

(1790) "I preached in St. Luke's, our parish church, in the afternoon to a numerous congregation on, &c. So are the tables turned that I have now more invitations to preach in churches than I can accept of." Vol. iv., p. 735.

The last entry in Mr. Wesley's Journals is on Sunday Oct. 24th, 1790, and runs thus: "I explained to a numerous congregation at Spitalfields church, 'The Whole Armour of God.' St. Paul's, Shadowell, was still more crowded in the afternoon, while I enforced that important truth, 'One thing is needful.'" Wm. Logan.

Fenelon Falls, Feb. 18, 1891.

Notes and Queries.

Sir, Would you kindly give me, through your Notes and Queries column, the names of the Archbishop's assessors in the Bishop of Lincoln's trial, and, if possible, the date of their consecration.

N. E. C.

Ans. Bishop of London, Right Hon. Rev. Frederick Temple, con. 1885. Bishop of Hereford, Right Rev. James Atlay, con. 1868. Bishop of Rochester, Right Rev. Anthony Wilson Thorold, con. 1877. Bishop of Oxford, Right Rev. Wm. Stubbs, con. 1889. Bishop of Salisbury, Right Rev. John Wordsworth, con. 1885. Vicar-General, Sir J. Parker Dean, Q.C.

Sir, Will you kindly tell me if the scale of fees for baptisms, marriages and funerals, as recommended in Niagara Synod some time ago, was ever authorized.

2. Do the laws which govern English Rectories obtain in Canada?

3. Have wardens any right to allow interments without consent of rector, of unbaptised dissenters in consecrated church ground?

Ans.—1. In 1880, [the Synod of Niagara adopted the following resolution: "That the Lord Bishop be requested to appoint a special committee to examine the table of fees prescribed in the Diocese of Toronto, and report on their adaptation to the requirements of this Diocese." Journal, p. 49. No further action, however, was taken.

2. The Canadian Rectories are governed by our synods under the Church Temporalities Act.

3. They have not.

Sunday School Lesson.

4th Sunday in Lent.

March 8th, 1891

"NUNC DIMITTIS" AND "DEUS MISEREATUR."

Meaning of these words. *Nunc Dimittis*, "Now Thou art letting depart," *Deus misereatur*, "May God be merciful."

I. THE STORY OF SYMEON (S. Luke ii. 25-35).

On February 2nd the Church observes the Festival of the Purification of S. Mary, the Virgin. At the same time as her Purification took place, according to the Jewish Law, Jesus was presented in the Temple. [Festival also called "The Presentation of Christ in the Temple. See Exod. xiii. 2.] Symeon a good man, &c. (S. Luke ii. 25.) He expected to find the "Consolation of Israel" in the Temple. (Mal. iii. 1.) The Holy Ghost led him into the Temple at this moment. Symeon took Jesus up in his arms and blessed God, saying, "Lord, now lettest, &c." He was an old man, and just wanted to be sure that "the good news" had come. He wanted to be at peace. And it was peace that he thanked God for.

II. THE "NUNC DIMITTIS," OR SONG OF SYMEON

1. v. 1. "Depart in peace." "Depart, i.e., 'die.' He was a "just" and "devout" man. His end must be "peace." (Ps. xxxvii. 37.) Special privilege granted him of seeing Jesus before he should die. (S. Luke ii. 26, 29.) Having lived a good life he could "depart in peace." "Keep innocency, and take heed unto the thing that is right, for that shall bring more peace at the last." "I can do nothing of myself, but." (Phil. iv. 13.)

2. The reason of this peace: the knowledge of God's salvation. (S. Luke ii. 30, 31.) See what Isaiah calls the Saviour. (Isa. ix. 6.) When Christ came there was peace in all the world—no wars.

This salvation had been spoken of before. (Acts iii. 22-24.) Men and women were looking for it. God had prepared His salvation (S. Luke ii. 31) from the beginning; before the foundation of the world. Noah's ark was 120 years preparing. God meanwhile waited for men to repent. (1 S. Pet. iii. 20.) All through the history of man was He

preparing His salvation. When He expelled man from Paradise (Gen. iii. 15); when He called Abraham from his home; when He gave Moses the law; when He sent Ruth to glean in the fields of Boaz, &c. And now, "in the fulness of time," &c. (Gal. iv. 4.) See Heb. i. 1, 2.

This salvation not for the Jews alone. (S. Luke ii. 32.) The light has shined on us, so we too may sing this hymn, and we do sing it at evensong, after second Lesson. Night is coming on, but we do not fear. (Ps. xxvii. 1.) Night a picture of death; but Christians should not fear death. Christ has died.

III. THE "DEUS MISEREATUR." (Ps. lxxvii.)

Instead of the Song of Symeon we sometimes use this Canticle. It is a song calling on the nations to bless God.

Family Reading.

Quinquagesima Sunday.

THE WHEAT AND THE THORNS.

There was another bit of ground besides the stony piece we thought about last Sunday, which was quite a different sort. This was some ground that would have been quite rich and good enough for the wheat to grow upon if it had not been for one thing.

What was that? Why something else was growing upon that ground too—growing upon it, and getting all the goodness out of it, so that there was very little left for the wheat.

That was some *thorns*. Great prickly brambles that did not let it have a chance of growing properly. They got in the way and choked it, and kept the rain and the sun from it. You may have seen something like that in your little garden. One year you sowed Virginian stock so thickly that your few nice delicate lobelias didn't do well at all. Just because the coarser plant kept the tender one from growing properly.

What is that like? Why, it's exactly what happens over and over again in people's hearts. Many a person's heart is so very full of worldly things, that there is literally no room for God's Word to strike root and grow.

Here is a shopkeeper who keeps his shutters up on Sunday (of course), and doesn't let a single customer in. But there's one thing he forgets. That is to shut the business out of his heart. It is there all the time, and though he doesn't actually make calculations on paper about his gains, yet he does in his head. And so, when he goes to church, the word he hears can't take root and grow.

Why not? Because there positively isn't room for it inside that busy, occupied mind.

He would like to join in the prayers, but somehow he can't. The reason is that the very words of the prayers are pushed on one side before he has got hold of their meaning. To make a little more money, to get rich, that is what, in various forms, runs through his mind. Is it wrong to make money? No, it is right to earn a living, but getting rich is another thing. I don't think earning a *living* often fills up the heart too much. But getting rich does; and the worst of it is, people often believe, too, that if only they are rich they are sure to be happy. Yet what can really be a greater mistake?

Many find out at last that the Word which has been thrust cut by the *deceitful riches* would have made them ten times, nay, a thousand times happier than they are.

But you say, "The love of getting rich doesn't fill my heart now." No, that sort of temptation generally comes later in life. It has been said that "saving is a young man's virtue and an old man's vice." Saving seldom gets much hold of a *young* heart. Spending is more often the bent, not saving.

But for all that, when you are young something else may choke the Word. Not cares, but *pleasures*.

You may well know what they are. Everybody likes pleasure. But there are bad pleasures and good. And do you know what bad pleasures do? Why, they choke the Word just as effectually as a faggot of thorns would choke a young green plant if you laid them on the top of it.

Gambling is one of these bad pleasures. It takes

tremendous hold of even boys' minds sometimes; it is very exciting, and seems such a nice easy way of getting money.

But it is *wrong*, because it is taking your neighbour's money without giving him anything in return. A great writer, Mr. Charles Kingsley, who had boys of his own, laid this down strongly in one of his letters.

People will tell you there is "no harm" in playing a game of cards for money. Now do remember it is a most dangerous thing, even to do it *once*. For once leads on to twice, and nobody stops at twice; they go on and on, and the pleasure grows keener each time. But for all that, it's a mean, selfish, bad pleasure, and will do you nothing but harm. For what is mean and selfish *must* crush what is good and noble. Both can't grow in one heart, any more than the wheat and thorns can grow on one bit of ground.

There are pleasures too which are right and good, and which you may enjoy with quite a clear conscience.

And yet just a word of warning. Good, right pleasures may choke the Word, and quite spoil its growth. Here is an example.

A holiday is a capital thing for everybody, and especially the "bodies" who work hard. You are delighted when the bank holiday or any other holiday comes. But you musn't let even a well-earned holiday be master. Don't let it get entire possession of you. Don't let it push good resolves right out of your heart.

We will say that you have made up your mind to be very kind and tender to your mother, who is not very strong—not half as strong as you, who are full of life and vigour and health. It is sometimes hard to be quite gentle and loving enough, but it has been easier ever since you happened to read this text in the Bible, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."

That text seemed just meant for you, and you are trying in good earnest to carry it out in daily life.

All goes on beautifully until there comes the very thing we spoke of just now, a holiday.

A famous one too (not a half and half sort of affair), with games, and races, and a band, and fireworks, and lots of fun of all sorts.

Well, don't quite forget "mother" in the midst of it all. Don't let her feel herself neglected because you are so happy. Don't be rough and hasty because you are excited and in tearing spirits. (Boys that I have known are sometimes.) For you don't want the best holiday in the world to get *all* your heart, and leave no room, not one little bit, for that good, beautiful resolution you made the other day about "bearing the infirmities of the weak," and "not pleasing yourself."

I don't think it's hard to call pleasures *thorns*; for thorns in their *right place* don't do any harm. But they must not get in the way of the corn that turns into precious bread. So pleasures mustn't choke the Word that will save our souls for ever.

The good ground brought forth fruit to perfection. Ah! you say, there's no use thinking of that. Perfection is far beyond me.

My dear boy, our Lord said some words once that were meant for you, and all of us, not just for a few holy saints.

"Be ye perfect."

So why should not good resolutions and right efforts get stronger and stronger every day, until perfection is reached? True, the seed needs watering. But then God's grace, which He freely gives, will do that.

Rich fruits! How good that sounds! It is planting, tending, and waiting *now*, but gathering by and by.

"And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it."

"And that which fell among thorns are they which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with the cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection."

"And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold."

"But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, kept it, and bring forth fruit with patience."