

eye shall see Him, Church waiting and longing. Sometimes almost despairing. Where is the promise? But He will appear in power and great glory, and we shall be glad.

Let us during this Easter season, learn, as we may, lessons of Faith and Hope, and Love, and Joy.

GOOD FRIDAY AND EASTER.

This issue of The Canadian Churchman will come into the hands of our readers on the Eve of Good Friday. It is needless to remind our readers of the awful solemnity of the Day of the Passion—of the glory of the great Paschal Feast. We shall gather around the cross not only to confess our sins, and pray for pardon, but to adore the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world, and to give thanks to God for His unspeakable Gift; and whilst we remember that Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, we shall, with earnest, humble, loving hearts, prepare to keep the Feast "with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." To forget the Table of the Lord on Easter Day is almost to deny the Lord who bought us.

CHRISTIANITY IN EUROPE.

Is it then to be believed that the "good Lord Jesus has had His day?" Has it come to this that Bibles and churches, and sermons, and sacraments, and public worship may be dispensed with? In other words, is the world about to substitute science for religion and Nature for God? We cannot think so. We believe that the religious instinct is unquenchable. Nay, more, we believe that the destruction of religious faith would mean the losing of its savour by the salt which has kept fresh the whole organism of human society. For one thing, we believe it may be said that Christian principles, theoretical and practical, have, at the present moment, a wider and deeper influence than they ever had in the history of the world. And it is sometimes said or assumed that, such being the case, we ought to be contented to have attained the principal result and effect of religious teaching and practice. Such a remark, common as it is, and plausible as it is, leads to many reflections which bid us pause before we concede its complete validity. For example, the diffusion of the principles of Jesus Christ has been brought about largely by a belief in His Divine authority and by the actual teaching work of the Church. True, the principles of the Gospel are self-evident, and they have passed into the life of the world: is it quite certain that they will maintain themselves by their own essential vitality without the support of Christian institutions? Reflections of this nature are aroused by what we are told of the state of religion on the other side of the Atlantic—in Germany, in France, in England. In Germany a comparatively small proportion of the people are found in the churches, whilst apparently the Government and the upper classes profess a regard for religion. In France, it is strangely different. It used to be said that the Church, even if it had lost ground in Paris and the other great cities, still held the smaller towns and country places. Then, again, it was said that, if the men were largely

unbelievers, the women were yet loyal to the faith. It is now said that great changes have taken place: that everywhere unbelief is spreading, communions are less frequent, and even attendance at church is given up by large masses of the people. One of the most serious phenomena in modern French society is the loss of faith in the literary, political and governing classes. There is hardly a man of distinction in France who makes any pretence of belonging to the Church. Many of them seem to hold a kind of Deism, but nothing more. Protestantism appears to have no attraction for the ordinary Frenchman. When he is not an Ultramontane, he is an Agnostic or a Deist. And things seem to be getting worse. But we are even more nearly interested in the state of things in England. It is said—and here unfortunately statistics leave us in no doubt as to the substantial facts—ordinations are decreasing in number, whilst the population is increasing. This need not be a positive evil, however, as men in former times took orders, as a kind of gentlemanly profession, without intending to do actual clerical work continuously. Moreover, there is said to be a large number of men in holy orders who are unemployed, so that a diminution in the numbers would not seem undesirable. Still we greatly fear that this explanation does not meet the case. And it is even said that the literary qualifications of those ordained do not come up to the old standard. When, however, we turn our attention to other facts and statistics, our conclusions will not be improved. For example, it is said that the numbers of young people confirmed are not much more than a fourth of those who ought to be presented. We are not informed whether this means a fourth of the whole population who have come to the age for confirmation, or only a fourth of those who have been baptized by the English clergy. If it is the latter, then, indeed, the case is deplorable; and the more so, when it is added that Churchgoing seems greatly on the decrease, and that a very large proportion—indeed majority, of the people, never go to church at all. It is high time that the causes of this state of things should be carefully investigated. It can hardly be said that a general disbelief of the Christian religion is found in Great Britain. It certainly cannot be maintained that the principles of Christianity are forgotten or ignored. So far, at least, as the duties between man and man are concerned, we should find it difficult to discover any time in human history in which the principles of the Gospel have been more fully recognized; and this is true of our legislative as well as our social intercourse. Still there must be some reason for the lamentable state of things referred to. It is not enough to speak of the lukewarmness of clergy or of laity, even if such an accusation were true. There must be some explanation of this lukewarmness. Shall we refer to our unhappy divisions? Undoubtedly these have much to answer for. But then, we are told that the same state of things is found among Roman Catholics and Dissenters—that, even if these last are not losing ground in comparison with the Church of England, they are yet by no means keeping pace with the increasing popu-

lation. Doubtless, before long, we shall hear from the fathers of the Church on this subject. It may be well, also, in a future article, to draw attention to the state of things on this side of the Atlantic, in the United States and Canada. But we are sure that all who love the Church and the Great Head of the Church will feel that there is laid upon them a very serious responsibility in regard to the state of religion in the world. Work and prayer are God's appointed means for the obtaining of His blessing; and when these are used widely and earnestly, the blessing will not be withheld.

SPAIN.

Before these lines reach our readers' eyes, everyone will probably know much more of the outcome of the present state of matters between Spain and the United States than any one knows at the moment of writing. The case is now complicated. It is no longer the miseries of Cuba that occupy the minds of Americans: the loss of the "Maine" has made the situation critical. It was bad enough before. Cuba was, and is, being ruined. Thousands of human beings have perished. Property of incalculable value has been destroyed. The island is getting to be a wreck. The terrible sufferings of the islanders have not brought them an inch nearer to submission: they are further from it than ever. At the beginning of the insurrection some form of autonomy would have satisfied them. At the present moment they will accept nothing short of independence; and they are ready to die, if they may hand on this boon to their children: they are not willing to live as subjects of Spain. It is impossible to acquit the Government of Spain of responsibility for this state of things. Spain has had the greatest opportunities of any European power, and she has thrown them all away. She was first on this continent, or if not actually on the continent, yet the first to obtain dominion over territory which promised to give her as much of the continent as she chose to occupy; and she did occupy much of it, and she has lost nearly the whole of it. It is said by those who are acquainted with the recent history of Cuba that the state of things there was simply intolerable, and the manner in which it has been attempted to suppress the rebellion has certainly been unworthy of any civilized nation. Of this there can hardly be a doubt. But perhaps it may be asked: How does this concern the people of the United States? Is that question asked by any among ourselves? Have we forgotten the Bulgarian atrocities? It was made clear to a good many subjects of the British Empire that those atrocities did very really concern them; and Europe intervened to secure a suffering people from a repetition of them. Has it not been spoken of as a disgrace to Europe that the doings of the Turks in Armenia have not been stopped by force? The British Government has actually confessed that an apology or a defence of its inaction was rendered necessary. In regard to Crete and Greece actual intervention has taken place. Why should not the misgovernment of Cuba be interfered with? And if so, what power so qualified to interfere, so

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