

Prayer. They did not want to copy Rome; she had her own ceremonial, we had ours. The preacher concluded with pertinent allusions to the Archbishop of York's charge to his synod on the subject of daily prayers and frequent celebrations of the Holy Communion, and to the Bishop of Lincoln's remarks at St. Agnes', Kennington, on clinging to the Bible and the Church:

The annual meeting was held in the evening at the Church House, Westminster. The chair was taken by Mr. H. B. Briggs, and amongst those present were the Bishop of Cairo (vice-president) and Mr. W. E. Lyman, hon. corresponding secretary for Canada. After the usual routine business had been gone through, including the adoption of the report, which stated that there are now 295 members on the roll, and of the financial statement, which showed that all debts had been paid, and that the liabilities were nil, the chairman explained that Mr. Feasey was unavoidably absent, but that his paper would be read by Mr. Digby.

The subject of the paper was "The Great Rood: Its Loft and its Screen, and the Ceremonial connected therewith." It dealt with the question exhaustively, but as we understand that it will be published in the "Transactions" of the Society, it would be better not to attempt to summarize it here. It was well received, and a hearty vote of thanks to the writer and reader were given, and an interesting discussion arose upon one or two points connected with it, the speakers being the Rev. J. L. Fish, the Rev. H. C. Williams, Major-Gen. Barnett, and the hon. Secretary. The Bishop of Cairo spoke a few hearty words, and emphasized what the preacher had said in the morning—"At Rome do as Rome does," but, added the Bishop, wherever the Church of the Anglo-Saxon race may be, do as the Anglo-Saxons do.

Votes of thanks and the Benediction brought the meeting to a close.—*From Church Review.*

#### THE HOLY EASTERN CHURCH.

No one can fail to feel a great interest in those venerable Churches in the East, which now for long centuries have been trodden down beneath the feet of the Moslem oppressor, and yet amid every persecution have kept the faith, refusing to yield either to the voice of Rome or to the voice of Protestantism. There is the Holy See of Jerusalem, whose first Bishop was James the Just. There is the Holy See of Antioch, founded by St. Peter, the Prince of the Apostles. There is the Holy See of Alexandria, watered by the blood of St. Mark, the Evangelist, its first Bishop. The Holy See of Rome is but a daughter of Jerusalem, "the Mother of all Churches."

It is sad indeed to think of Rome separated from these, the great pillars of the Catholic World, and to know that while Constantinople has continued faithful in their fellowship, although younger and having no Apostle for its founder, Rome has been rejected because of her forgetfulness and neglect of the Lord's own command, that it should not be among the Apostles as among the princes of the Gentiles, one having lordship over the others, but that all should be brethren, with one Lord and Master, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Besides these ancient Churches of the Greek-speaking East, there is also the great and glorious Church of Russia. How full of zeal and of missionary enterprise, is evinced by the most blessed fruits of her labours in Japan. To this Church belong all the peoples of the Russian Empire, with but few exceptions, and quite lately vast numbers who had for years been induced to submit to the yoke of Rome have now returned to the Communion of the Orthodox East.

All this becomes of the greatest interest to us when we see day by day that those barriers which were erected between us and the Eastern Churches by our subjection for centuries to the Papal yoke, are now gradually being removed, and that while we are learning to look with eyes of love upon these Churches which were the cradles of our holy religion, the learned in these quarters are discovering that we of the Anglican Communion are neither the followers of Luther nor Calvin, nor of any other heretic, but a part of that same Church of which they are the venerable first fruits, a part which in the struggle to get free from the un-catholic usurpations of Rome, had suffered much and imbibed many of the errors of others making the same attempt at emancipation, but with different ends in view. It is sad, but, alas! true that the errors of Protestantism are but too prevalent among us, both clergy and people, but yet we have kept the whole of the Divine economy of the Church, and retaining, as we have done, the true priesthood, we have the same Divine sacrifice to offer, we have the same

Holy Bread, we absolve the penitent and confer all other necessary graces even as they.

Under these circumstances it is not strange that there should be a force drawing us together, and lately this has been very evident. We have seen statements upon this subject which have caused us sorrow, because they were not true. It is not true that Archbishop Lycurgus assisted as a bishop at a consecration of the English Bishop Suffragan of Nottingham, and the fact that priests of the Greek Communion have been present at services in our churches, such as at the funeral of the late Bishop of California, is no more significant than the presence of dissenting ministers of every name on the same occasion.

There are some steps, however, which are of real significance, and these should be kept quite distinct from others which are either untrue or of doubtful significance.

Some years ago the Patriarch of Jerusalem allowed the use of the Chapel of Abraham in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre for the Anglican Church. He has often invited the Anglican clergy to go with him to functions, and has placed them in the chancel among the clergy.

A short time ago the Russian Bishop of California (whatever his official title may be), at the invitation of the Bishop of Iowa, was present in his cathedral and sat vested in the chancel.

At the consecration of the Bishop of Massachusetts, the Archbishop of Zante, who came to represent the Eastern Churches at the World's Fair, was present in the chancel during the function and preached a brief sermon.

At the opening of the Diocesan Convention of New York the same prelate was present in the sanctuary, and received the Holy Communion at the hands of the Bishop of New York.

At the Missionary Meeting in Chicago the same Archbishop made an address.

Now these acts must not be interpreted as meaning more than they really do. But even when we remember that these are only the actions of individuals, and that the Greek and Russian theologians at the Bonn Conference refused to give a positive opinion in favour of the validity of our orders, yet we may justly conclude that these acts are the outgrowth of a fairly well developed feeling among Eastern ecclesiastics of culture, and that if we are careful to do our part there is good reason to hope that the venerable patriarchs of the East will not be indisposed to welcome us to closer relations with themselves. Moreover, it is worthy of note that on these occasions the Nicene Creed must have been used with the Western addition of the words "and the Son," and the fact that this was not publicly resented would seem to indicate that our Western Doctrine is now better understood, and found not to be inconsistent with the belief of the Orthodox East.—*Living Church.*

#### CHURCH ATTENDANCE.

One of the greatest of the many problems that present themselves to the parish priest for solution is that which concerns the attendance of his people at the various services in the church. In the majority of parishes the percentage of regular worshippers in the house of God is very small. I do not mean that the proportion is smaller among Church people than it is among members of the different Nonconformist denominations. The point is not raised with a view to setting up a comparison, favourable or otherwise, with what prevails among other religious bodies. The object of this article is to call attention, without the smallest approach to exaggeration, to the existing state of things, and then to examine the causes of the evil, and suggest possible remedies.

It may be taken for granted, then, as a fact which is beyond the possibility of a denial, that the number of those who habitually attend the services of the Church, Sunday by Sunday, to say nothing of week-days, is lamentably small as compared with those who absent themselves. It is not proposed to give any statistical figures, but rather to deal with the broad question.

Let us see what explanations are forthcoming.

1. It is sometimes objected that, where the services represent the views of an extreme party within the Church, the congregation dwindles, because so many people stay away for the reason that they object to certain details of the ritual, or else to the doctrines taught from the pulpit. There is no doubt that a clergyman, who is unwise and devoid of tact, may easily alienate a considerable section of his flock by unnecessary and ill-advised changes in the ornaments of the church and the service, or by an insistence on certain points of sacramental teaching which are totally opposed to that to which, for many generations, they have been accustomed. Such examples are, unfortunately, by no means uncommon, and empty pews too often testify to the mistake that has been made. Alterations and modifications should not, generally speaking, be made too suddenly. When the incumbent has won the affection and

respect of his parishioners, he can lead them, with hardly a dissentient voice, to adopt views and ritual which, if introduced on his first arrival among them, would have almost caused a revolution. But extremes of party influence of feeling, in either direction, will not account for the paucity of church attendance. Well known cases will at once occur to us in which, where the clergyman is sympathetic, hard-working, and of a deeply spiritual character, the services are crowded on all occasions.

2. Another explanation is sometimes suggested, namely, that lengthy and difficult musical renderings repel many worshippers. Undoubtedly there is some truth in this argument, yet we all know that St. Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, and many of the metropolitan churches which are famous for their music attract vast congregations. The inhabitants of the particular ecclesiastical district may not, perhaps, in all cases be largely represented, but the fact disproves this allegation that it is on account of the music being elaborate that the attendance at Divine worship is scanty.

3. Some critics, on the contrary, maintain that the rigid, almost Puritanical, simplicity in the public exercise of devotion, which is still in vogue in a certain number of our churches, is so dull and lifeless that the congregation either seek a more congenial and cheerful sphere for the offering of their prayers and praises, or else give themselves up altogether to secular amusement. But, while allowing that the spirit of the age is opposed to what may have altogether suited the taste of former generations, experience shows us that this explanation of the cause of the evil to which attention has been called is insufficient.

The smallness of Church attendance does not arise from any single cause. It is due to a variety of circumstances, and can only be rectified by a variety of remedies. It is to some extent consequent on the complexity of the problem which has to be solved by the vicar or rector.

In the first place, provision has to be made for the spiritual needs of the most diverse characters and the most opposite views. The parish is usually composed of those who represent every grade of education, and every shade of feeling and instinct. The clergyman has so to arrange his services as to meet the requirements and predilections of the young and ardent Ritualist and the earnest Anglo-Catholic, as well as of the unemotional Low Churchman, who asks for nothing more than what he was accustomed to fifty years ago, when he and the other members of his house occupied the great family pew, withdrawn from the observation of the rest of the worshippers. However gifted and eloquent the preacher may be, it is almost beyond the possibilities of the human intellect for him to be able, under such circumstances, to arrest the attention, and engross the interest, of all who listen to him, more especially if he attempts, as he is bound to do, to instruct his flock in the doctrine of Christ. I remember some years ago being present on Sunday in the Chapel Royal, Whitehall, when the late Archbishop (Magee) of York was preaching on the occasion of the silver wedding of the Prince and Princess of Wales, the offertory (for which he had to make a special appeal) being arranged to be given to the Gordon Boys' Home. On the Saturday morning the Bishop of Peterborough (as he then was) received a Royal command to refer in his sermon to the lamentable assassination of the late Emperor of Russia. A more difficult task than this it is hardly possible to imagine, and perhaps no other of our many great pulpit orators could have acquitted himself in the admirable manner in which the modern Chrysostom of the English Church performed his task.

In the next place, the falling off, or rather the absence of a large and rapid increase, in the Sunday attendance at the house of God, may be due, in a measure, to the following cause. There is a growing tendency, among a considerable section of the laity, to resent and ignore the authority of the priesthood. No doubt this is the survival of the old "No Popery" cry, and is intended to be a protest against "sacerdotalism." At all events, the fact remains, that those who hang upon the words of their family lawyer or family doctor, and regard their utterances as being almost inspired and absolutely infallible, apply a totally opposite principle to the advice and admonition of their spiritual pastor. They will not allow that a clergyman, who for years has devoted himself to the study of theology, and has received at his ordination the Divine grace of the Holy Ghost, is in the smallest degree more competent than they are to explain the Articles and Creeds of the Church, or to expound the meaning of intricate passages from the Bible. They adopt the "shibboleths" of the particular party to which they belong, and read a few devotional tracts or manuals, and at once consider themselves to be Heaven-born theologians. If their parish priest teaches them from the pulpit any doctrine which is not in accordance with their ready-made views, they decline to "sit under" him.

I may mention a third reason for the fact that so many Church people absent themselves from God's