

prepare for the season of humiliation and penitence intended to introduce to us the glorious triumphs of the Redeemer over sin and death.

We are first to think of our offences and to be delivered from them; and then to survey the work that lies before us. This work is regarded by the Church as a race, a fight, and a labor. But we can engage successfully in none of these without self-discipline—"I keep under my body and bring it into subjection." There is the same necessity for this self-discipline, whether we regard man's physical or his moral nature; and this discipline is absolutely necessary to fit us for the part assigned for us to act, both in this world and that which is to come. It is this fitness for this future post that has to be prepared for, and the acquirement of which necessitates first the removal of offences and then the running, the fighting, the labor of the Christian course—not forgetting the endurance of adversities and afflictions, to be considered on Sunday next, and the exercise of all Christian virtues, especially Charity, to be brought before us on the Sunday next before Lent.

There is then a necessity for moral preparation as well as physical and intellectual. And an important distinction which gives superior interest to man's moral progress is that it can to a great extent be effected in his present state of existence. Much depends upon ourselves. It is true that we cannot by the mere exertion of our will prepare our bodies for a glorified condition. Nor can we raise our intellect to angelic eminence; but with respect to morality and holiness, fitness for eternal blessedness is, by the grace of God, within the reach of all. We are unable by taking thought to add one cubit to our stature; we cannot, by taking thought, expand our minds to a comprehension of all mysteries; yet, by taking thought, we are able, through the wisdom and goodness of our Creator, to make continual advances, morally, towards fitness for the Kingdom of God.

And this fitness corresponds exactly with the moral training which prepares the heart in childhood for the duties of manhood. In order that he may be safely entrusted with the cares and duties of domestic and social life, he must acquire habits of obedience, docility and subjection to authority—habits of justice, truth and charity—habits of attention, industry, and self-control. Now these moral requisites must be yet more indispensable for admission to the society of celestial beings. Man, in the infancy of an immortal existence, must be trained to higher degrees of moral excellence, in proportion to the character of the community to which he aspires. And for this purpose he must be ardently engaged in the running, the fighting, the laboring inculcated on this Sunday, the endurance on the next Sunday, and the charity on the Sunday following.

PREACHING SHOPS.

THE churches (and I use the word in its largest sense) have been made too much mere *preaching shops*. The service has been regarded but as the overture before the great performance—the sermon. This method of procedure carries with it the seeds of its own destruction. In the town from which I am writing there is a striking case in point. A large central church, built in the days when art was at a discount and the aesthetic in ecclesiastical matters was a thing, if not infernal, not far removed, is ministered to by an eloquent, earnest, Evangelical churchman. The music is wretched, and the *ensemble* the lowest of the low; but when the preacher is at home

many hundreds swallow the inartistic service (some with semi-visible contortions) and feed on the sermon. If, however, the attraction be absent,

a beggarly array of empty and half-empty pews meets the eye of the curate, or the supply, if he happen to be inferior to the incumbent. The church is simply what we have described as a *preaching shop*. If the incumbent should break down, or leave, and a poor preacher get the living, the edifice is at once emptied, as it has been during some former tenancies. The people do not go to worship God, but to hear the preacher. And this is, if anything, more true of Nonconformist places than of the one I have described. The idea is there more than ever—"Who is to preach?" and the attendance depends largely upon the reply to this query. This state of things I consider a mistake. A church should be built primarily for worship, and secondarily for preaching. The emotional and active elements in worship are if anything more important than the intellectual and passive (which are exercised in listening to a sermon), and the worship of the sanctuary is more likely to enkindle these than any didactic discourse. The cultivation of the aesthetic in worship would, I am convinced, of itself draw many to church who now go nowhere.—*Modern Thought*.

A GOOD EXAMPLE FOR OTHERS.

AMONG the almost numberless satisfactory communications we are continually receiving, there are two or three received this week, which are so decidedly in the right direction that they would seem to demand a special notice.

A lady in Hamilton and a gentleman in Toronto have sent One Dollar each for copies of the DOMINION CHURCHMAN to be forwarded to the Rev. W. Crompton, Aspdin, Algoma. Another lady in Hamilton writes;—"I enclose our subscription for the present year. Mamma will be glad to subscribe for another number to be sent to any outlying Mission Station, where you think it would be acceptable, and they will be glad to receive the paper regularly."

These examples are well worthy of extensive imitation and probably there are many of our friends who would gladly have done the same before now, had the idea been suggested to them. Mr. Crompton's Mission is so extensive, and the people there are so needy, that scores and even hundreds of copies of the paper would be serviceable; and there are many other outlying Missions of a similar character. We have observed that in some of the poorest Missions in the United States, hundreds of dollars are expended in this way; and now the price of the DOMINION CHURCHMAN is reduced to ONE DOLLAR a year, there is additional inducement for the adoption of the same practice here. We therefore trust it will be immediately and extensively taken up and carried out.

CLERICAL LIFE ASSURANCE.

THE letter on this subject by the Rev. C. R. Bell, in a recent issue of the DOMINION CHURCHMAN is one of so much importance to the Church generally that we desire to invite correspondence on it. We purpose having an article in reference to its benefits in an early issue.

ACCESSIONS TO THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH.

WE call attention to Mr. Fletcher's letter in the correspondence columns, on the subject. Mr. Bradshaw was kind enough to furnish us with a list some time ago; but Mr. Fletcher's

list is more complete than any other we have seen. It plainly shows that the alarm attempted to be got-up, by certain enemies of the Church within her pale, is totally without foundation.

BOOK NOTICES.

RITUAL, Religious and Secular, a primary law of man's nature, by Alfred Meadows, M.D., Fellow and Examiner of the Royal College of Physicians, &c., &c. I. Masters & Co., London, p. p. 19.

This is a paper read at the annual Conference of one of the numerous Church Societies in England. In concise, clear, yet comprehensive language Dr. Meadows treats his subject. The perusal of a work like this would be exceedingly valuable to those who from a purely one-sided reading are wont to harshly condemn those who endeavour to "uphold the dignity of Divine worship" by such "outward acts and gestures" as are calculated to set forth great and glorious truths, which might otherwise be lost sight of. The writer states it to be his object to give his hearers "some reflections on the subject of Ritual in the broadest and most Catholic sense of the word, to trace out if possible the principle which seems to underlie the practice of it; and to suggest reasons for believing, that in adopting external forms commonly called Ritual as modes of expressing reverence in the ordinance of worship, we only obey a law which seems to pervade all nature—the law namely, that spirit is superior to matter, and that the man of science, from his assumed high stand-point of intellectual superiority, is bound by the law of his existence, and in the spirit in which he so prides himself, to concede the whole principle which underlies the practice of some kind of Ritual, and that however extreme his antipathy to it may be, as a matter of fact he is practising it every day of his life."

Our author puts the subject in this way:—"Suppose I want to show respect and reverence, or even simple recognition of a person, does not bodily gesture become almost necessary for this purpose? Why? It is the distinct recognition and the natural outcome of a law which dominates our whole being in the relation of man to man. It is not that matter—the material body—recognizes matter, but it is the soul of man speaking in bodily gesture to the soul of his fellow-man. This being so in every-day life "Why then, I ask, when you come to the higher exercises of man's soul, where you come into those regions of thought in which we might well look for and expect yet clearer and more decided evidences of this law—why, in a word, when you stand upon holy ground, and the soul of man is stirred to its inmost depths—why then is there to be no "outward deed and gesture," no sign or symbol of the fact that the soul of man is holding Communion with its God, is praising Him, adoring Him, loving Him, in humbly supplicating Him on bended knee, as a man pleads with his fellow-man for forgiveness of an injury?" Dr. Meadows thus concludes "I might adduce numerous instances to prove how general is the acceptance of the principle of Ritual in the common affairs of life, but I will only take one. Let any tell me, if he can, what difference there is in principle between the man who dips his flag in the sea to salute a royal person and the Priest who kneels at God's altar in adoring salutation to the King of Kings? * * * It should be remembered too, that we, the laity, have not much to do with the details of the Ritual, which belong properly to the clergy, and it is surely of far