

sugar socials, and even dances and theatrical exhibitions. There is no telling where a church, which once takes up with shifts and expedients for raising money, will stop. The temptation will come to provide the most worldly amusements in return for the financial aid it seeks. Improve the spiritual life of the church, and one of the first results will be to fill up the exhausted treasury of the church. In many of our Canadian churches, the social meetings in the week go very far towards nullifying all the preaching of the Lord's day. It is simply a disgrace to any Christian church to allow on its social programmes slangy and coarse songs or readings. In such cases there is no thought as to whether the exercises are demoralizing or stimulating; the whole thought is, will they draw a house? We have heard programmes which were so simply disgusting that the only fit place to carry them out would seem to be a saloon. We believe in socials, in a good laugh, in a warm hand-shake and every other thing that recreates us without defiling us. But we protest against bringing the spirit of the world into our churches even though the treasury may be low."

A noted member of the English Wesleyan Conference describes the decline of their churches to the acceptance of four Gospels—"the Gospel of fun, the Gospel of bazaars, the Gospel of music, and the Gospel of fiction." But this is "an age of progress." The Church has gone into the amusement business largely, she has entered the market, and is in competition with these great caterers. It is thought that the Church, in order to hold her young people to her altars, must provide for the natural craving for amusements, to keep them from theatre and opera. Churches must be made into semi-theatres and semi-operas. So far from preventing attendance upon a full-grown theatre and opera, by these efforts the appetite is whetted for them. Can there be any doubt as to the inconsistency of this indirect method of trying to raise money for the support of the Church, in contrast with straightforward, honest appeals to men to give of their substance to Him on whom they depend for all things. It would greatly promote the spirituality and usefulness of the Church if much of the showy extravagance was curtailed, and so carry out the vow of baptism in renouncing the "world, the flesh, and the devil."

It is evident that the world is in the Church from the manner in which money is sought through concerts, lectures, suppers, bazaars and theatrical exhibitions. It is idle for a man to claim that when he gives twenty-five cents for admission to a Church concert, he is giving it to the cause of God, for he is only paying for "value received" in the shape of eatables, music and speeches.

It is certainly as much a duty to give as it is to pray, or the performance of any other devotion—for giving is now looked upon as worship. Our praying for the coming of the Kingdom is incomplete without the giving to aid the coming of the Kingdom—the asking is amiss that is not accompanied by the gift. Ignorance of the need and the duty to give, a spirit of covetousness, a lack of interest, and indifference, cause the neglect of giving. Selfishness is so ingrained in our nature, that appeals have to be made over and over again. It is impossible to invent any patent process which will do that which is clearly a personal and responsible duty devolving upon all. If every member of the Church would comply with the divine will, as indicated to the Jews—requiring one-tenth of their all, the aggressive work of the Church would be easily accomplished. Let this method of systematic benevolence be adopted, then there will be no crippling for want of funds for missionary and all other purposes. Our giving should not be stationary or stereotyped in its amounts, any more than our getting is—giving "as God hath prospered us." The rule laid down by the Apostle is, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by in store, as God hath prospered him." They were once a week to think how much they ought to give, and they were to put that by. This law of frequent and stated appropriation cuts up by the roots the common practice of giving large sums and then for a long time nothing, and also that of giving only or chiefly at death. It also repudiates the practice of *waiting to be solicited*. Permanent giving for religious purposes should not be dependent on occasional enthusiasm, but upon intelligent conviction, upon an abiding sense of responsibility and upon that zeal which is awakened by the constantly constraining love of Christ. Honouring God by our substance is one of the surest ways by which poor human nature can manifest its love. Some people with pious exterior break down when it comes to making a financial sacrifice for the cause of Christ. They find it comparatively easy to worship God by singing and prayer, but an exceedingly difficult problem to give the worship which calls for dollars and cents. We are told that religion costs nothing, "Come without money and without price," and that is the reason that some people seem to have so much of it.

PHILIP TOCQUE.
March 17th.

Sunday School Lesson.

5th Sunday in Lent April 3rd, 1892

THE CRUCIFIXION.

I. "WAS CRUCIFIED."

On Sunday last we read of our Lord's sufferings which preceded the final struggle, the actual crucifixion. Pilate knew that Jesus was innocent. "I find no fault in Him" (St. John xix. 6). But he was afraid of the people: he could not resist their cry, "Away with Him, crucify Him" (xix. 15, 16). Think of Jesus led forth to be crucified, in charge of a band of soldiers. See the crowd that follow, the weeping women, the men who mock and jeer. "He bearing His cross went forth." They laid the cross upon His back already torn and lacerated with cruel scourging, His body weakened by all the agony through which He had passed. At last His worn out strength could stand it no longer, and gave way beneath its weight. Then the soldiers pressed Simon, the Cyrenian, into the service, and "On him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus."

Slaves and the lowest kind of criminals were crucified. The Jews wanted Jesus to die a death of shame. Arrived at the hill of Calvary, outside the city, the cross was laid upon the ground; and Jesus, all bleeding, torn, and fainting, was laid upon it. Then a soldier taking a hand or foot, drove a nail through the quivering flesh to fasten Him to the wood. Not a word of murmuring broke from the lips of Him whom thus they nailed to the cross. Not a word of anger, but with eyes lifted to His Father, He cries, "Father, forgive them: they know not what they do." When the nailing is completed the cross is raised from the ground and let down into the hole prepared to receive it and Jesus allowed to hang by the nails from the cross till He died. Think if you can what pain He suffered. But His thoughts were not for Himself. Two others, malefactors, were crucified with Him, "on either side one, and Jesus in the midst." One reviled Him, the other cried for mercy; in response to his appeal "Lord, remember me," He answered "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise" (St. Luke xxiii. 42, 43). Close to the cross of Jesus stood His human mother, "the sword piercing her soul" of which the aged Simeon spoke (St. Luke ii. 35). "When Jesus therefore saw His mother," etc. (St. John 27). He uttered the third word from the cross, "Woman, behold thy son, behold thy mother." After this the noonday sun was darkened (St. Luke xxiii. 44, 45), and Jesus was silent. About the ninth hour He uttered that fourth word, which betokened the depth of mental agony He underwent (St. Matt. xxvii. 46), "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me." Three more times He spoke,—one more word which betokened suffering, "I thirst" (St. John xix. 28); one which was a word of triumph, "It is finished" (St. John xix. 30), one a word of commendation of His soul, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit" (St. Luke xxiii. 46).

"Seven times He spake, seven words of love; And all three hours His silence cried For mercy on the souls of men: Jesus, our Lord, is crucified."

II. WHAT CRUCIFIED JESUS.

It was not the Jews, it was not the Romans that crucified Jesus, but it was our sins, yours and mine (1 St. Peter ii. 24). How we should hate our sins. If we go on with our sins we crucify Him afresh (Heb. vi. 4 6). Often think of the love of Jesus who was crucified for your sins and mine, and say with St. Paul (Gal. ii. 20), "Who loved me and gave Himself for me."

Notes and Queries.

SIR,—2 Kings xiii. 18. Meaning of Trench's note "Shoot again, &c.?" J. H. McC.

Ans.—Trench seems to intend reference to the fact that the *Hiphil* of the Hebrew verb *Nakah*, 'to strike,' is used with the idea of enforced intensity or frequent repetition. Two or three strokes would be but a faint response to such a word: as the prophet intimates, his order implied destruction complete—an impetuous, persistent, and irresistible onslaught. The Greek version 'patasso,' and Latin 'percutio,' indicate the same idea. Wordsworth dwells on the Hebrew being cognate with the Greek 'nekros' (dead) and Latin 'neco' (kill), and so, strong, even in *kul* mood. The Hebrew word might almost be translated 'make them strike dead.'

SIR,—What are "ecclesiastical duties accustomedly due at Easter to parson, vicar or curate, from every parishioner?" S.

Ans.—They are the *personal* tithes of the present generation of Churchmen as distinguished from the

endowment tithes of former generations. The traditional method of collection was by the Incumbent's warden, who paid an official visit to each parishioner and received his contribution, entering it in a book of account. It has been more customary of late years for people to give or send their offerings to the Church offertory as part of the 'oblations' or 'devotions,' but designated as belonging to the clergyman. It is to be regretted that the Communion Service Rubric in this matter is much overlooked.

Family Reading.

The Chicken and the Pond

There was a round pond, and a pretty pond, too,
About it white daisies and buttercups grew,
And dark weeping willows that stooped to the ground,
Dipped in their branches and shaded it round.

A party of ducks to this pond would repair,
To feast on the green water weeds that grew there;
Indeed, the whole family often would meet
And talk o'er affairs in this pleasant retreat.

One day a young chicken who lived thereabout,
Stood watching to see the ducks pass in and out,
Now standing tail upward, now diving below;
She thought, of all things, she should like to do so.

So this foolish chicken began to declare,
"I've really a great mind to venture in there;
My mother's oft told me I must not go high,
But really, for my part, I cannot see why."

"Ducks have feathers and wings, and so I have too,
And my feet—what's the reason that they will not do?
And though my beak is pointed and their beaks are round,
Is that any reason that I should be drowned?"

"Then why should not I swim as well as a duck?
Suppose that I venture and e'en try my luck!
For," said she, spite of all that her mother had taught her,
"I'm really remarkably fond of the water."

So, in this poor silly conceited chick flew,
And found that her dear mother's cautions were true:
She splashed and she dashed, and she turned herself round
And heartily wished herself safe on the ground.

But now 'twas too late to begin to repent,
The harder she struggled the deeper she went;
And when every effort she vainly had tried,
She slowly sank down to the bottom and died.

"Changed Lots; or, Nobody Cares."

CHAPTER XVI.

(Continued.)

At Nance's first words of affection all else was forgotten but her love; she heard how much she was missed, how much she was wanted back, that Nance's illness had kept her from coming to see her before, and that times had been very hard, with eager sympathy.

Jenny, too, clung to her hand, and asked her when she would be well, she wanted her "so bad," there was no one to lead her about now, and she had met with many accidents; Prince, she was told, looked for her every day, he had not yet grown accustomed to her absence.

Nothing was said of Joe or of singing any more on this or any other visit, and by the time she was dismissed as convalescent Dorothy's spirits had risen and she no longer looked forward with the same dread to returning to the encampment.

She came out of the hospital strengthened both in body and mind by the rest and good food and all she had read and heard. Animated by as true a heroism as has led many a forlorn hope, she determined she would work hard for mother and Jenny and try to mind nothing as long as Joe would let her alone.

He had not spoken to her many minutes before he saw that in Missie's face which told him it would be harder than ever to bend her to his will, and from surly abuse of her folly in running away from him and thereby causing the accident, he suddenly changed to a fulsome flattery of her singing and a recital of all that had been said about it.

But Dorothy was not to be mollified by any soft words; she stood her ground bravely, and vowed she would never sing in a public-house again, and when Joe began to threaten her she told him proudly that she was not his child, and that if he touched her she would complain to the first policeman she could find.

"If you don't belong to me you belong to my