

THE INELEGANT LEAN-TO

The other day we saw about two dozen of them and all *within*, not outside, the walls of a town Church. They were men, both fat and lean, who were pretending to pray to the Most High God. Perhaps they flattered themselves that they were not so irreverent at the hour of prayer as were some others over the way to whom the following words might apply:—

"One hour they find in seven long days,"

"Before their God to sit and gaze"

but so far as their conception of worship was concerned, it was as painful and shockingly debased in the one case as in the other. How would it look for the Clergyman also to sit down and "lean-to" in the prayers! Thank God for the seemly and dignified worship set before us in the Bible and in the Prayer Book. Alas! that in any of our Churches there should be witnessed, even on the part of a few, the inelegant and lazy custom to which we have referred, and which is such a terrible caricature of worship.

We read of the Wise Men from the East who when they found the Infant Saviour "fell down and worshipped Him." Each one bowed himself down and bent the knee in lowliest adoration. Had they been imbued with the notions of many in the latter part of this nineteenth century, possibly they would have said amongst themselves:—"We perceive that the King loveth simplicity; see, here is a bench, let us sit down and with elbows on our knees, assume a crouching attitude and dub it adoration!" Had Daniel known of these days and held the debased ideas of many called Christians he would have sat down and "leaned-to" three times a day and prayed as he did aforetime.

To be consistent the "lean-to," when about to say his private prayers night and morning, should sit on a chair and pour out his supplications to his Maker.

When Max O' Rell tells us that there are sixty millions of people in America, mostly Colonels, we enjoy having fun made of Americans on account of their supposed fondness of titles, but when Max O' Rell tells us of what many English speaking people consider worship we cannot but feel sad. We once knew a man ever on the alert for the slightest "innovation" on the part of the priest in the saying of the Church's services who

yet himself constantly disregarded rubric after rubric where he was taught to kneel before the God of heaven and earth. Some error in the construction of the seats may sometimes prevent stout people or long thin people from obeying the rubrics with reference to kneeling, but they should at once complain to the Church Wardens and ask for the needed alterations in the pew. Unless prevented by infirmity from kneeling no man should presume to pray without humbly kneeling, or at least reverently standing, while confessing his many sins and making known his requests to his God.

It is not the purpose of this article to point out the manifold reasons for kneeling upon our *knees* in prayer, but we must say that besides the worship of the spirit there is the worship of the body. The latter is to those rightly instructed indispensable. Indeed it is hard to conceive how there can be real worship of the heart without a corresponding lowliness of attitude on the part of the body. To remain sitting in a pew or on a chair when petitioning the King of kings is not indicative of earnestness on the part of him who prays, nor of humility, nor of self-abasement; and prayer offered in such a spirit is not likely to be accepted.—*Communicated.*



The Bishop of Rochester's farewell address to his diocese is particularly valuable from the testimony it bears to Church work based upon a clear, unflinching faith, definitely thought out and definitely held. Multiplying experience enabled the Bishop to say with confidence, that for work of the best and most lasting sort, in things secular as well as sacred, the Church must look to those men and those parishes, whose whole work is based and centered upon the clear firm faith of the Creed as proclaimed in the Church's consecrated ministry of Word and Sacrament. There should be nothing vague, indefinite or uncertain in the message. The firm and calm assurance based on eternal truths, and the quiet persistence and daily consecrated devotion of lives given up for Christ's sake to the service of those for whom Christ died are the permanent fruitful sources of blessing to the Church. The parson in the parish and the parent in the home can step out with head cool and face forward upon this firm ground of confidence, quietness, strength and permanent success.

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