

(many of them) to "barter away their birthright" for a little spite!

"THE ONE CLEAR SENTENCE" in Gladstone's essay has been named and identified by the *Church Times*. It referred to the Miners' Bill—a great compliment to labour to have such a singular and exceptional departure from the G.O.M.'s usual style occasioned by their requirements. It would really seem as if the habit of "delphic ambiguity" had so grown upon this eminent statesman that it is difficult for him to say or write anything that does not require a great deal of hesitating consideration in order to ascertain even the "net" probable meaning of his very elaborate and involved sentences.

THE EASE-LOVING WOMEN.—"The careless daughters of America" get rather severe handling from Bishop Hall, of Vermont, though he deals with the subject with characteristic delicacy of touch. He charges the doctors "never to be a party to relieving women from the necessity of becoming mothers." After referring to the alarming decrease of population, he says: "Our honourable families are losing their life, and inferior ones are taking their places." He calls the medical profession to the aid of the clerical in the protection of the country from this form of evil.

PAROCHIAL VISITING seems to be as much a source of difficulty and anxiety in Montreal—judging by the *Parish Worker* of Grace Church—as in other parts. "It sometimes happens that, while word is promptly sent to the medical man, the clergyman is not thought of at all, but left to find it out for himself! If he does not hear of it, he does not call; and then 'he catches it' for neglecting his duty." How true that is, and how common are the queer ways of lay members of the Church—every parson is very apt to say. A little consideration would teach lay people that the modern parson has not the gift of clairvoyance, so as to render ordinary means of communication—such as messenger, letter, postcard, telephone, telegraph—unnecessary.

HARVEST THANKSGIVINGS—HALT?

Far be it from us to suggest that there should be an end put to those most wholesome and delightful festivals which have become so characteristic of our day. There is no occasion to "halt" in our expressions of thankfulness—there never can be too much of that! The subject, however, of the precise form which such thanksgivings had better take, now—near the close of the 19th century—is another matter, and a legitimate subject of enquiry; chiefly because they have become so general and so numerous—these occasions. In Canada the exuberance of thankfulness seems to have become so great as to be really embarrassing. The same appears to be true of England. A long letter in a recent *Church Times* voices the sentiments of a vast number of Churchmen on both sides of the Atlantic.

PAROCHIAL FESTIVALS

of this description are beginning to clash seriously with one another, and with other Church festivals. They have leaped into a sudden prominence not at all provided for in the Church calendar. The national "Thanksgiving day" is altogether inadequate to express the religious enthusiasm of Churchmen. They may serve well enough for Dissenters, who are satisfied with big military reviews, huge roast turkeys, and very "mixed" concerts. Churchmen need something of a higher type. Indeed, the national day is so given over

to secular amusements that it seems "beyond redemption." So the Church has "broken out all over" in a vast and curious assortment of observances. From this hot and impulsive bed of enthusiasm unbridled confusion has arisen. But the subject is of a character so important and so serious as to call for

MORE REVERENT TREATMENT.

A few months since—in some cases only a few weeks have passed—hard-working men and women began to loosen the close and tyrannical bonds of wage-earning and money-making. Gradually the "busy mart" has been deserted, and the lakes and woods occupied, instead. Not millionaires only on their palatial steam yachts, and merchant princes on their islands—Monte Christos on a small scale—but mechanics, milliners, nurses, clerks, have taken to "summering" as a means of recuperating worn-out energies. Just enough of relays have been left at home to preserve things in statu quo till the others come back. Now, in September, they all come flocking back, full of new vigour, revived by inhalation of nature's boundless stores of ozone, with unaccustomed muscles attuned into healthy harmony with the rest of the body; the mind and the heart have risen in sympathy with the renewed body. The whole man now faces duty and destiny with a more confident mien; we look in each others' faces with eyes full of congratulation—but

"HOW SHALL WE SHOW OUR THANKS TO THEE?"

That is the great enquiry which wells up from the depths of every serious and thoughtful mind. In his heart of hearts the Churchman does not desire to displace, disarrange, or confuse the well-nigh perfect firmament of the Church year—its sky of directing and illuminating lights. "St. Matthew, St. Michael, and All Angels"; "St. Simon, and St. Jude"; even "All Saints," are put in peril by this new enthusiasm. Where shall we put it? It is so good, so natural, so wholesome, so deeply felt, and so useful in these toil-laden days, that it cannot be suppressed. It must find expression, and adequate expression, in some way—even if St. Michael himself gets "mixed" somewhat in the effort at making "two objects occupy the same space." The trees, the shrubs, the bushes, the herbs, the flowering grass,

ALL NATURE CALLS US.

Shall we be silent, or even careless, with such full hearts and such innumerable monitors? The English writer to whom we have referred has a suggestion which shows a little of the "compromise" character—not enough to discredit it, but just enough to conciliate. He proposes that small communities—"unions of parishes" *pro tem.* and *ad hoc*—should agree to select a certain Thursday or Thursdays as a neutral starting point for the observance, allowing the occasion to colour the following Sunday a little. Thus in any given locality, a few weeks, or even a month or two, would be pretty well taken up with week-day and Sunday, sacred and secular observances—for be it remembered that good eating and drinking, at least, are recognized Scripturally as "correct" adjuncts to a proper formal acknowledgment of the fruit-gifts of God.

OUR AMERICAN THANKSGIVING THURSDAY

looks as if it might be easily utilized, modified and engrafted on the English suggestion. The most obvious obstacle in doing this is the obstinate habit which the Government displays of putting their "national" Thanksgiving so late as to preclude the possibility of any adequate

attempts at church or home decoration—without which Thanksgiving seems almost bare and unmeaning. Enquiry seems to hint that the queer habit of "late celebrations" of Thanksgiving day originally arose from a frugal idea of first ascertaining just *how much* we had to be thankful for—how much wheat, potatoes, corn, cabbage, apples, beets, and even fish we have to be thankful for at the particular time. As if our legislators really could not trust God to deal with the country about as well as usual! The absurdity of such an idea appears from the fact that no matter how late they put the day there will be something to expect—last of all the "ice crop." We are afraid, however, that no better explanation of our stereotyped "first Thursday in November" is forthcoming. Far more appropriate would be

A "LAMMAS" FIRST-FRUIT FESTIVAL.

Why not return to this truly Scriptural and Christian form of thanksgiving, on or about the 1st of August?—when we can, at least, take up and present at communion to "the Giver of all" a loaf made from the first and best of the new wheat crop, earnest and promise of what is to come—instead of waiting suspiciously for the rest to come, as if we were afraid that the Almighty might take His harvest thanks from us, and then give us an insufficient return for our trouble! The North American date might vary a little from the English model of Lammas day, but the spirit of the thing is the important part, after all—"first ripe fruits to God!" We commend this idea to our readers generally, and particularly recommend it to those of our Church reformers who are anxious to show due respect for the time-honoured provisions of our calendar, before foisting upon our yearly routine such a very embarrassing feature as the "brand-new" Thanksgiving day, whether parochial or national. The plan of the old Saxon Church (1000 years ago!) may prove the best way out of our increasing practical difficulties in this matter, after all—even if we have to add a little 19th century polish to make it fit in better.

OUR SURROUNDINGS

—it cannot be denied—have considerable influence on our feelings. One who is unaccustomed to indulge much in the luxuries of rare fruits is greatly exercised in joyous thankfulness by the presence of peaches at 40 cents per basket, melons for 3 cents each, grapes for two cents a pound! This is quite true; but much preferable is the feeling produced by the aspect and prospect of a fair harvest in the near future, though the precise measure and degree of abundance still remain in the hands of God. The "first ripe sheaf" has yielded its burden of blessing already, and bids us trust for the rest that is to come—in such measure and degree of abundance as God sees fit. The small fruits have been teeming into our baskets, the trees and vines are weighed down with their fruitage before our eyes—surely there can be no better moment for a full heart to pour out its thankfulness, albeit somewhat tempered by hope and dependence upon the hand of mercy, grace, and goodness. Far better than to wait doubtfully until we can count out, in a miserly spirit, every individual basket and bushel! Having ground our first gathering of wheat, and turned it into flour, we are ready to hold it forth to "the Giver" with words of praise for His goodness to undeserving humanity. Yes; surely our Saxon forefathers knew how to do this thing well—on "Lammas" day. They displayed more creditable religious sentiment herein.