

in proportion to your income. (The Bible plainly teaches that we should give *one-tenth*) but say one-twentieth of what you have to spend for living purposes; and further suppose that you give with some little sacrifice, *i. e.*, fewer cigars; fewer buttons on your kid gloves; lower heels on your boots; less crushed strawberry on the hats; fewer dainties on the table if needful;—sacrifice somewhere in order to give to GOD's work. Result, overflowing treasury; missions promoted, charities helped and good work set forward.

Please take these matters into consideration, and suppose you do try to be *faithful, honest and earnest*, not only in your dealings with men but with God.—*Earnest Worker.*

THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH.

THE GENERAL COUNCILS.

WE have now reached a most important epoch in Church history. With the reign of Constantine the Great the Catholic Church assumes a new relation to the world. In 314 A. D. (one of the important dates of general history) the Emperor issued the celebrated Edict of Milan, by which decree Christianity received the sanction of the State. Christians were now allowed to worship unmolested. No longer were they obliged to celebrate the mysteries of the faith in "dens and caves of the earth." Thus tolerated and protected by the world, the condition and position of the Church was materially altered. Bishops and ecclesiastics were numbered among the counsellors of the

Emperor. Magnificent churches sprang up everywhere. The old heathen temples and shrines were left without a worshipper. But in this changed condition of affairs the hand of God is distinctly visible. The time had come when the faith which had been so long held *implicitly* had to be formulated into an *explicite*. Heresies concerning the nature and character of the Lord of the Church had begun to disturb the mind of Catholic Christendom. Contact with philosophical schools had given rise to many forms of heresy or "science falsely so called," as S. Paul puts it. The time had come when the Church, as the Witness of the Truth, was obliged to give some authoritative decisions in matters of faith. These decisions were given in the Six General or Ecumenical Councils, which are recognized by *all* branches of the Catholic Church, Anglican, Roman and Eastern. These councils are regarded by our Communion as General because they *alone* bear the distinctive marks of an Ecumenical Council. These marks are, (1) Councils to which *all* the Bishops of the Catholic Church have been *invited, no matter how few may attend.* (2) One where *freedom of deliberation and voting* has been guaranteed to all. (3) Its decisions concerning matters of the faith *must be received with approbation* by the great body of the faithful. Judged by these texts it is easy to see why the Anglican Communion cannot receive the decisions of such Councils as Trent, or the recent Vatican Synod, which, by the Roman Church, are looked upon as General Councils.

1. The Council of Nicea was