

what was wanting in the Church, and of the principles on which improvement should be sought for and carried on.

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

THE duty of thankfulness seems to be specially brought before us for several Sundays at this season of the year—perhaps on account of the abundance of temporal blessing which is usually bestowed upon mankind generally, when the fruits of the earth are gathered into the garner. The moral failing of ingratitude is of so monstrous a character that no man has a word to say in favour of it in its native unloveliness, as between man and man. Its more common and more serious phase, as between man and God, meets, however, with least disfavour among us. There is oftentimes an indistinct idea or an under-estimate of the service that He renders us. We make light of His blessings and benefits, as received from Him. The nine lepers in the gospel of this morning's Communion office, could hardly have been guilty of this at the moment of their cure. For the evil of leprosy, and the great curse of it, belonged to all positions and all privileges of society. It carried with it a moral and religious as well as a social stigma. It is a typical illustration, obvious to the senses of men, of the deep pollution of sin. Apart from the haunts of men, with his clothes rent, with his head bare, with his lips covered, the leper cried continually, hour after hour, day after day, "Unclean, unclean!"—conscious of his pain, of his banishment from the commonwealth of Israel, and from fellowship in all that Israel held dear. Taking these things into consideration, we cannot for a moment suppose that the nine lepers thought lightly of their cure, but they were perhaps too much delighted with their restored health and honourable position that they seemed to forget the gracious friend to whom they owed the restoration. And yet they had given a ready obedience to our Lord's command in showing themselves to the priest, thus proving that a thankless spirit is sometimes to be found in characters otherwise religious. The lepers, however, lost sight of their Benefactor, although they could not have thought little of their cure. Their thanklessness probably arose from carelessness. The benevolent stranger who had told them to go to the priest to be inspected, had fallen already into the background of their thought; and if they reasoned upon the cause of their cure, they probably thought of some natural cause, or of the inherent virtue of the Mosaic ordinances. In some instances the sense of being under an obligation that cannot be repaired, is viewed as a form of slavery, and the benefactor must be got rid of at all costs. There is a dark story in the annals of the Byzantine empire, which gives a painful insight into this side of human nature. The emperor, Basil, had been saved while engaged in hunting, from an enraged boar, by one of his courtiers, and Constantinople was speculating upon the honourable decorations or the substantial gifts by which the servant would be rewarded at the hands of his grateful master. But what was the astonishment, the consternation, and the shame, when it was known on the following morning, that the preserver of the sovereign's life had been ordered out to execution! The debt could not be adequately repaid, and so the creditor became a personal enemy. And this is very much like what happens when men take up with ideas

about the origin of life and the origin of the universe, which exclude the uninterrupted and loving activity of God's providential care. The sense of living under the eye of a Being to whose good pleasure they owe the gift of existence, and Who makes them a present of it moment by moment,—the sense of being unable to term, in a strict and literal sense, any one power bodily or mental, any one blessing spiritual or material, their own—this is too much; it is too fatal to their wrong headed sense of independence to their perverted notions of self-respect. And this is the secret of all the scepticism, and of nearly all the schism and heresy in the world—the pride of the human heart.

THE LATEST WONDER.

THE Theological discovery of the age, most worthy to be termed 'transcendental,' has been made by the self-constituted "P. E. Divinity School" of Toronto. It is embodied in a very brief catechism.

Question.—Are your text books the Books of the New Testament, those of Bishops Pearson and Harold Brown, with Hatch, and some few others?

Answer.—Precisely so.

Question.—How do you account for the fact that—with the exception of "Hatch"—on many fundamental points the teaching of your school is diametrically opposite to the teaching of the aforesaid books?

Answer.—"So much the worse for the Books"!!

WHAT IS "THE LAW"?

TO obey the Law is supposed to be the bounden duty of people in general. But this statement requires some qualification; for if we enter into particulars we shall find there are some people who are not expected to obey some laws. It is difficult to say what laws Bishops are expected to obey. Besides other matters we might notice, it may be observed that they are not expected to obey any law about ritual, otherwise they would be expected to wear a cope at the celebration of the Holy Communion, in accordance with the written law of the Church and with the decisions of the civil courts,—but they are not expected to obey any such law; for no one finds fault when they habitually and persistently break all the laws that can be quoted on the subject, whether written law or judge law.

Every bishop solemnly declares at his consecration, that he is "ready, with all faithful diligence, to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's word; and both privately and openly to call upon and encourage others to do the same." But having made this vow in the most solemn manner possible, he is expected to think no more about it, unless it be to act in a manner exactly contrary to the obligation imposed by the Church and promised by the bishop.

The private members of the Church are scarcely expected to be called upon to obey any law at all; for any attempt to exercise discipline with them is about the most dangerous thing an incumbent can do—as witness the case of Mr. Cook in England, and the Belleville case in Canada.

In an ecclesiastical point of view, the clergy, that is, the priests and deacons, seem to be the only persons among us who are expected to obey any laws at all; and even the clergy are not ex-

pected to obey all of them, not even some of the plainest, and some about which there can be no possibility of mistake. There never was a plainer or a more unequivocal law laid down any where, than the law of the Church which requires all priests and deacons to say daily Morning and Evening Prayer, either privately or openly; and that "the Curate of every parish church or chapel shall say the same in the parish church or chapel where he ministereth; and shall cause a bell to be tolled, that the people may come to hear God's word, and to pray with him." Now no words can be plainer or more straight forward than these, and yet no clergyman is expected to obey this law, for no one is found fault with or punished if he disobeys it. And priests as well as bishops are required by the Church to make a solemn vow that they will be "ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrine contrary to God's word. But priests as well as bishops having entered into this obligation and made this vow, in the most solemn manner possible, are expected to think no more about it, except for the purpose of disregarding it as an obligation imposed by the Church, and of breaking it as a solemn vow entered into by the priest. As witness the fulsome laudation of the late Dean Stanley on account of his *liberality* in patronizing any and every schism and heresy within his reach.

It is only when we come to questions of ritual (many of which are of no consequence whatever), that the clergy are expected to "obey the law." But here another most important question arises; and that is, what "law" is to be obeyed. On these questions of ritual the "ornaments rubric" is the latest written law of the Church in England, having been enacted or re-enacted in 1662; and with regard to the meaning of its terms, when taken in their strictly literal and grammatical sense, there can be no mistake. But the decisions of the civil courts have been in some cases exactly contrary to this written law of the Church; and we are told that whatever laws the Church may have enacted, the decisions of the courts form the only laws which can be enforced. But here we are met with a circumstance of the most puzzling character; which is, that the decisions of the courts are not only the strangest that can possibly be imagined, but they are absolutely contradictory to each other; so that the poor unfortunate priest, who is willing to ignore his ordination vows, disobey the written law of the Church, and obey the law of the civil Courts, is placed in a most awkward dilemma.

We will mention some of the findings of the Courts, by way of showing that we have not spoken of them too strongly.

It is now thirty-one years ago since the Gorham judgment was delivered. Mr. Gorham, vicar of St. Just-in-Penwith, had denied some of the plainest statements in the Prayer Book, and that in the plainest and most unmistakable terms. The Privy Council cast his words aside, and invented and put into his mouth a certain doctrine concerning Baptism, wholly different from what he had either stated or held, and then ruled that Mr. Gorham's "views" were not heretical. The Bishop of Exeter published a pamphlet, of which 80,000 copies were sold in a few days, in which he showed that the "judgment" was not really a judgment, but a warning; while Mr. Gorham, as soon as he got safely into his living, energetically repudiated the statement of his opinions invented by the Privy Council, on which alone they had acquitted him of heresy.

In the case of Liddell and Westerton in the year 1857, this Privy Council court decided that stone