

of men. May God forgive those who would let solemn words on a sacred subject pass their lips without feeling them in their hearts! No; it is a simple, certain truth—a truth which no disbelief of some can make less true—that fasting and self-denial are a vast help to the subduing of sin and to the growth in grace, and that a right observance of the holy season which begins this day is a blessed thing, year by year as it comes round, to many a soul, and *will* be a blessed thing to all who honestly seek to profit by it.

And mark one thing. When we speak of such things as fasting and self-denial, we speak of things which concern only such as are already striving to serve the Lord, and to walk in the narrow way. To all others this subject can have little meaning, and no interest. To the sinful and worldly, self-denial is an unknown term. They have something else to deny before they come to this. They must first deny their wilful sins. They have to deny self in its worst and grossest form. Oh! well for those who even thus far have learnt to deny themselves! They are not far from the kingdom of God.

Am I speaking now to any one whose life has been one of self-indulgence, who has not yet learnt the lesson of restraining and curbing the sinful and selfish desires of the natural heart, who has (either in open sin, or with a fair showing before men) only sought to take all the ease and pleasure of this world, or to gain all the objects of his wishes here below? Oh! now is the time to learn a new lesson. Begin this very day. What day could be fitter? Begin to curb and

restrain and deny that wilful and selfish heart. Cut off the right hand—pluck out the right eye—that leads you into sin. Cast from you with all your might those temptations—friends, places, amusements, indulgences, it matters not what—which cause you to stumble and fall. It may be as hard as to cut off the right hand, or to pluck out the right eye. But it *must* be done. The cross may be heavy, but it *must* be taken up and borne, or we cannot follow the Crucified.

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#### COUNCIL OF ARLES, A. D. 320.

Was the supremacy of the Pope recognized at the Council of Arles? Certainly not.

When the assembled Divines—Bishops of London, of York, and of Caerleon being present—had come to a decision on certain points of discipline, they drew up certain rules and sent a copy of them to Sylvester, then Bishop of Rome, in which they speak of themselves "*as collected together by command of the Emperor*" (Constantine), and call the Bishop of Rome merely *their brother, whose society and assistance they would gladly have had*. Since, however, they understood that his occupation kept him at home, they tell him that they thought fit to *signify to him what they had decreed; as wishing all persons to know what they must, in future, observe.*—E. C. P.

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#### CONVERSION.

LET there be no mistake in the minds of any within or without the Church, conversion is necessary on the part of every one who has strayed like the Prodigal from