

olics in some quarters. By its constitution and methods it must and does represent the sentiment of the Church at large. Latterly a large number of chapters have been organized in Catholic parishes.

THE Bishop of Exeter has communicated to *The Times* some of his impressions after his few weeks' sojourn in Japan. The people's attractiveness and the charm of their manners have not blinded his Lordship to their faults and vices, as they apparently did a celebrated literary man who a little while ago took up his abode with them, but, nevertheless, he thinks that it would be no hard task to love the people. Everywhere the converts welcomed the Bishop, and listened with keen interest to his assurances of English sympathy. 'The Protean forms of unbelief' which trouble the West, the Bishop found all have their counterpart in Japan, and are the gravest difficulties in the way of the missionaries. 'Of sceptics the name is legion,' and hence the absolute necessity that the missionaries should be 'men of culture and able to expose the hollow pretensions of agnosticism.' The Bishop is satisfied of the singular wisdom of what has been hitherto done in training converts, but trained shepherds and wise leaders are required in every great city. His Lordship does not forget to say a word about what the Church in America has done in the field, where it was first. He is of opinion that our ritual, and liturgies, and creeds are simply priceless among the shifting currents of religious thought which are now moving Japanese minds. The Bishop concludes by warning us that though the door is open, the great Japanese Empire is not to be won without 'taking up the cross and following the evangelists of former ages as they followed Christ.' There are, as he reminds us, fifty millions of people in Japan, and only about one in 400 has yet been baptized. Many large towns and thousands of villages are yet untouched, and he pleads for fifty more labourers—men and women—during the next three years. Writing on the spot, with a heart full of thankfulness for the 'triumphs of the Gospel' which surround him, he will, he tells us, send himself one of the fifty when he returns to England, and will personally plead for the other forty-nine.

THE RULE OF SERVICE OF ST. ANDREW'S BROTHERHOOD.

Entire consecration to the welfare of men in the service of God is the first principle of Christian living. It is the duty of every baptized believer to spend and be spent, to sacrifice time and strength, to do all he can for the establishment of Christ's Kingdom—a duty limited only by circumstances and ability.

The Brotherhood of St. Andrew is composed of men who have, in greater or less degree, acknowledged the duty of entire consecration, and have united to carry it out in the direction of young men. In practice they may fall short of the theory; but that is their theory. Knowing their weakness they have defined a certain minimum duty with a time limit by means of a rule

of service. This rule, like its companion rule of prayer, neither states a new duty, nor exhausts the full meaning of the old duty, but is a mere reminder of the least effort that should be done each week, in performance of the larger and universal obligation—that minimum being a conscious and conscientious effort to bring some one man nearer the Kingdom of Christ.

What each man can do is a matter to be determined by himself as in the sight of God; what he can do, however, it is his duty to do. If he has the opportunity to give up his entire time in the ordained ministry, and is accepted by the proper authorities, that way his duty lies. If he is able to devote his entire time as a layman to works of mercy and Christian effort, he has no excuse to refuse his entire time. If he is making a living in some so-called secular pursuit, it is his duty so to pervade it with the spirit of Christ, and so to use it in His name, as to make it no longer secular business but religious service. If he can give an hour a day, or an hour every evening to the service of man in the name of Christ, he has no right to withhold his tribute. If he can only conduct a mission service once or twice a week, or teach a Bible class, or visit the sick, the poor, the newcomers, or receive strangers in God's house, or take any other part in organized Churchwork, if he can, he must. If all he can do is to speak a word of hope, guidance, or invitation, once a week, his duty is done; but not unless that is all he can do. If he lacks even the opportunity to do that, provided he has sought to make the opportunity, and yet has lived a straight, pure, square life amongst the men with whom he works, his full service has been performed. Such service Dr. Stalker thus tells of: "I have known a youth from the country enter an office in the city, where the daily conversation was so foul and profane that it would almost have disgraced the hulks; but a month after his arrival not a man in the place dared to utter an unchaste word when he was present. Yet he had scarcely spoken a syllable of reproof; it was simply the dignity of manly goodness that quelled conscious iniquity."

The rule of service is not fulfilled by an invitation to Church services or Bible class, if there is power and opportunity to do more. It is not fulfilled when much work has been done for others and no attempt has been made to follow the example of Christ in one's own life. It is not fulfilled when what has been done to advance the spread of the Kingdom has been offset by what has been done to retard it. Suppose that a member of the Brotherhood has given a man an invitation to church and has then given him occasion to doubt the moral value of church-going; has he fulfilled his vow? Suppose that he has spoken to one man about his soul's welfare and then provoked him to wrath; has he done what he has promised to do? Suppose he preaches about the brotherhood of man and then starves his employees or cheats his customers—on which side shall he be counted? Suppose the general tenor of his life is such that no one who knows him wants to have anything to do with the religion that could produce his char-

acter. Suppose that he positively and purposefully tempts another man into sin—can he atone for it by ushering in church or visiting the sick? These are plain questions, and they can be answered in but one way. The effort for the right side, which is offset by assistance to the wrong side is neutralized. Without the witness of character, the witness of activity counts for little or nothing.

The rule of service, at which so many stumble, is, then, but a reminder of the universal duty of self-sacrifice. He that seeks his life shall lose it; and he that loses his life shall find it. The rule of service applies the principle, puts its fulfilment on the list of our regular engagements, and is fulfilled only when we have done all we can to spread the Kingdom among young men and have proved the sincerity of our efforts by an earnest striving to do each day what Christ would do in our place.—*St Andrew's Cross.*

"THEY PRESENTED GIFTS."

The first record of the Gospel is the record of God's great gift to men; on the next page is the record of man's gift to God, when, led by the star, the magi presented to the young Child their offerings of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The Gospel is the good news of divine giving; the answer to the Gospel is man's giving—giving of himself to God in body, mind, and soul.

Some Christians seem to think they have done with giving when they have given the soul; as though it were possible to give the soul and keep back that which is the soul's instrument and expression. They find great comfort in the Solifidian doctrine of salvation, and congratulate themselves in the enjoyment of a free Gospel that has never cost them a cent. They regard religion as purely a spiritual concern, preparatory for another life, in which the small part of them which they call the soul will be saved. As for the body and the ordinary faculties of mind which are concerned with every day life, these belong to this world. At least, they have great reluctance to employ them in any service of religion.

This blessed commemoration of Christ's giving, this Epiphany of the all-embracing bounty of God, should be helpful to Christian people in finding and following more closely the spirit of the Gospel. By this world-wide celebration of the divine giving, every year, the principle of sacrifice and loving service, of liberality and charity, is commended to the world with greater emphasis and more persuasive power than it could have been by proclamation of rulers and eloquence of preachers. And the response to this blessed teaching of the Nativity, in the bestowal of Christmas gifts and the increase of charity all over the world, is an encouraging evidence that the principle of sacrifice is not alien to humanity, is not an unknown and unwelcome guest in the hearts of men.

Christmas gift-making among friends, and to the poor, is good, so far as it goes, and it should be encouraged, within bounds of strength and means; but such giving should lead on to a splendid Epiphany of love to God and man. The man who has been generous to family and