

The Church Guardian

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CALENDAR FOR DECEMBER.

- Dec. 2nd—1st Sunday in Advent.
 " 9th—2nd Sunday in Advent.
 " 16th—3rd Sunday in Advent. (Notice of St. Thomas and Ember Days.)
 " 19th—EMBER DAY.
 " 21st—St. Thomas; Ember Day.
 " 22nd—EMBER DAY.
 " 23rd—4th Sunday in Advent. (Notice of Christmas; St. Stephen. St. John and Innocent Days.
 " 25th—CHRISTMAS. (Pr. Pss. M., 19, 40 85. E 89, 110, 132. Ath. Cr Pr. Pref. in Com. Service till Jan. 1, inclu.
 " 26th—St. Stephen, 1st Martyr.
 " 27th—St John. A. & M.
 " 28th—Innocent's Day.
 " 30th—1st Sunday after Christmas.

SOME DEFECTS IN EUCHARISTIC TEACHING.

It cannot be doubted that there is amongst us a painful want of earnestness and devotion in regard to the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. A large number of our people are not communicants, and many of those who are communicate but seldom—at Christmas, or Easter, or on a sick bed, or with a sick relative or friend. And in such cases it is often apparent that little more is intended than a formal assertion of Church membership.

The significance of this fact is seen at once when we call to mind the daily or weekly celebration of the early centuries. In the fervour of its first love, the whole Christian multitude "continued steadfastly in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers;" and this they did "day by day in the Temple, and breaking bread at home." Obedience was the rule; and the non-communicant was a marked man. There was a reason for his absence from the Table of the Lord. It was not voluntary. He was excluded, and exclusion was the recognised disciplinary punishment of notorious offenders.

But the anomaly of a Christian denying himself the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ was unknown, and would not be toler-

ated. How is it that we have fallen away so far from the love and earnestness of the early Church? What is the cause? Can we retrace our steps back to that primitive standpoint from which men were able to see the Holy Sacrament, as Christ ordained it, an ordinary means of grace, to be used habitually for the "strengthening and refreshing of souls?"

Before we can cure the evil we must seek for its root, and we imagine that in most cases we shall find it in our teaching. The Prayer Book and other authorized formularies are clear and definite and full, but our popular teaching is not. We have not, as a rule, preached the whole truth according to the mind of the Church in regard to the Holy Sacrament; and this we believe to be a principal cause of the defection of which we complain.

In the first place, our Eucharistic teaching has been too largely *negative*. It is full of denials and disproofs, as, that Transubstantiation is not true, that the Sacrifice of the Mass is not consistent with St. Paul's teaching, that the denial of the cup to the laity is contrary to the institution of Christ, and so on. Our position in regard to these historical doctrines and practices is unassailable; but it should be remembered that devotion cannot rest on mere negatives. That the Holy Communion is not so and so, or should not be administered in such and such a way, will not make anyone love it one whit the more, or in the least degree more anxious to partake of it. No doubt our historical position explains and justifies the abundance of our negatives. We have been forced to protest, to disprove and to deny; and it is no wonder that popular teaching, which is naturally influenced by passing emotions and present needs, should have lost, occasionally, the exact balance and proportion of doctrine. The Prayer Book recalls us to the necessity for positive Eucharistic teaching. It indicates plainly the outline of the structure which Protestant theology built up in place of the Roman edifice which it threw down. It is positive and definite; and though we may question its doctrine, there can be no doubt as to the mind of the Church which it expresses.

We have spoken of the indefiniteness of teaching; we must beware of indefinite criticism. In order to avoid it we give an instance of an important branch of Eucharistic theology in which Protestant pulpit teaching has been almost entirely *negative*.

Our Lord said of the consecrated bread, "This is My Body which is given for you." And of the cup, "This is My Blood of the New Testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins." And St. Paul writing to the Corinthians, said, "The cup of blessing which we bless is it not the communion of the blood of Christ, the bread which we break is it not the communion of the body of Christ." It is plainly a matter of the highest importance that we should understand these texts, and not only that the clergy should understand them, but that the communicants also should have clear and definite notions about them. How else are they to have clear notions of the grace to be looked for in the Sacrament. And if they come to Communion, expecting nothing definite, can they be said to come in faith, or to believe "the promises of God made to them in that sacrament." The Catechism adopts the language of these texts when it says that "the body and blood of Christ . . . are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper." So does the Prayer of Consecration: "Grant that we receiving these Thy creatures of Bread and Wine, . . . may be partakers of His most blessed Body and Blood." There are many other passages to the same effect in the Communion Service, and no one can doubt that the Reformers accepted unreservedly the words of institution, as conveying inestimable spiritual truth. But yet, even here, where, if anywhere in the Bible, we have an inexhaustible treasury of positive truth, our pulpit teach-

ing has for the most part taken the form of destructive criticism. It has been careful to point out the senses in which the bread and wine are *not* the Body and Blood of Christ, and it is to be feared that the impression left upon the minds of very many is, *that they are not there in any sense*. We have taken away the Romanist idea, and we have done well so far, but we have put nothing in its place; and the result is, that the mental attitude of the average Protestant towards the Eucharist is one of denial and contradiction. To him the Sacrament is the Mass stripped of everything which served to identify it. It is the merest residuum, without strength, without consistency, offering nothing, inviting no one. The one positive idea which has survived is that of remembrance, and this is manifestly inadequate to kindle devotion or to sustain earnestness. If the Eucharist be only a symbolical remembrance, its logical place is below prayer, below preaching, below the study or reading of the Word. It is not a means of grace in the ordinary sense of that term, and, separated from its usual accompaniments of prayer and praise, it is not an act of worship. Moreover, it ceases in that case to be a Sacrament, for, as has often been said, if the transubstantialist overthrows the nature of a Sacrament by destroying the outward and visible sign, the Zwinglian does the same thing just as effectually by denying the inward spiritual grace.—*The Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette*.

GIVING, BEGGING, EARNING, SAVING.

(By the Editor of the Church Helper, Western Michigan.)

Life and love are equivalent and convertible terms: love being potential life, and life being essential love. Indeed we may say that He who is essential Love is also and *therefore* essential Life.

It is ever the property of love to give, give *itself*. Love thus out-flowing, thus expending itself, is life. If no such giving-out of self, then no true life, no real love.

"The Gift of God is eternal Life." "And this Life is in His Son." "He that hath the Son hath life." "To him that hath, shall more be given." "Give, and it shall be given unto you."

In other words, both God's part and man's part in the Gospel of Christ coincide, all is in the one line of the *extension of Grace*. All Christian duty is comprised in this single term, *giving*. Man receives and transmits. He can do no more. All that he has is a loan to be repaid by handing it on. "Let your light so shine." Pass on the light, the help, the hope, the sympathy, and the money which you have and *more will come*. Hoard these, and your soul, your heart, your purse, shall be lean. You shall have emptiness in the midst of abundance. There may be much gold and silver in your purse, but "their rust shall be for a testimony against you, and shall eat your flesh as fire."

In parochial work two cases of difficulty must be dealt with: [1] the withholding of money from Church work by those who have an average income, and [2] how to get money to give for religious uses by those who have small or no income. Without considering here the former case, we will now confine our attention to the latter.

How shall a parochial income be had or increased? It is curious to note how uniformly some persons in facing this question see the answer only in some appeal to others for the money needed. Some begging scheme has to be devised, and how often it happens that it is the first of the classes above referred to which first suggests the resort to begging. It is the