

articles which were handled the past year throughout the United Kingdom.

THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES.—To receive, deliver and forward the enormous amount of mail matter requires the services of over 100,000 employes, 18,000 of whom are employed in London alone, and this number is exclusive of a very large staff of clerks. The 18,000 mentioned above attend to all the business of the London office, the postal system of which covers 250 square miles.

CHRISTMAS, 1892.

Gentle Reader.—Grist is required to keep the mill grinding; we have ground out another year, and wishing to grind still better in the year before us, draw the attention of our readers to the reminder enclosed in last week's *Churchman*. Wishing them heartily all success and happiness in the year to come.

CHARITY.

"I have somewhat against thee because thou hast left thy first love;" "the love of many shall wax cold."

To how many of us does this Advent warning come with sorrowful reproach? It may be that our hearts are chilled, the flame of devotion burns low, the oil of Divine grace has not been carefully stored up in our lamps.

How many have grown weary in well doing; the "first works" of zeal and love may have ceased to interest us, the cares of life may have dulled our spiritual perceptions and chilled our fervour, and we have ceased to watch for the Bridegroom's coming with any eagerness.

In a sermon on the Ten Virgins' preparation for their Lord's return, and on the need of making ready for His appearing, Canon Scott Holland says—

"The common heritage of grace brought down to us by the Catholic Church, is the beginning of salvation, but this cannot carry us through, unless deep in our secret heart we have stored up the hidden oil of expectant love,—the expectant love that looks with a personal and peculiar tenderness to the days of His coming, the love of the inner heart for Him who after long delay . . . is still waited for with intense devotion, with living personal earnestness. . . . Let us lay up this secret oil [of gladness, each one in his own soul-vessel,—not looking for fruit, for ease, for comfort, but storing it up in patience, in silence, in love, for that great day when the trumpet shall sound through the night and a cry is heard, 'Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him.'"

There must be many marks of love in our lives, if there is any real union with Christ: Charity is the "very bond of peace and of all virtues"; it pledges us to the fulfilment of all moral and spiritual duties, since "Love is the fulfilling of the Law"; it constrains us to a nobler self-sacrifice and self-devotion to God and man, as we see the measure and cost of the Divine love for us, and the necessity it lays upon us, "herein perceive we the love of God because he laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." Without Charity, "whomsoever liveth is counted dead before Thee;" there is no true life without love; "he that dwelleth in love" dwelleth in God, and God in him." To them that love His appearing, every incident in daily life comes as a token of His presence, a revelation of His will, a gift of His love, or a provision of His providence: "the good hand of my God upon me" is felt and acknowledged in all that

happens, and the smallest duties are dignified by the sense that they are worth doing for the love of God, if for nothing else, and that He deigns to accept the lowliest ministries of service for others as done unto Himself, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye did it unto Me." The 18th chapter of I. Corinthians shows us many other instances and offices of Charity, which may well form a subject for Advent self-examination and study as we make ready to commemorate the great gift of Divine love in the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the Christmas Festival.

"Now abideth Faith, Hope, Charity, these three, but the greatest of these is Charity."

Let our Advent watch kindle fresh zeal in our hearts through the exercise of these graces by which our union with Christ is maintained and strengthened; until the "promise of His coming" is fulfilled, and we are finally assured that neither life nor death, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

MERRIE CHRISTMAS.

There is nothing so good but that it hath been profaned of evil men. But this word "merry" which will sanctify so many salutations at Christmas-tide, comes down from a clean source. In the English of the King James Version it stands for the Greek *euphron* as in the parable of the prodigal son, "Let us eat and be merry" . . . "they began to be merry." The sacred joy of the father over the son that "was dead and is alive again," which was as the joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, was thought worthily interpreted by this word "merry," by the divines and scholars of the golden age of English undefiled. For then it signified the gentle cheerfulness of a grateful and contented heart, and *euphrosune* was near of kin to *eucharistia*. The one was spoken of the intelligent soul, the other of the immortal spirit, and both were opposed to the unseemly and riotous mirth of *eutrapelia*. If the elder son had heard such sounds from the banquet hall, instead of music and dancing, he might have done well to be angry and refuse to go in. But no suspicion of such evil attached to the father's feast, and the elder son's virtuous indignation reflected only on himself. And God "which maketh us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of His Son," invites men first to the eucharistic joy of sons of God in Christ Jesus, that all their joy may be in the Lord. With such a breaking of the fast as is to all in the Holy Sacrament, no lack of accessions of worldly circumstances can spoil the "merrie" Christmas of a Christian man. Without it, or its equivalent of spiritual communion, no abundance of friends nor fulness of bread can make a Christmas "merrie" as it is for him whose spirit doth rejoice in God his Saviour.—*Churchman*.

THE CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL.

With glad and grateful hearts we welcome the return of the Christmas Festival. It marks another epoch in life; it revives the pleasant associations and joyous greetings which are incident to the season; and it presents, with increased prominence and force, the grand central truth of our holy religion, that Christ, the only begotten Son of God, for us men and for our salvation came down from Heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost, the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and dwelt among us. The salutations and joys, the services and gifts of Christmastide are appropriate and beautiful; and in the full spirit of the season

we offer to all our readers and friends the compliments and congratulations of the day. To each—to all, may this Christmas prove bright, and beautiful, and happy.

It is gratifying to notice that this festival of the Church is now all but universally observed. There have been those, even bearing the name and professing the faith of Christ, who have discarded the observance of the day as a useless custom, or a relic of superstition. Such unfounded and ill-timed ideas have been gradually exploded: and among even the strictest of modern Presbyterians, Christmas Day is celebrated as a public holiday, and as a Christian festival. This is an implied homage to the teachings, and principles, and practices of the Church; and, more than that, it is a recognition of the grand historic fact which is commemorated on this day, and of the great doctrinal principle which is based upon it.

These two must always go together. They cannot be separated. The history supplies the basis of the doctrine, and the doctrine is the most profound and comprehensive within the sphere of revealed truth. It is fundamental, indeed, to the whole Christian theme. No other truth can be enunciated without a primary recognition of this. Hence the insidious and inveterate attempts to invalidate both the fact and the doctrine. Both are impregnable. On the highest ground of evidence, and by the strictest rules of logic, their reality is demonstrated. We can deny any other fact of history, rather than the birth of Christ; we can reject any other doctrine rather than the Incarnation. Both have need to be asserted in bolder tones and upheld with stronger faith; and it was one of the blessed uses of this Christmas commemoration that it brings into fresh and bolder prominence the fact of the Nativity, and compels a fuller recognition of all that it involves in relation both to man and God.

REVIEWS.

The Expository Times for December has some excellent and timely papers, besides a quantity of notes on current and general topics and hints for Bible students and teachers. Among the first class we would mention a very lucid and helpful article on the late Professor T. H. Green, famous not only for his great "Prologomata to Ethics" and other works, but also as being the prototype (as is supposed) of Mr. Grey in Robert Elsmere. Other articles of importance are—one on the moral and devotional value of the Old Testament by Professor Driver, Ryle's Canon of the Old Testament by the Rev. J. A. Selbie, and one on our debt to German Theology by Professor Banks.

Home & Foreign Church News

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS.

QUEBEC.

SHERBROOKE, P.Q.—*Deanery of St. Francis*.—This important section of the diocese of Quebec comprises twenty-one parishes or missions, besides Bishop's College; in this field of work are 28 clergy in parochial or professional work; besides these are two clergy who have retired; the Archdeacon of Quebec, who works in the whole diocese, also resides in the district. In December the Church Society of this district holds its anniversary, and the deanery board of the same district meets in the same week. The anniversary of 1892 took place on Tuesday and Wednesday, Dec. 6th and 7th. Special interest was excited on the occasion, as the Bishop of Quebec was amongst us at the anniversary. On Tuesday afternoon a meeting of the Church Society is held. At this all the clergy of the district present reports of their work during the year. When adopted by the meeting they are authorised to be sent to the central body at Quebec. A summary of these reports is prepared by the secretary (the Rev. Canon Thornloe, M.A.); the report was encouraging. The absolute total of money raised for Church purposes was not quite equal to that of last year, but the sum raised