

ng order, of these the *Church of England Temperance Society* has ninety-eight branches; and the *Lay Helpers' Association* has twenty-four preachers, fifty-five readers, and 310 enrolled lay workers. Eighteen churches have been consecrated, five restored, and nine are now in process of construction. Of a bishop's work some idea may be given by the fact that Dr. Thorold received 19,527 letters of which he answered 13,378 with his own hand. He has confirmed 32,819 persons, and ordained 210.

Chapter II. describes the Diocese of Rochester as it now is. The population is 1,800,000, in 290 parishes, ministered to by 572 clergy. Of the 290 parishes 117 have weekly Communion, and 100 evening celebrations. In 1880 there were 31,468 baptisms, and 13,158 enrolled in the Temperance Society.

Chapter III. is devoted to "wants" which, from the large population, are many and varied. Thirty-four churches and thirty-nine mission chapels are needed at once. He urges private generosity in church building, and says he has had seven so built. When we see him advocating Brotherhoods and Retreats, we begin to understand how the Puritan fetters are loosening. But how could he do otherwise? He finds irreligion increasing, and so he writes that "if we would not see the mass of working people helplessly surrendered either to a gross animalism or dismal unbelief, we must throw our prejudice to the winds, and organize a brotherhood of Christian workers, which with resolute purpose, real sacrifice, and fervent devotion shall march under the Church's banner, preach her Gospel for the salvation of souls to Christ."

Chapter IV. is filled with *Counsels and Directions*, and opens with the following quotation from Canon Liddon:—

"That which really draws us to itself is the sight of a man who knows the value of truth, and who is strong in knowing it; strong enough to be perfectly courteous towards opponents, and to be withal entirely unyielding; strong enough to feel that he can afford to be, and is bound to be, considerate and tender."

Upon Holy Baptism and Confirmation the Bishop speaks words that every Canadian Churchman should ponder, especially those who call themselves Evangelicals. Referring to the number of children brought to the sacrament of responsibility, he says, "These occasions should be eagerly seized for explaining the doctrine of Baptism, pressing its privilege, and inculcating its responsibility." "A grave apprehension possesses me that comparatively few of us expound with sufficient precision, or press with adequate seriousness, what Baptism bestows, implies, and assures. Yet actually it lies at the very foundation of the Christian covenant; and to water down its vital value as an effectual, means of grace into a mere formal admission into Christ's visible body is to rob Christian parents of their irresistible claim on the divine Fatherhood, and to sap the faith of prayer."

His Lordship's words on Confirmation are cheering, as showing an appreciation of the sacramental character of that apostolic rite. Though we do not approve of evening celebrations as a rule, we must allow that the Bishop's argument is kind and charitable if not altogether convincing. One paragraph is so appropriate to our position in Canada that we cannot forbear quoting it: "Let those who prefer the eastward position as Catholic and rubrical, no longer be stigmatized by those who differ from them as playing at Popery. Let those who, because they honour their Lord, and desire in the highest way to edify His people, celebrate occasionally in the evening, if they think proper, as the

most convenient time for their flock, be no longer coarsely scolded by brethren, who deprecate the practice, as if they dishonoured Christ, or scoffed at antiquity." It is pleasing to notice how the Bishop draws attention to the rubrics of the Prayer Book. He says that where possible there ought to be daily service; baptisms in public; the elements for Holy Communion should not be placed on the Holy Table until just before the Prayer for the Church Militant; Holy Communion ought to be celebrated every Sunday and holy day; it is only unreasonable bigotry that identifies surpliced choirs with party.

Chapter V. discusses "*Church Problems*" of the day—Romanism, Ritualism, Church Courts, Non-Conformity, and Free Thought, in a broad, tolerant spirit. On Mission Services the Bishop says: "Our proper function is religion. The task of penetrating these millions with the ideas and consolation of the gospel is enormous, but not more enormous than glorious; and thinking out the task till it appals us, should only send us to our knees. We want many things, and must not only find the means, but train the instruments. Have services with suitable singing, that will, meet, stir and satisfy them. If the Church means to win the lower stratum of the working class she must not be too fastidious. During the last winter in South London the experiment was made of opening the Victoria Coffee Tavern, formerly, but no longer used as a theatre, for religious services conducted by Churchmen, for the working classes on Sunday evenings. The Bishop of the diocese opened the services, and the Bishop of Carlisle was good enough to 'close them. About the attendance there can be no doubt. It amply satisfied us. So also the serious and attentive behaviour of those who came."

"We must go after our brethren until we find them; they will not come after us. In the open air, and at their house door, and in cottage rooms, and under railway arches, wherever there is shelter or standing room, there the Church must be found. Our teaching must not be grandiose nor classical; with doctrine of course, but not too technical, with argument sometimes, but not in syllogisms. Flexibility, adaptation of style and matter to circumstances; humour and a gift of anecdote, homeliness, if it be not vulgar, all will tell. But even more, let there be an intense conviction of what we say, with a personal kindness as to those whom we love, and faith in the Spirit of God. Mission chapels, which we must multiply as fast as we can, are best built in the courts themselves, notwithstanding the urchins who kick at the doors."

"But most of all we want men. All sorts, for the Hall of Science wants one sort of mental gift, and a back slum of Southwark another. Not unites, but as I have said elsewhere and cannot help repeating, a fellowship of brothers, who can surrender trifles, and make sacrifices, and recognize differences, and forgive eccentricity, fired with the one enthusiasm of winning souls to Christ. Every well equipped army has its Uhlands; let the Church have hers. It is our great need; who will supply it?"

Chapter VI. deals with the future in a bright, hopeful spirit. While he is naturally a little afraid of Eucharistic devotion, and of the use of Confession, he thinks that there is more danger from laziness, selfishness, and worldliness. Noting these blemishes he exclaims,—"Yet how much there is to be thankful for, if we will only look back to see how the Church has grown both in devotion and energy, in unity and self-government, in organization and resources, during the last fifty years. The dignity and beauty of public worship, in which

all schools alike, (that one, perhaps, which least expected it) have made a prodigious advance, . . . the manly and ungrudging welcome now given by all intelligent believers to physical research, as a handmaid to the revelation of God; . . . the astonishing energy of the Church's school work; the increase of the permanent endowments of the Church, including glebe houses, and grants from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners of £54,000,000; the increase of separate benefices from 10,718 to 13,617; the expenditure of no less than £25,548,703 on 8,871 new or restored churches since 1840, the eager zeal for the conversion of the indifferent and ungodly, with a profound faith in the grace of the Holy Ghost, as evinced in special home missions; the ever augmenting interest in missions to the heathen; last, but not least, the steady and indisputable and growing approximation of the various schools among us to each other, without compromise of principle or loss of honour; these are grounds of thankfulness for which the most cautious and humble may bless God."

Yes, thank God, we Churchmen in Canada do take courage, even here the clouds of mere party may yet dissolve. The watch cry by which Puritanism within the Church used to stir the embers of strife has surely lost its force; and our ranks once firmly united the Church must assume her rightful position as the Bride of Christ and the Light of the world.

CHURCH THOUGHTS BY A LAYMAN.

No. 37.

CHRISTMASTIDE.

THE Festival of Christmas has become associated with joys and delights so domestic that the deeper thoughts, the profounder lessons, the nobler spiritual aspects, it inspires, conveys, and wears, are overshadowed, much in the same way as the gravity, wisdom, devotion to high duties of a parent who holds a lofty position of honour in the world, are obscured in the family circle by the vivid recognition of him as the bond, the centre, and fountain of love. But Christmas is the most glorious as it is the most unique of festivals, it touches deeper chords of philosophy, it has more solemn, more awe-inspiring strains of religious music, and over all this grand harmony there floats the sweetest, tenderest melody that ever charmed the ear of man. Christmas never presents to him such a thought, nor suggests to his deadened spirit so stirring a reflection, but none the less does this festival rise before the infidel as an impregnable argument against his denials, and stands as an unanswerable rebuke by challenging him year by year, century after century, to solve the mystery of its existence by any mere human reasoning.

The Easter and Ascensiontide miracles stand amid a sacred group; they have also fictitious rivals and parallels. Christmas has no compeers or similars, sacred or profane; it stands as sublimely alone as His life whose earthly dawn it celebrates. It is in itself supernatural, above, outside of, unaccountable by human experience. Christmas is a miraculous memorial of a miraculous event. Let doubters reflect upon, let them count up until their brains reel, the unimaginable sum of births since the glory of motherhood fell upon woman. Let them take a narrower range by seeking to grasp the stupendous total of such births as have taken place in any one civilised land, then