

Child Who sanctified infancy, and made it possible for boyhood and manhood to be holy, and pure, and like to Him. Let us have more Christ, and less legend.—*The Parish Record St. Louis.*

### THE CIRCUMCISION.

The Church computes not *her* year according to the revolution of the material sun, but bases it upon the life of the Incarnate Son of God, the Sun of Righteousness; and whilst the first of January is in the secular calendar called New Year's Day, it is known by the Church as the festival of the CIRCUMCISION: a festival, we fear, too little observed: and yet how important in the whole scheme of salvation. Then it was that the name foretold by the Angelic Messenger to the Virgin Mother was in the way of God's appointment given openly, and His Name was called Jesus: for "He shall save His people from their sins."

How necessary too in this age to emphasize the lesson of the day, *obedience*: and that too in its double aspect of obedience "to the law," that is to the divinely imposed ordinances and of obedience through mortification of "our hearts and all our members," our souls and bodies, spoken of in the collect for the day. The festival brings the word of warning at the very outset of the year, that to pass through it happily in truth, and so as to hold back upon it with satisfaction there is constant need in struggling against the sin recognized to exist in us, to submit to law and suffering. "This feast is celebrated" [says a writer in the *Church's Year*] by the Church to commemorate the active obedience of our Lord in fulfilling all righteousness which is one branch of the meritorious cause of our Redemption."

The wondrous efficacy of the *name* given us on this day should also lead to the loving observance of the Feast.

Through it and in it wonderful works were done by the Apostles: devils were cast out; the palsied were healed; the sick, restored; the lame, cured. "It was the love of this name which gave strength to the martyrs and saints of old, to bear the cruelties and tortures inflicted upon them" and His Name is still "as ointment poured fourth" to heal the wounded: soothe the troubled; the assurance still holds good "whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name He will give it you." In the words of St. Bernard, "The name of Jesus is not only light but also food; it is likewise oil, without which all the food of the soul is dry; it is salt, unsavouried by which, whatever is presented to us is insipid; it is honey in the mouth, melody in the ear, joy in the heart, medicine to the soul; and there are no charms in any discourse in which His name is not heard."

We would therefore appeal for a more Churchly observance of the Secular New Year's Day: turning it into that which shall carry a benediction into all days, by the recognition primarily of the great truths taught in the holier festival of the Circumcision. And may its observance inspire to more faithful recognition of each and all of the Holy Days appointed by The Church throughout the year.

### PREACHING.

BISHOP Wordsworth in his autobiography speaks very earnestly against young men preaching too much extempore. He says that for one thing it is ruinous to style, and quotes Cicero's dictum that with a view to become fluent of speech there is nothing so needful as much writing. May I be allowed to support his teaching with all the emphasis that I can. It is very seldom that I hear an extempore sermon that does not rub me the wrong way, especially if it is fluent. The man is sure to repeat himself in the most wearisome way, to say commonplaces with great empressement, and (most irritating of all) to talk in a sort of confidential wheedling way as he stops and looks down over the pulpit, instead of standing upright and preaching with dignity, I remember hearing a clergyman boasting that he had never written a sermon since the year he was ordained. And he was a frightful example. I saw one or two addresses which he put on his parish almanack, and I venture to assert that there is not a man, woman, or child who shall read these lines who could not write more grammatical English.

Not that there are not men who can't preach extempore, and well too. But it is after long practice with the pen. And moreover, I know as a matter of fact that some of the best sermons "without book" that I have ever listened to have been carefully written out beforehand. I heard one such this autumn; the preacher is one of the foremost divines in the Church, and he told me that every word had been written in his study. So did Charles Kingsley with the only sermon I ever heard him preach. When one looks over the roll of great preachers, I doubt whether there is in the first rank one who did not write his sermons. Without going out of the century there is Chalmers, a preacher of transcendent power, who always read from a manuscript. Liddon occasionally dispensed with it, but hearers unanimously declared that the written was better. I was not an admirer of Henry Ward Beecher, but there can be no question of his power in the pulpit. He used to read from a book, so do Cuyler and Dr. Taylor. And once more I venture most respectfully to tell young preachers that they will never rise above mediocrity if they don't write their sermons.—"*Peter Lombard*" in the *Church Times*.

### ANOTHER EPISCOPAL MITRE, PASTORAL STAFF, AND COPE.

ON Monday afternoon, Nov. 30, a large meeting of Bristol citizens was held in the Chapter-house at the Cathedral on the occasion of the presentation to the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol of a mitre, a cope, and a pastoral staff. The pastoral staff is of olivewood and silver handsomely jewelled, and it is so constructed that it can be reduced in length in order that it may be handled with greater ease. The cope and mitre, which were designed after early English examples, were worked by the St. Raphael's Sisters at Bristol. The cope is of gold and white braced silk, with green orphreys down the front. The centrepiece of the hood represents the Adoration of the Lamb. The mitre is of white satin, with a great deal of embroidery and inlaid with precious stones. Sir CHARLES WATHEN ex-Mayor

of the city, presided at the meeting and made the presentation. In doing so, he said he was glad to learn that before long they would probably have a Bishop of their own. The gifts were presented to his Lordship from the See of Bristol.

The Bishop, in acknowledging the presentation, said the richly-embroidered cope before him brought into prominence the canon of the Church which prescribed its use in the cathedral churches. The mitre was an ancient symbol of the Church of Christ, and the staff symbolized duties which he trusted he would ever bear in mind. Those who knew him would understand that it would cost him an effort, perhaps a considerable effort, to come to the resolution he had arrived at with regard to these gifts. But he had determined to make the effort, in the first place to carry out their wishes, and, as he understood their wishes, they were to add dignity to the services of the mother Church; and, secondly, he had resolved to assume them to show his heartfelt gratitude to the subscribers. He purposed using the gifts at an ordination after the Christmas season. Some people might ask if it were right such insignia should be worn, and especially by one who had never before adopted any one of those articles. His reply was, the answer to the question must depend upon the spirit in which these insignia were worn. If they were to exalt official position or to enhance personal dignity, they were ill-worn and spiritually hurtful to him who wore them. If, on the other hand, they were worn with all humility and simplicity, to add dignity to the service of the Church and to do honour to the service of God, they were well worn, and they became symbols of reverence.

In the course of subsequent speeches, in which several leading citizens took part, Mr. CHARLES WILKES, a prominent Nonconformist, testified to the esteem in which Dr. Ellicott was held in Nonconformist circles, and to the manner in which his work was valued. He expressed a hope that in time the gulf between the two sections of the Christian Church might be bridged over.—(*From the English Churchman, St. James Chronicle, Evangelical.*)

### EXTRAORDINARY HUNGER FOR THE WORD OF GOD.

SCHELDOM in the history of the Church of Christ has there been anything at all parallel to the hunger for the Word of God which is manifested by the converts and inquirers in Uganda. In the vernacular of the country only St. Matthew's Gospel is yet in print and only a few copies have yet reached the field. The whole New Testament is in Swahili, which many in Uganda, as in all the countries of Eastern equatorial Africa understand. It is the conquering language of that part of Africa. Only a limited number of copies of this version of the New Testament have yet been received and circulated by the Missionaries. Almost all the people who have been taught how to read by Ashe, Mackay, Pearson and other missionaries, are exceedingly eager to have a copy of the first Gospel in the vernacular, and even those of them who already have the New Testament in Swahili. Those portions of the Prayer Book which have been translated and