

rival within the Church of England has told heavily against the rural Dissenter. Fifty years ago the chapel was the natural refuge from the formality of the parish church. "But since then much has happened. The Church of England has been transformed. . . . Rural Nonconformity, in short, is being crushed between the upper millstone of the Church revival and nether millstone of the revival of the Church." One of the speakers in a dialogue in this article is made to say: "Nonconformity has always been struggling to hold its own against heavy odds. It is in the position of a private firm which has to compete with a business subsidised by the State and advertised everywhere as the national house. . . . We want a Sustentation Fund raised in the towns for the maintaining of the cause in the villages, and what is more, we want the town ministers to be given to understand that the little country churches ought to have a great deal more of their sympathy and their countenance. Since Mr. Spurgeon died, there are very few ministers of eminence who think it worth their while to come down to the little country places." The writer adds that he is afraid it will require more than a Sustentation Fund to save the situation, and that it will require the union of the Free Churches of England in order that they may make common cause against the common danger.—*National Church*.

#### REASONS FOR CHURCH GOING.

##### 1. Because God enjoins it.

Public worship is a divine institution. Thus saith the Lord: "Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary"; "not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is." If I don't go to church, I am trifling with, and trampling on, a divine command. And so long as I do this, knowingly, I rob myself of the divine blessing. "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination.

##### 2. Because my soul demands it.

He, who knows the needs of my soul, has appointed public worship for my soul's benefit. He has instituted the Christian Church and Christian ministry for my soul's salvation and edification. Some will say, "We can just as well read a good book, or good sermons, at home." But so saying, they would be wiser than God. For "it pleased him, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe." If we prefer our own pleasure to His, how can our souls prosper? "If thou forsake God in public, take heed lest he forsake thee in private." And what will all thy private reading then come to?

God's way will always be found the best and surest road to the soul's prosperity and progress. Is not a fruit tree more likely to grow in the garden, where it receives all needful shelter, and culture, and care, than in the common, where it is exposed to the rough blasts of heaven, and to the ruder hands of men? The Church is "a garden enclosed," and the ordinances of His grace are the appointed means of the soul's nourishment and growth. The house of God is the house of prayer, and the place of blessing.

And any day that we wilfully absent ourselves from it, we may miss the very blessing our souls were needing to get, and our Saviour was there waiting to give.

##### 3. Because my Lord's example enforces it.

We read, that, "As his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. And after His resurrection He met for worship with His disciples on the first day of the week pre-eminently styled 'The Lord's Day.'" And if He, the Lord of the Sabbath, and my Lord, set the example, shall I follow it? Can I safely ignore it, or set it aside? Hath He not "left us an example, that we should follow His steps?"

And if we say we abide in Him, ought we not also so to walk even as He walked?

4. Because my own example will tell upon others.

If I am in my place at church, it will cheer my minister and my fellow-worshippers. The sight of numbers is inspiring, and specially so, the full swell of united praise. There is an electric chain of sympathy running through the worshippers, and binding them all together. And my empty place is like a missing link, and may serve to break or weaken the chain. My guilty neglect may cause some poor brother to stumble. My coldness may chill his soul to death, and so I shall be "verily guilty concerning my brother." Instead of repelling others from the house of God, let us constrain them, saying, "Come with us, and we will do you good." Let parents take their children along with them, and early train them to the habit of attending church.

5. Because my worship in the church below will best prepare for the work of the week, and for the work and worship of Heaven.

The Sunday gives the keynote to the week. If only Sunday is spent aright in the Worship of God, the work of the week, like a clock duly wound up, will go on pleasantly and prosperously. And each successive Sabbath thus spent will attune the heart for the more blessed work and beatific rest of Heaven.

The earthly Sunday is a type of the heavenly. And if, respecting the former, I say, "Behold, what a weariness is it!" then how could I enjoy or endure the Sabbath of eternity? But if the rest of Sunday is prized and enjoyed now, how sweet will be "the saint's everlasting rest!"

"Thine earthly Sabbaths, Lord, we love;  
But there's a nobler rest above."

#### WHEN?

1. Statedly—at the regular diets of worship.

Two such diets, if not unduly prolonged, cannot surely be deemed excessive. No doubt, when prior and higher duty, or infirmity, or distance forbid it may be necessary and right to forego one diet, if not both. For "The Lord will have mercy and not sacrifice." But, where no just plea or excuse can be urged, surely it is our privilege, and ought to be our practice, to wait upon both diets. The saints of other days felt their need of both, and in this high-pressure age we don't need less.

2. Habitually—from Sunday to Sunday.

The habit of irregular attendance is a very insidious and ensnaring one. Some excuse themselves on the very plea of habit (of laziness?) but this rather condemns than excuses them. In human law, "habit" heightens both offence and penalty. And at the great day a lazy habit will form a grave indictment. "Thou wicked and slothful servant." Yet a good habit is a great help in the discharge of duty. The word "habit" is suggestive. As an article of dress, the closer it fits and the longer it is worn, the firmer and easier it sits. Well-ordered habits brace up the soul; loose habits never.

Intermittent attendance at church hinders the soul's growth. Bedding and lifting a plant by turns, kills it. "Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God."

3. Conscientiously, at the bidding of Christian principle.

If there is no guiding principle, we shall be completely at the mercy of circumstances. Let us consult conscience more than the barometer when to go to church. Miss Havergal has furnished *seventeen* strong reasons for going to church on a *rainy* day. But still stronger, and no few reasons may be urged for going to a church on a *fine* day. Yet, alas! while on the former many find an excuse for staying at home, on the latter, many find a reason for walking abroad, as if the *fourth* commandment ran thus: "Remember the Sabbath day, to

make a holiday of it, instead of "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."

## Correspondence.

### THE DIVINE CELEBRATION.

To the Editor of the CHURCH GUARDIAN:

SIR,—A great deal has been written, pro and con, in reference to the general or particular meaning of the words, "This do" as found in the account of the Institution of the Holy Communion. Some tell us the words, "This do," are a technical and sacrificial term or expression, while others most strongly deny any such meaning.

But there seems to me to be quite another way in which to consider these words which I have not seen in any commentary, or theological work dealing with the question. The words might be taken either as referring to the act of our Lord in the matter or to the act required of the Apostles. If the former, then the latter act becomes necessary; but if the latter, then the former must also be inferred. The words, then, might mean a command to the Apostles to do as He, their Lord and Master, was then doing. He was acting as the High Priest of the new covenant, and therein doing an act of supreme importance. "He took bread and blessed it," "He took the cup and gave thanks." And in both instances, as recorded by St. Paul, He said to His Apostles, "Do this." In this connection the words might mean, "ye do as ye have now seen me do," or "do ye to and for others as ye have now seen Me do to you." Thus without any technical or critical handling the command might well be taken to convey an express direction and authority to the Apostles to exercise the office of the priesthood in offering the pure and unbloody sacrifice. Yet, in this interpretation, the general view as implying a command to receive or to communicate, must be inferred, as without some to receive, as the Apostles then did, there could not well be any to do as our Lord did. The priests of the Church cannot fully and properly perform their office unless there be also the faithful waiting to do their duty. Thus the command, "This do," as applied to the people is only a secondary or inferred application.

But the words might be held to have an application to the act of the Apostles in the first instance. They were in the act of receiving the "Bread" and the "Cup," and our Lord says, "This do in remembrance of Me." In this view the command would mean, "receive this Bread and drink this Cup in remembrance of Me." But, still, even in accepting this meaning we must admit the necessity of some to do for them as our Lord in this instance had done for the Apostles. And hence the inferred meaning would be the command for some to offer the sacrifice in order that the supposed primary meaning may be performed.

There will, doubtless, be a doubt in some minds, which is the primary and which the secondary meaning as given above, while some will hold the one as many others will hold the general and popular view. The latter seems the least correct. Yours truly,

JOHN LOCKWARD.

Port Medway, Jan., 1892.

SIR,—Kindly allow me through the columns of your paper to acknowledge, with thanks, the receipt of \$13 from the Mascouche Bible class, per Mr. A. C. Asch, student of the Diocesan College, Montreal, towards the Laurel Church building fund. And also to the Ladies' Society of St. George's Church, Montreal, for a beautiful Communion cloth for above named church.

R. F. HUTCHINGS.

Arundel, Que., Jan. 12th, 1894.