

cases they might, a provision in our Government Savings Bank to meet the demands of such a crisis as we are passing through at present. And how few give as a matter of sacred duty, and according to some definite system, to the support of God's Church. If Church people throughout the Diocese of Nova Scotia recognized the fact, that in reference to the means they possess or earn, they are God's stewards, our Board of Home Missions would not be languishing to-day for want of funds.

The bounties of the table are God's gifts. Rightly do we give Him thanks for them. Yet the glutton and the drunkard abuse those gifts. Instead of eating and drinking to live, they seem rather to live to eat and drink. Solemn are the warnings of God's Word against the abuse of these gifts of our Father. Scripture shows in the histories of Noah and Lot and others the sad results of drunkenness, and it traces to the gluttony of the cities of the plain their terrible doom. The Book of Proverbs, which our young men would do well to read often and heedfully, says "the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty." Medical science gives emphasis to the warnings of God's Word. Ask our most skilled physicians what is the most fertile cause of madness and various forms of disease. They will tell you intemperance in eating and drinking. I will not call the adulterated and poisonous stuff that is sold in some directions under the name of spirits one of God's gifts. I speak as unto wise men. Would not your bodies be stronger and more capable of the hard toil you have to endure here; would not your wives be happier; would not they and your children be better fed and better clothed; would you not be better prepared in every way to face not only with patience, as you have done, but with inspiring hope, our present difficulties and trials, if you never touched what are called, all too fittingly, *ardent* spirits?

Think of one of the sellers of liquor in this place making \$500 after one pay-day! Is not that so much money thrown away, yea, worse than wasted? If this money was not wanted for the provision of wives and children, would not men, endowed with ordinary forethought, have put it by in the Savings Bank for use against a rainy day?

I might enlarge here; I might speak of the total abstinence pledge, which seems *almost a necessity for some*; and yet I might easily show that the pledge, without the mighty support of God's grace, which is to be sought by prayer, and through the ordinances of God's Church, is, after all, but a poor broken reed; but I must pause, for another and all important part of our subject yet remains.

I have shown you how wide is the sphere in which the Christian grace of temperance is to be exercised. It enters into all departments of our Christian life and conduct. Our religion, our opinions, our words, our dealings with others, our pleasures, and our use of all God's gifts are to be defended and guarded, sanctified and guided by Christian temperance.

Why? Why should every Christian man, woman and child seek, by God's grace, to be "temperate in all things?" Many motives might be fittingly urged; many reasons having the sanction of God's Word might be given. The Epistle for to-day gives one which is appropriate for the Advent Season.

II. The Motive—"The Lord is at hand"—Providentially, Spiritually, Personally, this is true.

(1) The Lord is at hand—Providentially. The nearness of God in His providence has been seen in every age of history. Look back. That Providence saved in infancy the life of the future deliverer of God's Israel; fed Israel with manna by the space of 40 years in the wilderness; delivered David from the hand of Saul and brought the son of Jesse to the throne; delivered Peter from the sword of Herod; rescued Paul and his companions from a watery grave in the Adriatic; and watched over the Church of the living God what time the fiery storms of Pagan persecution fell upon her. That Providence has doubtless

kept us from many unforeseen and unknown dangers; nor think that then only the Lord is near us when we can mark His guiding hand; He is ever near us though we know it not, for "Providence is the never sleeping guardianship of a gracious Father, comprehensive as it is minute, constant as well as casual, universal as well as particular, particular as well as universal; it guides and governs and helps not then only when we are in a strait, but then also when we are secure, when we are unthinking of it, as when we appeal to it."

(2) The Lord is at hand—Spiritually, that is in the power and presence of God's Holy Spirit. This thought should give reverence and reality to our worship of God in public and in private. In God's house of prayer and in our retirement we are speaking in the ever listening ear of One who is near us to accept our praises and offerings and to hear our prayers. How profoundly reverent, how intensely real would all our worship be, did we only realize this near presence of our God.

(3) The Lord is at hand—Personally. It is not unlikely that the thought of the Lord's personal advent may have been the chief thought in the mind of the Apostle when he wrote the words of the text. It is not unlikely, because only four verses intervene between my text and the mention of our Saviour's personal advent. It is not unlikely, because the Coming of the Lord was an ever present object of hope to the Apostles and the early Christians generally. They loved Christ's appearing; the hope of their Lord's return animated and sustained them in a way no other hope could have done. For ought they knew the Lord might come in their own day. Hence, here as elsewhere, the Lord's personal advent is regarded as near. "The Lord is at hand."

Such language is the natural language of faith. Faith is "the giving substance to things hoped for." (R. V. margin.) Hence faith would bring near the great object of the Church's hope. It would lead Christians to speak of it as near. If like precious faith was ours, we, too, would feel no difficulty in applying my text to the second coming of our Lord. We would rejoice to remember that while our Lord is at hand providentially and spiritually, He is also at hand personally.

III. Connect we now, in conclusion, the duty and the motive.

Is the Lord at hand by His providence, by His Spirit, by His advent? then let us in all things exercise Christian moderation, let us cultivate Christian temperance. In joy and sorrow, in our temper, words, and disposition, in our use of all our Father's gifts and bounties, in the pleasures and festivities of the joyous Christmas time, let our moderation be known unto all men.

"Beneath our eaves  
Each sound His wakeful ear receives;  
Hush, idle words, and thoughts of ill,  
Your Lord is listening: peace be still.  
Christ watches by a Christian's hearth,  
Be silent vain, deluding mirth,  
Till in thine altered voice be known  
Somewhat of resignation's tone."

The beautiful poem of Keble for Advent, from which I am quoting, closes with a reference to the personal coming of our Lord:

"Nor let your torches waste and die,  
Till when the shadows thickest fall,  
Ye hear your Master's midnight call."

The midnight call—"The Bridegroom cometh." Some preparatory sign or note of warning forcing upon the whole professing Church the conviction of the actual nearness of the personal advent of Jesus. 'Tis quickly followed by the actual advent. "The Bridegroom came, and they that were ready went in with Him to the marriage, and the door was shut."

"They that were ready." Who are they? The parable shows, they who have not only the lamp but also the oil; not only the outward profession, but also the inward grace of God's Holy Spirit.

But is it possible for any intemperate man to be "ready" for the coming of the Heavenly Bridegroom?

## OUR AMERICAN BUDGET.

THE Diocese of New York has 318 clergy; 202 churches and chapels; 38,734 communicants; 37,032 Sunday school scholars, and yearly contributions of \$1,055,428.38.

THE Rev. Dr. T. R. Lambert has resigned St. John's Church, Boston, after a rectorship of twenty-eight years.

FOR each one of the 8,000 churches in America there are four grog-shops, and for each one of the 90,000 ministers there are six bar tenders.

THE value of kid gloves imported into New York every year is ten times as much as is given by all the societies in America to foreign missions.

HITHERTO in Hebrew congregations women have had no voice in the election of rabbi, or any of the Church business, but a Philadelphia synagogue has accorded to them equal privileges with the male members, except the holding of official positions.

REV. EDWARD R. ATWILL, D. D., Rector of Trinity Church, Toledo, Ohio, has received a call to St. John's Church, Waterbury, Conn.

SIX Dioceses gave more than ten thousand dollars each to missions last year: New York, \$80,580.65; Pennsylvania, \$44,973.53; Long Island, \$21,071.40; Massachusetts, \$19,164.92; Maryland, \$12,101.19; and Connecticut \$10,105.40.

THE new Bishop-elect of East Carolina was born in New York State, and is aged seventy years. He was reared in the Presbyterian faith, but will make a first rate Bishop.

THE New Hampshire Holderness Church School for Boys is to have a Gothic brick church built early in the Spring, costing \$10,000. A wealthy young lady of New York city, just come of age, is the donor.

THE Rev. James S. Bush has just resigned his charge at the Church of the Ascension, West Brighton. A short time ago a fair was held in the church, when a gold watch was put up for raffle. The Rev. Mr. Bush was opposed to that proceeding, which he considered gambling.

In his letter resigning the rectorship of All Saints' Church, Worcester, Mass., the Rev. Dr. Huntington writes: How much it has cost me to reach this decision, how much it now costs me to put my purpose into words, I will not attempt to say."

MR. GORDON W. BURNHAM, of New York, has promised to Trinity Church, Connecticut, \$10,000, if the parish itself will raise a like amount, for the completion of the new church edifice.

AT the new Italian chapel in Philadelphia last week the Bishop preached and the Rev. Mr. Zara, the missionary-in-charge, interpreted the sermon to his people, and added an address of his own. The chapel holds about 200, and there are rooms below for night-schools and other mission agencies.

MR. Charles E. Barnes, of Salem, an Adventist preacher, has recently signified to the Bishop of Maine his desire to become a candidate for Holy Orders, and has been informally accepted. He is the sixth Adventist minister who has sought and found "rest" in the Church within a few years."

THE Rev. Dr. Joshua Morsell, while conducting the services in Grace Church, City Island, N. Y., on Sunday of last week, motioned for a window to be opened and sank down in the pulpit as though in a faint. He was found, however, to have died from heart disease.

SERVICES in German are being held at St. Mark's Nashua, with a good attendance.

THERE is a good deal of sin and more folly in the city of New York, but there are vast streams of charity that do a world of good. There are not less than five hundred societies and institutions of a benevolent order.