

ness will not eat together, but sit in sets in these boxes, except now and again when they wish to proclaim how very, very loving they are with each other—in spite of these partitions and their little private sets!

It would seem, on reflection, that the wits of that old town had some reason for thinking the three houses above described represented things ecclesiastical in more than their names and signs. Possibly some who read the above will conclude likewise. If, however, any are puzzled to discover the hidden meanings veiled by the above we will supply them a key to unlock the mystery. That "The Three Inns," is absolutely true we vouch—for we have seen and been in each of them.

In recent years a feeling has grown up that it would be well to amalgamate the Mitre and the Gown and Crown. The Mitre people say that they are not responsible for the bad feeling to the town caused by rivalry. They say "The Mitre doors are open; all who come are welcome, we made no division, we taught those who oppose us all they know," if they wish to have union let them come back to the old home! The other people want the Mitre pulled down, and a new place built for both to occupy. Which proposal is the more reasonable we leave our friends to judge.

WILD AND DANGEROUS DOCTRINE.

A WRITER to whose article on marriage the *Rock* gave prominence a short time ago, lays down the most dangerous doctrine, that the marriage of persons who are not "children of God," in the evangelical sense, is no marriage at all! We hear now and again of the Church of Rome refusing to acknowledge a marriage which has not been celebrated under its sanction. Such presumption is rightly condemned as an infringement of civil liberty. Here, however, we have an evangelical organ propagating the even worse theory that a marriage between those not "converted" is no marriage. It follows therefore, that although such persons have been married legally, they, according to the theory of an evangelical writer, are at liberty to act, so far as religion is concerned, as though they had never been so wedded! The logical outcome of such teaching would be a dissolution of the marriage tie of the great bulk of the people, and their entire freedom from the moral obligations of marriage. Such a theory is grossly immoral and its appearance in a religious journal is very deplorable.

It is, however, only another phase of the teaching of Wycliffe. That illustrious divine in one of his works, see *Select English Works*, Vol. 3, p. 88, says:

"God is and has dominion over all. Each man in his degree is bounden to serve God, and if he does not render this service, he is no lord of goods of true title, for he that standeth in grace is the true lord of things, and whoever falleth by default of grace, he falleth short of the right title of that which he occupieth, and making himself unfit to have the gifts of God."

Whatever Wycliffe meant such doctrine to

do as regards the Papacy, there is no denying that it is a distinct assertion that unless a man is "converted" or in "a state of grace," whatever property he owns is not held by him under a "right title," consequently there can be no wrong done by depriving him of such property. It would make quite a difference in the assessment roll were titles to become invalidated under Wycliffe's law, because of the present owner's "default of grace."

CLERICAL DELEGATES TO PROVINCIAL SYNOD.

THE Synods of the Diocese from which delegates are sent to the Provincial Synod, might do well to select a more varied class of clergy than what, for some time past, has been the fashion. There are a large number of rural clergy who are fully equal to the duties of a delegate to the Provincial Synod, many indeed, as much so as the class usually favored with these appointments. We are not disparaging the importance of that Synod when we affirm that upon the large majority of the clergy who attend, it imposes no severe strain either mentally or bodily. Indeed we should not find much serious difficulty in showing that to those clergy who have hitherto attended the Synod, it has been a most welcome relief from parochial routine. Change of work is rest, oftentimes more truly so than abstinence from labor. To attend the meetings of the Provincial Synod is very much of a holiday to the bulk of the clerical delegates on this very ground—what work they have to do in connection with the Synod is felt to be refreshing, because of its novelty and inherent interest. Why then cannot this be thought of in selecting Delegates? There are many who have gone again and again to these gatherings, while others, equally capable, have never once been so honored, or so relieved by this welcome change. Routine, which to large bodies is what habit is to the individual, slavishly controls these appointments, without reason. The Diocesan Synods might, we submit, do well to break off these routine fetters, by selecting representatives with some regard to the fact that the rural clergy and the clergy of the smaller cities and towns, have a just claim for consideration when appointments of this kind are being made.

A KNOTTY QUESTION.

THE next Synod of the Diocese of Toronto will probably consider the question of distributing the St. James' rectory funds. That the question is a knotty one all admit. There is no precedent as a guide, nor any fixed rule by which such funds must be divided, beyond those Scriptural injunctions which condemn selfishness. Those precepts are quite capable, if thoroughly acted upon, of unraveling every knot. Perhaps we may be corrected, however, in saying there is no precedent, as one can be cited, but it is not of a nature to govern the action of a Synod, however it may move individuals. The case is this, one clergy-

man in Toronto, who during the litigation regarding these funds was reduced to painful financial straits, as soon as the rectory funds began to be distributed, resigned his legal claim to another fund for the benefit of a brother clergyman whom he deemed more needy than himself.

We have no desire to press this example, it is hardly reasonable to expect all men to follow counsels of perfection, and there are variations in circumstances which render what is very noble in one man hardly prudent in another. But the question must be courageously dealt with as to the unfairness, the injustice of giving to the clergy interested in the rectory fund exactly the same sum each regardless of their income from other sources. The result of this rough rule is simply this, it causes a large amount of Church money to pass, practically, into the pockets of laymen, for there are a very large number of laymen who lower their contributions to the Church in proportion to the amount of income the clergy receive from non-parochial or non-congregational sources. We have no sympathy with the plea for equal incomes, or incomes levelled up or down to one figure. But we condemn most strenuously as a scandalous wrong, the keeping a considerable number of our clergy in poverty, some indeed on the verge of want, many burthened necessarily with unworthy and depressing cares, when the Church is at the same time distributing large funds that only supplement the incomes of clergy who are already well provided for. To him that hath shall be given is not the divine law for paying for services done, but, rewarding every man according to his work, and aiding him according to his need. The grading of the amounts distributed proportionately to each individual claimant's financial necessities is doubtless the ideal plan, but it is an impossible one. It would, however, be far from difficult to classify those who are to receive a share of the rectory funds into, say, three groups. As a basis for the grouping a minimum stipend should be fixed, and the first rule for distribution should be to make a group, No. 1, of all who need a grant in order that their incomes may be raised up to the minimum.

A second group, No. 2, might include those whose age and families call for special consideration. These two groups no fair-minded Churchman will deny, include all who have any claim on the rectory fund other than bare legality. We should be indeed sorry to be shown that any one of our clergy, who could not be classed in these two groups, insisted upon his legal "pound of flesh," when not in real need of its help while his brethren were in real need. The third group then would include those whose existing stipends are sufficiently liberal to exclude them from claiming a share of these funds because of any actual need.

The question is one which we have confidence will be discussed by the clergy in a spirit worthy their high vocation, and by the laity with sympathy and generosity towards those who too often in privation and poverty minister unto them in things divine.