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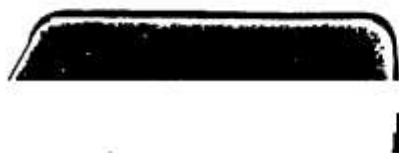
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BY THE

EEV. HENET MACKENZIE, M.A.

ONE o7 THE CHAPLAINS TO THE LOBD BISHOP o7 LINCOLN,

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FIRST SERIES.

LECTURE I.

ON PASTORAL GOVERNMENT.

A very short time has been assigned to me to speak to you, Christian brethren, on this and the two following mornings on some practical topics. May my words, under God's blessing, be helpful in the fulfilment of the solemn responsibilities about to be sealed to you in your Ordination!

The first of these Lectures will be devoted to " Pastoral Government," the second to " Educational Work in the Parish," the third to " Self-government in the Pastor."

No doubt many of you have asked yourselves the question, "How shall I first set about my work when I find myself settled as curate of a parish?" The small experience of some, and the total inexperience of others, may make you willing to receive some hints whereby this question may be answered.

I am bound to assume that each one of you presents himself to the bishop in a spirit <&

faith, and love, and zeal, and prayer. You could not be competent for your future work without these, and I will not doubt but that you possess them all.

Now it is probable that under the strong spiritual impressions thus enkindled in you, some may be disposed to esteem very lightly any secular, or, so to speak, mechanical aids to the fulfilment of your duties; nevertheless it is to these I call your attention, as calculated materially to help you in the performance of your spiritual functions.

One of the very first steps I would recommend to you (in subordination to your rector's will) is to make yourself thoroughly master of all the statistical knowledge of your parish as to the streets, houses, and residents it contains. Without this your flock can only be dealt with as individuals, or, at best, as a congregation; but, at all events, partially and imperfectly. For the fulfilment of the pastoral responsibility you owe to it, it will be necessary for you to know it, and to deal with it, as a whole.

First, then, survey accurately the boundaries of the parish wherein you are called to minister. "Mark well its bulwarks, and set up its houses" in the eye of your faith. And while you carefully note in the parish map, which every one of you should procure or make for yourself, the boundary-line of your parish, re-member that every soul within that line is bound

to you by a solemn obligation; an obligation known to and recognized by you, though perhaps unknown to and unrecognized by those to whom you are sent; an obligation which, fulfilled, may enhance your mutual joy in Christ throughout eternity, or which,

neglected, may make more intense endless misery to both of you. Your special and earliest mission is to make known that Christian obligation to all your parishioners; and in so doing, by acting as a faithful herald for Christ, you will deliver your own soul from one part of the burden laid upon it, and apportion the responsibility between you, where God intends that it should rest.

For you will bear in mind the scope and design of that diocesan and parochial system which is at once the strength and weakness of the Church of England. The territorial limits of the Church and the land being co-extensive, there is not a spot of ground which does not pertain to some particular bishop, and possess a claim upon the ministry of some particular parish priest. In instances where this is not realized, neglected parishes are given over indolently to the well-intentioned but irregular ministrations of Dissent, or recklessly to the encroachments of Satan through the natural desires " of the flesh and of the mind," to the prejudice of the revealed glory of God. And hence the scandal arises, in too many cases, of the National Church "

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live and being dead 1 ," like that of Sardis of old; your mission, however, is " to be watchful and strengthen the things that remain," even though they should be " ready to die." Your object will be to fulfil your personal responsibilities,—whether as priest, or as deacon acting under a priest,—by carrying the word of truth and the knowledge of salvation to every soul in the parish committed to your care.

In doing this you will make careful notes of the number of souls and of the habits of the population. For while dealing with the parish as a whole, you must strive also to deal with each member separately as an individual. While you awaken in others a sense of responsibility by reminding them of having a living guide, and teacher, and friend ever ready to lead them as sinners to their Saviour, you will also consider your own responsibility as being honoured with that office, and " watch for their souls as one that must give account." With this view it will be desirable that you should cultivate frequent and

friendly intercourse with as many as possible, and invite them to consult with you unhesitatingly on all their spiritual wants and difficulties, whether arising from error, from ignorance, or from sin.

And that you may more readily refer to any ease in after days, it will be useful that you

1 Rev. iii. 1.

commence your ministry by a Parochial Register, wherein the population is classified according to some easy system. Some may prefer to arrange them under the heads of Educated and Uneducated; some as Rich and Poor; some as Adult and Youthful; some as Members and Non-Members of the Congregation, dividing these again into Communicants and Non-Communicants, and re-arranging the lists every new year, so as to mark the changes which have taken place in their relative positions. The last-named method is perhaps the easiest and most practical. But whatever classification you adopt, this at least you must always remember. It is your part and duty to find means of spiritual aggression on all who are as yet uninfluenced by the Gospel; and of spiritual edification for all who are already influenced; for just so far as the population of your parish is untouched by your teaching, just so far your mission from God to them has failed in its object.

While you will endeavour to make your general register of families and households as complete as possible, it will be wise also to have a particular register of all cases of personal visitation that present any special features of spiritual interest. You will thus in the course of a few years provide yourself with a fund of experience which will rapidly mature the fruits of your ministry, and fit [^]qwl fe*

dealing with cases of delicacy and difficulty which will not fail to arise, as well as prepare you for dealing practically with larger masses of population than those at first committed to your shepherding.

In the public ministrations of your sacred office, be careful to make them as acceptable as possible. Spare no pains to make yourself a

good reader as well as a good preacher. Look upon this as a solemn duty in the sight of God, and then there will be no danger of its leading you into mannerism, into vanity, or into coxcombry. Affectation and unreality are at all times offensive as well as silly; but no where are they so offensive as in the house of God and the exercise of the offices thereof. If you are to lead the devotions of the souls committed to your teaching, you must be devout yourselves. Even a heathen could write " Si vis me flere primum dolendum est tibi." The law of sympathy is innate in humanity, and the heathen poet knew it; but the sympathy you are to cultivate is a sympathy with the Divine nature; and in order to cultivate it, you must be, as St. Peter teaches, " partakers of the divine nature" yourselves 2 . In self-denying study, therefore, aim at excellence both in preaching and in reading; for God, who calls you to His service, requires the best of such

* 2 Pet. i. 4.



services as you can render. Remember that the Apostle who determined " not to know any thing but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified/ 9 still availed himself of the graces of elocution and the use of rhetoric in addressing the accomplished members of the grave court of Areopagus; and similar aids are not only ad-nussible for you, but their use becomnes a duty, if you can thereby impress more faithfully and more successfully the good tidings of God on the hearts of your flock.

Your ministrations in Church, however, will be miserably deficient if you only study to make the pulpit-duties effective. The National Church has provided us with sacred offices for Sunday and week-day ministrations, both public and domestic, which are calculated to elicit our devotion in their utterance, but which require that devotion to be fervently, clearly, and simply expressed, if they are to stimulate the devotion of the people to whom we are sent. The Word of God requires to be read with holy reverence as well as with sonorous utterance, if it is expected to operate with awakening power upon careless ears and slumbering hearts. We are frequently unaware, till

aroused to the knowledge by painful experience, how often the mere formal schoolboy reading of a thoughtless clergyman has destroyed the devotion which ought to have been cultivated, or alienated the sym\&th£&&

which ought to have been attracted. True though it be that we are sent to minister among a people already professing Christianity, it would be an exaggeration of charity to assume that all are equally prepared to accept our ministrations as men of God. We must prove ourselves to be men of God ere we can expect our services to effect a permanent influence on those as yet unimpressed by the vital truths of religion. If our congregations find us careless in the pronunciation of the words we utter, or indifferent to the meaning those words are designed to convey; hesitating where we ought to be decided; bold and loud in expressing professed humiliation; feeble or careless in uttering words of professed praise; will they not justly regard us as blind guides, and thoughtless, if not positively unfaithful shepherds
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In order that the parochial government of the ministry may be systematically felt, you must be careful to let your pastoral visitations be regular, An approximation to a fit system may be found in this rule. In addition to the constant " visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction," and the sick and poverty-stricken in their hour of need, endeavour to converse with every family that will receive your visits about once in every month, and with every individual about once in a quarter. Except in times of special necessity, too fre-

quent or too lengthy visits are apt to weary parishioners, and not only to interfere with their avocations, but to degenerate into mere gossip. This, however, may always be stopped at once by asking whether it be wished that the clergyman should read. Light and trivial conversation detracts from the influence of a minister of the Word and Church of God ; and though he should have a pleasant and kindly word for all, he must never forget to show " gravity, uncorruptness, sincerity," in his demeanour, and "sound speech that cannot be condemned *" in his conversation. He should be scrupulous moreover in personally recognizing the domestics in every family where servants form a part of the household. AovXov?

teal 8ov\ a\$ fir) inreprrrfdvei, is advice as old as St. Ignatius ; but there is a temptation to neglect it now which probably did not exist in his day \ The position of clergy as gentry, in the present

» Titus ii. 7, 8.

* Baxter's Reformed Pastor, ch. ii. s. ill. 2, p. 84. Ignatius ad Polycarp: (quoted as above:)

TrvKv6rtptov trvvaytoyai ytvixrav' i\$ 6v6fjLaros tc&vras ("firctiofaovs K(d tiofaas fify inrepticdyct,

i.e. Let the assemblies be gathered;

Seek after (or inquire of) all by name; Despise not servant-men or maids.

You see it was then taken for a duty to look after every member of the flock by name, though it were the meanest servant-man or maid.

condition of society, leads many to undervalue the widely-extended influence for good or evil of domestic servants; the power they exercise over the trading classes connected with the household, and frequently over young children within the household, is very great. Every well-regulated establishment ought to realize the idea of "the Church in the house;" and a clergyman may do much in helping forward this desirable consummation, if he never allows mere conventionality to interfere with his bringing the knowledge of Christ as their Saviour to every member of the households he visits.

And if the social condition of the Christian family realizes " the Church in the home," the Christian parish, represented in its corporate capacity by a formal vestry, realizes the Church in committee. Here the parochial clergyman should always be found in his place. His duty as a ruler and guide is here recognized and defined by law; and here he is frequently brought into contact with many who abstain from his ordinary pastoral mmkteations. His civil duties will require delicacy of management; but if he be consistent in showing a high sense of Christian duty in himself, and Christian courtesy and gentleness to all, whether opponents or friends, he will

never feel himself out of place. Happily, moreover, he will always find himself supported by consistent



members of his flock; for the position of the laity is much better understood in these days than formerly; the clergy are no longer considered to be the Church. Spiritual life is recognized as diffused throughout the whole body of the laity, and spiritual acts are committed to, and performed by, churchwardens, schoolmasters, Scripture readers, district visitors, Sunday-school teachers and others, without interference with the direct duties of the ministerial orders. It will be your duty, in the exercise of parochial government, whenever placed at the head of a parish, to develop as much as possible the spiritual power of the laity through these and kindred offices. In collections for missionary purposes; in the Sunday-school, and the week-day evening school; in the adult Bible class, and the monthly or quarterly missionary meetings; much kindly aid may be given by the laity of your parish. If you are honoured in ministering among a people who are brought by your ministrations to feel that they are all "taught of God," your labours will be infinitely lightened by their happy and hearty co-operation in works of piety and charity; and the unity of the Spirit will be manifested in the bond of peace, which will bind you together in a hallowed sympathy.

And now in concluding this opening Lecture let me say that—
assuming all Christian doctrine to be carefully, clearly, systematically
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and illustrated, and personal repentance, faith and holiness enforced,—your pastoral government will still be incomplete unless you exhort from the pulpit, as well as from house to house, to the fulfilment of all domestic duties. Family prayer, mutual love, the responsibilities of the parental, the wedded, and the filial states, the true relation of master and servant; all these should make a part of public instruction (as drawn from the written word) as well as private exhortation. A parish must be hallowed into unity by Christian households, just as a household must be hallowed into unity by Christian individuals.

And of all the elements of parochial cohesion do not forget yourselves, or let your flock forget, that the two Sacraments "ordained by Christ Himself," and affirmed by our Church to be "generally necessary to salvation," are the most powerful. It is not assigned to me to speak of doctrine to-day, and my allusion to this subject now has mainly reference to the disciplinal results that flow from the due and faithful and universal reception of these holy ordinances. If you are privileged to bring every child of wrath born into your parish into the covenant of grace; if you are privileged to see the adult members of all the families to which you minister "come up with acceptance to the altar of God," will not you feel a thrill of sacred joy every time you minister at the

font or the Lord's table, and enjoy a heavenly felicity when you spread your hands before the Lord and say, "Behold, I and the children whom Thou hast given me?" Will you not then realize a sympathy with the beloved disciple who said, "I have no greater joy than to know that my children walk in truth," a 11 *! with that not less distinguished Apostle of Jesus who was anticipating a blessed meeting with his flock at the great day, when he cried out in rapture, "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye are our glory and our joy 8."

* 3 John 4. • 1 Thess. ii. 19, 20.

LECTURE II.

ON EDUCATIONAL WORK IN THE PARISH.

•

In offering for your consideration some hints on educational work in the parish, I may assume that you feel at least an equal interest in the young, as in the adult members of your flock. It is thought by many, and some of these in high places, that these growing souls demand a greater share of your time and diligent personal superintendence; and though I cannot concur in this view, certain it is that the influence they will hereafter exercise in their manhood's prime will

largely outweigh that of the generation now in their vigour, but then in rapid decadence. The school is, in fact, the germ of the coming parish,—of what the parish is to be a quarter of a century hence,—and the prudence and forecast recommended by our Lord 1 , will teach you to imbue its growing members with those principles which will then

ON EDUCATIONAL WORK IN THE PARISH. 15

work most successfully for the glory of God and the advancement of their own happiness.

In dealing with the lambs of Christ, not less than with the sheep of His fold, the exercise of faith and love and zeal and prayer is imperative upon all.

And in this work, as in taking charge of your parish altogether, I would recommend you to commence the material part of your duty by acquiring accurate statistical knowledge. Learn not merely who are the children God entrusts to your pastoral guardianship, but how they are employed. Your " Parochial Register for School purposes," should tell you at a glance before you have been a month in your parish, who attend the national school, and who do not; who attend 'dames' and other private schools, and who attend no school at all.

I need not here pause to speak of the necessity of education; that is generally admitted; or of the education required being religious; that is admitted too, both by the Church and the sects; but I do wish to impress upon you that a parish without a school must be an imperfect parish; and that rather than there be no school at all, the parish priest ought at certain hours in the week, as well as on Sunday, to turn voluntary schoolmaster himself, and make his own hall or kitchen the schoolroom if no other can be obtained. "With the facilities now offered, however, for the erection and maintenance of

schools, that parish must be unusually depressed in circumstances, or must have been hitherto unusually ill-shepherded, which is reduced to this necessity.

The proportion of children needing practically the maternal and educational care of the Church through the clergy, will be found to vary much, according to the nature of the parish, and the social position of its members. Doubtless the competent education of parents imposes a definite responsibility upon them with reference to their children, which tweducated parents cannot be expected to realize. Hence the Church must take a special charge of the latter, and provide for the growing generation those blessings of a sound and Scriptural education which, apart from her maternal responsibilities, they would never have the means of acquiring. We may perhaps approach a proximate estimate of what ought to be done in each parish, by assuming the case of one containing a population of 1000, sufficiently compact in size for all the children to be able to attend school; viz. having its school so situated that no children live more than a mile and a half from it. Such a distance, or even a little exceeding it, ought not to be a bar to the children of our hardy peasantry regularly coming for education.

It has been said that one-fourth of the whole population of every given parish are of an age

to be at school. If this is correct, it would give us 250 children in such a supposed parish as we contemplate. Could thfe whole of this number be brought under Christian training, there would be required separate schools for boys, 'girls, and infants; but it is not probable that such a population could find the means of maintaining more than two schools. There is some difference of opinion as to the way in which such schools should be divided: and many experienced educationists would recommend—(1) a mixed school, under a master; and, (2) an infant school, under a mistress. My personal experience (which, however, can only go for what it is worth when opposed by the experience of others) is unfavourable to the encouragement of mixed schools for children above a certain age, when others may be had. My own impression therefore is, that the schools in such a parish should be—(1) for boys of more than seven or eight years of age, under a master; and (2) for girls and infants under seven or eight, to be educated together under a well-qualified mistress.

In forming new schools, it will be most essential to place them under the best possible management. A good master and a good mistress are sure to be appreciated wherever they are found, and will in most cases (with the aid now granted by Government) make the schools self-supporting; whereas inferior teachers, *r&.

always entail a heavy expense upon the incumbent of the parish, even when aided by a small endowment, and will utterly fail to realize the design contemplated in their appointment. The Church has lost a large source of income from endeavouring to provide entirely eleemosynary education for the poor. The humbler classes are generally able, and (in towns especially) almost always willing when able, to pay something for the training of their children. They value more highly what they pay for than what they receive gratuitously; and by bearing a due share in the expenses of education, are led to take a more lively and more personal interest in the progress made in the schools.

In the regular superintendence of your schools you must be very careful not in any way to supersede the master and mistress in their duties. There is a distinct work for both of you; and each will develop the work of the other, if care be taken that the one intrude not into the other's province. If I might venture to characterize the line of each by a single word, I should say that the strictness of judgment should characterize the master, the gentleness and liberality of mercy, the pastor. Every School to be perfect must have a certain amount of discipline, and consequent formality; any tendency to rigidity in this direction should be tempered and softened by the loving character

which it is the very business of the Christian minister's life to display. The perpetual exaction of duty in matters of detail necessarily gives a kind of angularity to the school teacher's habits and manners. The pastor may, and ought to, round off the corners of this sharpness, and tone down the stiffness which children are themselves apt to acquire from it. He is to be essentially the educator, the bringer-out of inner life into its fittest form; while the teacher and instructor imparts knowledge, and defines those principles which the pastor's affectionate guidance develops into the highest visible type they are

capable of exhibiting. Tffl great mission to children is to expand their faith into holy obedience—holy, not formal. "Wonder and love are the leading characteristics of childhood; he need not, therefore, fear to set before the lambs of his flock the highest mysteries of faith, but he must always so describe them as to square with the affectionate nature of Him who said, " Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not." The pastor's influence in the schoolroom so exercised will prove immense; the habits of childhood will be elevated, their manners improved, their earnest nature quickened into a spiritual and living power, when their pastor is ever beheld " walking in the spirit," a visible witness for Christ, before their almost daily observation.

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But while the frequent and kindly visits to the daily school which the pastor gives are calculated to stimulate the teachers and elevate the learners, there is one point in which he must be the chief practical teacher himself. He should not only systematically take a Scripture class in the week-day, but he must actively and personally superintend the Sunday-school on the Lord's day. Sunday-schools are not meant only for one class of society, or for those who acquire in other places secular knowledge during the week. It is good to encourage the children of parishioners above the class educated in the National Schools to attend them, as well as those below, it if there be any; and it should be made attractive, not only by its gentle discipline, and the kindness of its voluntary teachers, but by the fervour and' earnestness with which Scriptural truth— and not only Scriptural knowledge, but^ the " faith which worketh by love "—are woven into its pupils' hearts.

As an engine of influence throughout the parish, the Sunday-school deserves also to be highly appreciated. Teachers as well as learners are by it practically taught to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. The classes of society, too widely separated by the forms of this world, are thus oftentimes brought into a hallowing relationship; and if the pastor gathers his teachers together during one even-

ing of the week, and prepares them by direct teaching of some particular portion of Scripture for the labours of the ensuing Sunday, he not only attaches those whom he instructs to his person and office, but directly fulfils his apostolic mission by disseminating through varied channels the one stream of truth that it is his duty to dispense for the salvation of his flock.

You may form some idea how imperfectly the teaching of the Church has been brought home to the poor of this country, by learning that (so lately as 1856) in sixteen parishes in this diocese the difference of actual attendance of school children varied from one-fourth to one-hundredth of the population; and though education has certainly made some progress since then, I fear there are some parishes still in which it is held in very low estimation indeed! Should your lot be cast in any of the less favoured parishes, you will find that the ordinary day-schools for children will not meet the requirements of your flock. In almost every parish, though more certainly in these, are to be found some young of both sexes who are not only uneducated, but who feel the want of education. For such it is desirable to make provision by opening evening-schools, or forming lending-libraries, or improvement societies. Facilities for the formation of these have of

late been largely increased through the practical experience of the metropolitan evening classes in London, and other kindred associations, whose officers are always ready to give information to clergy who apply to them. Faith and youth are the two elements of cohesion essentially necessary to their permanent success. If merely literary, or otherwise not based on a religious foundation, they have no claim on the parochial clergyman's time and attention. If not definitely adapted to youth, the numbers, however great at first, necessarily fall off, and there is no reserve to provide a perpetual succession.

And while these institutions—interesting and influencing the general parishioners by occasional lectures on popular topics which the local clergy are always able and generally willing to provide—are calculated to elevate and improve the young men by systematic classes for personal instruction, there is another class who ought not

to be lost sight of, I mean the young women. It is not advisable that the younger clergy should themselves form classes for evening instruction for females only; but they may often find Christian ladies, or females of cultivated mind and Christian grace, who will devote one evening in the week to a class of this nature; and such class will always exercise a hallowing as well as a civilizing influ-

ence on its members, if its meetings be commenced by prayer, and closed by the reading of the Scriptures.

Time will not permit me to speak fully on the subject of rewards in schools, whether for adults or children; but my own experience leads me to believe it wholesome to let the rewards, in the Sunday-school at all events, be earned rather than given; viz. to have a system of marks for time, lessons, and conduct; to affix a conventional value to these marks, suit* able to the means at your disposal, and to let their assigned pecuniary value purchase school-books and other rewards at stated seasons.

jBut the culminating point of the pastor's educational efforts is the formation of the Christian character, the development of the lineaments and proportions of Christ in those who are called after His name and baptized into His brotherhood. This cannot be done by any system of rules, or any mere external pressure: it must be drawn out from within, as the very word education implies, and can only be effected by the pastor working in the strength of the Spirit upon souls over whom that Spirit has breathed, who have been thus made plastic beneath the blessed influence of the ministry of the Gospel. Thus are the servants of Christ made fellow-workers with God in the conversion of the old into the new—the

natural into the spiritual man—a hallowed honour!

And now, in closing these hints on educational work in the parish, let me add one word on a sacred duty which frequently under God's blessing gives point and efficiency to all school instruction previously imparted.

The Church's care, which brings us to the font in infancy, and consigns us with hallowed rites to the grave at whatever age we may be called home, has been specially extended to the young in her offices of the Catechism and Confirmation. The mere hard, dry rote-teaching of the former is no preparation for the latter; and when the time for the latter comes, you will have to ascertain that your young brethren are personally and practically imbued with that knowledge of the Christian covenant, creed, obedience, prayer, and the sacraments, which is necessary for every one who is presented to the bishop for imposition of hands. You will find the preparation for that solemn rite one of the most interesting periods of your ministry. Rightly and carefully used, it will carry you into the hearts as well as the homes of your flock, and prove a blessing to parents as well as to children. Spare yourselves therefore no pains in devoting your most active energies to fix the principles of the young at that auspicious season. Confirmation is a meeting-point

for all the theories of the sects, as well as a starting-point for the adult life of the Churchman. Here may be found a development of the idea of election as held by the Calvinist, of conversion as held by the Arminian, of "the ordinance" as held by the Baptist, of admission to membership as held by the Congregation-alist; and here especially is to be found the test of success or failure in your previous school-work in the parish, and the means of building up into our most holy faith the souls of the young committed to your care. Let your school-work among all classes of your parishioners have reference to this seal of the Spirit; and the Spirit in whom, for whom, and through whom your work is done, will bless that work abundantly to the glory of the Triune Jehovah.

LECTURE m.

ON SELF-GOVERNMENT IN THE PASTOR.

My task of to-day is perhaps the most difficult of those assigned me. It touches the inner rather than the outer life of the pastor; and its design is to give you such a sketch as will lead each of you to exercise habitual self-government in the fulfilment of your coming duties. For this there is special need of faith and prayer.

Even if you are deeply imbued with these now, and if love and zeal in addition are daily actuating you, where is the assurance that they will be always sustained ?

The sense of shame and personal humiliation that comes over us in our private communings with God, when we reflect on our shortcomings in the ministry, is too deep and too sacred to be made a subject of record; but I would solemnly warn those who put their hands to the plough how they venture to look back, lest the edict go forth against them, that they be not fit for the kingdom of God.

ON SELF-GOVERNMENT IN THE PASTOR. 27

The wisdom of the wise uttered this sentiment under the law, " He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city V And an inspired Apostle has said, " If a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God*?" These passages prove how essential is the power of self-government to every one called to office in the ministry of the Church; for how can a man rule his house, unless he has first learned to rule himself?

I need not speak of the restraint of desires that are vicious, or in any way opposed to the direct commandments of God. These may be assumed to be already overcome, or you would not dare to present yourselves as vessels to be consecrated for your Master's use in the edification of His Church. I would rather limit myself to those defects of temper, habits, and manners, which so frequently mar the success which might otherwise wait on the ministrations of the clergy.

We all know painfully well what a snare temper is to most of us; and yet, even while knowing and lamenting it, are probably apt to look with too lenient an eye upon our own defects in this particular. But in dedicating ourselves to God's service under His holy call, we are bound to overcome every defect that

i Prov. xii. 32. ■ 1 Tim. iiL 5.

militates against the successful promulgation of the blessed law entrusted to us to inculcate. If one who preaches peace by Jesus

Christ, and exhorts his parishioners to follow the meekness and gentleness of his Master, is himself known to indulge in habitual hastiness and impetuosity; if one who preaches forgiveness, and never enters the pulpit without saying aloud, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us," is known to be at strife and enmity with others; if anger, vindictiveness, or jealousy, break out as visible imperfections in the temper of the pastor; how shall the flock have faith in his sincerity, and confidence in his honesty P

2. Much, too, of pastoral success depends on the habits of mind cultivated and exhibited by the clergyman in his parish. The procrastination that ever defers till to-morrow what ought to be done to-day, should be conquered by a vigorous determination to carry out the maxim, "Directly you find a place or a person in your parish with which or with whom you are unfamiliar, conquer your ignorance." The easiness of the good-natured man who assents to views with which he cannot concur, is a sin against the pure conscientiousness which ought to characterize the minister of Christ; it may be screened under the pretence of imitation of that great Apostle, who "became all things to all men, if that by any means he

might save some," but even this desire, unless carefully watched, is apt to degenerate into a weakness in place of being the embodiment of a principle. The loquacity that will talk without knowledge and reflection is sure to bring discredit in its train; while the silence that an unrestrained and self-indulgent reflectiveness is apt to generate, places the taciturn clergyman under the just imputation of a want of sympathy. Severity of remark, and the un-kindness of sarcasm, are offences against the exemplary charity of Christ; and "idle words" are opposed to the direct teaching of that Scripture which we, of all men, are bound to uphold. Indolence is a snare of Satan especially calculated to entrap those of a soft and amiable disposition, and needs to be combated by that vigour of zeal which alone can compete successfully in the race of souls. If we would "so run that we may obtain," we must bear in mind the stimulus applied by the Apostle to the Corinthians, when illustrating his teaching by the Isthmian competitors, "now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible!"

3. Defects in manner frequently, too, prove impediments to ministerial success; but while you are very careful not to undervalue the influence of manner upon others, be most careful not to become mannerists yourselves. In private intercourse let your tone be

from moroseness and from levity; from sub-servience and from discourtesy. The freedom of the Gospel should be illustrated by the frank honesty which outspeaks all, but only what it feels. Any thing like presumption or haughtiness is as offensive as it is unbecoming; and your bearing, whether in private or in the pulpit, should be that of dignified simplicity and modest assurance. The nervous timidity which characterizes many of the younger clergy in the pulpit must be overcome as a positive fault. Though not equally to be condemned with the over-bold confidence which sometimes offends in others, it is an evidence of want of faith, as well as of want of courage. Our work is a work for God; whatever we speak, we speak in His presence; and if we be not ashamed to compose our sermons in His Name, and to read them before Him, we ought not to be ashamed or afraid to speak them unhesitatingly before our fellow-sinners.

In temper, habits, and manners; in self-denying humility, yet in burning but even chastened zeal; yea, in the entire self-government of the pastor, we have not far to go to look for a perfect pattern. He who is our Saviour as well as the Saviour of those to whom He sends us, is our example in spiritual rule as well as theirs and ours in spiritual obedience: and if that Spirit which was given to Him without measure be duly sought in His name for the



sanctification of our wills, then shall we (and then only may we hope to) "bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ*," and stand forth His acknowledged witnesses to the world in general, and to our own flocks in particular.

It may perhaps be useful to some if I attempt to give such an outline of a day's parochial work as may illustrate the practices of one who

aims at habitual self-government in the discharge of his parochial functions.

Such an one will be no sluggard; and though some variation must be allowed for the difference of constitution, and of previous habits and training, we may suppose his rising to be so early as to give him at least an hour for divine meditation and sacred devotion of a purely private character, in his dressing-room before eight o'clock. At that hour he will probably commence prayer of a more public kind, domestic and social, if he has not the opportunity of daily service in church. Upon this will follow his morning meal, which should for health's sake be not too hasty, and for work's sake not too protracted. At few periods of the day is more time commonly lost than in the lounging-time after breakfast. The pastor will be careful to avoid this; and probably he will make his appointments with his parishioners

* 2 Cor. x. 5.

between the hours of nine and ten, and hold himself open to all comers for advice, guidance, and assistance during that special hour. From ten he will have three hours of uninterrupted study, except on stated days, when the Church services or school visitation require time to be deducted from this period; and at this time he will be storing his mind with the wisdom and experience of those who, having lived by the faith of the Son of God, have left on record their impressions of His sacred Word. Then he will make his notes and sketch those suggestive outlines which will afterwards afford him materials for filling out into regular discourses. Then he will enter into his common-place book memoranda of his reading; and in addition to his thoughts on the earlier ages of the Church, will, side by side, accumulate extracts from the judicious Hooker and the weighty Bull; the spiritual Leigh ton and the classical Donne; the suggestive Joseph Hall and the illustrative Jeremy Taylor; the argumentative Gloucester Ridley and the discursive Burnett; the thoughtful Field and the accurate Spanheim; the learned "Waterland and the careful Hammond ; the logical Pearson and the ingenious Magee, not to mention the crowd of able and instructive writers of still more recent date; and all his reading he will carefully and

accurately square by that one Book, which is the great authority to which his Church defers; which

must be his own first, chief, and central object of study, and which alone "maketh wise unto Salvation," even the canon of Holy Scripture.

With a mind thus strengthened by study, and deepened in its power by acquired wisdom, the pastor will emerge from his library prepared to enjoy an hour of social recreation with his family and friends; or if he be a lonely man, to refresh at once his mind and body with his needful supply of daily bread: and when this hour is past, the afternoon will remind him that it is time to begin his daily walk, combining health and recreation and duty in the fulfilment of a series of visits among his flock.

As the pastor's influence over his assembled congregation can only be secured by a judicious as well as devout exercise of his gifts in public, so must he be thoughtful and careful if he hopes to succeed in gaining spiritual influence over his parishioners in domestic and private ministration.

It has been well observed that "the house-going minister makes the church-going people;" and this witness is true. In the pastor's out-of-door labours from two to five p.m., he will find means, by a judicious distribution of his visits, to see all his parishioners in their turn. He will be careful to make his visits not so short as to seem hurried, and not so long as to be tedious. By visiting at this season of the da[^]

he will not be likely to interfere with the mealtimes or domestic business of the poor,—periods when he should, with scrupulous delicacy, abstain from intruding on their privacy.

On his return home about five o'clock he will be well entitled to an hour's rest for correspondence or refreshment; and after six o'clock it will be advisable for him, as a rule, to devote the remainder of the evening to social and domestic intercourse, and to the enjoyment of lighter than theological literature, with the exception of some two, and occasionally three, evenings in a week, which may be profitably

employed in the work of evening-class teaching of some kind, or to the composition of sermons. Of these latter he will do well not to compose more than one in the course of the week; for if he writes more than he reads, he will soon exhaust his originality, and become tedious and uninteresting to his congregation by a mere repetition of old and familiar ideas.

One word of warning should here be uttered against the too frequent waste of time and strength in habitual evening engagements. The town-pastor should be especially on the watch against this temptation.

When the time for family prayer is past, then will come the opportunity of an hour's careful employment in strict privacy, in devout reflection, and careful summing up of the day's work done for God. Now will the diary be made

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up, and notes of the pastoral work be drawn out; and that not hastily or roughly, but in neat and regular form, easy of reference for any future time.

Such a day as this, my younger brethren, may appear to some of you to require more labour, care, and self-government than you feel yet fully prepared to give; but, believe me, that days like these will be the days of your life that you will look back upon with thankfulness at its close. Happy will it be for you if you never have to write *perdidi diem* in your diary.

It is no long time since one of the Crimean chaplains told me that when lying in imminent danger,—as he then supposed in articulo mortis, though by God's mercy he was saved,—his previous life rose as in a panorama before his mental vision, and of all he recalled, that only seemed of value which had been spent in spiritual and direct communion with God, or in the actual discharge of appointed duty. Let then the close and daily walk with God be ever uppermost in your minds; and remember that a thorough self-government in all things can only be achieved by the subordination of your natural wills to the

revealed will of God, beneath the ever freshening and transforming grace of the Holy Ghost, which is shed abundantly on the seeking believer for Jesus Christ's sake.

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SECOND SERIES.

LECTURE I.

MISSIONS, AND THEIR REFLEX RESULTS IN THE
PARISH.

It may be remembered by some now present, that on a former occasion I endeavoured to lay down the principles and method of pastoral government, and sought to give an outline of parochial educational work, and to lead the youthful pastor into habitual self-control. Having been desired to continue those lectures into another series, I have selected three subjects which will necessarily come under your notice in the future labours that the providence of God opens before you, viz.: 1. Missions, and their reflex results in the parish. 2. Dissent, and the mode of dealing with it. 3. Public Teaching, and Parish Literature.

I ask for your secret prayers, my dear young brethren, that I may have grace to speak wisely, and you to hear profitably, upon these several topics.

In speaking of missions it will be right to

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define what is meant; for it is in a limited sense that the expression is used to-day. Every one has a mission from God. Every living soul impressed with volition may fulfil this mission under God's grace, or fail to fulfil it by yielding himself a servant to Satan through sin.

Beyond the mission which is stamped together with conscience upon every soul ¹, the members of the mystical body of Christ who have been baptized into His death and made partakers of His life ^{*}, have a special mission given them in their new birth to their Father's

¹ Rom. i. 20.—"For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."

Rom. ii. 14, 15.—"When the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another/"

^{*} 2 Cor. v. 15.—"He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again."

2 Cor. v. 17.—"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

Gal. iii. 26, 27.—"Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

Gal. iv. 6, 7.—"Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."

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glory. Their covenant-relationship to God in Christ pledges them to show forth the fruits of the Spirit " in goodness, righteousness, and truth."

And again, beyond this mission which is common to all Christendom, a still more special mission is laid upon those who are called to be the watchmen on the towers of the spiritual Zion, and ordained to exercise the ministry of the Lord Jesus in the Gospel of the grace of God. And yet again, the mission of this ministry is still more narrowly limited and more closely defined, when, with our ordination vows upon us, we are sent into our several parishes to preach to the whole as well as to the sick, to minister in the house and the school as well as the church, to reprove, to rebuke, and to exhort, with all long-suffering and with doctrine, the souls specially consigned to our pastoral cure.

But all this, you will perceive, applies to a personal sense, and a personal fulfilment, of a personal mission. In addressing you as being, or about to become, parish pastors, you will need to be reminded of something more than isolated and mere personal efforts to promote the glory of God.

In her corporate capacity the Church of Christ has received a mission to "preach the Gospel to every creature." In your special mission as office-bearers in parishes, it will be

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your business and duty to develop the corporate power of the Church in those parishes. This corporate power must doubtless first of all be directed to its home-work; it must exhibit itself in loving charity to the young by providing efficient education; in pious care for the sick,

the aged, and the suffering, so that the needs of all are sufficiently supplied; in holy zeal that carries the testimony of the Gospel in warning to the sinner, as well as in cheering comfort to the feeble saint. The graces and charities of the Gospel should, first of all, be developed so as to reach to and touch (in the way of testimony at least) every soul in every parish by the united action of the Church in that parish!

This is the home mission of the Church; this is parochial work as exhibited in its internal organization; this exhibits to men and angels " the Church in the parish," as clearly as St. Paul exhibited to the Colossians and the Laodiceans " the Church in the house" of Nymphas 8 .

But it is morally impossible that the Church can end its work at home, though it is bound to begin there. " Go ye," said the great Founder of the eternal corporation against which the gates of hell shall never prevail, " into all the wrld, and preach the Gospel to every crea-

- CoL to. 15.



ture." But they to whom this commission was given were to " begin at Jerusalem." So now the Church must begin its work within its own boundaries; but so soon as the fluttering motion of the Dove of Grace is felt above the brows of your parishioners, so soon as the radiant light of the Spirit illuminates their hearts and beams through their happier countenances, just so soon will they desire to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives them utterance, and to testify to those who occupy the place of the Gentiles the exceeding grace of God.

The spirit of " mission " is the same, whether it be applied to home or to foreign operations ; but its developments are different according to its application. When applied at home, it teaches us to condense our energies; when applied abroad, it teaches us to expand our sympathies. Now there lies a snare in each of these paths. There is a

powerful centripetal force at work in the one, a centrifugal force in the other; and there is danger to the young and ardent pastor, 1. lest in adopting his parish as his centre, he lose sight of the external relationships of the Church in her missionary vocation; or, 2. lest in spreading his sympathies too widely in the cause of souls perishing at a distance, he be betrayed into neglect of those souls entrusted to his special and personal mission at home.

The antidote to both of these snares is to be found in the pastor's personal faith in, and love to, Christ. If he gravitates to Him as his spiritual Centre, the local centre of a parish will never rob him of his sympathies for souls in the shadow of death; nor will the distraction of sympathies over-indulged ever lead him away from the personal and local mission Christ has laid upon him. The work at home and the work abroad are neither of them ends in themselves. They are only means whereby the glory of God is to be promoted; they are both works for Christ, who is Himself the true Centre and Life of the Christian pastor's being.

Thus much of preface as to missions generally has seemed necessary, lest any should suppose that the mission-work of the Church abroad was to supersede, or even take precedence of, the pastor's mission, or the Church's mission, at home. The object of the former lectures was to show how, in its main features, the latter was to be done. Let me now invite you to consider how best you can aid in doing the former.

There are two great agencies already in operation whereby the National Church seeks to fulfil her missionary work abroad: the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and the Church Missionary Society. These societies have the same end in view, the glory of God in the propagation of



the Gospel of His Son; but they differ somewhat in the point from which they start. The former cherishes more the corporate action and organic formation of the Church; the latter, the personal action and volition of associated individuals in the Church. Both are legitimate channels through which the sanctified will of Christian men and

English Churchmen may act; and the adoption of the one in preference to the other generally indicates the bias of the mind towards corporate or individual action, as the case may be. Their several and distinct, yet common operation, has been thus happily described by one whose judgment we are bound to reverence: "They are the two great arms of the Church; now spreading to the right and to the left the Gospel of Christ, and now joining together in one common effort; now scattering the precious seed of the word of God abroad, now clasped together at home in prayer and praise \"

My mention of these two agencies is not of course to recommend one to the prejudice of the other, but to recommend the object they both have in view; and to show th&t, on whichever side your sympathies may lie, there is a ready agency provided, through which you may promote a missionary spirit among your parishioners. It is not a question of Paul, or Apollos,

4 Bishop of Lincoln's Speech at Nottingham, June 30, 1856.

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or Cephas; but it is a question of working for Christ, that " the heathen may be given Him for an inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for His possession."

No one can compare the history of modern missions with the Book of the Acts of the Apostles without being forcibly struck with the striking parallels they exhibit. Time would not permit me to draw these out at length, but I have noted a few, which I may find other opportunities of advancing, and which appear to me amply sufficient to impress any unprejudiced mind with the fact that the foreign missions of the Church of England have features identical with the early missions of the Church of Christ; and hence, that if it was the duty of the Church then to encourage missions, although at the cost of suffering and martyrdom, so it must be the duty of the Church note ; and so will continue to be, until the Gospel has been preached to every creature.

We come now to the practical question, How is the mission-work to be encouraged in our parishes f

The simplest and most effective plan I believe to be this: for an extended experience has demonstrated that it is calculated to elicit and encourage and sustain a practical and beneficial interest among the people at large.

Let the subject of missions be brought before your congregations from the pulpit at some



suitable season, say at Advent, or Epiphany, or Whitsuntide, and let the principles of missions be laid down and enforced from the Scriptures. It will not be necessary to have a collection upon such an occasion, unless previously desired by members of your congregation; but shortly after the sermon it will be expedient to invite those whose interest in the cause has been aroused, to attend a meeting in which the detailed operations of the National Church's missions may be recited. Either of the great societies will provide clergy applying for them with a deputation to % explain the working of the mission cause, as well as with collecting books and boxes whereby the alms of the parishioners (in the absence of the weekly offertory) may be easily and systematically collected. A meeting once a quarter will enable the parochial clergy, without more than occasional extraneous assistance, to keep their flocks well informed as to the progress the kingdom of Christ is making in its aggression upon heathendom, and its propagation among our too much neglected colonists abroad. Each new meeting will not improbably add one or more new collectors, besides several new subscribers, to the missionary association. It is almost sure to grow when it is once set on foot; and few are they who having learned to take an interest in the missionary cause ever lay it aside! It is felt to be a privilege no less than a duty;

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and zeal and love will urge on the cause which obedience to the command of Christ has once set in motion.

Let me now speak of the reflex results of missions upon the parish itself wherein they are encouraged.

The love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the power of the Holy Ghost flings a light behind as well as before it. The love of missions, as imposed by Christ upon His Church, once encouraged in the soul of Christ's faith-ful members, brings certain benefits upon all who foster it with their gifts. If indeed we ' join in the work merely from our fondness for this or that society, we may fail to find the blessing I speak of; but if our love be for Christ and the glory of His Name, then the society will be a secondary consideration, and only regarded as the instrument whereby we fulfil our duty, not in itself the object of our affection.

Imagine then that you have succeeded in introducing a desire for the propagation of the Gospel abroad into your parish at home. Is it possible that your parishioners who have learnt through you to disseminate Christ's truth to others, will be satisfied with less than Christ's truth themselves P

But it will not merely teach them more to appreciate the love of the Son of God; it will take from them that selfishness of Christian



profession, which acknowledges a personal salvation in the Gospel, and then stands- still so soon as it believes that is secured. It is the attribute of faith to appropriate the promises of the Gospel; but faith must work by love; and if we really have faith to appropriate God's promises in His Son to ourselves, we must have love enough to extend those promises to others. A missionary spirit in a parish brings out this spirit of love in its plenitude; and thus tends to enlarge our views of Christ's abounding mercy, and of His Church's ever expanding and never ceasing responsibility.

And hence you will perceive that the law of brotherhood, which ought to make the redeemed world one in Christ Jesus, finds freer scope in those parishes where a love of missions is encouraged than in those where it is not. Men are led to feel that their true centre is Jesus as the Head of redeemed humanity; not in a locality like a parish, or a geographical division like a nation. The best Christian is the truest cosmopolite; and that, not as undervaluing the hallowed ties of patriotic and local affections, which God has given to twine' together the minuter reticulations of human society; but as seeing and feeling the citizenship in heaven, and therefore being placed far above the more insignificant and merely temporary bonds of earth.

And beyond the enlargement of views and



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conviction of the true centre of all unity, which grow out of a full realization of the mission-work of the Church of Christ, there is a lesser but very practical advantage which accrues to parishes where the love of missions is felt. We live in an age notorious for its divisions. The liberty of spirit which characterizes our country and our day is apt to make us split upon the merest trifles. The ornaments of a church, or the erection of a school, a phrase in preaching, the adjustment of a vestment, or a posture in Divine worship, is in turn seized upon as a cause of division, or remarked on as a ground of suspicion. Now, brethren, if we can show to those who are so ready to criticize us that we regard the inside of truth far more than its outer development,—that our anxiety is not to magnify ourselves or our influence, but to win souls to Christ,—that our strife is a strife against Satan and sin, and not against a party or an opinion,—that our zeal is for God and not for man, for eternity and not for to-day,—surely in doing this we set before the eyes of our people so high and noble an object, that all petty differences fade away in its pursuit, even as lesser fires perish in the presence of the sun. O believe me that an enlarged love, a stronger hope, a livelier faith, and a purer zeal, are all encouraged in those parishes where the

mission of the Church is understood, and its fulfilment aimed at by pastor and people in happy union.

I feel bold in saying that your home exertions in the cause of Christ and His Church will never suffer the loss of what is offered to the Lord in His cause abroad; for this is the grace which in a special sense "scattereth and yet increaseth," and while it "watereth others, is," by its reflex results, "watered also itself."

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LECTURE II

DISSENT, AND THE MODE OF DEALING WITH IT.

The mode of dealing with Dissent as exhibited in our parishes, is frequently a matter of great delicacy and difficulty to a young pastor. I believe the practical solution of the problem to lie in marking the distinction clearly in our own minds between Dissent and Dissenters. It is certainly no part of my duty to apologize for non-conformity, or separation from the National Church as such. I do not see how any one can read Ephesians iv., 1 Corinthians xii., Romans xii., xiii., and fail to trace therein the duty of clinging to the Church as an united body; and that to rend it is contrary to the purpose of God. Nor do I see how any one can study the course of history, and fail to acknowledge that the National Church, whereof we, by God's grace, are members, if not ministers, is a true and living branch of the holy Universal Church of Christ. But seeing that there are many Christian men of undoubted honesty, as well as undoubted personal piety, who do decline to con-

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form to the National Church, we are bound in charity to assume that they see cause for their non-conformity, though we do not. Many of these, moreover, have now been for generations trained and educated in divergence from, if not hostility to, the principles which are cherished as true by us. They have been regularly and carefully taught to regard the National Church as a mere establishment, or the

creation of an act of Parliament; and it would be unreasonable in us to expect that they should all at once give up prejudices that have practically grown into convictions, merely because we in our ministrations tell them that we hold them in error.

First of all, then, in our dealings with Nonconformists, let us very clearly distinguish between Dissent and Dissenters. Let us, in all simplicity and honesty, declare the error in principle that stamps disunion, "God is the God of order, not of confusion." But at the same time, let us deal with the largest charity toward those who, through education or other circumstances, have adopted the error our Church condemns.

We are indeed bound to contemplate this subject, not only in a spirit of charity towards others, but in deep humiliation ^a* regards ourselves. Those of us who have laboured long in the ministry are personally conscious of such painful shortcomings, that we may reasonably

suspect ourselves of having sometimes aided the prejudices of non-conformity by our own personal failure in duty. And if this be true (as it is) of many who pass through their work with the average amount of personal fidelity, and it may be even of personal success, how much more powerfully must its truth be illustrated in the case of those who have been manifestly deficient in the performance of the solemn duties of the ministry? There are in this Church of England many parishes where it is ^{*} impossible for the pastor to feed all his flock with spiritual nutriment, sometimes from population, sometimes from extent of area; but, alas! there are many more where the attempt is not made as it should be; where the means of grace are not offered to the laity as they should be; where coldness usurps the throne of love, and indifference quenches the fire of zeal. ^{*} When therefore we examine into the causes of Dissent, and find that the neglect of duty in the pastors of the Church is not the least prominent among them, that apathy, indiscretion, partisanship, covetousness, self-indulgence, and sin in various shapes among ourselves, have frequently stimulated division among those who might have been attracted by holy and zealous love, we cannot but acknowledge that a portion at least of the sin of schism rests upon

those within the Church, who have repelled a yearning though eccentric faith from its boundaries,

as well as on those without, who in restlessness and discontent have withdrawn themselves from its influence.

This, I think, is true of the present as well as of former generations; but even more of palliation than this may be found for those around us who have inherited and been trained in the non-conformity they profess. Had the Church # and her ministry always been faithful to the high vocation laid upon them, there never could have been any ground whereon religious men could erect a system of non-conformity.

I say religious men: for it is important to draw a second distinction beyond that already noticed in reflection on this subject. Dissent is of two kinds; religious and political. The latter is essentially schismatical and frequently seditious. The former is never seditious, and only accidentally schismatical.

From religious Dissent the National Church, as representing the body of Christ in these realms, has nothing, and can have nothing to fear; but has many souls to reclaim to her own more excellent way. From political Dissent the National Church, as an establishment, may have much to fear. But as it is not in a political but religious sense we have to consider the question,—being engaged in a warfare whose weapons are not carnal,—as in fact we are called not to be establishmentarians, but -members of, and ministers in, the mystical body

of Christ, we have nothing to fear from Dissent.

This may be contrary to the preconceived notions of some. But observe, the stronghold of Dissent is to be found in these two elements, ignorance and self-will. Ignorance perishes beneath knowledge, and self-will is sanctified into obedience when it is absorbed into the mind of Christ. The service that aimed at mastery requires only to learn that the mastery it sought is rebellion, and its subordinated self a perfect freedom: it will then gladly cherish and

use the powers it formerly despised, and walk in grateful happiness in the path ordained for its exercise.

In my last Lecture I had occasion to refer to the twofold nature of Church life—its corporate and personal elements. Dissent ignores the former, and cherishes only the latter. Standing upon the ground of the relationship that subsists between God and the individual soul, it knows not how to translate into any intelligible meaning that beautiful passage in the Epistle to the Ephesians, iv. 12—16, which speaks of visible unity and an edified body on earth, in the perfect manhood of the Church, under the Headship of Christ. The Dissenters' point of view only enables them to see God as a Spirit sanctifying the soul; and clouds that ennobling view of the Holy and Undivided Trinity which in the Word, and Church, and Sacraments of

God is so beautifully revealed. They can see no reproduction or visible representation of the mystery of the incarnation in the grace of the new birth into the body of Christ; they trace no renewal of the power of the atonement in the commemorative reception of the blessed elements whereby we feed by faith on the body and blood of Christ, and are made one in Him and He in us. God forbid that we should deny to them the exercise of individual faith in their life and actions; but the experience of history warrants us in asserting that their system is utterly insufficient to guarantee to posterity the security in its integrity of the faith once delivered to the saints.

How then, we come next to inquire, how are we to deal with Dissent as we find it in our parishes ?

First of all, we must be fully persuaded in our own minds of the reality of our Church's mission, and our own as her ministers. Then, in the strength of the Spirit who has called and sealed us to His service, let us go forth with the word of God in our hands, the authority of the Church in our lips, and the love of Christ and all mankind in our hearts. We meet with those who tell us that though we go to church and they to chapel there is no difference between us. Is it charity to agree with them? My belief is that it is neither charitable nor honest. We are bound to assert a

difference, or to condemn ourselves for not sympathizing with all they say and do. If there is no difference, there ought to be no division.

At the same time, while we assert the difference that exists between the Church and the sects, we must be careful to make two points very clear to those who separate from us: viz. 1. that we hold that difference ourselves as a point of conscience; and 2. that we hold it in a spirit of charity, allowing to them that latitude on the point of conscience which we claim for ourselves.

The Church will never fulfil her mission by mere dogmatism. The assertion of her ministers that they hold authoritative jurisdiction over Dissenters in their parishes will never make one Dissenter the less. But if Nonconformists are made to feel the gentle, loving, ministering, soul-caring influences of the Church—whether they attend her public ministrations or not—they will soon learn to acknowledge her living and hallowing power. The Church of Christ is built upon suffering, not upon assumption. There are no anathemas used as bricks in her building. The power of excommunication she possesses is designed to be reserved for sin, not to be wantonly exercised against mistakes. The spirit of cursing is far from her gentle bosom. The spirit of love ¹

¹ Some of the Canons of 1603 are painful exceptions to these assertions.

hallows her every thought, and influences her every action.

If in this spirit of love—pure, self-denying, holy, and zealous love—you set about your work with the Non-conformists of your parish, you will find that you will secure their respect by your conscientiousness and firmness, while you win their affection by your zeal and kindness. You will endeavour to deal with Dissent rather by attraction and absorption than by antagonism; and though the process will necessarily be slow, you will not find it the less efficacious in the end.

We know that truth expels error in the moral world, just as light destroys darkness in the material world. But Dissent is not all dark, nor all erroneous. It has its particles of truth and light, though they are mixed up with much that is wrong. Now if it be your object to set forth in all their fulness and beauty before the eyes of Dissenters the harmony and proportions of the Gospel — the doctrines of Providence, and of Regeneration, as revealed by the Son of God for our guidance and sancti-fication ; the power of the Creator, the love of the Redeemer, the grace of the Sanctifier; the atonement of the cross, the pledges of the covenant; the death unto sin, the new birth unto righteousness; the necessity of holiness, the instrumental efficacy of faith; the corporate life of the Church as the body of Christ,

visibly united in and through the sacraments ordained by Himself; the personal life of the Churchman as a member of Christ vivified by the indwelling Spirit of his Lord!—if these be set forth by each of you as a minister of the Gospel, with all authority and in all humility, then you will find that the true particles of Dissent (be they more or fewer) will be attracted and absorbed into the Church, while the false particles will be precipitated and evaporate. Its errors will fade away and disappear before the full blaze of the light of truth, tabernacled in the lamp of love.

It is not an easy task to fulfil all the duties implied in what has been said. In dealing with mere political Dissenters, your indignation may sometimes be roused; in dealing with religious Dissenters, your forbearance may sometimes be taxed. But if you keep your own principles steadily in view before you, your • indignation will never lead you into wrath or evil-speaking, and your forbearance, whenever called forth, will readily respond. We are called to be brethren of Him who " when He was reviled reviled not again; when He suffered threatened not, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." He hath " left us an example that we should follow His steps," and when we are tried as He was we must " go and do likewise *."

* An instance has very recently come to my knowledge Of a

Some perhaps may be indisposed to follow the line now recommended, because it does not at once denounce the sin of division, and encourage a crusade against it as opposed to the words of the Gospel and the authority of the Church. In answer to this I would simply say, Let the Church and her ministers prove their authority by the superiority they exhibit! If you have reason to believe that a dissenting minister in your parish preaches well, give

dissenting teacher in this diocese going into a clergyman's house and telling his servants " that the Church clergy did nothing for conversion; that they never converted a single soul/' What would be your conduct in such a case ? Perhaps you think, like Jonah, that you would " do well to be angry." Nature certainly would lead us to feel anger at a remark alike uncharitable and unjust. But it strikes me the first lesson conveyed to the clergyman's mind by such a remark should be to examine well into the spiritual state of his own household, to see that they, at least, were all walking in the condition of Merctvoxa—the grace of a true and spiritual conversion—so that no member of his own family should give any " occasion to the enemy to blaspheme." " The godly man, he shall be my servant: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight." Then let him carry the aspersion as a healing stimulant in his bosom. Let him go forth watchful, gentle, zealous, persevering among his flock; let him test the truth or falsehood of the remark by the lives of his parishioners. Let him work and pray, and labour and not faint, until he is able to say of all his people, " The seal of my apostleship are ye in the Lord." This will be the true answer to the accusation. He may keep his anger till he has proved the fidelity of his ministry: and when his success proves this, he will find his heart so full of gratitude to God, and of charity to his fellow-sinner, that no place for wrath will be found.

yourself no rest till you preach, better! Is he active among the poor P Be more active yourself. Is he a good superintendent of his schools P Be a better superintendent of your own. Does he teach truth mixed with error P Be careful yourself to teach truth in its simplicity and integrity. God and the law have placed you on a platform above him. You will shame God and the law if you permit him to exercise greater influence than you can exercise! The Church has given you a commission such as he does not even profess to hold. . You will

shame both your Church and your commission if your influence is inferior to his 3 .

But in all the emulation that may be excited in your bosom, beware of admitting a single spark of bitterness or personal enmity. All your work is for the God of love. It is only in love you may contend.

To sum up all the strife to which the ministry of the Gospel of God are called in the National Church is a strife against Satan,

* Baxter's Reformed Pastor, ch. ii. s. iv. 1.—" The best way to silence such usurping teachers is for those to whom it be-longeth to do it themselves so diligently, that the people may not have need to go a begging; and to do it judiciously and affectingly, that a plain difference may appear between them and usurpers, and that other men's works may be shamed by theirs; and also by the adding of holy lives and unwearied diligence, to high abilities, to keep up the reputation of their sacred office, that neither seducers, nor tempted ones, may fetch matter of temptation from our blemishes or neglects."

not against man. Let every soul in your parish be very dear to you. Strive in prayer for every one. Set an example in your own person to every one. Let your own " repentance whereby you forsake sin"—your own " faith whereby you believe the promises of God"—your own " perfect charity with all mankind"—be patent to all. Let your preaching, your teaching, your pastoral visitation, your social conversation, all mark you as a man of God, and then the sons of the Church will love you, the enemies of the Church will respect you, Dissenters will bring their children to be taught by you, and—even if for their own lifetime they remain Dissenters—will cease to perpetuate Non-conformity, where the beauty of holiness is exhibited in the ministry and Church of Christ.

LECTURE HI.

PUBLIC TEACHING, AND PARISH LITERATURE.

It is with much diffidence that I offer a few remarks on a subject which has been treated by such men as Burnet, and Baxter, and Patrick, in former days; and Abp. Sumner, and Professor Blunt, and other distinguished writers in our own; but our usefulness as parochial ministers is so intimately woven with the exercise of our gift of preaching, that I dare not altogether pass it over in silence.

And first of all I would earnestly implore you never to degrade what St. Paul calls the " grace given " of " preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ " into any mere intellectual exercise. Do not undervalue the powers of mind in your composition. Employ your intellect in the work faithfully; but use it as a servant called in to obey the master's behest; do not stoop to it, as though it had a power to act independently of your own believing and sanctified will.

The Scriptures teach the ministry of Christ to look upon their power of teaching as a gift. " Having gifts differing according to the grace that is given us," writes St. Paul *, " whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation." This gift, as he himself possessed it, he only valued as it was "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power*;" and so he urges his brethren at Corinth 4 , who had " received the Spirit of God," to speak "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." Again, in alluding to his own case, he left a legacy to all ministers of Christ when he said, " Though I preach the Gospel I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel •! " The twelfth and fourteenth chapters of 1 Corinthians enforce the same doctrine throughout; the fourth chapter of Ephesians corroborates it; while even the largest measure of success in the exercise of this gift is shown • to be no ground of boasting, but the spirit is chastened and humbled by the exhortation, " He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." To quote the words of St. Peter, "If any man speak, let him speak as the

* Rom. xii. 6, &c. » 1 Cor. ii. 4. 4 1 Cor. ii. 12,13. • 1 Cor. ix. 16. • 2 Cor. x. 13—16.

oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever!"

With a reflection like this prominently set before us, you will not be surprised at my cautioning you not to be content with any uninspired model that may be recommended for your imitation. "It is no small matter," writes Baxter, "to stand up in the face of a congregation and deliver a message of salvation or damnation as from the living God in the name of our Redeemer. It is no easy matter to speak so plain that the ignorant may understand us; and so seriously that the dearest hearts may feel us; and so convincingly that contradicting cavillers may be silenced." You may indeed gain hints whereby you may improve your gifts from many; but be not satisfied by becoming the copyists of any one. If you wish to preach with success, strive to apprehend fully, and to express clearly, the mind of Christ. Aim at preaching like your Master, so that "all men shall wonder at the gracious words which proceed out of your mouth." Endeavour, like St. Paul, faithfully to "preach Jesus and the Resurrection." like Apollos, strive "mightily to convince the gainsayers,

7 Befrmed Pastor, ch. ii. s. ir.

showing by the Scriptures that Jesus is Christ'," and, like him too, be "mighty in the Scriptures \ " Like St. Peter, encourage fresh witnesses to come forward and declare their faith; preach from the prophets; announce the Resurrection ; herald the coming of the day of the Lord. Like the same zealous Apostle and his loving colleague, "obey God rather than men " in your teaching. Like Philip, explain the old covenant by the new, and illustrate the new by the old. Like Stephen, be ready, if need should be, to witness unto death for Him who gave up His life for you!

The great principles upon which the exercise of our gift of preaching should be based, appear to me to be these : faith, obedience, and the sense of responsibility. God calls us to His service, and gives us authority to minister in His Name 1 : we believe and obey. God bestows on us the power, and invests us with the duty of preaching the Gospel of His grace to our perishing, yet redeemed fellow-

sinner: we who receive this power, and this call of duty, are bound to consecrate our moral, intellectual, and physical faculties to the development of the former, and the discharge of the latter. The flocks to whom God sends us, that we may feed them, need instruction in right-

• Acts xviii. 28. " • Acts xviii. 24.

1 On the work of the ministry, see Baxter's Christian Ecclesiastics, ch. vi. s. 4, pp. 108,109.

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eousness, exhortation against evil and to holiness, guidance in the way of the life of Jesus: we are pledged by the vows of our ordination, and the commission given to us through our chief pastor in Christ, to supply them with all these needs. " We are ambassadors for Christ as though God did beseech men by us. We pray them in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God! o

Of the weight of the responsibility thus laid upon us I need not now speak; you are all feeling it keenly; but for your future guidance I would remind you that in the exercise of the gift of preaching the impress of The Mediator rests upon you. Like him who of old stood between the dead and the living and stayed the plague, you have to stand, in delivering the message of the Gospel, between the living author and finisher of your faith, and a people dead in trespasses and sins. Your mission is to stay the progress of sin, and to announce pardon and life to the awakened sinner. Some of you, perhaps, may think this too harsh a view of your mission, addressed as it is to a redeemed and covenanted people who "were sometime darkness," but are now "light in the Lord;" but let me remind you of the solemn Scripture truths, that " whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all ;" * that " the soul that sinneth, it shall die;" that " death is the wages of sin;" and " that death

th passed upon all men, in that all have

sinned." Therefore your message is "Repent, and believe the Gospel;" "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish!"

Is it not true, then, that the impress of the Mediator rests upon you while making known the riches of heaven* to ransomed, though still sin-stained, earth ? The very business of the Christian preacher is mediation; but, oh, if in its sterner impress the shadow of the Mediator is sometimes cast upon you, remember that you have the happiness of sharing His brightness too! Yours is not merely a mission of warning, or of a threatened condemnation; it is also a message of light and life. Though in its exercise you must strive to awaken, yea, and to keep in view the solemn darkness of a conviction of sin, still through this gloom the rays of pardoning love must break; and few more blessed privileges are vouchsafed to man on earth, than to him who is permitted to know that the mission of Jesus is fulfilled to individuals through his lips, and that by the faithful use of his gifts the balm of pardon has dropped upon an awakened penitent; a suffering and believing soul!

With the Bible in your hand, and its truths in your heart, you can never be at a loss for subjects of public teaching; but it may be prudent to caution the young preacher not to assume or presuppose too much knowledge or information on the part of his hearers. Never



let a fondness for declamation on principles yon yourself know well induce you to allow your flocks to remain in ignorance of that which they know not. Though we live in a professed age of enlightenment and progress, the world is a wonderfully ignorant world still; and just as John the Evangelist thought it necessary to inform his Gentile disciples that " the passover " was " a feast of the Jews," though the words were to seem a mere iteration to so many thousands since, so you will find it wise to inform the minds as well as to rouse the heart* of your several flocks; and to give them elementary lectures on history, doctrines, and local customs, as well as expositions of the

deeper mysteries of the faith, and illustrations of spiritual life drawn from the Scriptures of truth.

As a matter of practical experience, and attended by a marked amount of blessing, I may mention that a course of expository lectures on the Old and New Testament, a single lecture only being devoted to each Book, has been found to be of great benefit. In parts of the country where education has not been cultivated, very little is known of the gradual nature of Divine Revelation; and an utter ignorance exists of the connexion between the Patriarchal, Mosaic, and Christian periods. It has been well remarked, by a statesman of the day J , that

' Mr. DTsraelL

though " Judaism would have been incomplete without Christianity, Christianity would have been incomprehensible without Judaism." And the question asked by one of our divines may be fresh in the recollection of some of you, "What is the Old Testament? The Gospel predicted. What is the New ? The Law fulfilled." The mutual relation of these two great parts of the Bible is well worthy of clear elucidation and frequent reference in your public teaching; but while you seek to interest the best trained mind and the subtlest intellect among your hearers, you should be careful to exhibit a simplicity in your mode of stating the question which shall make your meaning intelligible to the least educated as well.

To secure this result you should aim always at a clear arrangement of your subject-matter, your sentences should be brief, your language simple, your arguments not too complex, your statements of doctrine straightforward, your illustrations copious, and taken from subjects familiar to your hearers.

As to a choice of words, you must remember that teachers must never cease to be learners themselves. If you are much in converse with your humbler parishioners, and much among the children of your schools, you will gather from them what words are, and what words are not " signs of ideas " to them; and while, under a due sense of the dignity of your mission, you



will refrain from the indiscriminate use of provincialisms, you will soon learn to frame your discourse to their profit, and avoid that kind of eloquence which would convey only "uncertain sounds" to those to whom you are to utter the clear and definite notes of the Gospel-trumpet.

To ensure freedom and ease in the delivery of your sermons, their repeated perusal will be necessary before preaching them; and they should be read once, at least, if not twice, aloud, so that your sentences may be under perfect command, and your voice sustained to the close. A sermon may be excellent in itself, and yet if clumsily or laboriously delivered, or if merely read from your book, and not preached to the understandings of the people, may utterly fail to arouse the conscience, or even awaken the interest of your flock.

It may be desirable to classify your public teaching of sacred truth in threefold form, viz. under the heads of sermon, lecture, and exposition. The first should be not only arranged with method, but composed with great care: the two latter may be delivered from notes more or less copious, or extemporaneously; but never without thoughtful previous preparation. It will be highly useful to acquire, if you do not already possess it, an aptitude for lecturing and expounding without a book before you; but when acquired, be careful

never to let it be a snare to preach ill-digested thoughts in hasty words. God requires, and your people deserve, the best instruction you are capable of imparting; and you must never spare your own labour in arranging in the best possible shape the matter you have to impart to them. Above all, bear in mind the instructive axiom, "Bene praedicasse, est bene orasse;" and fail not, therefore, to seek in persevering prayer an increase of power to use your "gift" of delivering God's message more and more profitably; and however graciously your prayers may be answered, never forget your humility, nor lose sight of the fact that in preaching, you are obeying a Master who not only sends you on a mission of grace, but is ever standing near you to see how that mission is fulfilled.

The preaching of the word of God is not, however, the only public teaching which pertains to the parochial clergyman. In days when the printing-press is used as an agent for disseminating evil as well as for heralding truth, it behoves the pastor to exercise a careful discrimination in directing parish literature. His position as a man of education, refinement, and intelligence, indicates his fitness (and this is especially true of rural districts) to influence the mind and guide the taste of others; while his office as the parish priest calls upon him to see that the literary food provided for the

mental nutriment of his flock is consistent with the principles of the Christian faith, and the practice of public, social, and personal morality.'

This, of course, assumes his working upon a lower platform than that which theology assigns him: but the example of Paul, both at Lystra and at Athens, seems to me clearly to justify this partial descent from his elevated position as a teacher of direct revelation. The sympathies of humanity should never be forgotten in the dignity of the priesthood; and he is usually the most effective pastor who interweaves (within due limits) the social amenities of the man with the gifts and graces of the minister.

But while the office of the public teacher touches thus the mental, moral, and social, as well as the spiritual life of his people, it is by no means desirable that he should arrogate to himself an autocratic power in directing the literature of the parish wherein he works. If he associates himself with intelligent and right-minded laymen, his part in the work will be rather that of the leavener than the dictator. He may encourage the formation, and exercise a due and discreet influence in the selection of libraries, such as will touch the different classes of society within the field of his ministration. He may wisely take part in the arrangement and delivery of lectures on historical, scientific, and literary topics. He may make it a careful

study how most effectually to store the pack of his colporteur or book-hawker, and how to draw up a popular and useful selection of books for school or village reading. The religious tracts put in systematic circulation through his district visitors and distributors,

will of course emanate exclusively from himself; but of the literary part, he may satisfy himself with merely a general power of recommendation and supervision. The influence he thus exercises, though of course less direct than that which flows from preaching the Gospel, will yet have no mean effect in preventing too great a "conformity with this world," and in aiding what St. Paul calls the "transformation" of the body, "by the renewing of the mind 8."

Imperfectly as these thoughts on public teaching and parish literature have been thrown together, I yet trust they may have some influence in fixing on your minds a sense of the importance and responsibility of the former in a spiritual, and of the probable influence of the latter in a moral point of view. God has given to each of us a mind as the seat of judgment, and a heart as the seat of affection, as well as a soul which is the seat of being; and we are bound not only to seek the sanctification of these in our own persons, for the proper fulfilment of our mission as ministers of the Gospel, but also to strive by every means in our

3 Rom. xii. 2.

power to secure their sanctification in the persons of our parishioners, that they and we together may "glorify God in our bodies as in our spirits, which are God's."

And now, in drawing this series of lectures to a conclusion, let me briefly remind you of the design kept in view in their preparation. This has been to impress upon you who are entering upon parochial work,—

1. That no parish is complete without some missionary organization, whereby it may extend to others those "good tidings of the grace of God," which are the chief source of its own internal peace and joy and harmony.
2. That the work of the Church is not done in any parish so long as Dissent finds justifiable matter to feed a grievance upon; and,

3. That your own mission as Priests and Deacons of the Church of England remains unfulfilled till the whole mind of God, as revealed in His word, be laid out broadly and intelligibly before your parishioners by the aid of sermon, lecture, and exposition; and farther (if their condition of intellect and morals so require), their minds be supplied with a stream of pure and edifying literature.

If the blessing of our Heavenly Father (which has been devoutly sought) has rested on this design and its fulfilment, neither my lecturing, nor your listening will have proved in vain.

THIRD SERIES.



LECTUEE L

SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHING.

In resuming the course of lectures I have been desired to prepare, with the view of aiding you in your pastoral work, I can scarcely commence the present series more profitably than by reminding you of those twelve necessary concomitants of the ministerial duty laid down by one of the greatest and most practical of the writers of the seventeenth century *. These are, self-denial, labour, prudence, definite doctrine, plainness in speech, prayer, humility, an union of severity and mildness, zeal, spirituality, love for souls, and, lastly, patience. Truly we may say to the parish pastor of these, as St. Peter said to his converts of his own summary of Christian graces, "If these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

When speaking on a former occasion of "educational work in the parish/" I was compelled to dismiss very cursorily the subject of Sunday-school teaching. It is, however, deserving of more copious treatment than I was then able to bestow upon it.

It must be obvious to every thoughtful mind that the teaching of the Church in the parish on the Lord's Day must be painfully imperfect,

if it be limited to two sermons from the pulpit. With the utmost care and pains it is very difficult to render the teaching designed for adults of interest to children. The strong meat intended to nourish them that are of full age, is altogether a different thing from the milk which is fit for babes.

The National Church has indeed foreseen and provided in a measure for this difficulty, by her rubric on catechizing; and obedience to this rubric would help to meet it.

Even, however, where public catechizing is carried out, there are few who have the requisite gift to enable them to reach through its means the whole of the children under their pastoral care; and we cannot but be grateful that, half a century ago, the minds of devout men were stirred up to make the Lord's Day a day of loving work wherein the lambs of Christ might be gathered in increased numbers into His fold, and nourished with the sincere milk of His Word.

Nor is the importance of the Sunday-school by any means limited to its declared end of training the young in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. It is an agency beautifully adapted to bring together in union and harmony, and in a work of Christian love, those whom the conventionalities of the world might otherwise keep absolutely separated. The division of society into separate and distinct classes, leads almost necessarily to an estrangement of their affections, the one from the other. It is the business and privilege of the Church to find meeting-points whereby the common life of all in Christ may be exhibited and centralized upon Himself; and when the family of the noble, the gentle, and the simple, are found taking a common part in the common work of teaching the young for Christ's sake, there is found an illustration of the true cement which binds the Church into one, and strives to bind the children of the world into its hallowed union—the cement of Christian love! The upper and middle classes in any neighbourhood may thus be brought nearer to one another in teaching, while the humbler are brought nearer to both of them in learning, in the Sunday-school.

I ask you, then, to realize to yourselves some of the useful fruits to which you may look forward in your future parishes, by organizing

where they are not, and by superintending and

improving where they do exist, parochial and district Sunday-schools. Some of you may not know how to organize such an institution in your parish. A few brief hints on this head may be useful.

Assemble your school not less than one hour and a half before morning service, and not less than one hour before afternoon service.

Open the morning school with prayer, and the afternoon with singing. Let all your teaching be of a directly Scriptural character. Arrange your classes so as never to give more than twelve to a single teacher, and not more than eight if you can find teachers enough.

Let your own part be rather that of a superintendent than class teacher; and encourage your teachers to look to you for an occasional quarter of an hour's teaching in their several classes, on any subject in which you can be of practical help to them.

Let the discipline be milder, but not less real than that of your day-school.

And now (1), note, first, how the regularity and order and loving discipline of the institution promotes, and in the cultivation of the rising, secures through future generations, the observance of the Lord's Day. The hallowed ordinance of God which "sets one day out of seven apart, that it may be kept holy to Himself/" has, like many other blessings, been converted into a curse to many through the malice

of Satan. To the man whose life is alien from God,—who has no sense of his true "life being hid with Christ in God,"—Sunday is either the dullest or the wickedest day of the seven. Indolence and active vice are the two special emissaries of the devil which strive for mastery on that day; and if either the one or the other prevail in the heads of a family, how can the children be expected to be trained in the service of God? But if you look well after the children of your parishes, and enlist the sympathies of lay members of your flock of the upper and

middle classes to aid you, the Sunday may be made to the rising generation the happiest as well as the holiest day of the week. Many a parent, too, who had in listless indolence passed his former Sabbaths, will be led practically to reverence the day when he sees his own little ones marching with happy face to the Lord's house, accompanied by a cheerful band of young compeers, and led by their pastor and teachers to worship God with an holy worship!

A very touching instance of this occurred to me in my own parish : " Ah, sir," said the old bellringer of my church to me, as we stood between the death-bed of his daughter and the sick bed of his wife, " I little thought ever to see the sight that gladdens me every Sunday, when you and the teachers come up under the church trees bringing your large little flock

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every morning." The dead daughter at twenty years of age had never been to school at all; the sick wife had been a most negligent churchgoer ; and while he thought with sorrow, and I believe with shame, of the past, he looked forward for the rising generation to a better observance of the Lord's Day through the medium of the Sunday-school!

2. Note, next, how the souls of the children are won to the service of Christ by the specially attractive nature of the Sunday-school teaching. In every day-school there must necessarily be a large amount of formality. The child belongs more to his class than to his teacher; perhaps more to the school than either. But in the Sunday-school, where the classes are smaller, the teachers more numerous, and the subjects taught more addressed to the heart than to the head, to the affections than the intellect, there the child belongs to the teacher more than to his class or his school; and he feels by the self-devotion displayed, that in a sense the teacher belongs to him. A feeling of communion between the teacher and taught is here strikingly developed; they stand as it were hand in hand and heart to heart on the same Rock, and that Rock is Christ.

3. Observe, again, how often the attachment formed by the Sunday-scholar to his teacher serves as a sort of Baptist to the mission of Christ to his home. Parents who are inac-

cessible to the ordinary clergyman or district visitor, are perfectly ready to receive a visit from the teacher whom their child loves; and even where this alliance does not take place, many a Scripture truth learned by the child at the Sunday-school is brought home to the parent's heart when most needed, and the infant glorifies God by becoming a missionary (though sometimes an unconscious one) to his negligent parent!

4. Another effect of Sunday-schools is the closer and more affectionate union in Christ which is generated between the clergy and teachers. From domestic or social circumstances beyond the control of either, there are many young people in the parish whom the pastor could scarcely ever see for the purpose of holding personal conversation, but for their attendance as teachers in Sunday-schools; in town parishes this is especially the case. But how vast is the advantage to society, when a number of the young of both sexes, shortly perhaps to take their station as the heads of growing families, are thus led to partake in the personal and kindly guidance, as well as the pastoral admonition, of their parish priest! The holy devotion they witness in his teaching gives an influence of sanctity to their own; and they are strengthened in the performance of their duty to others, while they have ready

access for advice and sympathy to him who faithfully discharges his duty to them!

5. And this union of feeling and action between clergy and teachers is immensely increased, if (as has been already recommended in a previous lecture) the parish pastor devotes an evening in the week to prepare his teachers by special indoctrination for the school-work of the ensuing Sunday. One hour's close and direct teaching of any Scriptural subject judiciously selected, will fill the teachers' notebooks, and store their minds with sufficient matter to teach their children through the day. An unity of design will thus pervade the whole school. The teachers will compare their notes one with

another, and what one has lost another will be able to supply. The children, as they go home from school, or during the week, will talk to one another on the several versions they have received of the same truth; and thus a series of doctrines, and of illustrative Scriptural teaching, will be impressed on their minds and memories, which will teach them to love the Bible in their youth, and prepare them for making its teaching attractive to their own children when they grow to be parents themselves!

6. There arises also this farther advantage from this especial mode of teaching. The teachers receive a practical lesson in the art

of teaching which improves them; and then they bring out in a lively form, thoroughly intelligible to their children, that instruction which, imparted by the clergyman, would have assumed something of a formal or professional character. Those of us who have been only accustomed to well-conducted schools, and the intelligent children whose wits have been sharpened by constant intercommunication in towns, are sometimes startled to find the utter density of the fog that envelopes the latent mind of rustic childhood. The children do not understand the words we use; they know not the places of which, nor the persons of whom, we speak; they require a medium of interpretation before they can apprehend the ideas we desire to convey. The taught Sunday-school teacher is that medium; and the clear and plain teaching of the pastor, filtered through the mind of the teacher, and reproduced in forms of language to which they are accustomed, becomes at once more acceptable and more profitable to the children. The life-blood of the Gospel thus infused, circulates through the veins of the teachers, and warms and invigorates every class with the sense of the love of God

7. Another beneficial result flowing from the Sunday-school is the increased reverence for the home of God in the parish. In some parishes the school is taught in the church; but

this is very undesirable. It is too much to expect that young children can sustain their attention without intermission for three and sometimes nearly four hours: and it almost always happens that, where the school is taught in the church the spirit of reverence

rather declines than increases. But where they are taken from school to church, as to the house of God, and the active teaching gives place to the calm and holy scene of united and orderly worship within its sacred precincts, the change, while it affords relief to the young body, stimulates the spirit of reverence in the young mind: and divine service encourages reverence for the house, just as the sacred teaching cultivates a happy recognition of the day that is consecrated to the Lord!

8. And note thus how a seal of sanctification is set upon the teaching of the week. Creeds and catechisms and dogmatic teaching, have not been forgotten or omitted in the national school: probably explanatory and illustrative Scriptural teaching have found their place there too; but the mutual study for mutual edification of the practical life and personal teaching of Jesus, and of those holy men who spake in the Scriptures as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,—these subjects (brought before their minds by teachers who, living in the world, show they are not of the world) realize more than any mere dogmatic teaching to

loving children's minds, the glorious fact of their sonship of God; their membership with Christ the Son of God; their unity in the Spirit of God; and the sure inheritance to the faithful among them of the kingdom of heaven throughout eternity!

9. Hence flows another result—a natural, if not a necessary result. These young learners gradually become qualified to be teachers themselves ! The seed now sown brings forth spiritual fruit in the next succeeding generation. Not only has the wounded and dying warrior of recent war recalled again and again with gratitude on the gory field of death the collects and the lessons of his pastor and Sunday-school teacher; but the young pupil of one generation has become the steady and life-long teacher of succeeding generations. Few great principles have shown more rapid growth and expansion (and expansion is the truest test of life) than that of Sunday teaching in Christ's name! At the commencement of this century Sunday-schools were few and far between: now, when it is little more than half its age, the Sunday-school teachers are stated on good authority*

to amount to upwards of 300,000 in number, —far exceeding the army, navy, and police, of the whole kingdom!

* See Bev. Joshua Fawcett's Speech at the Town Hall, Leeds, on Nov. 15, 1858; reported in the Guardian, p. 945, col. 1, Nov. 24, 1858.

10. But apart from the national and social benefit that would seem to arise clearly from the careful development of the Sunday-school system, there is a definite personal reason why each of you, in the exercise of pastoral functions, should give great heed to the Scriptural teaching of the young,—a teaching that you cannot impart yourself personally to each, and yet a teaching that you are pledged, ministerially, to see imparted to all, —a teaching that may possibly be imparted by instruction during the week, but is more likely to be imparted by sympathy through the voluntary teacher on the Lord's Day!

This definite personal reason is to be found by each of us, as teachers in the Church of Christ, in St. Matt, xviii. 5, 6. 10, and 14, and the parallel passages 8 in the Gospels. Listen to the words of the Lord Jesus :—

"Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me; but whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

Again: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."

* Matt. x. 2; Mark ix. 42; Luke xvii. 2: also Mark x. 13, and parallel passages.

Again: " It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish!"

I earnestly entreat you to study these passages in solitude, with prayer; and I feel satisfied that, if you have not yet realized the inestimable help the Sunday-school, duly superintended, is to the

parish pastor, they will stimulate you, in your several parishes, to rally round you such holy and God-fearing teachers as you can gather; and to secure their help in enabling you to fulfil the solemn responsibility laid upon you to train and cherish for heaven, with tenderest and most careful nurture, the lambs of the fold of Jesus!

LECTURE n.

DOCTRINAL CONTROVERSY IN DOMESTIC

VISITATION.

Domestic visitation is not only one of the most important duties of the parish pastor, but is also the most fruitful in results. An idea has lately obtained currency that this duty not only may, but ought to be limited to the members of the Church in each several parish. I earnestly entreat you never to be led into this dangerous delusion, the effect of which, if generally adopted by the clergy, would be at once to narrow the National Church into one of the sects of the nation. Let your people at once understand that you come among them as one invested with authority, but serving in humility among all. Your Master has sent you to bring the exhortations, the instructions, and the consolations of the Gospel, to every soul within the territorial limit committed to your ministrations. If any of the parishioners withdraw from your public ministry, whether through indifference to their duty

or attachment to a less sound form of faith than the Church presents for their edification, they do it on their own responsibility. That is their concern; not yours. But if, on account of ignorance, or prejudice, or misguidance, they neglect your public teaching and your leading in common prayer, do not imagine for an instant that that exonerates you from the cure of their souls, or justifies you in leaving them un-cared for, and, it may be, unwarned.

There is a very remarkable passage in Dr. Hammond on the Power of the Keys', which seems to bear very pertinently on this subject. "It is the more likely way, as Quintilian saith, comparing public and private teaching of youth, to fill narrow-mouthed bottles (and such

are most of us) by taking them single in the hand, and pouring in water into each, than by setting them all together, and throwing never so many bottles of water on- them."

Now this practical illustration of the duty of house-to-house visitation, and personal influence over individuals, applies with even greater force to the non-attendants at your church than to the regular members of your congregation; they do not even give themselves the opportunity of receiving the surplusage of the waters of life thrown over the congregation; and a twofold necessity thus lies upon you to

1 Ch. iv. s. 104, p. 113, quoted in the Preface to Baxter's Reformed Pastor (p. xliii).

"take them single in the hand," and see whether you cannot "pour some water" of life "into each."

It is of course obvious that visitations of this kind will involve the parish pastor in many difficulties; and I shall seek to lay down some principles whereby those difficulties may be at least mitigated, if not altogether successfully encountered.

When you go forth, then, on your round of visits, be sure you bear in mind the Scriptural injunction that "the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men; apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves."

. This feeling will preserve you from merely seeking vain disputations, or placing any undue confidence in mere human powers of argument. Many with whom you will be placed in contact know nothing of the principles of reasoning; what they require is, not conviction of the understanding, but an appeal to the affections; not the conquest of the intellect, but the conversion of the will; and the most conclusive argument may fail to convince some who will be deeply impressed and edified, when they trace in your kindly exhortations "the meekness and gentleness of Christ."

Creeds, you will remember,—however necessary to maintain inviolate the faith of the Church,—were not imposed with a view to

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rate, but to unite, believers; and as of course you are familiar with the history of the Confessions of Faith of National Churches, as well as with that of the Three Creeds of the Universal Church, you will be able to prove to those who may make captious objections either to the one or the other, that they have grown up from the necessities of the case; and that "articles of religion" in every faithful branch of the Church have been framed, not so much with the view of anathematizing all who were in any degree wrong, as of comprehending all who were in essentials right

Before being led therefore into arguments upon detail, you will always do well to test the soundness of your parishioners' faith by a reference to the simple confessions of faith which were admitted as sufficient by the inspired teachers of the New Testament. "Belief in the crucified Jesus as Lord and Christ*" seems to have been all the creed required by St. Peter on his first preaching at Pentecost. "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God 3," was the profession of the eunuch that justified Philip in receiving him into the covenant of grace. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ/" was the answer of Paul to the gaoler at Philippi, who asked, "What must I do to be saved*?" "Jesus and the resurrection," was the sum

* Acts ii. 36. 8 Acts viii. 37. * Acts xvi. 30, 31.

and substance of the same Apostle's teaching at Athens 5 ; and, in writing to the Romans, his test of sound doctrine was contained in these simple words, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved *."

If you and those to whom you are sent are thoroughly at one upon the great principle of personal salvation through Him who died upon the cross for both of you equally, you will not be likely to quarrel, however widely you may differ, and however important those differences may be, upon subsequent questions of discussion. Every student of Scripture who believes in our Lord as his personal Redeemer and Saviour, knows that He said these words, "By this

shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one toward another;' 9 he will not dare, therefore, to risk that Saviour's wrath—yea, that Saviour's rejection of himself — by speaking and acting in an unkind and unloving manner toward those to whom he is sent that he may win them to Christ.

Not only this; he will be so armed with the " soft answer that turneth away wrath," and so fenced in by " forbearing in love," that he will neither give offence to, nor take offence from, his neighbour. And when each disputant on a

* Acts xvii. 18, &c. • Rom. x. 9.

question of detail is satisfied that the other has taken firm hold of the Rock of Salvation, and that he has a good hope of dwelling in the Saviour's kingdom throughout eternity, he will be quite ready to argue calmly and dispassionately as to the best mode of doing the Saviour's work on earth, and ascertaining the form, the shape, the functions and the power, which are the attributes of His kingdom in its militant condition in the world. One may " believe in the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints" as a visible organized body; the other may believe in it as a spiritual body, whose limits are only perceptible to Jehovah's eye; but if both believe that they are spiritual members of the common Lord and Head of that body, they will be so strengthened by their loving sense of that vital union with Him and with one another, that they will love and respect each other, however widely they may conscientiously differ on the subject of external Church-membership.

Contemplate yourself then as a pastor, invested with authority by the Church in which you minister, making a series of parochial visits among your non-conformist parishioners. Is it not patent to the simplest apprehension that, if honest and earnest, these visits will not only render bitterness and hostility to the Church, as such, an impossible thing, but that they will leave a witness for Christ, for His Gospel, and for

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His Church, which would not have been raised, had such visits not been paid ? They demonstrate that a social union in Christ is possible, even where the sins or follies or prejudices of man have made ecclesiastical union impossible for the present ; and by exhibiting the love and care of the Church for souls, even of those estranged from her ecclesiastical pale, they pave the way for future generations to shelter themselves under her fostering wing, when temporary dissensions shall have vanished, and modern sects died out into obscurity, or frittered away their power into infinitesimal divisions.

It is of course only possible to touch very lightly upon the kind of controversial discussion that would arise in a series of such visits; but we may suppose a few cases of the ordinary nature of parochial division.

1. You commence your visit by the clear and forcible enunciation of the positive truths of the Gospel, and you find a ready response; but when you come to inquire into the condition of the young, you find the children unbaptized, and are met by the two great objections of the Baptist sect, 1. to infant baptism, and 2. to our ordinary baptism by affusion instead of immersion. How are you to meet them ? The latter objection is met by the rubric which sanctions immersion, and only recommends affusion when immersion would endanger health; and the justification of affusion on

Scriptural grounds is demonstrable from the case of Peter's request to Jesus, and our Lord's reply 7 ; and may be inferred from the fact of many thousands having been baptized in one day in a street in Jerusalem, when it is in the highest degree improbable to suppose that baptism by immersion was possible in every case 8 . The answer to the objection to infant baptism is not to be found in a single text: for although you may justly infer from the command to "make disciples of every creature, and to baptize them 9 ," that infants are not excluded, you may not assert without qualification that infant baptism was herein enjoined. The argument is in fact a cumulative one,—the analogy of the covenants, the readiness of Jewish believers to accept the baptism of infants as the substitute for the circumcision of infants, the willingness of the Redeemer to receive the little ones 1

, and the unwillingness of the Father that one little one should perish 3 , the assurances that the promises of the Gospel are to us and to our children *, the capacity of the children of holy parents (even the children of one believing parent, which makes the case stronger,) to be considered themselves holy 4 , the fitness of holy children to be called of God,

7 John xiii. 9,10. * Acta ii. 41.

• Matt, xxviii. 19, 20, with Mark xvi. 15,16.

» Mark x. 14. « Matt, xviii. 14.

* Acta ii. 39. * 1 Cor. viL 14.

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as was Samuel before he himself knew the Lord 5 , and as was John the Baptist who was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb *,—the instances in which whole households were baptized: these and many other testimonies from Scripture unitedly, have convinced the Church that "it is certain by God's word that children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved," and these same Scriptural testimonies will at least convince your Baptist parishioner that your convictions are grounded on the revelation of God, and not the results of your blind submission to a dogma which he has not yet learned to receive or to respect.

2. In arguing with Wesleyans, the example and precepts of their founder ought certainly to have weight; and the letter he wrote at the close of life enjoining his friends to bring their children to Church for baptism, and to attend themselves the administration of the second sacrament in Church, is a demonstration that he never designed that sad alienation from the Church which has sprung up subsequently among his followers. To this day many of the most devout and earnest among them are honestly attached to the National Church 7 , and devoutly frequent her

* 1 Sam. iii. 7, Ac. • Luke i. 15, Ac.

f See the evidence of the Rev. George OBborn (Wealeyan



worship; though few, I fear, are to be found to act strictly on the principle laid down by Wesley himself, and allow their ministrations only to be exercised as supplementary to the Church when she is silent, and not in antagonism to her when in the active fulfilment of her mission.

3, 4. The two branches of Methodists called •' Primitives" and "Reformers," stand so widely apart from the received founder of Methodism, and are in the main so entirely ignorant of his teaching, and in the case of the Primitives even of his existence, that they can only be dealt with as sectaries who require clear and definite Scriptural teaching in order to disabuse their minds of prejudice and fanaticism. This can only be imparted by domestic visitation, and,—where they can be induced to attend them,—by a carefully adapted system of week-day evening lectures. So soon as they begin to learn that your teaching is simply and wholly Scriptural, their reverence for the Bible (which, thank God, they still retain) will lead them to lend a willing ear. Their present alienation from the Church arises mainly from the ignorant and prejudiced notion that her teaching is not Scriptural; and, this removed by the practical exhibition of its falsehood, they may yet be won back again by her faithful ministry.

Minister), before the Duke of Marlborough's Committee on Church-Ratcs, July 29,1859.

5. The argument with the Independents is one that will require time and learning as well as temper. Among the majority of them, their hostility is rather political than religious, and many of their devoutest members are almost at one with the National Church in her doctrinal articles. There is a rebel will in all of us until quelled by the grace of God, and Independency is simply a form of this rebellion of heart which refuses to accept the authority of others, and claims its right to be authority in itself. The vestry of an Independent meeting-house is but a popedom in commission; and the exercise of power is so sweet, and the idea that that power is inherent in

ourselves so pleasant, that when once men have associated themselves under these convictions, it is very rarely that they can be disbanded. If you wish to convince your Independent parishioner of his error, you must take him alone, and work out point by point, from the Word of God ⁸, the constitution of the Church as it is there delineated. But even if you fail, do not on that account give up your Independent friend. Better that he should serve God in the isolation of a sect, than not serve God at all. Better that he should feel that the Church, as the body of Christ, and the minister of that Church, cares for him, than that he should be left in his exclusiveness to suppose

⁸ Rom. xii., 1 Cor. xiL, Eph. iv., Epistles to Timothy and Titus.

each only cares for his ottm, and that therefore his exclusiveness is justifiable. If our Lord had waited for us to care for Him before He cared for us, we should have been still unredeemed ; but He died for us while we were yet sinners and enemies, and now we love Him "because He first loved us." Depend upon it that if you as parish pastors love on, through evil report and good report, your love will not be lost, though sympathy may seem to your impatience a long time before it shows itself in response. He whom you follow will seal you for His own, and even as He was, you will be honoured in death, if not appreciated in life; and in the life to come your crown of thorns will be irradiated by His glory.

6. There is much affinity with your Independent and Presbyterian parishioners; and if unhappily a question of Church and Dissent arises, they will probably be more closely acting in concert than other classes of Non-conformists. They are not, however, at one on the point of Church-government, and the approximation between the Churchman and the Presbyterian is much closer than between the latter and the Independent. The reason is obvious: the former clings to the principle of a National Church, or at least of a National Establishment for united religious worship, while the latter on principle repudiates it. Your argument then with the Presbyterian will be drawn from history as

well as from Holy Scripture, and while you can point with confidence to the universal consent in the Church for more than 1000 years to

the principle of the three orders of ministry, you will be strengthened by the testimony of Calvin, and those who thought with him, that "they were worthy of an anathema who rejected such an episcopacy as that presented by the Church of England." In the main, however, you will generally find the Presbyterian ready to conform to our National Church where he has not lapsed into Socinianism, and where there are no special local causes which keep him in a state of separation.

7. But among all Non-conformists you will find one body of whom you will rarely convert a single member, and yet who will never seek to quarrel with you, and will seldom either deride or oppose your views; I mean the Society of Friends. Quiet and industrious, models for order, neatness, and cleanliness in their persons, and of comfort in their houses, they are passive and non-aggressive in principle, and therefore not given to interference of any kind. Liberal and even munificent in all philanthropic and sanitary matters, they are stern in their denial of many of the Church's rights. They are, like all Non-conformists (perhaps we ought to add with humiliation like all men generally, and like ourselves particularly), divided into two parties. They, however, who adhere rigidly to

the principle formerly laid down among them, which virtually denied the Scriptures as a rule of faith, are now few in number. For the most part they are open to an appeal to the Scriptures; and as far as my own experience goes among them, I bear most cheerful testimony to the simplicity, the blamelessness, and the integrity of their lives. They have, however, no conception of the corporate element of the Church. It is to them a mere aggregation of spiritual units, not a visible body constituted under Divine ordinance into the mystical Person of Christ on earth. If you fall in with those who refuse to admit Holy Scripture as a reference, there is of course no common ground whereon to argue; but if you meet with those who are known as "Bible-Quakers," there is then no doubt that the advantage of argument will lie on your side rather than theirs, as the necessity of the Sacraments to salvation, and the distinction between the ministry and the laity, which they deny, are therein clearly laid down and enforced throughout the New as well as the Old Testament.

8. I have now touched lightly on the more popular forms of Non-conformity with which you are likely to be brought into contact. The more fearful heresies of Socinianism, and the wild liberty of Socialism you will necessarily be prepared to meet with and contend against in a more earnest spirit. The former is an out-

growth of man's presumptuous pride of reason; the latter has found an ephemeral, and now almost extinct, popularity from its touching that need of our nature which the Church of Christ alone can supply—the want of a common centre whereto to gravitate, and of a fit development of the principle of association in daily life. So strangely do the lines of error intersect one another, that the errors of Romanism have gained a hold upon some minds from the very same yearning after a visible centre upon which to lean!

Now in controversies or discussions arising out of all the differences alluded to, you will rarely be wrong if you assume this need of our nature to be felt by all; and lead the searching yearning mind at once to Christ In Him dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead bodily; in Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge and love! It is in vain to attempt to drive men to the sheltering arms of His grace by dogmatizing against the false views they may have adopted; but personal influence, perseveringly but humbly and kindly exercised, may and will do much, under His blessing, to lead those entrusted to your care to Him as their Saviour; and even if you fail to bring all your parishioners to a visible and corporate unity in the Church wherein you minister on earth, the loving spirit of duty which they see in you may lead them to worship Him in the

unity of the Spirit even here; and the life of both of you will be cheered and hallowed, if you know and feel that you are alike marching onward, through many imperfections, to attain your place in heaven in the one fold under the one Shepherd, Jesus!

LECTURE IH.

SECULAR AIDS TO SPIRITUAL INFLUENCE.

A parish is a more complicated machine than some people suppose; and care is requisite lest some parts of its mechanism be allowed to interfere with others, and so the whole machine get out of gear.

The present system of clerical education is not perhaps the most favourable that might be adopted for the formation of habits of business in the pastor; and it will be advisable for you to ask yourselves how far you are ready to cope with those practical difficulties which will arise in the business part of your pastoral duty.

I propose to consider this morning some of those secular aids to religious influence which come legitimately within the sphere of the parish priest's work; and which undoubtedly, when rightly used, tend greatly to extend his personal usefulness.

A few words on the personal conduct of the clergyman, and a few more on the principles that should actuate him in secular matters, may

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fitly precede more definite allusion to the nature of the secular work itself.

Personally, then, every parish priest is bound to prescribe to himself a strict law of punctuality if he desires his influence in secular matters to be of any value in his parochial administration. If he is late for an appointment, he loses time (the time of others as well as his own) and loses confidence as well; if he neglects an appointment, he is guilty of a breach of trust that shakes faith in him for the future. Of course in this I am not speaking of the higher duties of public or ecclesiastical ministrations; I take for granted that you all recognize the absolute bond under which you lie for regularity in such engagements as these; but the engagements of youth being frequently unimportant, and affecting no interests beyond those of the parties immediately concerned, young men sometimes fall into habits of unpunctuality, or irregularity, of the evil consequences of which they are unaware: e. g. they say they will call on a parishioner at such or such a time, or make inquiry on such or such a subject,

and then think the omission " of no consequence " if it happens to have escaped their memory, or to have given place to some other occupation of greater temporary interest. It is, however, of real moment to the weight and influence of a clergyman's own character, if an appointment once made ever be forgotten, or

allowed to be supplanted; and is almost certain to be afterwards remembered and commented on by others, long after the circumstance has passed away from his own mind.

And together with the habit of punctuality the pastor must be careful to be strictly relatively, as well as absolutely just. A prevalent failing that he will meet with, is that of jea-lousy of one another among his parishioners; and hence if they are able to detect any flaw, however slight, in his justice, whether it be in the rewards or punishments of their children at the schools; or a partiality in the distribution of any gifts or benefits among themselves; he will be placing a stumbling-block in the way of their receiving his religious ministrations, and be causing a weak brother to offend! On the other hand, when they have once learned to recognize him as one scrupulously and fearlessly just, they will learn to submit unhesitatingly to his decisions, even when awarded against their own interests.

In the expression of his decisions, however, especially if in any controverted question, or appeal from the subordinate authorities in school or club, he must be not only discreet in language, but personally gentle (though firm) in manner. " The meekness and gentleness of Christ " must be the pattern he follows; and if he walks in his Master's steps, a share of that Master's honour will undoubtedly rest upon

him, even though, like Him, he has to be "made perfect through suffering!"

One of the safest principles on which to act in secular matters in the parish, is to work as much as possible through the parish officers. As soon as you enter any new parish, it is desirable to ascertain who are the churchwardens, the overseers, the surveyor of highways, the vestry-clerk, and others holding office; and to call upon them

distinctively in their official capacity, to let them know your anxious desire, as the minister of the Church, to co-operate with them in all works of piety, charity, and usefulness, as far as possible. The public advice received by the churchwardens of this diocese from its chief pastor in his Charge ¹ with reference to the collection and disposal of alms, will strengthen your hands in fulfilling such a course; while the personal influence you will gain, by personal contact and friendly consultation with your parish officers, will prove of great value to your ministry.

Another principle—of the highest importance for you to bear in mind—is the principle of personal forbearance. It is not to be expected, especially when we consider the state of education in our rural districts, that you will always find lay officers in a parish equally ready to co-operate with you as you are with

¹ Published in 1858, p. 29. Skeffington's.

them; and, therefore, should your overtures be at any time slighted, or even repelled, by those to whom they are made, you must be very slow to take offence; remembering that your business is not only to show them the good and right way, but to prove to them also, by forbearing in love, that you walk in it yourself. "Assistance, not interference," must be your motto; let them see and feel that you come as a friend, not as a dictator.

Let us now look for a few moments practically at some secular aids to religious influence, which will show you a tender guardian of the temporal welfare of the poor of your parish, as well as a minister to the spiritual welfare of all.

I would classify these secular aids under the heads of

- A. Encouragement of provident habits;
- B. Provision for sickness or distress; and
- C. Provision for the profitable employment of leisure time.

A. For the encouragement of provident habits among children and the poor, few things are more useful than Penny Banks or Saving Funds.

Useful as the "Savings' Banks" are, they do not yet touch the humblest class of the poor: moreover, they are not always accessible to those who desire to use them. The parish priest can without any expense, and without

much self-denial, open his national school for an hour in the week (say at noon-time on Mondays), to receive such small deposits as his poorer parishioners may be disposed to make. The savings' bank will be his banker, and enable him, with the addition of a very few subscriptions (should it be deemed desirable), to allow a small premium at Christmas on the sum laid by. So soon as the sum reaches, say a sovereign, he should recommend its being deposited in the savings' bank on the depositor's own account; and the children of the school, as well as their parents, should be recommended to become depositors in the parochial bank, preparatory to their being thus moved a step higher in the path of investment.

Next to the saving fund—the proceeds of which should be placed absolutely at the depositor's disposal, to be drawn out without notice, or increased at will—it may be advisable to encourage weekly deposits for specific purposes, —say for clothing, and for coals or rent, according to the depositor's own desire. In each case the rules of the club should be few and simple, and the restrictions on the will of the depositor as slight as is consistent with his own truest good. Cards, and tally-books for working funds of this description can be purchased at trifling expense from the office of the Metropolitan District Visiting and Belief Association

in London 2 . It is obvious that the systematic reception of deposits gives the clergyman an acquaintance, under favourable auspices, with a large number of his poorer parishioners; and they who find him thus ready to devote his time for their temporal well-being, will probably be the more ready to apply to him for aid when their consciences are troubled,* or their souls awakened to the need of spiritual guidance.

A third mode of encouraging provident habits is by directing the minds of the poor to the principle of life assurance. Facilities have recently been given by some of the London offices for effecting very small policies; and when it is known that a payment of one penny per week can ensure the sum of ten pounds at death, many a man who fears to become a pauper at his death, when he has struggled against pauperism all his life, would gladly avail himself of a means whereby he might bequeath enough to bury him, and leave a surplus for the family that was deprived of the strong arm that had hitherto laboured successfully to keep the wolf from the door !

B. Provision for the time of sickness or distress is the next secular aid to which I would call your attention.

In this diocese many parishes are largely

* 4, St. Martin's Place, Trafalgar Square.

endowed with "doles," which are given out at certain times of the year, in fixed sums or proportions, to parishioners above a certain age. This is liable to much abuse, if there be not care taken in the distribution. Wherever it is proved to have been abused, the Charity Commissioners will be found ready to sanction an improved system of application, if properly applied to; and a fund of this nature will be found to be of immense value in a parish where it is judiciously used, even though under ignorant and careless administration it may have previously ministered to recklessness or excess.

The clubs for relief in sickness, common in our rural districts, are not always founded upon sound financial principles, and in far too many instances are quite as advantageous to the public-house as to the members who support them. It may probably be considered both ungracious and difficult to recast or remodel existing associations of this kind; and hence when an organization exists like those of the clubs called the Odd Fellows and the Foresters, it may be more desirable to

" endure the ills we have,

Than flee to others that we know not of/'

I believe, where such clubs do not exist, that the machinery of the Saving and Life Assurance Fund, if conducted in a large parish,

i 2

or by an union of small ones, might be made available also for taking weekly deposits for deferred annuities on the government plan; and if this could be effected to any great extent throughout the diocese, there is no doubt it would produce a large diminution of the pauperism that now rests heavily as a blight upon its energies, as an extensive section of the country at large.

In time of severe pressure, whether arising from the severity of the season or from local causes, it may sometimes be desirable to open a kitchen for the bestowal, or sale at a reduced rate, of good soup to the poor; but, as a rule, it is far better to encourage them to help themselves by habits of forethought, economy, and providence, than to encourage them to rest upon their wealthier neighbours for eleemosynary support. In any case where such help from others is unhappily called for, it will be desirable to call in the co-operation of those of the laity who are most conversant with the condition of the poor, rather than to act upon your own, perhaps imperfect, experience, and your own undivided responsibility.

For cases of ordinary sickness, local medical skill will generally suffice; but it may be as well to make yourself acquainted with the terms of admission to the nearest hospital, in case of emergencies arising which may require Buck aid. The poor can never be expected to

have sufficient store in hand to enable them to provide themselves with high medical skill, but the great hospitals of the Metropolis are so liberally conducted, and communication with them now generally so easy, that if you can provide the means of transit, there is rarely a difficulty in gaining admission for any deserving case, however severe.

C. We turn now to the consideration of the profitable employment of leisure time among your parishioners.

1. Lending libraries, and the circulation of popular tracts judiciously selected, even if you cannot compass a reading-room, are highly desirable. The delivery of a secular lecture on a well-chosen subject, popularly announced, once a fortnight (or once a month if you cannot contrive it oftener) during the winter season, will be productive of much good. An occasional " Musical Evening," under proper direction, may also tend to the gradual refinement, as well as the present amusement of many of your people. Without some such inducements as these, many of the young, whom you might by their means attract to your spiritual influence, would loiter away the time in idleness, or debase it by gross indulgence. In reference to the last-named subject I may add a special word. Much musical capacity is latent among our flocks; and the offer of instruction is generally kindly and gratefully received. Few of our

gifts are, in their -cultivation, calculated so manifestly and publicly to glorify God, as the taste for music; and the life imparted to congregational worship by good and general singing, is calculated to rouse the devotion of the inert, as well as to kindle the sympathies of all who join in it.

2. But beyond mere evening occupation, you will generally find in every parish some active and benevolent minds that desire to be employed for the good of others. For these your School Committee, your District Visiting Association, the distribution of your tracts over an appointed district, the collection of weekly subscriptions for missionary and other objects, or your Dorcas or Work Society, may be wholesome safety-valves. The pastor's influence will be felt alike in the invitations to join in such works, and in his sustained superintendence of them when entered upon; and secular and mechanical as the method and arrangement of these works may be, they will all prove helps to the religious influence his ministry is designed to exercise.

In another point of view, moreover, it is very important to find employment under the Church's sanction for those whom God's grace has already disposed to occupy themselves in good works; for if the Church finds no post for them to occupy, there are others who will, and whose influence may be used to draw them from

the cause of unity and truth to that of dissension, if not of heresy.

In thus lightly indicating some few of the many secular aids to religious influence, I would by no means imply that those I have named are all the channels open to you, nor that they are channels necessary in all cases to be used. My object rather has been to show that there are many points of contact between the pastor and his people which maybe wisely used, sometimes for their temporal advantage, sometimes for their edification, sometimes simply for their amusement; but always so as to strengthen the hold a kind and holy man of God will have upon the intelligence, the affections, and the wills of those among whom his Master has sent him to labour. The teaching of the Gospel was never designed to supersede human '

sympathy; it was rather intended to develop it into its right proportions, and sanctify it when so developed. We are so differently constituted, that the avenue opened to one is closed to another; but if, like that servant of Jesus who became all things to all men, if that by any means he might save some, the parish pastor uses all means in turn, he will not fail to find some of them fruitful in good. There is of course some danger that youth, in its desire to bring pleasure to others, may forget, in the gratification they afford, that all the means he uses are but means to one

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sole end,—the bringing those to Christ for whose spiritual edification God has placed him in the position he occupies. But if you bear ever in mind the principles of your hallowed mission, and the necessary concomitants of ministerial work (of which I reminded you in the first of this series of Lectures), you will not be likely to fall into this or any other snare of Satan. The grace of God is sufficient for all of God's children, and His strength will be made perfect in the weakness of all who lovingly trust in Him, and prayerfully seek it at His hands.

And here I must conclude. Heartily do I pray God that the practical hints suggested on Sunday-school teaching, on doctrinal controversy in domestic visitation, and on secular aids to spiritual influence, may all be brought out into rich results in your future ministry; and that your efforts, direct and indirect, to promote the good of souls, and the happiness of your brethren, may meet with the blessing of Him who alone can make our ministry fruitful to His own praise and glory!

THE END.

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