

Own Service," because it tends to make a distinction which is unauthorized by Holy Scripture. General services of prayer and praise, the preaching and hearing of the Word, are enjoined in many parts of the Bible as the ordinary means of grace by which we may approach God at all times. But this appeal for prayer, thanksgiving, and attention to the Word of God is emphasized without any mention of the Holy Communion.

And so, whether we speak of the Holy Communion as "The Principal Service" or as "The Lord's Own Service," there is a danger of inaccuracy and misconception. The Holy Communion can be rightly regarded as the main public service of our Church for those who are spiritually qualified, but it is this, notwithstanding the precise time of observance or whether the communicants are few or many. The supreme requirement is spiritual preparation as laid down by our Catechism and Ante-Communion Service, and the question of large attendance ought never to be allowed to enter in. Even a few communicants properly prepared along the lines of repentance, faith and love, as required in our Prayer Book, would be far truer to Scripture and to the essential meaning of the Holy Communion as taught by our Church than the largest congregations of people who, for one reason or another, do not participate. Our Church is specially careful to emphasize the true Scriptural use of Holy Communion, and those who, following the Prayer Book, desire to adhere to its Scriptural teaching will have no difficulty in observing our Lord's command regularly, earnestly and heartily, whatever may be the time fixed for the Communion, or however many or few may be present to communicate.

STUDIES IN TEXTS.

Suggestions for Sermons from Current Literature.

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VI. INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS AND COMPENSATIONS.

Texts.—"Whoso moveth stones shall be hurt therewith; and he that cleaveth wood is endangered thereby" (Eccles. x. 9, R.V.). "Raise the stone, and there thou shalt find Me; cleave the wood, and I am there" ("Saying of Jesus," in the papyri).

[Book of the Month: A NEGLECTED SACRAMENT.¹=M. Other refl., Grenfell and Hunt's "Sayings of Our Lord"=G. Smith's "Unwritten Sayings of Our Lord"=S. Deissmann's "Light from the East"=D. Mason's "The Truants"=T. Glover's "Verification of the Christian Tradition"=V.]

Here are two texts which throw light on one another: each looks at the danger of accident in daily toil. One written by a Hebrew philosopher. One "spoken by Jesus," recorded outside the Gospels, and discovered on papyrus in Egypt in 1896. The first sounds cynical and pessimistic. The second, if the full restoration be correct, is a reassurance to the workmen. "Jesus saith: Wheresoever they may be, they are not without God; and where there is one alone, even thus I am with him. Raise the stone, and there thou shalt find Me; cleave the wood, and I am there" (S. 88). It has been considered that the words may allude to sacrificial worship (cf. 1 Kings xviii. 32, 33). More probably they refer to the sacrifice involved in dangerous work.

I. A REMINDER OF DAILY DANGER.

The "Preacher" seems filled with foreboding. Work often means wounds. "Who remove stones, bruise their fingers" (Herbert, *Jacula Prudentum*, quoted S. 93). "The quarryman must fear the flying splinters of stone; the labourer who lifts a heavy piece of rock may crush his foot if he lets it fall" (M. 79). "Ordinary honest labour must pay its due of misfortune in this sad world" (M. 80). Is it worth while to go on working? Yes. Doing your duty develops character. "On the Dogger Bank men risk their lives daily to put a few boxes of fish on board a cutter. Take your risk half-heartedly, and your boat's swamped. Take it with all your heart, and there are the fish-boxes to your credit" (T. ch. xiii.). Not a question of hire, but morale. Risk can make work heroic, and workmen into warriors.

2. A PROMISE OF DAILY DISCOVERY.

Lord Kelvin says the verge of a difficulty is the edge of a discovery. "Just in proportion as the industries of a nation broaden and develop, does the character of its citizens gain strength, and

¹ By Dr. J. Hope Moulton: pub. by the Epworth Press. Interesting studies and addresses by an accomplished student of the Bible who was never dull.

their brains and muscles skill and power" (Wiley). Do your work heartily as unto the Lord and not unto men, and you will find not only perils, but the Presence. "It is fairly certain that the 'Saying' offers a general parallel to Matthew xviii. 20" (G. 13). "Our Saying stood in this connexion in the 'Diatessaron' of Tatian" (S. 89). "Jesus lifted stones and cleft wood in the builder's workshop at Nazareth for more than twenty years out of His short life, to show that honest toil brought something else besides danger, that the stone could become a Bethel, and the wood an altar which raiseth the consecrated soul 'Nearer, my God, to Thee'" (M. 83). "He is present not only where two or three are gathered together in the exercises of prayer and praise, but in the employments of the quarryman and the woodman" (S. 90, 91). This has a reflex effect upon the efficiency of the whole man. "Conversion has often meant, and means still, a clearing of brain which involves an extraordinarily heightened effectiveness in buying and selling, making and planting" (V. 176). God is proved in difficulties and discovered in drudgery. "In the noise of my kitchen I possess God as if I were at the Sacrament," says Brother Lawrence (Convers. iv.).

3. A PLEDGE OF DAILY DELIVERANCE.

"A remarkable parallel in the Gospel of Thomas, ch. x. The boy Jesus heals a woodcutter whose axe had fallen and severely injured his foot, and dismisses him with the words, "Arise now: split the pieces of wood and remember Me": suggests that the Saying is a word of consolation for those engaged in dangerous work" (D. 33). "It is natural for us to conjecture that the new Saying was introduced as in Sermon on Mount. 'Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time' (we may suppose Him saying), 'He that moveth stones shall be hurt therewith, and he that cleaveth wood is endangered thereby.' But I say unto you, Raise the stone, and there thou shalt find ME; cleave the wood, and there am I" (M. 38). "A gracious word for all who never know, when they go forth to their day's toil, what may befall them ere the day is done" (S. 94, 95).

"Where the many toil together, there am I among My own;
Where the tired workman sleepeth, there am I with him alone.
Nevermore thou needest seek Me; I am with thee everywhere;
Raise the stone, and thou shalt find Me; cleave the wood, and I
am there."

—H. van Dyke.