

classes will be conducted by the Vicar as follows:—

MALES—Thursday Evenings at 8 o'clock in the Church, commencing February 16th.

FEMALES—Sunday Afternoon at 3 o'clock in the Church, commencing February 19th.

LENT, 1899.

What is it? Shall we keep it?

The season of Lent is one which is very precious to Christians. The *great struggle* of our Master for us is then so evidently set forth before us.

The Church of Christ on earth has a commission to proclaim the whole counsel of God. She may not teach *one or two* truths, however important they may be, and leave others out.

It is for this reason that in the Christian year, the Church has set before her children, *in order*, the whole work of Christ for man's salvation.

We have been led to the cradle of Bethlehem to rejoice in a Saviour's birth; we have been taught in the guiding star that He came for all people, for the Gentile as well as the Jew; and now the thought of sin is pressed upon us: He came because we are sinners, and the Church asks us to go apart with Him into the wilderness, and see Him wrestling there against sin for us. Surely it is good for us to be there.

But do you say, *Why should we keep Lent?* we ought to think of our sins all the year round. True! no doubt we ought, and the more you do, the more you will feel the value of Lent.

The merchant keeps his accounts all the year round, but he balances up at the end of the year; and, if we follow the example in spiritual things which they set us in worldly things, we shall have a better knowledge of our sins, and go more earnestly to the Cross, and it is through the Cross alone that we can have true Easter Joy.

Shall we keep it? Our own sinful hearts say *no!* The world laughs at the idea and says *no!* and many a half-hearted would-be-Christian holds back and gives an *uncertain answer*. They have no doubt about keeping *Christmas*; no doubt about keeping *Easter*; but Lent is a different thing. They would share in the *Joy* but not in the *Cross*. Surely the true Christian will answer *yes!* we will follow Jesus in His Temptation and in His Passion, that we may follow Him in His Victory and in His Glory.

But *How shall we keep it?* Look to our Blessed Lord in the wilderness, and try by His help to bear something of the toil of that conflict with Him. Give some time for special *Self-examination*. Find out whether you are making any real Christian progress, and pray more than

you have ever done before, for His grace to keep and strengthen you.

Learn to practise Self-Denial. The Church has left her Children free to make their own special rules; because, what is Self-Denial to one, may be Luxury to another. Only bear in mind that the object of Self-denial is "To keep under the body and bring it into subjection," lest the flesh should get the mastery over the spirit.

This should be the great struggle of the Christian Life, and in that struggle *Lent* will be a welcome help. The Christian who thinks of his own pleasure and his own comfort before his Master, can never follow Him of whom S. Paul says—"Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich."

The Rev W. Evans, M.A., Pontardawe, will give a series of Addresses on Wednesday Evenings in Lent, on the following subject:—

"THE CHRISTIAN CREED AND THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH."

Taken as follows:—

- Feb. 22, Belief in God the Creator.
- Mar. 1, Belief in God the Redeemer.
- " 8, Belief in God the Sanctifier.
- " 15, The Church. The Spirit bearing Body of Christ.
- " 22, The Church. The extension of the Incarnation.
- " 29, The Church. The Witness of the Father to the World.

On Thursday Dec. 29th, Mrs. Mainwaring gave a tea to the boys attending the Newton Schools, also to the members of her Mothers' Meeting—all heartily enjoyed themselves and were very grateful to Mrs. Mainwaring for her kindness.

On Thursday, Jan. 5th, the Annual Sunday School Treat, in connection with the Blackpyl Mission Room was held. A large number of Scholars sat down to the tea at 5 o'clock, which was presided over by Mrs Webber and Miss Webber. The tea was given by Mr. Graham Vivian. After tea the children were presented with a number of very beautiful books, being rewards for good attendance and behaviour at Sunday School. The money for the prizes was collected by Miss Webber who takes the very greatest interest in the School, Choir, and all that affects the Church at Blackpyl.

Mr. Gerald Eden, assisted by Captain Hall and Mr. Morgan kindly gave a Lantern Entertainment at Blackpyl on Feb. 13th, the pieces selected for illustration were "John Gilpin," "Queen Victoria's Reign," and "The Jackdaw of Rheims." The room was crowded