

The Church Guardian

—: EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR:—

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CALENDAR FOR SEPTEMBER.

SEPT. 2—15th Sunday after Trinity.

" 7—Friday.—Fast.

" 9—16th Sunday after Trinity.

" 14—Friday.—Fast.

" 16—17th Sunday after Trinity.

" 19—Ember Day.—Fast.

" 21— { ST. MATTHEW.
Ember Day.—Fast.

" 22—Ember Day.—Fast.

" 23—18th Sunday after Trinity.

" 28—Friday.—Fast.

" 29—ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS.

" 30—19th Sunday after Trinity.

SUNDAY TEACHINGS.

[By the Rev. Henry W. Little, Rector of Trinity
Church, Sussex, N.B.]

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Collect for the day is a prayer for the 'grace of God.' 'Preventing grace'—the supernatural strength of Baptism. 'Abiding grace'—the grace that is offered and supplied in the Sacraments of the Church and her Scriptural ordinances, 2 Cor. xii., 9. Grace 'sufficient' for all needs. God's Throne 'the throne of Grace,' Heb. 4, 6. Progress a sign of being under the influence of Divine grace, 2 Pet. iii., 18. 'Grow in grace.'

The Epistle follows the same train of thought viz., the power of Divine grace to keep and help the soul and to develop in it the mind of Christ. St. Paul a miracle of grace. Lowliness, Meekness, Patience, Forbearance all marks of the Spirit of God in the individual soul, as 'oneness' is an evidence of the 'mind of Christ' in the body. There must always be an 'endeavour' to keep the unity of the Spirit. Success is not promised, but effort is not to be relaxed on this account. To study to promote 'oneness' in the body a duty not acknowledged as it should be in our day. 'The Unity of the Church of Christ' the truest mark of her Divine origin; to sin against this unity outward or spiritual is to sin against the Holy Ghost, whose function it is to 'keep the unity.' Every fact that concerns the Church, whatever duty enjoined on it, or doctrine revealed to it, or privilege vouchsafed to it, all bear witness to the same blessed principle of unity, as characteristic of all that proceeds from the one true and living God. 'I believe in One Catholic and Apostolic Church.' 'The unity of the Church a type of the Divine unity of the ever blessed and adorable Trinity, attested by the proofs of one intelligence and rule exhibited in nature,—as the unity of 'the body' should be attested by the harmony and unity of the 'one fold' into which the nations scattered abroad are to be gathered under 'one shepherd.' The unity of the Church spiritual—one spirit. Visible—one body. Not one spirit that is one body, but 'one body and one spirit.'

The Gospel reveals to us the certainty of victory through grace. 'He took him and healed and let him go.' Preventing grace, 'taking him;' continual grace, 'healing him,' vv. 1-4.

Grace is given to those who are content to take 'the lowest room'—the 'poor in spirit,' their's is the kingdom of heaven. Grace calls into the Church, and then advances the soul step by step to the highest spiritual excellencies. Pride prevents the working of the Holy Ghost in the heart and life. He that exalteth himself is abased. Nature in revolt against God is cast down.

The First Morning Lesson, Jer. v.—The judgments of God upon those who, like the Jews, were not obedient to the calls of grace. The neglect of truth and righteousness: a denial of God and a contempt for the teaching of His prophets, v. 13, signs of decline from grace—from a state of trust and obedience, and acceptance of the Divine Will and purpose in all things. The decline of the nation complete, the prophets false in their message, the priests ruling by deceit, and the people loving 'to have it so.' Corruption in Church and State and social life, God's punishment for neglect of 'means of grace,'—the inevitable penalty of the sin of 'apostasy.'

The Second Morning Lesson, II Cor., viii.—The subject of the chapter, 'the grace of God,' v. 1, bestowed on the churches of Macedonia. How great a contrast between the two pictures presented by these two Morning Lessons. i. Grace abused. ii. Grace accepted. The Love, Unity, Holiness (personal), v. 5; the 'willing mind' all signs of the presence of the 'grace of God' in the heart of the individual and in the Church as a 'body.'

The First Evening Lesson, Jer. xxii.—The call to repentance—'grace' preventing—e.g., the King of Judah. Mercy and Restoration follow true penitence. God's people are precious to Him, even in their error, v. 6, 7. Justice and righteousness between man and man a mark of 'grace.' 'Is not this to know Me! saith the Lord?' v. 16. The true blessedness of the pains of penitence,—to make gracious, i.e., to soften and humble, v. 23.

The Second Evening Lesson, St. Mark xiii, 14.—The sorrows of Jerusalem. The end of all created things. The neglect of the Jews to make good use of the 'days of grace,' often recurring to them when Christ taught in their streets. 'How often?' The results: Woe, Sacrifice, Desolation. The lesson not to be lost on us. The parables of preparation call us to make good use of 'the grace of God,' not to be found sleeping or indifferent, but watchful servants, with girded loins and burning lights, day by day preparing for 'the time,' whenever it may be, of His glorious re-appearing. 'The morning' draws near for us individually, and for the Church as a 'body.' The signs of the times, 'the cock-crowing,' are with us now in the events of the day and century. Watch!

A RELIGIOUS EXIGENCY.

(From the Living Church.)

The Rev. Edward L. Stoddard of St. John's church, Jersey City, recently preached a sermon on the education of children, which has attracted considerable notice. He drew emphatic attention to the defects in our modern school system, which while excellent of its kind, is but a partial system. It cultivates the intellect, but neglects the soul. Even some of the foremost defenders of the public school have strongly felt this deficiency. As time goes on it is more clearly seen that the idea that to train the intellect while ignoring the moral nature will make men righteous and law-abiding, is a complete fallacy. The statistics of crime in the United States suffice to prove this. There is an increasing number of criminals who have turned to evil ends the capacity and skill which

education has given them. A wicked nature is as capable of intellectual training as any other, and the result is to produce a devil, not a saint.

Mr. Stoddard says that the Roman Catholics, (and, he might have added, the Lutherans) attempt to get out of the difficulty by supporting parochial schools; we, in company with the Protestant denominations, "try to console ourselves with our Sunday schools." Useful as Sunday schools may be, according to the methods employed and the ends in view, seldom has their inadequacy as means of supplementing the training of the secular school, been exhibited with such telling effect. Estimating the average attendance for the year in the public schools as 5,000,000, that of the Sunday schools is about 3,500,000. That might not seem so very bad. "But," says the preacher, "the state of things is much worse than appears by these statistics. Let us take our own schools, one which is large, flourishing, and of good reputation. The attendance for forty weeks from September to June is about 75 per cent. Including the summer, it is but 50 per cent. The average scholar then attends twenty-five lessons a year. As the time of instruction is thirty minutes long, it follows that on the average a child in such a Sunday school as ours has religious instruction twelve hours a year." On the other hand, a simple calculation shows that "for every hour given to religious teaching there are over thirty given to secular teaching. Is this the proper proportion between soul and intellect? It may be said that children are taught religion at home. But how much are they really taught of God, of the Church, of its principles and their duties to it? There are cases in this parish where children cannot come to Sunday school because the parents who lie abed in the morning insist on having a late dinner. Having given up religion at home and having taken the utmost care that it shall not be taught in the public schools, we come to the Sunday school, where as we have seen, one-half of our children receive instruction in things pertaining to God from twelve to twenty-five hours a year."

There can be no question that this is a fair statement of the actual state of things. It serves to show the tremendous responsibility which rests upon those who have at heart the religious and moral training of the young. If we believe that religion is not a mere sentiment, a refinement of culture, an enjoyment of leisure, but that it is a primary duty, and the means of salvation for the immortal soul, then we must direct our strongest efforts to build up religion in the young, before other influences obtain possession and gain a power which can hardly be dislodged. If Christendom is to remain Christian, it must be through the training of the young. It is the last and most potent weapon of the adversary to exclude religion and morals from the field of education. This is a contest which is going on at present over a large part of the Christian world.

In this country the general atmosphere was so fully charged with Christianity, Christian morality was so unquestioningly accepted, legislation itself guided, at least theoretically, by a Christian spirit, that there was little thought of danger when the public school system was inaugurated. It was taken for granted that it would always rest, at least implicitly, upon a Christian foundation. If there was no direct religious instruction on account of the danger of sectarian conflict, at least the Bible was read, prayers were offered, and teachers often exercised a strong religious influence.

But as time passed on, the secular spirit of the age made itself felt, and it was powerfully aided by the opposition of the Roman Church even to the use of the Bible in the most formal way. Concerned only that their own children should receive no touch of Protestant influence, they cared not if Protestant children became