

The Church Times.

"Evangelical Truth--Apostolic Order."

VOL. 2. HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA, SATURDAY, JANUARY 8, 1858. NO. 1.

Calendar.

| CALENDAR WITH LESSONS. | | MORNING. | | EVENING. | |
|------------------------|--------|-----------|---------|-----------|--------|
| Day | Date | Lesson | Verse | Lesson | Verse |
| S. | Jan. 4 | Isaiah 41 | Mat. 23 | Isaiah 48 | Rom. 8 |
| M. | 5 | Genesis 1 | Mat. 23 | Genesis 1 | Rom. 8 |
| T. | 6 | Isaiah 60 | Luke 3 | Isaiah 49 | Jan. 2 |
| W. | 7 | Isaiah 60 | Luke 3 | Isaiah 49 | Jan. 2 |
| T. | 8 | Genesis 1 | Mat. 23 | Genesis 1 | Rom. 8 |
| F. | 9 | Isaiah 60 | Luke 3 | Isaiah 49 | Jan. 2 |
| S. | 10 | Isaiah 60 | Luke 3 | Isaiah 49 | Jan. 2 |

* The Athanasian Creed to be used.
 a To verse 23. c To verse 12.

Poetry.

LITANY TO THE HOLY SPIRIT.

BY ROBERT HERRICK

Anno 1635.

In the hour of my distress,
 When temptations me oppress,
 And when I my sins confess,
 Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

When I lie within my bed,
 Sick at heart and sick in head,
 And with doubts discomfited,
 Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

When the house doth sigh and weep,
 And the world is drowned in sleep,
 Yet mine eyes the watch do keep,
 Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

When the passing bell doth toll,
 And the curies in a shoal,
 Come to fright a parting soul,
 Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

When the tapers now burn blue,
 And the comforters are few,
 And that number more than true,
 Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

When the priest his last hath prayed,
 And I see to what is said,
 Because my speech is now decayed,
 Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

When (God knows) I'm tossed about
 Either with despair or doubt,
 Yet before the glass runs out,
 Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

When the tempter me pursueth,
 With the sins of all my youth,
 And half damns me with their truth,
 Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

When the flames and hellish cries
 Fright mine ears and fright mine eyes,
 And all terrors me-surprise,
 Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

When the judgment is revealed,
 And that opened which was sealed,
 When to thee I have appealed,
 Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

Religious Miscellany.

THE BAG WITH HOLES.

[The following are extracts from an Advent Sermon for the times, preached on Advent Sunday, 1857, in St. Mary's Church, Burlington, N. J., by the Bishop of the diocese, who is also rector of the parish:—]

Now, therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag, with holes. Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways. Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord. Ye looked for much, and lo, it came so little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why saith the Lord of hosts. Because of Mine house that is waste; and ye run, every man, to his own house.—Haggai 1:3-8.

How well these words describe the present state of things with us! Look back to midsummer. Was ever land so full of wealth, and of what makes wealth, and stands for it? What plenteous crops! What busy mills! What crowds of ships! Agriculture never so profitable, Manufactures never so active. Commerce never so extensive. Peace with the world. Prosperity at home. What enterprise that could not safely be encountered! What rate of progress that could not be easily achieved! What some of prosperity that was not certainly attainable! It really seemed that gold was God;

that the warning, as to "doubtful riches," had gone entirely out of use; that there were no longer wings for wealth, nor any moth nor rust that could lay hold on earthly treasures. Before mid-autumn came how fearful was the change! The whole land trembling with dismay; men's hearts failing them for fear; confidence gone; enterprises checked; manufactures stopped; commerce paralyzed; agriculture unable to pay the freightage of its products to the market; the most established institutions shaken to their foundations; the oldest and most respected commercial houses driven into bankruptcy; the names that had stood up for whole generations as lighthouses for integrity and honour tempted to dishonesty. And even now, from Europe, comes—above the roar of ocean, above the thunder of the heavens, above the din of Indian battle-fields—the echo of our crash, stunning our ears, while it appals our hearts. Was ever such transition, from the highest height of prosperity, to the deepest depth of adversity? Was ever lesson so imperative, that gold is only dust; that wisdom is only foolishness; that strongest of strength is only weakest weakness? Where was the arm that could arrest the panic? Where was the mind that could explain it, or account for it? What was there for whole America, what for ancestral England, but to bow like willows to the storm, and save themselves by yielding? How keen, in such a case, the sarcasm of the Prophet: "Ye have sown much, and bring in little." The golden harvests of the West are still in barns, for want of money to transport them. "Ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there are none warm." Men, who have rioted in plenty, find themselves reduced to want. Luxury and licentiousness give way to scarcity and care. The vestments, which cost thousands, fail to warm the trembling wearers. "And he that earneth wages"—he that has laid up money, the product of his toil, or triumph of his skill—"earneth wages to put into a bag, with holes." As some industrious country woman, who has put all her savings into an old stocking, and laid it safely up behind the chimney, finds that the mice have gnawed it into holes, and all her hoarded store has fallen beyond her reach. At other times these troubles have befallen some; now they reach all. At other times the doubtful fell, the weak were shaken, now the strongest were the first to fall, and the least questionable had to own their weakness. There has been no such searching of manly hearts since we became a nation; and never with so little reason, or, in a way to pass so fearfully all human comprehension. If statistics are reliable for the products of the land; if freedom from foreign entanglements were safety; if enterprise, ability, and industry were strength; we should now be filled with riches, and their increase passing all experience. Without flood, or fire, or famine; no war, no pestilence; we are a crippled nation. The richest cannot reach their wealth. The wisest know not where to turn. The most skilful find no occupation. The most industrious cannot earn their bread. Is there a theory that can explain it? Is there a chain of second causes that has produced it? Has human skill, or human energy, or human enterprise, been at fault? "No," says the withering sarcasm of the Prophet. "Ye looked for much, and lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it, saith the Lord." In the stronger language of the margin of our Bible, "I did blow it away." "Why? saith the Lord of hosts. Because of Mine house that is waste; and ye run, every man, to his own house."

My brethren, the lesson of the text is, clearly, the lesson of the times: "Consider your ways." It is repeated, "Now, therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider your ways," and, again, "thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider your ways." In the more expressive language of the margin, "Set your heart upon your ways." Dear brethren, is there not a cause? Can we do less? Have not our ways gone wrong? Has not disappointment sprung up in every path? Have we not found that riches are deceitful? That enterprise is powerless? That wisdom is at fault? What is the obvious lesson but to set our hearts upon our ways?

Beloved brethren "set your heart upon your ways!" It is the lesson of the text not only, and the times; but of that holy season on which the Church now enters. Surely the duty of all duties, for the Advent Season, is the consideration of our ways. Our sinful ways, which brought the Lord of glory down from heaven. Our sinful ways, on which the fire of His fierce anger is to burst, when He shall come to judge the world.

"Awake, again the Gospel trumpet is blown;
 From year to year, it swells, with louder tone;
 From year to year, the signs of wrath
 Are gathering, round the Judge's path;
 Strange words fulfilled, and mighty works achieved;
 And truth, in all the earth, both hated and believed."

"But what are heaven's alarms to hearts that cower,
 In wilful slumber, deepening every hour;
 That draw the curtains closer round,
 The nearer swells the trumpet's sound?
 Lord, ere our trembling lamps sink down, and die,
 Teach us, with chastening hand; and make us feel Thee nigh."

Beloved brethren, the coming of the Lord is drawing nigh. Even now, the Judge is at the door. What, if he find our loins not girded? What, if he find our lamp not burning? What, if He say, "Depart from Me; I know you not?" That it may not be so, the merciful goodness of God spurs us to another Advent. Let us make it, what the Church designs it for, a season of earnest preparation for the Judgment. Let us be instant, in prayer. Let the family altar be set up, on every hearth. Let us be constant, in the daily service of the Church. Let us be frequent, at that Holy Sacrament; through which, to penitent and faithful hearts the grace of their salvation cometh. Let us be more holy, in our lives; more charitable, with our tongues; more generous, with our hands. In a word, let us be more as servants who await the coming of their Lord; not knowing when He cometh. Saviour and Judge—most gracious Saviour and most glorious Judge—sustain us, by Thy grace, and fit us for Thy glory! And, unto Thee, with the Almighty Father, and the ever blessed Spirit, shall be ascribed, forevermore, the glory and the praise. Amen.

ESSENTIAL FEATURES IN THE MINISTERIAL CHARACTER.

Gravity is another essential feature in the ministerial character. St. Paul says, "Let the deacons be grave"—not sour and melancholy, but grave—not uncheerful, but grave, serious, and sober minded. The every-day life of a minister, instead of being trivial, as the life of men in general, is solemn; for he has to do with what is serious and important in life.

There should, then, be a sobriety and solidity about his character, which may at once bespeak his sacred calling. He is the Lord's Servant, an Ambassador from the Court of Heaven, a Messenger on the most solemn of errands. It is of little use out speaking and preaching seriously, if our manner, and our life are trifling. The world looks at us out of the pulpit, to know what we mean when in it.

It is especially needful to bear this in mind when in society. If the minister loses his gravity, the company will take liberties with him, and they will look down upon his office. Our gravity, however, should be natural—that which flows from a constant sense of our calling and duties. It should be far removed, too, from that self importance, which will only disgust men, and also from that affected silence and reserve, which will repel, rather than attract, those with whom we mix.

The natural manner of some is decidedly cheerful and elastic. And surely to those who are endued by nature with such a temper, there is cause for thankfulness. But then they have, perhaps, on this score peculiar need of watchfulness. While the Christian minister should ever be cheerful, still he should acquire a certain control over his spirits. Men will judge of us by the outward man; and harm is often done by the apparent levity of a clergyman, while in fact his soul may be deeply penetrated with the reality of eternal things.

Kindness of heart and manner will give a charm to our ministrations. All can appreciate it; and all who come under its influence feel its value. "The minister," says Vinet, "is a man of benevolence