

Dominion Churchman.

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THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

In the ninth, tenth, and thirteenth chapters of the second book of Kings, the history embraces a period of nearly half a century, from B.C. 884 to 836, beginning with the commission given to Jehu to destroy the house of Ahab. Jehu was the tenth King of Israel, the founder of its fourth dynasty, and reigned twenty-eight years. Aesur-nazir-pal had ascended the throne of Nineveh in 885 and was succeeded by Shalmaneser the second in 860; Hazael the first being King of Damascus, and reigning, according to the late lamented George Smith, from 886 to 857, when he was succeeded by Benhadad the third.

Jehu had held the command of the Israelite army at Ramoth-Gilead, which was stationed there to hold in check the Syrians, who had endeavored to extend their frontier to the Jordan, and had already obtained much of the territory belonging to the Israelites east of that river. After King Joram had been wounded in action, a council of war was held among the military commanders just at the time when one of the sons of the prophets had been sent to anoint Jehu King. Jehu was not the man to lose any thing by remissness, and therefore immediately advanced to Jezreel where Joram lay. Joram with Ahaziah King of Judah, met him in the field of Naboth, a place fatal to the house of Ahab. The death of Jezebel followed that of Joram in the manner so graphically described by the same historian; and then the seventy sons of Ahab, with all the kinsmen of Ahab, till he left him none remaining, according to the word of the Lord. He then showed his zeal, though not in a very straightforward manner, in the destruction of the temple and ministers of Baal, in Samaria, and for this purpose associated with himself, Jehonadab the Rechabite, who appears to have been a man of austere virtue, and possessed of the esteem of the multitude. Jehu departed not however from the schismatic establishment of the golden calves, in Dan and Bethel, as set up by Jeroboam; on this account his dynasty was to extend only to four generations; and for this the Divine aid was withheld from him in his wars with the Syrians under Hazael on his eastern frontier. He was buried in Samaria, leaving the throne to his son Jehoahaz, who continued to follow the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat; in consequence of which Benhadad the third,

and Hazael the second, continued to oppress Israel, 2 Kings xiii.

THE COLLECT, like those for the last two Sundays, is traceable to the sacramentary of Leo, A.D. 483. It prays for an increase of the three Christian graces, Faith, Hope, and Charity—not only because the Christian is required to go on unto perfection, but also because when the seeds of these graces have once been sown by the Divine Spirit, in the ordinance of Christ's appointment, if there is no continued growth, they will, like the seeds of the natural world, begin to decay, and in process of time, become altogether dead and useless. We learn also, from the Collect, not to attempt to separate these Christian graces, if any satisfactory growth in the spiritual life is to be expected. The Gospel for the day gives an instance of the existence of some degree of faith and hope, without the presence of Divine Love or charity; and the result is shown in total ingratitude; insensibility to God's mercies; going back again to the world. The latter part of the Collect, which prays for a spirit to love that which God has commanded, has reference to a particular form of charity or love, here taught to be absolutely essential to the attainment of what God has promised, which is thus shown to be conditional.

THE EPISTLE from Gal. v. 16, etc., is a more particular delineation of the purity which forms an essential feature of the fruits of the Spirit, and which directly flows from the exercise of the three Christian graces prayed for in the collect,—the increase of which can make no advance whatever except as the fruits of the Spirit, the entire holiness particularized in this passage is continually cultivated.

THE GOSPEL contains the remarkable miracle wrought on the ten men who were afflicted with that terrible disease, which was typical of the impurity deprecated in the epistle—the disease of leprosy. It also marks very distinctly the ingratitude of the nine Israelites, and the gratitude of the one who was a Samaritan. There are, speaking generally, three chief reasons for unthankfulness on the part of man toward God. First, an indistinct idea or an underestimate of the service that He renders us; secondly, a disposition, whether voluntary or not, to lose sight of our benefactor; and thirdly, the notion that it does not matter much to Him whether we acknowledge His benefits or not. In order to understand the full force of this passage, Leviticus xiii and xiv should be read, and we should remember that leprosy was in the eye of the law one of the most terrible evils incident to man, carrying with it a moral and religious as well as a social stigma. It was typical of the pollution of sin, and in a multitude of instances it was a consequence of traceable moral evil.

BRECHIN DIOCESAN SYNOD AND COUNCIL.

At the annual meeting of this Synod, on the 1st ult., it was unanimously agreed to record the following minute:—
“This Synod resolves to express its most deep sense of the irreparable loss sustained by the Church in general, and the Diocese of Brechin in particular, in the death of the late Diocesan Bishop. Bishop Forbes was a man of the deepest piety, of great learning, of fervent zeal for the honor of God and of his Church, and was thus entitled to respect and reverence from all. But, in addition to these great and noble qualities, he possessed a tenderness of heart, a generosity of disposition, and a fascination of manner that attracted to him a warmth of personal affection which few men have the power to inspire. It is, therefore, with saddened hearts and humbled minds, that the members of this Synod record their own most grievous loss, while rejoicing in spirit that their loved and honored Bishop should have been summoned in ripeness of holiness, and perfectness of peace, to the immediate presence of the Great Shepherd and Bishop of souls.”

From the statistics of the year, up to Dec. 31st, it appears that there are in connection with the diocese 11,863 souls, and 3,929 communicants. There had been 876 baptisms, 281 confirmations, 110 marriages, and 287 burials. It was reported that eighteen hundred volumes had been bequeathed by the late Bishop to the diocesan library.

Bishop Jermyn read a statement of his own work. He said he had held confirmations in all the charges of his Diocese except two, and had confirmed upwards of 500 persons. He had ordained three priests, and, acting for the Bishop at St. Andrew's, had consecrated a cemetery at Glamis. He referred to the Representative Church Council which had now a constitution given to it, although it had not yet held its first meeting. He thought that all financial matters should be handed over to that body, which is to consist, not only of all the voting members of the Synod, but of all the clergy of the Diocese, and of representatives from each congregation. He also suggested that the matter of Foreign Missions, and the matter of education and schools, should be given to that body. The Bishop also brought before the Synod the subject of Temperance. He said that everyone seemed to think the time had arrived when they ought to do something to check the drunkenness of the country, especially of the lower orders. Some efforts had been made to reconcile some of the old temperance bodies with the Church body, but it had been found impossible. It would be a good thing if they would take the rules of the Church of England Temperance Society as a basis. He thought that, as a Church, they ought to take the matter up, and that the clergy should carry out their decision as far as