

The Church Guardian

— EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR: —

L. H. DAVIDSON, D.C.L., MONTREAL.

— ASSOCIATE EDITOR: —

REV. EDWYN S. W. PENTREATH, B.D., Winnipeg, Man.

Address Correspondence and Communications to the Editor, P.O. Box 504. Exchanges to P.O. Box 1968. For Business announcements See page 14.

Special Notice.

SUBSCRIBERS IN ARREARS are respectfully requested to remit at their earliest convenience. The LABEL gives the date from which subscription is due.

CALENDAR FOR OCTOBER.

- OCT. 2nd—17th Sunday after Trinity.
 " 9th—18th Sunday after Trinity.
 " 16th—19th Sunday after Trinity. [Notice of St. Luke].
 INTERCESSION for Sunday-schools.
 " 18th—St. LUKE—*Evangelist*.
 " 23rd—20th Sunday after Trinity. [Notice of St. Simon and St. Jude, A. & M. Athanasian Creed.]
 " 30th—21st Sunday after Trinity. [Notice of All Saints.]

DAYS OF INTERCESSION FOR SUNDAY-SCHOOLS.

Saturday the 16th. and Monday the 17th of October. are the days suggested, we believe, for special Intercession in behalf of Sunday-Schools by The Church of England; and we suppose that the daughter Church in Canada will cheerfully accept the suggestion—more especially as by so doing it will be in accord also with the Sister Church in the United States which has as we learn from that admirable monthly *The American Church Sunday School Magazine* for September adopted these days. Doubtless, already preparations have been made in our several Dioceses for their observance, (though we have not heard of any steps having been taken to this end in the Diocese of Montreal, and it may be no exception): but if not, there is yet time for securing this; and surely none—not even the weakest parish and mission—will miss the privilege of joining their prayers with those of the many thousand congregations which on these days will ascend to the Throne of Grace on behalf of this all important work of the Church. We would urge upon our brethren of the Clergy and on Superintendents and officers of Sunday-schools prompt and immediate action in this matter, that the opportunity of impressing the children of the Church with the thought of the oneness of the Church, as evidenced in this simultaneous service throughout the world, and the privilege of belonging to an organization world-wide in extent and influence be not lost. Brethren of the Clergy the opportunity is yours—lose it not we pray.

As indicative of the form that such observances might take we give the methods suggested by the Executive Committee of the Church Sunday-school Institute of the United States. The Committee say:

The Committee feel that it is hardly necessary for them to refer to the need of Special

Prayers on behalf of Sunday-schools, and of the manifest advantages which arise from united and simultaneous action. If Missionary work, and in some Dioceses, Temperance work, receive the recognition and prayers of the Church on fixed occasions in the year, the Sunday-school, as the Church's agency for carrying out the Saviour's charge, "Feed my lambs," ought not to be denied a like position and benefit.

The Committee while leaving, as it is their obvious duty, the Clergy and others to make what arrangements may seem to them best for the observance of the days, yet venture to suggest the following methods, which may be found practicable:

PAROCHIAL ARRANGEMENTS.

1. A Special Celebration of the Holy Communion for the Teachers, with an address.
2. A devotional meeting for the Teachers on Sunday, and on Monday a similar meeting, to which the parents of Sunday-scholars, and the congregation generally, may be invited.
3. Sermons by the Clergy, showing the importance of Sunday-school work, inviting Parochial interest in it, and the personal help of all duly qualified persons (especially young men) as teachers, and pointing out to the parents of scholars how they may further the teacher's efforts.

The first of the days might be observed as the "Sunday-school Sunday, and a Special Children's Service made one of the features of the proceedings."

TOPICS FOR PRAYER.

The following topics for prayer are suggested, together with appropriate Collects from the Book of Common Prayer:

1. Confession of shortcoming and sin; want of faith, zeal, devotion; neglect of opportunities; self-seeking, pride, vain glory, in past work.

Thanksgiving for being allowed to engage in the work, and for success and blessing vouchsafed, notwithstanding, human imperfection.

Prayer for the Sunday-school as a pastoral agency; that its importance may be more and more recognized, and its usefulness developed by the Church.

APPROPRIATE PRAYERS.—Collects for Advent, Easter-day, Whitsun-day, 22nd, 23rd, and 25th Sundays after Trinity.

2. *Prayer for those now engaged in, or preparing for the work*: the Clergy, Superintendents and Officers in our Sunday-schools—the Teachers, that all may be taught of God; that He would greatly increase their number, and raise up a fit supply of persons to serve in this vocation and ministry; also for a blessing on all Teachers' Preparation Classes and Meetings, and upon all Local Associations.

Collects for Good Friday (second), St. Mark, St. Barnabas, St. John the Baptist, and from the Ordination Services.

3. *Prayer for our Scholars*, that the instruction they receive may make them wise unto salvation; for the senior scholars especially, that they may be kept safe through the many temptations that surround them, and that they may declare themselves on the Lord's side; for those who have passed through our schools; and for the careless, the insubordinate, and the hardened.

Parts of Baptismal and Confirmation Services, Collects for Christmas Day, 2nd, 7th, 15th and 18th Sundays after Trinity.

4. *Prayer for the Parents and Friends of the Scholars*, that they may heartily co-operate with the Sunday-school; and that, where they are irreligious, the school influence may be blessed to them.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE WORK.

The Sunday-school work of the Church is immeasurably great and glorious. It aims at nothing short of bringing within the fold of Christ, and there feeding, the vast flocks of His lambs—of every class and every country—

throughout the world. Notwithstanding the progress which has been made during the last few years, Sunday-schools are still but partially developed, and an imperfectly worked agency Church. The claims of our children are urgent, and the future of the Church will be shaped by the children of our days.

'THAT THEY MAY HEAR SERMONS.'

They are not wise who undervalue the sermon as a great power of the age. Those teachers do not well who allow other parish work to push aside the time and pains necessary for making the sermon profitable and interesting. Not every ordained man can expect to be a Newman, a Liddon, a Robertson, a Blunt; but all may call these, and many successful preachers, to their aid in their own preparation. Some men there are who do not claim to preach well, but these are in better case than those (and there are many) who think themselves good preachers and are not. For those who make no pretensions can build up a sermon—plan, argument, illustrations, whole eloquent passages—from the genius and pains of others. They can be as Solomon drawing on David's splendid stores. And those who think they can preach well, who will dare to tell them (if this be so) that they cannot? Perhaps those of their household, blinded by affection, assist to keep up their delusion. Not many will have the advantage derivable from such plain home-speaking as the scotch *meenister*, wet to the skin, heard from his landlady: 'Dinna fash yersell, meenister, ye'll be dry eneuch when ye get in to the pulpit.'

How, then, can a man discover whether or no he hits or misses his mark as a preacher?

Let him, first of all, conceive it possible that he is not a preacher able to compel attention. This will be a great point gained, for then he will be helped, by many small straws, to see how the wind blows. Is the Church fairly full? especially do the men come? Is the congregation attentive? Have the people been laid hold of by the preacher? Does he find, in his after-ministrations, that his words have, here and there, gone home? Of course he is not to invite or encourage comment upon his sermons, or to seem to be "fishing" for praise. Far from this. But some of its shafts should have pierced the joints of the armour, even though shot at a venture. In some cases a 'What shall I do?' or a 'I have sinned against the Lord,' should follow upon the hearts assent to his 'Thou art the man.'

Of course, if a man undervalue the importance of hearing sermons, in spite of the exhortation to God-parents in our Church's solemn Baptismal Office, there is no more to be said. So far as he is concerned he has no great heart in the matter, and, to reach the heart, sermons must come from the heart. He will hurry or sloven over the preparation, with the result that 'the hungry sheep look on and are not fed.' Yet the Chief Shepherd, in His exhortation to St. Peter, twice says 'Feed' for once that He says 'Tend.' Services multiplied, house-to-house visiting, all the different organizations in a parish: these are of vast value. But after all, the tending the sheep should culminate in the feeding them, as our Lord's last word of charge to His Apostle shows. And what is to be the desirable result of the labour of a house-going pastor? Even that of a 'church-going people.'

True, they must be taught to come to church, not to hear only, but chiefly to worship. Still, we repeat, the sheep are gathered in the fold to be fed. Does not the Church provide for this requirement by the reading of the Lessons and the Epistle and Gospel, also by her direction as to Sermons and Catechising?

And is her requirement met by the provision of the poor, dry, tasteless chaff, with no 'good-