

The Church Times.

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Calendar.

CALENDAR WITH LESSONS.

DAY & DATE	MORNING	EVENING
Nov. 5	1st. 1st. 1st. 1st.	1st. 1st. 1st. 1st.
6	2nd. 2nd. 2nd. 2nd.	2nd. 2nd. 2nd. 2nd.
7	3rd. 3rd. 3rd. 3rd.	3rd. 3rd. 3rd. 3rd.
8	4th. 4th. 4th. 4th.	4th. 4th. 4th. 4th.
9	5th. 5th. 5th. 5th.	5th. 5th. 5th. 5th.
10	6th. 6th. 6th. 6th.	6th. 6th. 6th. 6th.
11	7th. 7th. 7th. 7th.	7th. 7th. 7th. 7th.

Proper Lessons for Populace.
 1st. 1st. 2nd. 2nd. 3rd. 3rd. 4th. 4th. 5th. 5th. 6th. 6th. 7th. 7th. 8th. 8th. 9th. 9th. 10th. 10th. 11th. 11th. 12th. 12th. 13th. 13th. 14th. 14th. 15th. 15th. 16th. 16th. 17th. 17th. 18th. 18th. 19th. 19th. 20th. 20th. 21st. 21st. 22nd. 22nd. 23rd. 23rd. 24th. 24th. 25th. 25th. 26th. 26th. 27th. 27th. 28th. 28th. 29th. 29th. 30th. 30th. 31st. 31st.

DOCTRINE.

TENTUAL SONGS.

"Is thoughts from the visions of the night."—Job iv, 14.

In the watches of the night,
 When slumber's gentle rod
 Drows the multitudes of earth,
 There are whisperings of God—
 Of His majesty and might,
 Of His glory and His grace—
 To the wicked full of dread,
 To the good a hiding-place.

In the watches of the night,
 When the busy world is still,
 There come whisperings of death,
 Like a spell upon the will:
 Then on solemn themes the thoughts
 Through their inner chambers roam,
 On the coffin and the bier—
 On the dark and narrow home.

In the watches of the night,
 When no eye can pierce the gloom,
 There are whisperings within
 Of the life beyond the tomb:
 Of its boundlessness of joy,
 Or infinitude of wo,
 As its ceaseless tide of years
 Through unnumbered ages flow.

O, the watches of the night,
 How replete with wisdom they!
 Then the day-dreams of the soul
 Flit like mist before the day,
 Truth and conscience reign supreme
 In the woe-filled midnight hour;
 Erring mortals heed their voice,
 Or at length shall feel their power.

Religious Miscellany.

A DEFENCE

of the Constitution of the Diocese of Vermont, in reply to the strictures of the Episcopal Recorder. By JOHN H. HOKINS, D. D., L. L. D., Bishop of Vermont.

THE EPISCOPAL VETO.

The third topic of your rebuke takes us to task. We call our Standing Committee "a Council of Advice." But why? They are so, beyond controversy. True it is that the appointment of such a committee was also a novelty. But the system is recognized and established by the General Convention. It has worked well. It has no injurious effect on the rights of Bishop, clergy, or laity; and, therefore, our Diocese adopts it to the full extent, and says as much regard to its functions as any other.

We are censured, next, because our Constitution vests the Bishop the judge in all ecclesiastical cases. But who else has the right? Does not the Apostle expressly put this office on Timothy and Titus? Was it not exercised by every Bishop in the primitive Church for at least five centuries? Do not the ecclesiastical judges introduced by the Church of Rome, and still employed by our mother Church in England, exercise their authority by commission from the Bishops and Archbishops, as their deputies, which is a plain proof that the original power was in the Bishops themselves? And therefore I contend, in this point also the older Dioceses are the more correct. I maintain that the Bishops are the natural judges in the Church by the positive evidence of Scripture and all antiquity. And as it is an admitted maxim of secular law that a judge has no right to delegate his functions, I question the authority of our Bishops to delegate their judicial power

Continued.

to presbyters. They have just as much right, on strict principles, to delegate the power of ordination.

But our learned censor asserts that this makes the Bishops "absolute." How so, I pray you? Is the judge in our secular courts absolute? Must he not be governed by the law? Or has he any power to acquit or condemn until the grand jury have found the bill of indictment, and the petit jury have given in their verdict? Such is precisely the power of the Bishop in the Diocese of Vermont. The Standing Committee must first present the offender. A certain number of presbyters, in the case of a clergyman, selected by the accused, and of laymen in the case of the laity, then act as a jury on the facts, and the Bishop presides as a judge, to secure the conducting of the trial according to law and order.—What man of common sense would not think himself more safe under the eyes of the highest officer of the Church, who is bound by the most sacred obligations to administer justice impartially, without respect of persons, than he could possibly feel in the hands of his brethren alone? And how can our Bishops ever be expected to make themselves familiar with those legal principles, which they are all called to administer, when one of themselves is put upon trial, if they be excluded from the judicial branch of their ordinary Apostolic functions, on the strange pretext that no Bishop can act as a judge in his own Diocese without becoming an irresponsible and absolute Dictator?

Our ingenious castigator finds fault, in the next place, with the canon of Vermont, which declares that "the Bishop is expected to express his opinion on every subject" with entire freedom. But truly, this seems to be a very ungracious kind of objection. For every member of the Convention has the same liberty of speech, and why should the Bishop be silent, if it be in his power to shed the light of his knowledge and experience on the question? This appears so obvious, that such a canon would not have been passed if the preposterous custom established in the older Dioceses had not reduced the Bishop to the position of a mere chairman at a public meeting, whose duty it is to enforce the rules of order, and appoint committees, and announce the votes, and leave all the thinking and speaking to others. No Christian man, however, can seriously imagine that such a system was the true exponent of the Episcopal office in the contemplation of the Apostle or the practice of the primitive Church. The clergy and the laity of the Diocese select their Bishop, in the belief, at least, that he is the best whom they are able to obtain for his high and responsible station. And hence, it must be supposed, that the great majority of the members of Convention desire to know his opinion, and are disposed to attach far more confidence to it than to that of any other. The sons of the family, grown to mature age, may be wiser, and more learned, and more eloquent than the father; but yet, when that family meet together to confer on those matters which most nearly concern them all, his judgment and his counsel ought to be freely declared, and to have their proper influence. The lawyer and the jury in court may include many who are superior to the judge in personal and intellectual endowment; yet when a serious question of fact or law is to be determined, his opinion is listened to with respect and deference for his office's sake. And the Bishop, in his Convention, bears to the clergy the double relation, ecclesiastically, of father and judge. Why should he not speak, who has been selected for the very purpose of being a guide, a teacher, and a governor in the Church of his Diocese? Why must the custom of a worldly town meeting ride over the simple and sound principles which should regulate the House of God?

In connection with this, our erudite assailant makes a great mistake by supposing, that when our clergy and laity vote in a way that does not please the Bishop, he exercises the power of veto, thereby "depriving them of their constitutional right to legislate." But such a course would indeed be an absurdity. The fact, however, is, that the working of our system is quite otherwise. If the proposition under debate be so objectionable to the Bishop's judgment that he cannot accede to it, he says so, and there is no veto taken at all. The ground we stand on is, that we cannot act, unless we act together. It is very true that in such a case the Convention

does not legislate. But what is the Convention? The clergy and laity without their Bishop? Nay, verily; but the clergy and the laity with their Bishop. And therefore, as the Bishop is a distinct constitutional element of the body, just as the clergy and the laity are, it results, of necessity, that the Convention, being the Church assembled in its integrity, cannot perform any act of a legislative character unless these three elements concur in the decision.

But when our eloquent accuser calls this "depriving the clergy and the laity of their constitutional right to legislate," he only shows the natural results of the erroneous plan which the older Dioceses have adopted. Their constitutions have indeed given the clergy and the laity power to legislate without, and even against, the Bishop; but right they could not give, because in the Episcopal Church there are no rights except those which flow from Apostolic authority. On scriptural and primitive ground, therefore, the clergy and the laity have no right to legislate without their Bishop, just as he has no right to legislate without them. And when the clergy and the laity are so ignorant of true Church principles as to desire to act without their ecclesiastical head, I should say to them, very kindly, but very plainly, that it is high time they should learn the true Constitution of their Church before they undertake to meddle with the serious and responsible work of her legislation.

Our persevering and ingenious censor sums up his charges by saying that the Bishop of Vermont may exercise "all power, legislative, judicial, and executive," so as to "dictate to the shape of a gown or the fashion of a surplice." I am really sorry to see a man of acknowledged talents and acquirements so far above the average descend to such cavilling as this. For as to the legislative power of the Bishop, I have shown that he is as dependent on the clergy and the laity as they are on him, and therefore he can make no change without their full consent and approbation. With respect to his judicial power, I have shown that it cannot be exercised until the Standing Committee have made a presentment, and a jury of presbyters or laymen has decided upon a verdict, which is in precise analogy with the administration of secular justice. And as regards the Bishop's executive power, our rhetorical friend must have thrown in the phrase *ad captandam*, or possibly to frighten his readers with a phantasm. For it is evident to common sense that the Church, being a spiritual kingdom, has no executive power at all under the present dispensation; and therefore the sentences of her officers can only be executed by the conscience of her members. The President has executive power, because he commands the army and navy. The Governor has executive power, because he can order out the militia of the State. The judge has executive power, because the sheriff is bound to enforce his judgment by the strong arm of the law; but the Bishop has no instrument of coercion connected with his office, and the application of such a phrase to him looks very like a pure absurdity.

I believe that I have now disposed of the catalogue of my good brother, the Rev. Dr. Hawks, and therefore I shall next advert to a statement of your anonymous correspondent which demands some attention. Our system, as he regards it, must deprive our Conventions of all attraction, and produce "a feeling of indifference and servility in both clergy and laity." And he introduces "a distinguished layman of Vermont," saying that "he had no interest in them, because he could not consent to be made an automaton."

Here we have three substantial allegations: 1st, the want of attractiveness, 2dly, the production of servility in the clergy and laity; and 3dly, the danger of transforming a "distinguished layman" into a mere machine. Let me consider them with fairness and with candor, although I cannot help thinking that our accuser has ventured upon the grave responsibility of publicly censuring what he has taken very little pains to understand.

With respect to the first charge—the want of attractive interest in our Conventions—the only proper way to test it would have been to compare the lists of the clergy and the laity who attend them, with similar lists in other Dioceses. If your correspondent had done this, he would have found that in no Diocese of the same size throughout the land was