

The Church Times.

"Evangelical Truth--Apostolic Order."

VOL. 8. HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA, SATURDAY, AUGUST 22, 1867. NO. 84.

Calendar.

CALENDAR WITH LESSONS.

Date	Day	MORNING.	EVENING.
8	Aug. 23	1 Kings 5 Acts 2	2 Kings 9 3 Pet 3
M.	24	St Bar A&M Ecclus. 24	24 Ecclus. 29 John 1
T.	25	Isaiah 10	23 Daniel 11
W.	26	Isaiah 12	24 Hosea 1
T.	27	Hosea 3, 3	25
F.	28	5, 6	26
S.	29	8	27 2, 3 John

* The Athanasian Creed to be used

Poetry.

COUNTRY WORK SONG.

BY REV. EDWARD HOPPER.

Up and away!
The sun shines bright,
Work in the day,
Sleep in the night.

While sluggards sleep
The rank weeds grow,
Harvest they reap
Who plough and sow.

Drones increase sorrow,
Lazily they
Leave till to-morrow
Work of to-day.

Wretched the shirkers!
Joyous are we,—
Happy the workers,
Healthy and free.

Farmers go singing
Forth to their farms,
Glad they come bringing
Sheaves in their arms.

Hoping the sower
Soweth the seed,
Joyful the mower
Moweth the mead.

Smoothly the plough
Turns the sod over,
Row after row,
Covering the clover.

Soon the corn springs,
(Law is not fickle.)
Soon the heart sings
Plying the sickle.

Borne on the gales,
Sound, clear and sweet,
Threshers' loud flails
Threshing the wheat.

Threshers keep time
Steady and strong,
Flailing the rhyme
Of a rustic song.

Laughing the grain
Leaps from the sheaves,
Falls as the rain
Falls on the leaves.

Hark! how the mill,
Sunshine or rain,
Works with a will,
Grinding the grain!

Round goes the wheel
Covered with foam,
Out comes the meal
On its way home,

Smiles the old miller
In the mill door,
Fills up the tiller,
Thinks of the poor.

Labor has song,
Labor has health,
Labor is strong,
Labor is wealth.

Sloth addeth sorrow
Under the sun,
Sluggards still borrow
Woes which they shun.

Work addeth pleasures,
Bringeth forth mirth,
Scattereth treasures
Over the earth.

Up, then away!
The sun shines bright.
Work in the day!
Sleep in the night!

New York Observer.

Religious Miscellany.

REPORTS TO CONVOCATION.

Convocation met last week to receive reports from its committees. It was understood that it was not a meeting for discussion, and the business was mainly confined to the presenting of these reports, though some other subjects were alluded to in passing. It is one of the anomalies of the present position of Convocation that it should be able to meet and transact business and receive reports, but, that though matters of deep concern to the Church and to society are under discussion in Parliament, it should be obliged to leave them out of its list of subjects for consideration. The Divorce Bill was probably in the thoughts and on the lips of most of its members when they met last week; but the forms of their meeting barely allowed one or two of them to show that they were aware of its existence. But such are the limitations under which Convocation meets at present; and we do not quarrel with the self-restraint and judgment that lead its members to acquiesce in them.

The reports presented to Convocation will be read with interest, and may become important starting-points for considerable practical measures. Two especially will engage attention. On the subject of Home and Foreign Missions, committees were appointed by both Houses, who have, while considering the questions referred to them, met in conference, but have prepared their reports separately. With respect to action at home, both recommend measures of a missionary character of a larger and freer character than we have had hitherto. They agree in thinking that the Parochial System, though of the utmost value, and indispensable as the basis of all other measures, needs something beyond it to meet the wants of a population which has outgrown it. They urge the appointment in each diocese of a body of Preachers, specially chosen for their work, to go about the diocese wherever their services may be needed and called for, delivering sermons or courses of sermons on special subjects or at special seasons, and otherwise giving temporary help where in any parish some object out of the common may demand an unusual effort. They suggest additional services for the poor and for children—the erection of temporary mission chapels, of small cost, in remote and neglected districts—and free employment of the Cathedrals for short and popular services, adapted to the laboring classes. In all these points they reckon largely on the services of the proposed Diocesan Preachers. The committee of the Upper House add a suggestion to the clergy to "substitute for their more formal addresses from the pulpit, plain expositions of God's word, and direct addresses to the conscience," such as the least instructed may understand. The Committee of the Lower House urge more frequent confirmations. The Lower House Report further brings forward strongly the necessity of a large increase both in the highest and in the lowest grades of the ministry. Strengthening themselves by some of the suggestions of the Cathedral Commission, they present the basis of a plan for dividing dioceses, erecting new sees, and appointing coadjutor Bishops. With respect to the diaconate, they suggest the expediency of drawing a stronger line between its functions and that of the Priesthood, and then of enlarging it by the admission of men selected more for their moral and religious character, and power of influencing others, than for their intellectual qualifications. Both Reports speak strongly on the importance of increased association and co-operation in parochial work between clergy and laity; both advise increased attention to organizing diocesan and parochial societies for the purpose of collecting funds for home and foreign missions: both adopt and recommend the plan already at work in some dioceses, of two stated annual collections in each parish, one for domestic objects, and one for missions abroad; both look with favour on the weekly Offertory as a desirable means, where practicable, of collecting for these purposes; both urge a greater frequency of Church services, and especially of the celebration of the Holy Communion; both allude to the importance of "a longer and more detailed body of Church statistics," to be supplied by annual reports from each parish to the Bishop of the diocese. Some of these suggestions, relative to our Church system

at home, are matters of fair question, and will probably give rise to considerable debate; but it is of advantage to the Church that they should be brought forward frankly for discussion, and that they should not be put aside as unsuitable or impracticable, until they have been fairly examined. With reference to Foreign Missions, the reports are more general. The committee of the Lower House strongly urge the formation in every parish of a Missionary Association, and express a wish for the further extension of the Episcopate abroad.

Another report of some importance is one from a Committee of the Lower House on lay-cooperation. It was appointed to consider "the best means for obtaining the counsel and co-operation of the laity of the Church in Annual Visitations or Diocesan Synods, or in any other modes that may be deemed expedient." The questions with which the Committee was charged must be felt to border on, though they do not necessarily involve, the more important one of the presence of the laity in any general Synod or Assembly of the Church; they, in a manner, feel the way towards it, and exhibit on a smaller scale some of the difficulties which will arise when the larger measure comes to be discussed. The report of the Committee, which was not a unanimous one, is cautious and general, and, like the measures which it suggests, of a tentative character. It specifies four occasions where laity and clergy might consult and discuss matters of interest to them as Christians and Churchmen—Parish Vestries, Ruridecaval Meetings, Archidiaconal and Episcopal Visitations. The laity who would consult with the clergy would be, in the first case, the parishioners in general—in the other three the churchwardens and sidesmen of the parishes. There can be no doubt that in calling attention to the opportunities afforded by Visitations of greater intercourse between lay officers of the Church and the clergy, and in suggesting the expediency of cultivating more carefully and systematically those opportunities, the report has made a very valuable suggestion. But it is to be observed that the report, while suggesting the importance of calling the laity of the Church very freely into counsel, and, perhaps, into increased influence, leaves untouched the serious question who are the laity of the Church. It declines all attempt at any accurate definition of them, and considers them simply under the form of ratepayers and churchwardens. There is no great importance in this, probably, as far as regards the actual working of the proposed meetings. But it is of consequence, as throwing light on the practicability of representing those who are really the laity of the Church, with reference to their being called to take their part in a general Council of England assembly. So far the Committee has confessed that it is impossible to discriminate them. Two of its members have, indeed, expressed their dissent from its recommendations. They object to the equal prominence given to the four kind of assemblies spoken of, and to the absence of any precise specification of their several spheres and duties, and point out that the paramount importance of the diocesan Synod is lost sight of in the consideration of other meetings, which ought only to be regarded as subordinate and subsidiary to it. But the chief ground of objection, at least with one of them, the Archdeacon of Worcester, is the point which we have noticed above—the giving up, on the part of the Committee, of any attempt to ascertain the true Church laity. The Archdeacon thinks that "a more just and true representation of the laity may be provided by means of a constituency of communicants." This is a broad and clear view of the matter. But it must be remembered that it is just as much clogged with practical difficulties, though difficulties of another sort, as the opposite view, that takes for granted that any ratepayer is a layman of the Church, and ought to be represented in her meetings. The question, however, is now fairly opened for consideration and discussion, not merely whether a lay "House," or "Order," would be an advantage in a Church assembly—diocesan or national—but what is the lay body which ought to be represented, and what ought to be the qualifications of its representatives. Till some clear understanding and agreement can be come to about the latter question, it seems either unfair or unpractical to