

The Church Guardian

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SPECIAL NOTICE.

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CALENDAR FOR OCTOBER.

- OCT. 4th—18th Sunday after Trinity.
 " 11th—19th Sunday after Trinity.
 " 18th—20th Sunday after Trinity.
 " 18th—St. Luke—Evangelist.
 " 25th—17th Sunday after Trinity.
 " 28th—St. Simon and St. Jude, (Apostles and Martyrs.

CHURCHLY PREACHING.

We have frequently felt that much of the power of the Church's teaching was lost through an absence of harmony between the utterances from the pulpit and the services themselves. For example, we have known of ministers preaching during Ascension-tide sermons fitted only for the Lenten season, and during Lent sermons becoming only to a festival occasion. Not only is there an absence of harmony in this course of action, but it would seem as if there were an actual hostility in the mind of the preacher to the system and seasons of the Church. And the effect is bad in every aspect; not only is it a loss of opportunity, but it involves ultimately an absolute disregard on the part of the people of the requirements of the Church. We would like to see greater harmony manifested in the entire service, not alone in fitting the sermon to the special teaching of the day or season, but in making the service in all its parts harmonious. And one most important means of teaching is in and by the hymns which are sung. These should always, it seems to us, be chosen with reference chiefly to the leading topic of the Sunday or festival, and never be antagonistic thereto, nor ever be chosen merely for the purpose of enabling the choir the better to display their capacity and training. There is, we are convinced, far too much of absence of thought and consideration in regard to this matter, and we are glad to find in that most excellent of Church monthlies—(one which we always find pleasure and profit in reading, and which we would gladly see on the table of every clergyman in this Province, though of course there may be and must be in this and any such publication at times more or less that is not in harmony with individual thought or taste)—*The Church Eclectic* for October an extract, under the title above given, from the Convention Address of the Bishop of Wisconsin, which we feel we cannot do better than reproduce in extenso.

Bishop Welles says:—

"In connection with the manifestation of Christ in all our preaching, too much importance cannot be given to the ritual of the Christian year. That which is especially needed in our pulpits to-day is entire harmony between the words of the preacher and that which the people listen to from the lectern and the Altar—the Lessons, the Epistle, and the Gospel. The system of doctrinal teaching which is the necessary condition of spiritual edification, of a sound and healthy growth in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, is that which is clearly marked out in the great festivals and fasts of the Church. It is teaching and emphasizing the gospel foundations of the Incarnation, Atonement, Resurrection, and Ascension, and the descent and work of the Holy Spirit. We cannot give too much care to a proper observance of all the Church's days and seasons; we cannot make too glorious the joyful or solemn services of the house of God, which commemorate these great events in, or connected with, the Incarnate Life. The world would rob us of our heritage, and despoil the King's daughter of all the glory of her divine home and lineage. There is a worldly element in the Church which affects to despise all the accessories of worship, sometimes arrays itself in bitter hostility, claims that the wealth and worldly influence represented in the pews shall dictate the utterances of the pulpit, demanding that the priest and pastor shall be lost sight of in the popular preacher, and that passing events and popular themes shall be the subject of Sunday discourses; that all that is distinctive in the teachings of the Word of God and of the Church of God shall be avoided, and that as men go to listen to a popular orator or lecturer, so when they go to Church they must hear only that from the pulpit which is pleasant to the ear. Every Bishop has again and again heard from vestries and officers of parishes the request that in supplying the vacancy some one would be sent whose preaching would please these, the people. May God in His mercy avert from the Church this degradation of the Divine office of preaching. A teaching Church must have faithful preachers—men who are not afraid to declare the whole counsel of God; to follow in their plain expositions of the Word the circlings of the Christian year, giving prominence to that which the Church of God in all ages has testified to as of supreme importance; the Incarnation, with its clear and manifest teachings on the Divinity of the Son of God; the Atonement, with all its lessons of comfort, strength and grace; the Resurrection and Ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ; and the descent of the Holy Spirit; connecting with these great facts of the Creed all that which is a logical and inevitable consequence, the unchangeable character of human responsibility, the assured day and universality of judgment, the certainty of everlasting reward and of eternal punishment.

"There is something appalling in that unreal, superficial, heretical preaching which is forced upon our attention as one of the characteristics of the so-called popular religion of the day; this profanation of the sanctity of the pulpit, this degradation of place and word, which should be always sacred because of the messenger and message from God to His people, the depravement of the pulpit into a mere show-place of human oratory where he who should be the Lord's prophet panders to the selfishness and self-indulgence of the flock that he is appointed to guide and teach and influence.

"In the case of any clergyman of the Church who neglects the Church's system of teaching, and selects the subjects of his sermons from political and secular events, or decides from mere individual feeling, there is very great danger that he will soon pass from that which may at first be colorless as regards Christian doctrine into open and avowed latitudinarian-

ism—rationalism—heresy. The value of the Church's system is that her liturgic worship, her chosen collects, her appointed lessons from Holy Scripture, her Eucharistic readings of Epistle and Gospels, all overshadowed and consecrated by her reverent spirit, will, if conscientiously adhered to, lead the preacher into a right choice of subjects, and guide him into a right spirit of exposition.

"Every departure from the system of the Church is a loss to individual character, and a weakening of belief and worship; but in regard to preaching and the preacher, it is the sure precursor of individualism, and, it may be, of heresy. Our safety—the safety of priest and people—is in living and working in the life and way of the Church."

THE CHURCH CONGRESS.

It is with the most unfeigned regret that we announce the determination arrived at by the Local Committee of the Congress to cancel the engagement. As will be seen, however, from the resolutions adopted, and to be found in the Montreal Home Field, that decision has been rendered unavoidable in consequence of the feeling of dread prevailing outside Montreal as to visiting the city. We certainly do not regard these fears as well founded, and specially regret the hesitation manifested, in the face of the duty to be performed. The feeling, however, against proceeding with the meeting was very strong, and the Committee could not do otherwise than yield to it. We notice that the Young Men's Christian Association has a Conference fixed for the end of this month in this same city of Montreal, and the Canadian Inter-Collegiate Missionary Alliance a Convention for the beginning of November; and we shall await with some curiosity their decision. We also await, not with curiosity, but with anxiety, the decision as to the next meeting of the Managing Committee of the Domestic and Foreign Board of Missions. This also is fixed, we believe, to be held in Montreal, and the urgency of matters in the Northwest, and the feeling of dissatisfaction prevailing there in regard to the meagre assistance rendered by the Church in older Canada, renders the necessity of action by the Board imperative. Already, confidence in that body has been shaken and greatly weakened; and we believe that it will require but little more of inaction and hesitation to lead the Church in several dioceses to ignore it entirely, and to act independently of it in the Mission work.

Since writing the foregoing notice has come to hand, that the next meeting will be held in Kingston on the 21st instant.

NOBLE ADHERENCE TO DUTY.

Whatever prejudices may have existed in some quarters as to Sisterhoods, and the Sisters of St. Margaret, Montreal, in particular, their noble and Christ-like readiness to undertake the work of nursing the small-pox patients belonging to Protestant denominations has won for them universal esteem, and will go far to recommend such organizations to the support of all classes of the community. We do not refer to this action as anything contrary to what was to be expected from sisterhoods; it is only in accordance with the law of their organization and being. But it is nevertheless a subject for admiration and praise, and specially so as evidencing, in the face of a Roman