

The Church Times.

"Evangelical Unity—Apostolic Order."

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Calendar.

CALENDAR WITH LESSONS.

Day	Date	MOORNING.	EVENING.
S.	Feb. 5	Quinquages. 8.	Gen. 22
M.	6	Exod. 17	1 Cor. 15
T.	7	19	17
W.	8	20	19
Th.	9	21	21
F.	10	22	23
S.	11	23	25
S.	12	24	27
S.	13	25	29
S.	14	26	31

* Proper Psalms—Morn. 6, 82, 83—Even. 137, 139, 143. The Communion Service to be used on this day. a T. ver 20.

Poetry.

GOD HELP THE POOR.

DARKLY the winter-day
Dawns on the moor,
How can the heart be gay—
Who can endure?
See the sad, weary wight,
Wanders from noon to night,
Shelterless! homeless quite!
God help the poor!

Now the red robin, here,
Sits on the sill,
Not o'en a grain of bere
Touches its bill;
So with the houseless poor,
Wand'ring from door to door,
Seeking a morsel more—
Lord, 'tis thy will.

White is the virgin snow,
Beneath the morn;
See those starved children go,
Wretched, forlorn!
Feet without shoes or hose,
Backs without warm clothes,
Strangers to calm repose:
Why were they born?

See that lone, aged man,
Snow-white his hair;
Mark his sad visage wan,
Deep his despair;
Craving the rich man's food,
Owner of many a rood,
Lord, thou art always good,
Hear his heart prayer.

Yonder a woman goes,
Ragged and old,
Barefooted, o'er the snow,
Famished and cold.
How her poor children cling
To her side shivering,
Chickens beneath her wing
Doth she enfold!

Fast falls the sleet and rain,
Slowly they go,
By for-side, sheltered plain,
Warming their snow,
City street now they see,
Here they roam wild and free,
Are they not flesh as we—
Canst thou say "no"?

Night spreads her sable wing,
Where can they lie?
Sorrow like theirs must bring
Tears to the eye;
Fall the cloud-torrent falls,
Down they must lie in halls,
Each to his Maker calls,
"Lord! let me die!"

To whom the heavens bless,
Give from your store;
'Twill ne'er make your treasures less,
Must make them more.
For he that gives cheerfully,
God loves so tenderly,
Give to them—pray with me,
God help the poor!

Religious Miscellany.

THE TE DEUM.

The authorship of this sublime composition has been a subject of much dispute. Indeed it is quite uncertain whether we owe its original to the East or Eastern Church. Common opinion ascribes it to Ambrose and Austin jointly, who, divinely inspired while at the baptismal font, sung it before all the people. The legend is, that when Ambrose baptized his distinguished convert Austin, they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and as they arose from the water, Ambrose joyfully exclaimed, "We praise thee, O God," to which Austin responded, "We acknowledge thee to be the Lord," Ambrose con-

tinued, "All the earth doth worship thee," &c. Austin again, "To thee all angels," &c., thus repeating antiphonally each canticle to the end of the hymn. If the Te Deum was not so complete and logical in the arrangement of its parts, we might not consider this account of its origin wholly improbable, since it is but an amplified Gloria Patri and Apostles' Creed, both of which were then in common use, and which might easily have been clothed in this noble form under the inspiring influences natural to such an occasion. For this reason, and because the only authority for it is the chronicle of Datius, a successor of Ambrose in the bishopric of Milan, which not only Marardus has shown, contradicts the writings of Austin and Passidinius, but has been proved by Mabillon to be a spurious publication, written five hundred years after the death of its supposed author, learned men generally have considered this account of its origin to be a fiction of late ages.

Some writers have ascribed this hymn to Ambrose alone, as he is known to have composed hymns for the Church; others to Hilary of Arles, who is supposed to have written the Athanasian Creed; others to Hilary of Poitiers; while by far the most numerous and learned of liturgical writers ascribe it to Nicetius, Bishop of Trier.

It is exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to determine to whom the honor of its composition belongs, yet it undoubtedly lies between Ambrose and Nicetius. Comber asserts "that it is placed among the undoubted works of holy Ambrose, who in times of general calamity first brought the use of hymns into the Latin churches, and made several forms of praise himself—among the rest this grand and powerful hymn." And so it was considered by the Fourth Council of Toledo, which recommended the hymns of Ambrose and Hilary to be sung in all the churches, the latter of whom was not then claimed to be the author of the Te Deum. Yet Cassander has not included it among the Ambrosian collection of hymns, and the learned Benedictines, who published his works, deny his authorship of it. Indeed, an examination of the Te Deum with these hymns must awaken a doubt as to their coming from the same source. The language of the one is simple and majestic, without rhythmical flow or metre. The Ambrosian hymns, on the contrary, are not majestic, but beautiful, the general measure is the Iambic tetrameter, every fourth line closing with a period. As Shepherd justly remarks, "they possess something of Ovid's neatness and fancy as well as quaintness and conceit." Perplexed by such contradictory testimony, we turn to investigate the claims of Nicetius, who flourished about A.D. 540, nearly one hundred years after the death of Ambrose.

The best evidence of its being the production of this Gallican Bishop is that of Archbishop Usher, who found it attributed to him in an old manuscript collection of hymns, and a Latin and French Psalter. On testimony thus afforded, and for reasons previously stated which weaken the claim of Ambrose Bishop Sillingsdeet and Dr. Cave also have ascribed it to Nicetius. Yet history furnishes a fact which awakens doubt as to the reliability of this testimony. It is well known that in primitive times, when a Bishop of high distinction transcribed and brought into use in his own Church another's composition, it afterward bore the name of that Bishop. Baluzius relates several such instances, and it is not impossible that this is a similar case. Mention is made of this hymn in the rule of Benedict, in the rule of Aurelius, and in the rule of Casarius, the authors of which lived at the same time or soon after the death of Nicetius; and Menardus confidently affirms, "there is no mention of this hymn in any writer before."

To this it is replied, that even Benedict himself ascribed it in his rule to Ambrose; and had he not done so it was first mentioned in the time of Nicetius, is no proof that it was known before by some other name. This is probable from the fact that Ambrose himself says in one of his sermons, "he was accused by the Arians for deceiving the people by those hymns in verse which he had made, and taught them to his flock, so that they could now every day praise the Trinity with their mouths, and with verses glorify the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." This could not refer to the Gloria Patri, it being

written long before, and consisting of but one verse. Hence we may suppose it was the Te Deum, and that Ambrose first brought it into the Church, A. D. 380. Whether our conclusions be just or not, surely no one will deny that it is one of the noblest productions of uninspired man, containing, as has been said, the sublimest passages of the Prophet Isaiah, the grandest truths of the Gospel history, and the most pathetic supplications that are to be found in the Book of Psalms.

The importance this hymn has been to the Church cannot be too greatly estimated. Of its private influence upon the individual character we may not attempt to investigate. No pen but the Recording Angel's can number how many desponding hearts have been revived by its inspiring notes of praise; how many doubting minds have been firmly established in the truth by its clear declarations of doctrine; how many guilty souls have breathed its earnest prayer for mercy, and found peace and joy in a Saviour's love. But of its influence in strengthening and uniting the early Christians, and in preserving in their purity and simplicity, the doctrines of Jesus Christ, history furnishes many interesting instances. Give me "the making of a people's songs," said a distinguished political philosopher, "and I care not who makes their laws." This was said with a deep knowledge of the human heart. The man who controls the tide of human affection is more powerful than he who subjects the human will. Hence the sentiment is as true in a religious as well as political sense. Laws and creeds may command the assent, and control the actions of men; but the songs and sacred hymns of a people are the offspring of their affections and the daily companions of their thoughts.—N. Y. Prot. Churchman.

GO PUNCTUALLY TO CHURCH.

If a thing be worth doing at all, it is worth doing well. There must be an hour appointed for the service of the sabbath to commence. To have such an hour and not regard it, is only a mockery. To have such an hour, and mean something else is very childish. To say "a quarter past ten, A. M.," and understand by it "half past"—to say "half past" and really intend about "twelve minutes before eleven," is using words quite idly, and tampering with common sense, and, what is more injurious, with common conscience and honesty. Say what you mean, and stick to it. Fix the hour and meet it on the omelette.

The tramp of late-coming feet up the aisles and along the galleries, is a great annoyance to every serious minded worshipper—and has no tendency to sanctify the minister. So many heads are set on pivots, turning like well-oiled weather-cocks to every gentle blast from the opened door, even every rustle of silk and muslin, that a preacher loses the countenances of half his congregation when the interruption occurs—and is in danger of losing his own countenance and something else beside.

It is a piece of indecorum to go late to Church, unless compelled by some rigid necessity, which every well-bred person, to take no higher ground, will blush to practice. We are not saying if you find you are to be late, you had better conclude not to come at all. Many people reason in that way for themselves. Our doctrine is that you ought to go, and to go punctually. You would hardly think it courteous, if you were invited to a dinner party at a specified hour, to stroll in some half an hour behind time, keeping the company waiting your tardy arrival, or putting back its course to begin afresh with you. It would be about as difficult to vindicate the courtesy and propriety of coming to the gospel-feast out of time.

What should hinder any one from being punctual? The whole Sabbath is divinely set apart for this very interest of religious culture. There is not an hour of it that is not legitimately claimed for something connected with the soul's spiritual welfare. What other appropriation of its consecrated time can justify itself? Over-sleeping—Jehy in household duties—listlessness and procrastination in preparation—lingering at the toilet—these sometimes excusable, but surely cannot warrant, a want of punctuality. God has made the day for his undistracted service. He has given it to us for that purpose. He enjoins,