

The Church Guardian

— : EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR : —

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ments See page 15.

CALENDAR FOR FEBRUARY.

FEB. 4—Quinquagesima. (*Notice of Ash Wednesday*).

" 7—ASH WEDNESDAY. (Pr. Ps. M. G. 32, 38. L. 102, 130, 143. Communion service).

[The forty days in Lent are to be observed as Days of Fasting or abstinence. Ash Wednesday Coll. to be used daily].

" 11—1st SUNDAY IN LENT. (*Notice of Ember Days. Ember Coll. Daily.*

" 14—
" 16—
" 17—

EMBER DAYS.

" 18—2nd Sunday in Lent. (*Notice of St. Matthias*).

" 24—ST. MATTHIAS. Ap. & M. (*Athanasian Creed*).

" 25—3rd SUNDAY IN LENT.

NOTES ON THE EPISTLES.

BY THE REV. H. W. LITTLE, RECTOR HOLY TRINITY, SUSSEX, N.B.

(Author of "Arrows for the King's Archers," etc.)

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT.

"The will of God . . . even your sanctification."
—1 Thes. iv, 2.

I.—The need and blessedness of *self discipline*. The influence of the body upon the mind (which modern science so forcibly teaches.) Self-control and the subduing of even lawful appetites necessary for the development of the perfect Christian character. In this the earliest Epistle of St. Paul (A.D. 54) we have a strong enforcement of the highest morality on a corrupt age. But it goes further than this. Sensuality is a disgrace to our Christian calling; it draws down God's vengeance upon those who yield themselves to its seductions; it outrages the Spirit of God, by whom we are called unto "holiness." This is the vital religious motive for purity of life, and is the true strength of all moral effort. The teaching of the Apostle as to the necessity of controlling the body, and abstaining from lawless and irregular indulgence in the desires of the flesh, very clear and forcible. The duties of personal purity and chastity enter into the very idea of Christianity, and the first lessons of the Apostle are on this subject. He returns to it again and again. "Ye know," he says, "what commandment we gave you by the Lord Jesus." With Felix he reasoned of righteousness, temperance and judgment to come. He speaks the language of affectionate entreaty, and appeals to his converts by the Lord Jesus "so to walk as to please God," as they had been instructed by him, their teacher, pointing out how surely the vengeance of God falls upon those who "go beyond and defraud a brother"—that particular wrong to the honour and holiness of others caused by sins of uncleanness. "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness."

II.—To despise the words of St. Paul on this

subject is to despise the words of God. "He that despiseth, despiseth not man but God." The Holy Spirit speaks through the Church. The voice of the Church is as the Word of the Lord Jesus. The exhortation was "by the Lord Jesus," not in the name of the Apostle, but through the Lord dictating and strengthening my commands: "So they are not mine, but His." To acquire and hold his own vessel (or body) in sanctification and honour; to keep his body "in temperance, soberness and chastity." In this connection it may be sadly necessary to point out that the sins expressly forbidden as dishonourable and threatened with the vengeance of God were accounted by the Gentiles as things *indifferent*. They were excused by parents—commended even by moralists—and consecrated by the Religions of the Heathen, especially at Corinth, whence this Epistle was written. Each Christian of Thessalonica was to acquire or purchase his own body, to redeem it from a debasing and galling slavery, and to become a free man in Christ Jesus,—master and lord of his own body, which had before been alienated by sin and under the yoke of Satan. Abstinence from sensual sins was a thing to be learnt by the Gentiles "who knew not God," 1 Cor. vi, 19; 11 Cor. vi, 16.

III.—The Christian's body a temple or "vessel" of the Holy Ghost. Christianity has greatly raised the standard of moral purity even among those who profess to ignore its precepts. It is wrong to deny this. A proof that our Faith is of God, that it is powerful to the pulling down of the very strongholds of Satan, that there is no evil which it cannot subdue and cast out of the human heart and out of society. Christian purity a possibility, a fact, as the lives of thousands of saints in all ages of the Church has testified. The Baptismal garment can be kept unspotted, as can be shown by the experience of all who have been truly mindful of their baptismal engagement to renounce the sinful lusts of the flesh, and who have joyfully and thankfully obeyed the will of God in this matter, knowing that the restraints of His holy law are the truest freedom. The Holy Eucharist the great antidote to the sins of the flesh—a careful preparation for and careful use of this great provision of "the Divine Love," the balm "to heal the hurt of God's people." The duty of the Church to teach the necessity of sexual purity sadly neglected. The loss of the young on this account very terrible—they sin through want of knowledge. In this matter it may be truly said that "the people are destroyed through lack of knowledge," Hosea iv, 6.

IV.—Exhortations and warnings needed in our own communities. (i.) Purity a habit to be formed by effort, by steady government over secret thoughts, by a persistent use of the means of grace. None need despair. Virtue will triumph by single efforts again and again repeated. "If God is with us," who can prevail against us. Need of courage, hope, joy and effort. The body, a vessel consecrated to the service of God, His temple, 1 Cor. vi. 18. All that is inconsistent with this thought is to be avoided. (ii.) Let us thank God for the sweet and purifying influence of religion, for that knowledge of His holy will which He has revealed to us. For the "glorious liberty" we may enjoy from the worst of services, the slavery of evil desire, if we will use the means placed at our disposal. (iii.) The voice of Holy Scripture is "a voice from heaven." He who despises it, despises not man but God. The Holy Scripture is not less the will of God because written rather than audibly proclaimed. "This is the will of God . . . even your sanctification." Possessed as we are of this heavenly knowledge, holiness of life should be the distinguishing mark of those who profess a desire to do God's will on earth as it is done in Heaven.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

THE quiet, secret aggressiveness of the Church of Rome, especially in educational matters, is felt not alone in Canada, but has aroused considerable opposition in the neighboring Republic. We find reference to it not only in our religious exchanges, but also in the secular papers, and so strong has the conviction of the abuse through the appropriation to Roman Catholic institutions of an immensely disproportionate sum relatively to other religious bodies from the taxes imposed for educational purposes become, that it is proposed, in order to remove it, to amend the Constitution of the United States. We learn from the *New York Churchman* the full text of the proposed Sixteenth Amendment, which is as follows: "No State shall pass any law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or use its property or credit, or any money raised by taxation, or authorize either to be used, for the purpose of founding, maintaining or aiding, by appropriation, payment for services, expenses or otherwise, any church, religious denomination or religious society, or any institution, society, or undertaking which is wholly or in part under sectarian or ecclesiastical control."

Of the foregoing amendment the same paper says: "It is notorious that this amendment has been proposed in order to correct and prevent the flagrant abuses by which State and city legislation has for twenty years or more defied the principles of the Federal Government. By the intrigues of the priesthood of the Roman Church, and the connivance of disloyal and unprincipled politicians, the public money of several of the States has been continually appropriated toward the maintenance of religious institutions. This might not have been recognized as an abuse, and would not, perhaps, have demanded any notice from the Federal Congress if it had been kept within the bounds of moderation and impartiality. But the Roman Church knows nothing of modesty and toleration, and is, therefore, sure, sooner or later, to repeat her own history and overreach herself. Her greed for public money has grown so great, and has been so long unchecked, that no one who is not blinded by prejudice can fail to see that in some of the States a revenue from the public funds has been poured into the treasury of the Roman Church enormously beyond the relative deserts of that Church and immensely disproportionate to the sums given to other religious denominations."

THE *Churchman* also gives some statistics as to appropriations made in New York city alone, which illustrates the extent of the abuse which has permeated and vitiated municipal matters. It would appear that during the ten years, from 1884 to 1894, there has been appropriated from the "taxation and general fund" of the city of New York alone for the support of inmates in the various institutions: (1) To Roman Catholic institutions, \$5,526,733. (2) To Protestant institutions, \$365,467.00. (3) To Hebrew institutions, \$908,534.00; whilst in the single month of August, 1893, there was appropriated from the "Excise Fund" to Roman Catholic institutions \$50,889.00, whilst Protestant institutions received only \$3,105, and Hebrew institutions \$3,100.

THE Church Club is an institution which it appears to us might well be transplanted from our Sister Church in the United States to Can-