

The Church Guardian

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CALENDAR FOR OCTOBER.

- OCT. 5th—18th Sunday after Trinity.
 " 12th—19th Sunday after Trinity.
 [Notice of St. Luke]
 " 18th—St. LUKE, Evangelist.
 " 19th—20th Sunday after Trinity.
 " 26th—21st Sunday after Trinity. Notice
 of St. Simon and St. Jude.
 A. & M. Athan. Creed.

CANON LIDDON.

A great prince has fallen in Israel. Not only Anglicans throughout the English-speaking world will hear with sorrow of the death of their greatest divine and preacher, but Christendom will mourn the loss of one who combined in his own person the character of a Barnabas and a Paul, who was at once 'a good man, full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith,' and was 'mighty in the Scriptures'—a learned, intellectual, and incisive teacher. The Greek Church, with whose fortunes he felt so warm a sympathy, the Old Catholics meeting to day in conference at Bonn, of one of whose previous gatherings he has given us so graphic an account; Churchmen scattered throughout our great Empire; and many Nonconformists, who with their Anglican brethren have hung on his words at St. Paul's, will mourn the loss of one who has dignified their common humanity. Nay he has encouraged them in hours of doubt and despondency to imitate the Master, 'Who went about doing good,' the last words from which he spoke under the dome of the cathedral church of the largest city in the world, where vice and virtue are alike the most active. Canon Liddon was a great scholar, he was a master of good English; he was a great preacher (because he prepared his sermons with a care which less able men would do well to imitate), he had a fascinating presence, a pleasant voice, and a world wide reputation. All these qualities contributed to make him a power in the chief pulpit in London, which even Melville never equalled in his palmiest days; but they were not the secret of his commanding influence.

The secret of a great man's life is to be

sought as the great Duke of Wellington affirmed in his early training and career. If it be true that the Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton, it is assuredly the case that Canon Liddon was trained in the stern discipline of his life at Cuddesdon, and in his well loved rooms at Christchurch for the triumphs he won, not for himself, but for the Church and her Divine Head, in the busy haunts of men. Anything more different than the surroundings of Mr. Liddon in the college at Cuddesdon, with its simple fare, daily round of study, and solemn services in its 'upper chamber,' and those of his later life in London can hardly be imagined. In both places however, his singleness of aim, power of sympathy, and the magic of his personal influence, arising from the conviction of his inherent goodness, and sanctified genius, made him both idolised by the intellectual giant and revered by the childlike Christian. No man had influence in such varied circles. The clergy were intensely proud of one whose intellectual acumen at once confounded the wisdom of the world; while his simplicity of life and character won the respect of all with whom he came in contact. Men of light and leading delighted in his society on the too rare occasions when he emerged from his study, and fascinated them by the brilliancy of his conversation and the flashes of his sparkling wit; for he possessed St. Paul's gift of sanctified sarcasm, a dangerous weapon, which he, however, always wielded in the cause of truth and the withering condemnation of all that was ignoble, mean, and wrong. His colleagues loved him beyond the power of words. No two men had more dissimilar gifts than Canon Gregory and the deceased, yet they were like brothers; and we have often heard Bishop Piers Claughton say, 'Liddon is so lovable, that when one goes into the Chapter to oppose him it often seems impossible in the sight of his beaming eye and thorough saintliness.' The middle classes formed the bulk of his hearers at St. Paul's; and he was in the habit when in London of visiting a number of poor and indigent folk pastorally, so that he was thoroughly in touch with all classes of the people.

The popular idea that his preaching was the chief characteristic of his character is, we are convinced, erroneous. His more abiding work has been that of insisting not merely in theory, but in practice, on the necessity of a better trained clergy. While he had the highest idea of the value of a University training, of the future clergy mixing with men training for other professions, he early realised that if the Church was to do her work among all classes of the people her priests must be carefully instructed.

Themselves first training for the skies,
They best shall lead their people thence.

Hence his was the controlling mind which left its stamp on Cuddesdon, just as Mr. Bennett did on St. Paul's Knightsbridge, though both in reality had no option but to resign in face of the Protestant whirlwind which carried everything before it with its resistless force. Yet the influence of Cuddesdon on every other theological college has been as great as Mr. Westerton truly foretold, that the example of St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, would be on every parish church. Canon Liddon was a great advocate for retreats, the principle of which he lived to see adopted by men of all schools of thought; and his intense reverence for the Bible, so well known to all who ever heard his inimitable Greek Testament lectures at Cuddesdon when he seemed to make the familiar words speak, continued throughout his life. His sermons were saturated both with Bible truth and Church doctrine, and notes of them were taken down by numbers of both sexes with equal care and far more interest than is the case with students listening to secular lectures. There can be no doubt that the Canon has suffered severe mental distress from

what he considered, and rightly, the disrespect—though unintentional—shown to the Bible by writers in *Lux Mundi*; by his own sons in the faith, one having filled the same office as himself at Cuddesdon, and largely through his influence been appointed Principal of a House at Oxford, intended to perpetuate the name of his dearest friend. If the trumpet from such a place (was, we know, his feeling) gave an uncertain sound who shall prepare himself for the battle? As one by one the old standard bearers of Evangelical Truth, Apostolic Order, and Catholic dogma pass from the Church Militant to the Church Triumphant those left behind feel more acutely the dangers arising from giving up any iota of the deposit of the faith out of sympathy for the scruples of weak brethren. Such concessions may be the veriest cruelty to those whose interests Liberal and freethinking theologians desire to serve; while views that may possibly be innocent as held by men imbued with Catholic doctrine, are highly dangerous to the less instructed, and may have consequences from which Mr. Gore and his colleagues would be the first to shrink. It may be that great as the influence of Canon Liddon has been in life it will yet be stronger after his death for the memory of loved teachers, the recollection of their last words, and the chivalrous desire to be true to their cherished convictions, is often greater when one has passed from sight.

That Canon Liddon was never recommended for a Bishopric by Mr. Gladstone, of whose policy the deceased was, till that statesman became a Home Ruler, so warm a supporter, has always been a matter of surprise. We doubt, however, if his particular qualifications were such as find the best vent for their energies in the Episcopate. He was no organizer, and business was not his forte, while even his unrivalled powers in the pulpit would have been unequal to bear the strain of the constant sermons demanded from a Bishop in these locomotive days. He was eminently a theologian. The cathedral and the college seemed his natural home. Never was the term 'Student of Christ Church' more literally true. Books were his passion, second only to his desire to bring out of their treasures things new and old that might benefit the souls of men. We rejoice however, that Lord Salisbury offered him the see of St. Albans, where he would have been his own Bishop, though we can quite understand the Canon's refusal, especially as his 'Life of Dr. Pusey' was his absorbing occupation. We fear that it is far from complete, and it would be difficult to name anyone thoroughly competent to take up the work where he left it. In some ways, for his own sake, it may be said that he has been happy in the time of his death, for, as we have intimated, anything like a schism in the High Church ranks, with which we appear to be threatened, alike on *Lux Mundi* and the Lincoln Judgment, would have been a severe trial to his gentle spirit. He has died too without any decay of his great intellectual powers. His sermons on capital and labor, his noble series on the Magnificat, and his latest eulogy on John Howard the philanthropist, were some of his finest efforts, second only to his bold defence of the Episcopacy at the consecration of the Bishop of Lincoln and Exeter, his denunciations of the Public Worship Act, his unrivalled sermons at St. James' Piccadilly, when he first took London by storm, and some of his earlier Oxford discourses. Canon Liddon was *facile princeps* as a scholar, a theologian, and a preacher. We doubt if he had the capacities of a party leader, or ever a desire to be one. His great desire was the salvation of souls, and to see the English branch of the Church Catholic, to which he was so intensely devoted, extend her cords and strengthen her stakes. In his recent illness he was much touched, both by the Queen's daily enquiries as to his condition and by the kindly sympathy expressed for him