

Dominion Churchman.

We have much pleasure in stating that Lachlan H. McIntosh, Esq., is Agent for the DOMINION CHURCHMAN, and is authorized to solicit subscriptions and collect all accounts.

THURSDAY, OCT. 5, 1876.

THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The first lessons are taken from the book of the weeping prophet, who bewails the calamities of Judea in language the most pathetic that the tongue of man ever uttered. He was contemporary with the prophets Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Ezekiel and Daniel. None of these however are in any particular way connected with him except Ezekiel. The writings and character of these two eminent prophets furnish many very interesting points both of comparison and contrast. Both during the same long series of years were laboring for the same object. The representations of both, far removed as they were from each other, are in substance singularly accordant; and yet there is a striking difference in the modes of statement, and a still more striking diversity in the character and natural disposition of the two. The mind of Jeremiah was of a softer and more delicate texture than that of his illustrious contemporary. He was evidently by nature mild and retiring, exceedingly sensitive, especially to sorrowful emotions; and we can well imagine that he was rather inclined to shrink from danger than to brave it. And yet he never shrank from publicity, when it was required; nor was he intimidated by reproach or insult, or even by actual punishment or threatened death. Indeed, he is as remarkable an instance, though in a different way, of the overpowering influence of divine energy, as Ezekiel. Jeremiah furnishes an example of moral courage sustained by divine inspiration against a natural love of retirement and deep impressions of outward evil; while Ezekiel presents a magnificent spectacle of the power of the same inspiration acting on a mind of the firmest texture, and bringing every element of the soul under its divine sway.

The lamentations of Jeremiah are astonishing exhibitions of his power to accumulate images of sorrow. The whole series of these elegies has but one object—the expression of sorrow for the forlorn condition of his country. He presents it in so many lights, alludes to it by so many figures, that his mournful strains are not felt to be tedious repetitions; but the reader is captivated by his plaintive melancholy. The key note to the book is contained in the first verse of the ninth chapter of his prophecy. "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" With what a sore and sad

complaint does he begin the book of the Lamentations, suddenly introducing us to the very depths of the sorrow of his heart:—"How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people! how is she become as a widow! she that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary! She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks: among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her." And again:—"Is it nothing to you all ye that pass by? Behold and see if there is any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger." Of the book of the Lamentations, a late writer remarks:—"Never was there a more rich and elegant variety of beautiful images and adjuncts, arranged together within so small a compass, nor more happily chosen and applied."

Jeremiah, from B. C. 628 to 586, was a priest set apart to the prophetic office from his birth, and was expressly addressed by the word of God at the early age of fourteen years. He was called to the office nearly at the same time as Zephaniah, in the thirteenth year of King Josiah, and continued to exercise it for more than forty years, during the reign of the wicked sons of that pious prince, to whom he fearlessly revealed the marks of the divine vengeance which their vacillating and rebellious conduct drew on themselves and their country. He was allowed to remain in Judea when Zedekiah and the greater part of the nation were carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar; but after the murder of Gedaliah, the governor whom Nebuchadnezzar had placed in Judea in place of Zedekiah, Jeremiah was forced by his countrymen to retire with them into Egypt; where, according to the account of St. Jerome, he was stoned to death, for his bold reproof of their iniquities. During his whole life indeed he appears to have been exposed to cruel persecutions from the Jews, and especially from those of his own village, Anathoth.

The fifth chapter of Jeremiah contains the threatenings of the prophet in the judgments of God upon the Jews for the sins of which they were specially guilty, and which the prophet enumerates with a graphic force we seldom meet with, beginning with such a picture of the general depravity of the capital city of the Jewish state, that he represents the state of the nation to be so abandoned as if one were to run to and fro through the streets of the city, over its length and breadth, and then be unable to find a solitary individual practising righteousness and seeking truth. For if such a one could, after the most patient and thorough search, be found, the Lord would reinstate the city in its former favor and regard. But after the most diligent search, as such an example could not be found, but the whole people were clearly revolted and gone, rebellious,

and with no fear of God before their eyes although he had given them the former and the latter rains in his season, and had reserved unto them the appointed weeks of harvest, therefore the question is asked:—"Shall I not visit for these things? and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?"

The twenty second chapter with singular force, denounces the judgments of the Lord upon Jehoiakim, eldest son of Josiah, after having in vain been exhorted to repentance, with the promise of a continuance of the house of David or the throne of Judah. Coniah, Jeconiah, or Jehoiachin seems to have been peculiarly obnoxious to the Divine displeasure, and therefore terrible judgments were proclaimed against him.

In the thirty-fifth chapter we have introduced to us that singular people called Rechabites, who were bound to the continued observance of the ancient usages which they had observed as the Kenites. Jonadab the son of Rechab bound them to this, in order to preserve them from becoming lost among the Jewish race. They found the benefit of attending to his instructions so great that for three hundred years they carefully observed them. Almighty God justly complained that these rules of Jonadab had been carefully observed by the Rechabites for several centuries; and yet, although the prophets he had sent to the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, rising early and speaking faithfully delivered their message, yet the people would not listen to their voice, nor hearken to their instructions.

THE COLLECT, traced to the Sacramentary of St. Gregory, is one naturally suggested by that from last Sunday. One of the ways, we remarked on that Collect, which defile the church, being the unholy lives of her children, we prayed that she might be cleansed and defended: and now we ask that we, her members, may continually be giving to all good works, so that the individual members being made holy, the entire church shall be cleansed and purified. But forasmuch as we are not able to do good works by our own power, we pray that the Divine grace may always prevent (that is, go before to guide, and protect) and follow us. We especially require God's grace to go before us, when we have to decide upon a course of action, and to follow us when we have gone astray, or when having decided upon a course of action we proceed to carry it into effect in the daily concerns of life. The Collect is peculiarly applicable to the ministrations of the word and sacraments, that the grace of God may go before to prepare the hearts of his people to profit by them, and may follow after in order to render them effectual to the spiritual growth of his church, both individually and collectively. The good works spoken of include,