

# The Church Guardian

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## CALENDAR FOR JULY.

JULY 4th—2nd Sunday after Trinity.

" 11th—3rd Sunday after Trinity.

" 18th—4th Sunday after Trinity.

" 25th—5th Sunday after Trinity,

" 25th—St. JAMES, A. & M.

## TO SUBSCRIBERS IN NEW BRUNSWICK, AND NOVA SCOTIA

W. B. SHAW, Esq., is the only person, (Clergy excepted), at present authorized to solicit and receive payment of Subscriptions in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

## THE LORD BISHOP OF FREDERICTON, METROPOLITAN, ON ELECTION TO RECTORIES, CONFIRMATION AND MARRIAGE.

(Continued.)

From the address of the aged Metropolitan to his Clergy at the late Synod we take the following:—

### ELECTION TO RECTORIES.

First, on the duty of those in whose hands the power of electing rectors to parishes is vested, and on the duty of the clergy in respect of testimonials which they give to persons who are desirous of obtaining a benefice. The law appears to impose checks on such of the parties who are interested in this important matter. The laity have a large power intrusted to them, and the law very properly provides that it should not be autocratic and absolutely beyond control. The persons elected must be in priest's orders, without which they cannot, according to the rites of the Church of England, administer Holy Communion in the Church, or in the chamber of the sick and dying; and they must have the Bishop's license, which is a security to the laity that the Bishop has obtained proper and sufficient testimonials from those who are competent to give them, of soberness, piety and honesty; and this during personal acquaintance for a period of three years. Similar testimonials are required by the heads of respectable firms before they will admit a young man into their employment. A check is likewise imposed upon the clergy. For if they give careless testimonials out of mere good nature (as it is termed), they willfully impose upon the Bishop, and testify to what they might know on enquiry to be untrue, and that by a most solemn attestation to which they in writing have voluntarily set their

hands. A check is also imposed upon the Bishop. For if he institute and issue his mandate for induction without sufficient testimonials from the clergy, in respect of personal knowledge for the required time, and from the Bishop of another diocese if the person to be elected come from another, then he violates the order of the Church, injures the clergy and laity who are placed under his protection, and subjects himself to ecclesiastical censure. And the laity are equally wrong if they persist in electing a person who is not in priest's orders, or who has no testimonials or insufficient testimonials. And they are fighting against their own interests, for testimonials are required as their security against the intrusion of unfit persons. And it is not unreasonable to suppose that the Bishop, who has familiar intercourse with the clergy, may have opportunities of knowing which the laity have not. And it is more desirable on all accounts that both the laity and the Bishop should be satisfied as to the election.

### CONFIRMATION.

It is no doubt a great benefit to parishes to have this holy rite administered frequently. But it should not be overlooked that there is as much if not more need for watchfulness after Confirmation is over than during the preparation for it. The minds of the young are open to every kind of impression, and when the first fit of earnestness has spent itself, if the priest be not watchful to strengthen the good impression which was made there may be a speedy declension from the promise of early piety or a disposition to seek assistance elsewhere. For this reason Bible classes or Communicants' classes are needed after confirmation; and the clergy must not suppose that their work is ended when there are no more to be confirmed at that special time. The young require clear and definite teaching, lessons of reverence in regard to the service of Holy Communion, which, if they do not get from us they will learn nowhere else. We must not take it for granted that they have all they ought to know on such matters. It is highly probable that no definite instruction has ever been given them by their parents on the fundamental doctrines of their religion.

### MARRIAGE.

Next, I would speak on the Marriage Service. I know of no more solemn rite in our whole Prayer Book than this. The symbolism of the rite taught us by St. Paul; the solemn appeal to "the dreadful day of judgment, when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed;" the certainty that "those who are coupled together otherwise than God's word doth allow are not joined together by God," and even if their matrimony be legal it is not in God's sight lawful; the solemn espousal "till death us do part;" the three-fold blessing; the prayer that they may "live together in holy love unto their lives' end"—those repeated cautions and warnings, and blessings, invest this rite with a significance and seriousness unsurpassed. And, yet, where is there a right more irreverently handled? I do not speak of the baser sin that is sometimes committed before marriage, but of the frivolousness with which matrimony is undertaken. The absence of religious feeling, especially of religious unity; leaghtly made the sole measure of lawfulness; the money-making business which often forms the chief desire for union; the hasty performing of the rite in a house, where the prayers seem unsuitable, the blessings unfit; where the whole wish is to make the service as short as possible; or if it be fashionable to go to church, the crowd of irreverent gazers, bent on nothing but criticism and the dress of those who are appealing to God for His sanction and His blessing—when all these signs of frivolity are manifest, who can wonder that the rules and prohibition of the church are trampled under foot? that bonds so lightly made are as lightly regarded,

and that in a neighboring county as stated on high authority one in ten of every family is said to have a divorce, and in some cases two or three divorces. So that mutual respect and family love have been broken up again and again. What kind of children must such disunions produce, if a heathen poet who lived in a loose age well tells us

*Ætas parentum, puer avis, tulit  
Nos nequiores mox daturos  
Pro geniem vitiosiorum.*

I thank God we have not got so low as this. But we should fear lest one step further should lead us to a point from which we cannot go back.

The clergy then, will do well to refuse to sanction unions prohibited by their own church laws, and to exhort and persuade their parishioners to have marriages celebrated in the most reverent way; and further, which is probably the more difficult task, to persuade them not to contract marriages where there is no bond of religious union, more especially where it is almost certain that the validity of our Orders and Holy Sacraments will be denied. Or, they will have to submit to being re-baptized, reconfirmed, and then deprived, as they most richly deserve, of the essential part of the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's body and blood. If you think highly of holy matrimony you will endeavor to counteract such evils as opportunity may be afforded you.

### THE OFFICE OF BISHOP.

It only remains for now to me thank you for the many marks of your respect and confidence which have been shown to me on several occasions. A Bishop can only be useful when he acts, not as an autocrat over his clergy, but as their fellow-laborer, in concert with them in the duties of their common calling; and in the exercise of his ministry, the Church of God from the earliest days has committed to his care functions in which priests take a subordinate part. The Clergy will readily acknowledge that these spiritual powers have been entrusted to him for the strength and protection of the whole body of the faithful, according to the wise rules which the Church herself imposes.

A Bishop is as much restrained as the priest, in matters of the highest moment, by the Creeds which are at the bulwarks of our faith, and by the definite and clear interpretation of Holy Scriptures, which our Offices severally contained. As long as we abide by these landmarks there must be a substantial and visible union amongst us, greater than the mere opinions of any single member or officer of the Church. It were to be desired that we should see eye to eye in all things; and that there should be no division even of opinion, but that we should be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. But as this is not to be expected, and some points either of ritual or of speculative theology will probably always remain open to discussion, our best security is that charitable construction of the actions and motives of others, which each man unquestionably desires to be practised towards himself. In these respects the Church of England occupies the peculiar position of being more tolerant and comprehensive than any other religious body with which we are acquainted; and while there is a considerable diversity as to the means by which reverence is promoted, the church inflexibly holds fast to primitive doctrine, primitive order and practical piety, so that whilst there has been in the last 50 years a peaceful revolution in matters not absolutely fundamental, and in the aspect in which certain theological opinions are presented to the mind, and as multitudes see no evil what ever in that which they formerly looked upon with distaste, or even with horror, the Church has not departed one iota from the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, and at the same time she has been everywhere stirred