

The Church Times.

"Evangelical Truth--Apostolic Order."

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Calendar.

CALENDAR WITH LESSONS.

Day	Date	MORNING.	EVENING.
S.	April 1	1. Matthev. 23. 2. Luc. 11.	1. Exod. 10. 2. Heb. 11.
M.	2	1. Matthev. 23. 2. Luc. 11.	1. Exod. 10. 2. Heb. 11.
T.	3	1. Matthev. 23. 2. Luc. 11.	1. Exod. 10. 2. Heb. 11.
W.	4	1. Matthev. 23. 2. Luc. 11.	1. Exod. 10. 2. Heb. 11.
T.	5	1. Matthev. 23. 2. Luc. 11.	1. Exod. 10. 2. Heb. 11.
F.	6	1. Matthev. 23. 2. Luc. 11.	1. Exod. 10. 2. Heb. 11.
S.	7	1. Matthev. 23. 2. Luc. 11.	1. Exod. 10. 2. Heb. 11.

1. Proper Psalms.—Morning, 22, 41, 64.—Evening, 69, 84.
 a To verse 11. b Begin verse 45. c To verse 20. d Begin verse 20.

Poetry.

THE TRUE LENT.

Is this a fast to keep,
 The harder lean,
 And clean,
 From fat of veals and sheep?
 Is it to quit the dish
 Of flesh, yet still
 To fill
 The Platter high with ash?
 Is it to fast an hour,
 Or rag'd to go,
 Or slow
 A downcast look and sour?
 No, 'tis a Fast to dole
 Thy sheaf of wheat,
 And meat,
 Unto the hungry soul.
 It is to fast from strife,
 From old debate,
 And hate:
 To circumsise thy life.
 To show a heart grief-rent,
 To starve thy sin,
 Not sin:
 And that's to keep thy Lent.

—HERRICK.

Religious Miscellany.

SUNDAY BEFORE EASTER.

CHRIST'S ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM.

"And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him; and He sat upon him." MARK XI. 7.

Our blessed Lord, five days before His passion, sent His disciples to a village to borrow an ass, that He might ride in triumph to Jerusalem. He had no horse of His own; but yet He, who was so dear to God, could not want what was to supply His needs. And, in like manner, it may be, God hath laid up a portion in the repositories of other men, and means to furnish us from their granaries, and that our wardrobe shall clothe us. And if we would but leave to God leave to make provisions for us in the ways of His own choosing, and not estimate our wants by the manner of receiving, being contented that God, by any of His own ways, will minister it to us, we could find our cares eased, and our thankfulness engaged, and all our moderate desires contented, by the satisfaction of our needs.

And now begins that great triumph, in which the Lord Jesus was pleased to exalt His office, and to use His person. He rode, like a poor man, upon a beast of burden and the lowest value, and it was not His own; and in that equipage He received the acclamations due to a mighty prince, to the Son of the eternal King; telling us that the allness of fortune, and the rudeness of exterior ornaments, are sometimes the outsides of a great glory; and that when God means to glorify or do honour to a person, He needs no help from secular advantages.

To hide great riches in renunciation of the world, and to let great honor break forth from the clouds of humility; and victory to arise from yielding, and to be the reward of him that suffers all the hostilities of men and devils. For Jesus, in this great humility of His, gave a great proof that He was the King of Zion; because no other entered into those gates riding upon an ass, and received the honor of "Hosannah," in that unbecoming and contradiction of unequal circumstances. Our blessed Jesus had never but two days of triumph in His life; the one was on His transfiguration upon Mount Tabor, the other this His riding

into the holy city. But—that it may appear how little were His joys and present exterior complacencies—in the day of His transfiguration, Moses and Elias appeared to Him, telling Him what great things He was to suffer; and in this day of His riding into Jerusalem, He rode the palms with a dew sweeter than the moistures upon Mount Hermon, or the drops of manna. For, to allay the little warmth of a springing joy, He let down a shower of tears, weeping over undone Jerusalem in the day of His triumph: leaving it disputable whether He felt more joy or sorrow in the acts of love. For He triumphed to consider that the redemption of the world was so near, and wept bitterly that men would not be redeemed. His joy was great to consider that Himself was to suffer so great sadness for our good; and his sorrow was very great to consider that we would not entertain that good that He brought and laid before us by His Passion. And thus Jesus—like a rainbow, half made of the glories of light and half of the moistures of a cloud, half triumph and half sorrow—entered into that town, where he had done much good to others, and to Himself received nothing but affronts. Yet His tenderness increased upon Him; and that very journey, which was Christ's last solemn visit for their recovery, He doubled all the instruments of His mercy and their conversion. He rode in triumph; the children sang Hosannah to Him; He cured many diseased persons; He wept for them, and pitied them, and sighed out the intimations of a prayer, and stayed all day there looking about Him towards evening; and no man would invite Him home, but he was forced to go to Bethany, where He was sure of an hospitable entertainment. I think no Christian that reads this but will be full of indignation at the whole city; who, for malice or for fear, would not, or durst not, receive their Saviour into their houses. And yet, we do worse; for now that he is become our Lord, with mightier demonstrations of His eternal power, we suffer him to look round about us for months and years together, and possibly never entertain Him, till our house is ready to rush upon our heads, and we are going to unusual and stranger habitations. And yet, in the midst of a populous and mutinous city, this great King had some good subjects; persons that threw away their own garments and laid them at the feet of our Lord; that, being divested of their own, they might be re-invested with a robe of His righteousness, wearing that till it were changed into a stole of glory.

But I consider that the blessed Jesus had affections, not less than infinite, towards all mankind; and He who wept upon Jerusalem—who had done so great despite to Him, and within five days, were to fill up the measure of their iniquities, and do an act which all ages of the world could never repeat in the same instance—did also, in the number of His tears, reckon our sins, as sad considerations and incentives of His sorrow. And it would well become us to consider what great evil we do, when our actions are such as for which our blessed Lord did weep. He who was seated in the bosom of felicity: yet He moistened His fresh laurels upon the day of His triumph with tears of love and bitter alloy. His day of triumph was a day of sorrow; and if we would weep for our sins, that instance of sorrow would be a day of triumph and jubilee.—*Jeremy Taylor.*

THE LAITY ELEMENT OF THE CHURCH.

It has been too much the custom to pass by the laity, or treat them slightly, in spiritual things—to consider the Clergy, in fact, as constituting the Church—and if not to exclude the laity altogether from her economy, at least to deny them any due place in her polity. In this country it is happily, to a certain extent, otherwise. The laity are members of our Conventions, and they constitute our Vestries,—though in neither capacity, perhaps, are they, by right, permitted to exercise their judgment in spiritual things. We question, indeed, if any considerable number of them are sufficiently instructed in the principles of the Church, of which they yet profess to be members, to be qualified to do so; and instances are too frequently occurring where, as Vestrymen, they take upon them to interfere with things which they do not understand. Ignorance, we all know, is the mother of prejudice; and they act under this influence very mischievously in many

cases, where they have it in their power—very much to the obstruction of improvements in Church arrangement, and even in the performance of Divine Service, and otherwise to the hindrance of their Minister's usefulness. The Minister himself, however, may sometimes be to blame for this; for he may have taken no pains to instruct his congregation in the distinctive doctrines, ritualism, and discipline of the Church—bestowed no care to make them intelligent and earnest Churchmen. And when it is remembered, that our ranks are being continually augmented by accessions from the various sects—often, there is reason to believe, from mere choice, rather than from actual conviction—it is very much to be regretted that so little attention is paid to the subject of practical and positive Church teaching. Hence the scenes of incongruity, irreverence, and ind devotion one witnesses in the Church's congregations. "Let us walk by the same rule," says the Apostle—"let us mind the same thing." The Church, in her ordinances, goes upon this principle. But in practice it is quite the reverse. In our congregations we see them doing the very opposite things,—some feebly responding, others not responding at all; some sitting when they should stand, as in praise; others lounging when they should kneel, as in prayer; many standing, as they ought to do, at the Doxology after the sermon, others sitting and holding down their heads, as though they ignorantly supposed it was a prayer, rather than an ascription of praise. It is quite striking, again, to see how many have lazily sat and lounged away their time when they ought to have stood up and joined in the Psalm or Hymn, who yet rise up, with one accord, as though they had got suddenly ashamed of their indolence, at the *Gloria Patri* which concludes it. Now these are not Church-like—they are most indecent, not to say indecorous irregularities, and indicate either an ignorance or a waywardness most disreputable, in members of the Church, if they really are such.

The laity of the Church partake with the clergy in her spiritual character. There are passages of Scripture in which all Christ's people, indeed, are designated as Priests. As, for example, where St. Paul says, "Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy Priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices unto God." And, again, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal Priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people." But then it is the spiritual character, let it be remembered, not the spiritual office, which is meant; for no such language as this, or any other language of Holy Scripture, is to be perverted into an authority for the exercise of spiritual functions by the laity. "It would be most wicked and presumptuous for a layman to take on himself the ordination of another, or the consecration of the Eucharist; but it would be nothing short of heresy, though a new heresy, to deny that the Bishop and the Priest perform these acts with that authority which is vested in the Church, as a society of faithful men, lay as well as clerical. It is in the name, not of the clergy, but of the Church, that the Bishop confirms and ordains; that the Minister pronounces absolution and a blessing; that discipline is enforced, and penitents are restored; and in all these cases the Minister is the representative and instrument, not of the clergy, nor of his individual Bishop, but of the Church at large." Such is the exposition of one who is considered, we believe, as some authority on the subject; and according to whom—*as, indeed, according to Scripture, and according to common sense—the laity are not only not the nonentities which some of the clergy sometimes affect to consider them, but are those of whom the "spiritual house," the Church, is "built up," and without whom the clergy's occupation would be gone. Not that the laity are to presume upon this, and assume a position of arbitrary authority, and a right to be despotic, or to dominate, in the Church. They have their rights, and solemn and sacred ones they are; as they have their claims, which are high and inestimable. But they have also their responsibilities—and these are assuredly of no ordinary obligation. Would that all laymen laid this, above all, to heart. Would that they would always act up to the high principles which they profess, remembering*

* Pledge on the admission of Lay members to the Synod of the Church.