

The Church Times.

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Calendar.

CALENDAR WITH LESSONS.

DATE	MORNING.	EVENING.
June 13	Job 19; Luke 2	Job 23; Ps 137
14	Job 31; Luke 3	Job 38; Ps 138
15	Job 42; Luke 4	Job 40; Ps 139
16	Job 42; Luke 5	Job 41; Ps 140
17	Job 42; Luke 6	Job 42; Ps 141
18	Job 42; Luke 7	Job 43; Ps 142
19	Job 42; Luke 8	Job 44; Ps 143
20	Job 42; Luke 9	Job 45; Ps 144
21	Job 42; Luke 10	Job 46; Ps 145
22	Job 42; Luke 11	Job 47; Ps 146
23	Job 42; Luke 12	Job 48; Ps 147
24	Job 42; Luke 13	Job 49; Ps 148
25	Job 42; Luke 14	Job 50; Ps 149
26	Job 42; Luke 15	Job 51; Ps 150
27	Job 42; Luke 16	Job 52; Ps 151
28	Job 42; Luke 17	Job 53; Ps 152
29	Job 42; Luke 18	Job 54; Ps 153
30	Job 42; Luke 19	Job 55; Ps 154
1 July	Job 42; Luke 20	Job 56; Ps 155

1. Paper Printed—Morn. 2, 21, 101.
2. The Almanac Creed to be used.
3. To end of term 2, 1 To term 13.

Poetry.

FOR THE CHURCH TIMES.

ETERNITY.

Oh! what art thou, Eternity?
A vast, unending, shoreless sea!
The spirit's lifetime, when resumed
The fleshly dress, so long inhumed
Within Earth's bosom—and on high
Shall be uplifted toward the sky,
The colossal, mighty hand
Of Him, the angel, whose broad stand
Shall be, conjointly, sea and land,
While he proclaims, in the name
Of Him who did Creation frame,
And Who existeth evermore—
Time's long-protracted reign is o'er.

Oh! what art thou, Eternity?
Coeval with the Deity.
Thou hast beguiling had'st, With Him,
Ere sang His praise the Seraphim,
Thou wast! yea, ere one star its race
Began through the unbounded space!
Thou saw'st old Aëon and Chaos pass,
When God said "Light"—and light there was;
And thou beheld'st when ether hung,
This glorious world to being sprung;
And from thine attitude sublime,
Dost march the birthday of young Time.

Oh! what art thou, Eternity?
Unfathomable mystery!
Anonymous thou dost recoil from thee!
Vainly it strives to comprehend
What no beginning had—nor end
Shall ever know! Man's feeble mind,
That circumscribed circles find,
Wrought out by Time, in vain essays
To calculate thy length of days.

Yet, oh, sublime Eternity!
Connected with Man's destiny
Thou art; and with him self dost rest,
When his abode shall be thy breast.
Whether a curse or blessing thou
Wilt prove unto him: on his soul,
That into space, his fate hangs,
Repeats with endless joys or pains.

The Sinner mazes, tremblingly,
On thee, oh, dread Eternity,
And with a spirit fear-subdued,
Contemplates thy infinitude,
Not to the Christian: though with awe,
He feels each moment durb him draw
Nearer thy entrance, yet no fear
Subdues his soul: his treasures there
Are all laid up, and safely, where
No moth nor rust can e'er destroy;
No spoilers their vile arts employ,
To do him hurt, and joyfully,
He thinks on thee, Eternity!

found in all the pagan world. The condition and character of the people, the signs of the times, and the plain interpretation of prophecy, all conspire to warrant the expectation that the dwellers in the land of Sinim, shall ere long both know and obey the truth.

The propagator of this 'new doctrine,' as the Chinese often call our religion,—now only because of their ignorance,—must come down to their low level, and teach them the elements of revealed religion, commencing with its first and simplest facts.—The Chinese are not wanting in intellect; but in all matters of religion, they have rendered themselves weak. For this weakness, this want of life, there is one remedy, a sovereign remedy; and it rests with those who hold this remedy, to decide whether or not it shall be speedily enjoyed by all the inhabitants of the Middle Kingdom. With the proper men and means at command,—such as Christendom can abundantly supply,—ten years would amply suffice to give the volume of inspiration to all the families of China.

Christian reader, bear with me a little longer; and as the gods of the Chinese, and their ministers of religion, their temples, their altars, their sacrifices, &c., pass rapidly in review before you, contrast all these with what you yourself enjoy.

The gods of the three orthodox sects are these, and others like these: Heaven, Earth, Ancestors,—these are the great gods; next come gods of the hills, the rivers, and the seas; the god of fire; god of rain; god of thunder; god of the kitchen; and so on, to the very lowest objects, and to things innumerable. The common name for these deified objects, to which they offer prayers and sacrifices, and for which they build altars and temples, is Shin, a generic term of wide extension; and, in both the colloquial and classical language of the Chinese, this word Shin, holds the same place as Elohim did in the Hebrew, Theos in the Greek, Deus in the Roman, and our plain old Saxon God and gods in the English.

Centuries ago very strong efforts were made by certain Jesuits to set aside this term Shin, and to substitute the title Tien-ti, 'Celestial and Ruler,' as a translation of the name God; and within the last twenty years these efforts have been renewed by some Protestant missionaries. At present, the Jesuits and all the other Romanists use Tienchu, 'Heavenly Lord'; the few Protestants, who now contend for Tien-ti, now use Shang-ti, 'High Ruler'; while a large majority of their Protestant brethren adhere to Shih, as the only suitable word for God. It is now the settled opinion, I believe, of all our Protestant missionaries in China, that, in translating the Hebrew Scriptures into Chinese, the proper name Jehovah should be transferred, and Elohim always translated. We can say in Chinese, 'Jehovah our Shin,' just as we do in English, 'Jehovah our God.' Nothing can be more plain and simple and unmistakable than this, and withal it corresponds well to Chinese usage.

Confucianism has been called the State religion, although it has not always been so, nor when adopted by the Government, has it always excluded the other sects. The ministers of this state religion, are the Emperor and his officers; he, the Son of Heaven, is the great, High Priest, and they the Priesthood. Of the other two orthodox sects, there are self-constituted orders of priests and priestesses. The Buddhist are far the most numerous, and the majority of them are mendicants. The others are supported either by endowed establishments, or by private means.

The temples and altars are numerous and costly; and these and the graves of the dead are the principal places where the Chinese do homage to those they have deified. Besides the public places of concourse, there are private altars and shrines and images, in numbers almost infinite.

The times and seasons fixed on for performing their religious services are various, some annual or semi-annual, some monthly or semi-monthly, others are daily, and others occasional. The Jews' Year and the new moons, the equinoxes, and the solstices, and other like terms are carefully remembered.—Funerals, marriages, and day after any new work to be undertaken, or when a child is born, or when a vessel is to be sent to sea, and such like events,

are among the occasional seasons, when it is customary to celebrate with religious services. In the state religion, the state dress and a ceremonial established by law, are required. Their rites and ceremonies are many and tedious; among them are numerous ablutions, bowings, kneeling, chaunting, etc.

The same ceremonies obtain with the other sects; but their official robes are less costly and less elegant. Their sacrifices consist of oxen, sheep, goats, pigs, fowls, fish, rice, cakes, various fruits, with oblations of wine and strong drink. On these, after they have been duly presented to the gods, the devotees and their friends are accustomed to feast.

The cost of all these,—god's temples, altars, sacrifices, incense, processions, with all their appendages,—is very great; greater far, I suspect, than is ordinarily paid by the people of Christian nations, for the support of their religion. On the effects which must result, and which I have seen resulting from this perversion of things, I now leave you, Christian reader, alone to ponder.

I have perused sundry papers, recently written, to prove that the ancient Chinese were Monotheists, not Polytheists; having a 'Monotheistic religion of patriarchal tradition'; but such 'notions' I have never seen substantiated. Sobor historians, so far as I can ascertain, give us no ground for such an hypothesis.

Being, as we believe they were, the descendants of Noah, the remotest ancestors of all nations, were Monotheists. But then, when did the Chinese begin to be a nation? We find, in their Historical Records, well authenticated dates back to B. C. 2357; and all traditions, so far as I know, accord with the history of that age, in declaring the nation to be the worshippers of many gods.

The monarch and his ministers were accustomed to engage in acts of religious homage. And so it was with the people; and so it has continued to be down to the present day. On the accession of the second Monarch, called Shun, sacrifices were offered by him to all the gods literally, *Peh Shin*, 'the hundred divinities,' to the Gods superior, and the gods inferior. From the great divinities heaven and earth, called *Shang Ti*, i. e., high rulers; and those of the sun, the moon, the stars, the cold, the drought, and the four seasons, down to those of the hills and rivers,—including local divinities,—not one was neglected.

His Lordship the pious and excellent Bishop of Victoria, (Hong Kong,) has during this month, put forth his views in favor of this 'monotheistic religion,' first in an editorial of the North China Herald, October 2d, and afterwards in a charge to his missionary clergy; parts of which charge are already published in the same paper, and more are yet to appear.—*Cor. E. Rec.*

SIGNS.

This is an age of "indications." On all sides, and of all kinds, are signs to be seen. How much they may mean, or what they mean, is a matter that is not always readily determined. There are some signs however, which cannot readily be mistaken.—They betoken progress, some in the right and some in the wrong direction.

We have faith to believe that the Christian world is on the whole, advancing in the right direction, so that ere long there will be more of truth and less of error prevailing among the great body of those who call themselves Christians than there is at present.

We are glad to see the signs which here and there greet the Churchman's eye, indicating that our brethren, who many years ago 'went out from us,' and quite forsook 'the good old paths,' are coming to a better mind, and are beginning to understand and to appreciate, what their fathers esteemed as not only reliable, but absolutely precious to a sound faith and a holy life.

The changes in favour of the usages and services of the Church, which are now going on among other bodies of Christians, are both gratifying and promising. We are quite certain that they will not stop short of changes which will in a measure involve principles. When denominations begin to call their meeting houses Churches, and designate parishes by Apostolic names, and adopt clerical robes; when they determine to preach old doctrines, teach the old creed,

Religious Miscellany.

THE RELIGION OF THE CHINESE.

I dwell on this topic, because it is essential to a correct understanding of a difficulty that meets the missionary on the threshold of his work, and also because without a correct view of it, the reader cannot understand the weakening and debasing influence of idolatry, which, like a heavy incubus, lies on the mind, hardening the heart and destroying the soul. From this view of facts, it is no more surprising that China is not a promising field for the Christian missionary. A more interesting sphere cannot be

• Concluded from last week