

Parish and Home.

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CALENDAR FOR FEBRUARY.

LESSONS.

- 5—**Sexagesima.** *Morning*—Gen. 3; Matt. 20-17. *Evening*—Gen. 6 or 8; Acts 21-17 to 37.
- 12—**Quinquagesima.** Gen. 9 to v. 20; Matt. 24 to v. 29. *Evening*—Gen. 12 or 13; Acts 27 to v. 18.
- 15—**Ash Wednesday.** Pr. Pss. M. 6, 32, 38; E. 102, 130, 143; Ash Wednesday collect to be used daily throughout Lent. *Morning*—Isa. 58 to v. 13; Mark 2-13 to 23. *Evening*—Jonah 3; Heb. 12-3 to 18.
- 19—**1st Sunday in Lent.** Ember Collect daily. *Morning*—Gen. 19-12 to 30; Matt. 27 to v. 27. *Evening*—Gen. 22 to v. 20 or 23; Rom. 3.
- 24—**St. Matthias.** Athan. Creed, Ember Day. *Morning*—1 Sam. 2-27 to 36; Mark 1-21. *Evening*—Isa. 22-15; Rom. 8 to v. 18.
- 26—**2nd Sunday in Lent.** Gen. 27 to v. 41; Mark 2-23 to 3-13. *Evening*—Gen. 28 or 32; Rom. 9 to v. 19.

ETERNITY.

DAYS come and go

In joy or woe ;

Days go and come,

In endless sum.

Only the eternal day

Shall come but never go ;

Only the eternal tide

Shall never ebb but flow.

O long eternity

My soul goes forth to thee.

Suns set and rise

In these dull skies ;

Suns rise and set,

Till men forget

The day is at the door,

When they shall rise no more.

O, everlasting Sun,

Whose race is never run,

Be thou my endless light,

Then I shall fear no night.

—*Horatius Bonar.*

FOR PARISH AND HOME.

Papers on Christian Practise.

II. DUTY—"I OUGHT."

THE word duty comes from "due," and means what is "due" towards another. It means a debt which we are bound to pay. It covers the whole field of life, and is due, as we are taught in the Catechism, towards God and towards our fellow-men. Duty often seems a cold word, but it should not

be so to any soul that has realized the meaning of life. If it be true that life is a mission, and that, as John Wesley said, man "is a spirit come from God and returning to God," then duty becomes an inspiration in the life of men, whether he meets with success or failure, sympathy or neglect. Mazzini, the Italian patriot, saw the force of this when he said: "Life is a mission, duty is, therefore, its highest law." He could, in the light of this truth, consecrate his life to his country's good, and say that he would labour on and love on even "without earthly hope." "Whether the sun shine with the serene splendour of an Italian noon, or the leaden, corpse-like hue of the northern mist is above us, I cannot see that it changes our duty." Duty, then, is the governing principle of life. It meets us every day and everywhere. We do not need to look for it. As Carlyle says: "The situation that has not its duty was never yet occupied by man." We have only to do the thing that's nearest, to look to God for help and guidance, and the performance of the simple things of life with the thought of duty in them will make even "drudgery divine." We need never look abroad and sigh for great opportunities for the display of heroism, for a larger field of action and influence for our abilities; our ordinary life, with its daily round and common task, will furnish us with all we need in order to do our duty, and we will find that

"The primal duties shine aloft, like stars ;
The charities that soothe, and heal, and bless,
Are scattered at the feet of man like flowers."

There is first of all our duty towards God. Tom Hood once said, in his sarcastic way, that "There are some persons who have so far outgrown their Catechism as to believe that their only duty is to themselves." Self is an idol with many worshippers. Indeed it is the fashionable religion of the day. God is dethroned in the heart, and self, the usurper, takes the highest seat. But what have we to do any more with idols? Our duty towards God should be instinct with love and faith. It be-

gins with trust, fears to do aught displeasing to Him, loves with the whole being, worships in adoring praise and prayer, is full of devout thanksgiving and holy faith, ever calls upon Him, honours His holy name, feeds on His Word, and devotes a life of loving service to His glory.

Our duty towards our neighbour arises from the law of love. It is simply stated in the words of Christ: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," and in the Golden Rule "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to men likewise." Our first thought in all our dealings with our fellow-men must be that of duty. It will often, perhaps, conflict with our interests; yet we must do the right if we are to live up to the light of truth which God has given us. Duty must stand first and remain supreme. The right is the supreme good, the secret of human happiness, the foundation of individual and national prosperity. When we outgrow the Catechism and think our only duty is to ourselves, we are working from a wrong centre and will soon find that the fountains of happiness will dry up. The fire of love is needed in the great heart of duty; love to our great Elder Brother and through this love to the great brotherhood of man. On the pedestal of the statue of the great and good Earl of Shaftesbury in Westminster Abbey there are two words which sum up his life purpose and illustrate our duty towards our neighbour. They are: "Love, Serve." Duty is not cold when it becomes loving service. Our religion is not a system of abstract doctrines, it is a life—a life linked by living faith with Him who is the Life, the centre, the source, the secret of all life.

It may become our duty, like those of whom Milton writes, to serve in what seems inaction: "They also serve who only stand and wait." We may be called to suffer a living martyrdom for loyalty to the truth. The body may not be racked by pain, but the soul may suffer and endure in silence. Thus Lewis Morris says: