

# The Church Guardian

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## SPECIAL NOTICE.

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## CALENDAR FOR FEBRUARY.

FEBRUARY	1.—SEPTUAGESIMA.
"	2.—PURIFICATION OF VIRGIN MARY.
"	8.—SEXAGESIMA.
"	15.—QUINQUAGESIMA.
"	18.—ASH WEDNESDAY.
"	22.—First Sunday in Lent.
"	24.—St. Matthias, Ap. and M.
"	25.—EMBER DAY.
"	27.—EMBER DAY.
"	28.—EMBER DAY.

## Sexagesima Sunday.

SHORT SERMON BY THE HON. AND REV. S. BEST, M.A.

"If I needs must glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities."—II. Cor. xi. 30.

This Sunday (like the last) is one of those in which the Church carries us, as in a state of transition, from the rejoicings of Christmas and our Lord's manifestation in the flesh, to those solemn scenes for which with more than usual earnestness she prepares us in Lent. We may admire, if our eyes are not closed to it through indifference or lukewarmness, the anxiety she herein shews for the edification of her children, that they may, year by year, go through a course of Christian instruction, and have all the lively scenes of Gospel history brought before them—all the practical principles of Christianity springing out of its doctrines brought home to them. The Christian year is, as it were, the epitome of a Christian life, and, while passing through it, we are taught to rest a while at each important station, to employ each hallowed season snatched from the business of the world, and indicated by God as His own, in some practical endeavor to advance our spiritual state, and to attain a fuller knowledge of each varying subject of revealed wisdom, that we may grow in grace, not suddenly or without effect on our part, but by imbibing precept on precept, and line upon line, until, in God's strength and wisdom, we come to perfection as Christian men,—to the fulness of the measure of the stature of Christ. The collect of this Sunday teaches us that we must not put our trust in anything that we do; we must not trust our own power of resisting evil, or of continuing firm and constant under trial or temptation; but direct our prayers to God, that, by His all-sufficient power, He would mercifully defend us against all adversity. We are approaching the season when, by fasting and prayer, the

flesh is to be subdued to the spirit. It is necessary that we should be sensible of the value of these arms. The Church, therefore, strongly impresses us with the truth that we may not trust in ourselves, and, pointing out to us the dangers that beset our path, refers us to the only means by which they can be successfully opposed. The struggle of the flesh with the spirit is one fierce in its character, and lasting in its endurance, and, if left in its strength, the flesh, it is to be feared, will but too often, as a strong man armed, successfully keep the house against its more worthy occupant. Let us, therefore, at once understand, that all our common defences against such an enemy are useless. This is illustrated in the Gospel. However good be the seed,—and it is always the same, for to all it is the Word of God,—if it fall in unpropitious ground,—in ground unprepared for it, neither cultivated nor cleaned from weeds,—it will be choked and die away without fruit. It is necessary, then, that all the weeds that check its growth be removed; that every mistaken notion of our own power, every misplaced good resolution to do our duty in our own strength, without reference to the assistance offered us by God in His ordinances, must be disposed of, before we can enter on that spiritual course, in which the flesh being subdued to the spirit, the Christian graces can have place, and, without interruption from external causes, have an opportunity of growth. The epistle shows, in the example of St. Paul, how the difficulties that oppose our Christian progress are to be met and overcome, how the trials of life are to be borne and turned to our eternal profit, how strictly applicable to all times is the reproach "that we suffer fools gladly, seeing we ourselves are wise." That trials, under different shapes, await us all, we cannot doubt; but how weak and contemptible are many of those to any reasonable man, which have, nevertheless, in too many instances, the greatest effect. We are brought into bondage; we are turned by trifles, and even by ridicule, as well from the assertion as from the confession of truth. God be praised, it is not our lot to bear the martyrdom of the Apostle, but his example is our shield. If ever man could boast—if ever man could trust in anything he did, in any power he possessed, St. Paul was that man; yet such was his deep sense of his entire dependence, and the utter insufficiency of any other support than that of God, that, if he needs must glory, he would glory in the things which concerned his infirmities. These things, then, enforce what the collect teaches: the ground must be cleared, the pride of human reason and of self-sufficiency must be humbled, and, feeling that we cannot put our trust in anything we do, we must trust for our defence against whatever trial or adversity may come, to God's strength and mercy, that through Jesus Christ we may finally be enabled to stand.—*Ext.*

## The Bishop-elect of Niagara.

It is with profound gratitude to the Great Head of the Church that we are enabled to announce the election of the Reverend Charles Hamilton to the See of Niagara. The election of a Bishop is a matter whose interest is not confined to the Diocese over which he is called to preside: the whole Church is interested in the character of the occupants of the Episcopal Bench, and the past

record of the Bishop-elect of Niagara is a sufficient guarantee that he will fully sustain the high reputation of our Canadian Episcopate. We heartily congratulate the Churchmen of the Diocese of Niagara on the happy result of their late Synod, as well as on the good feeling which appears to have characterized all its proceedings. The following biographical sketch of the Bishop-elect is taken from the *Hamilton Times*:—

Rev. Chas. Hamilton, M.A., is a Canadian by birth, a native of Hawkesbury, Ontario, a graduate of University College, Oxford. was ordained deacon in 1857, priest in 1858, by the Bishop of Quebec, was appointed incumbent of St. Peter's, Quebec, and is now rector of St. Matthew's Church, Quebec. He is Bishop's Chaplain, also Prolocutor to the Provincial Synod. The Diocese of Quebec, in which he has spent his life thus far, was constituted in 1793, and comprised the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada. It is now confined to that portion of the Province of Quebec extending from Three Rivers to the Straits of Belle Isle, and New Brunswick on the shores of the St. Lawrence, and all east of a line drawn from Three Rivers to Lake Memphremagog. The rev. gentleman is of more than ordinary scholarship, is a man of genial manner, large heart, and is noted for benevolence in all matters, irrespective of creed or nationality. His conduct as prolocutor of the Provincial Synod has won for him high regard from those who, to some extent, differ with him in Church and other matters. He is noted for his impartial conduct and business tact. He is a son of the late Col. George Hamilton, of Hawkesbury, a member of the family of Hamilton, of Hardwood, County Meath, Ireland, who claim descent from Hugh Hamilton, a son of Sir James Hamilton, of Elandale, Scotland, who settled in Ireland in 1616.

## Household Religion.

If there is a revival needed in any sphere of life it is in household religion, for the family lies at the root of things. All our hopes for the future, in both Church and State, are bound up with the well-being of our families. Let family piety decline, and that of the Church will decline with equal step. Let the restraints of religion diminish their hold on the family, and the restraints of law will be but feeble in the State.

We say there is need of a revival of household religion. We have especial reference to religious observances in the family. These will foster, even if they cannot create, true piety. Yet we fear that in many a Church household religious observances are largely or altogether neglected. This ought not so to be. The form without the spirit, to be sure, is empty and profitless, but there is no good reason why the spirit should not animate the form, and so the religious observances contribute mightily to the growth of true and faithful piety.

The family gather about the table, but through some strange timidity the father does not venture to invoke the Divine blessing. Surely that household will not be swift to remember the Father of lights, from whom comes every good and perfect gift. It may be, however, that a blessing is asked, but it is made to take the place of any other act of worship. Better this than nothing but alas! for that family which has no family altar. Private devotions cannot take its place, and even these are apt to languish when the spirit of prayer does not pervade the family. The household, as a household, ought to seek the Divine blessing upon itself before engaging in the duties of the day, and ought to recognize the Divine care and invoke the