

The Church Times.

Rev. J. C. Cochran—Editor.

"Evangelical Truth—Apostolic Order."

W. Gossip—Publisher.

VOL. V.

HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA, SATURDAY, NOV. 30, 1852.

NO. 47.

Calendar.

CALENDAR WITH LESSONS.

Day & Date	MORNING.	EVENING.
S. Oct. 21.	1st S. of Tr. B. bef. Prov. 13	John 13
M. " 22.	Baruch 6	1st S. of Tr. B. 1
Tu. " 23.	1st & 2d Is. of Is. 1	2d S. of Tr. B. 2
W. " 24.	Is. 2	3d S. of Tr. B. 3
Th. " 25.	Is. 3	4th S. of Tr. B. 4
F. " 26.	Is. 4	5th S. of Tr. B. 5
S. " 27.	Is. 5	6th S. of Tr. B. 6

Poetry.

GOD IS CONSOLATION

Oh! Thou who driest the mourner's tear,
How dark this world would be,
If, when deceived and wounded here,
We could not fly to thee?

The friends who in our sunshine live,
When winter comes, are flown;
And he who has but tears to give,
Must weep those tears alone.

But thou wilt heal the broken heart,
Which, like the plants that throw
Their fragrance from the wounded part,
Breathes sweetness out of woe!

Oh! who could bear life's stormy doom,
Did not thy wings of love
Come brightly waiting from the gloom,
Our peace-branch from above.

When joy no longer soothes or cheers,
And even the hope that threw
A moment's sparkle o'er our tears,
Is dimmed and vanished too.

Then sorrow touched by thee grows bright
With more than rapture's ray,
As darkness shows us worlds of light
We never saw by day.

Religious Miscellany.

[The subject of the following notice filled a large space in the eye of the P. E. Church, and the work mentioned has doubtless been read by many among us. It produced a powerful sensation, and has been the means of leading many to that Church, which the force of truth led himself to embrace.

We presume therefore, that the following affecting account of his closing scene, in that land whither so many go for the gold that perisheth, but to which he bore the "unsearchable riches of Christ,"—will be perused with interest.]—Ed. C. T.

THE LATE REV. F. S. MINES.

It was recently our painful duty to record the demise of this devout and zealous servant of the Lord at San Francisco, California, on the 5th of August. A writer in the *Churchman*, (we presume the excellent Rev. Dr. Berrian,) gives some interesting particulars in relation to his life; from which we learn that Mr. Mines was born in Virginia, and was the son of a Presbyterian clergyman. He received his academical education at Princetown College, and entered the Theological Seminary at that place, in order to prepare himself for the Presbyterian Ministry, in which he soon attained a high position and influence. He very early gave indications of doubts and struggles in his mind, which continued to harass and disquiet him, before he settled down in thorough conviction, and found peace in the bosom of the Church. The motive by which he was led to change his ecclesiastical opinions and views are forcibly set forth in a series of essays which originally appeared in the columns of the *Churchman*, and have since been published in a volume, entitled, "A Presbyterian Clergyman looking for the Church." Immediately after his admission to our ministry, he was engaged as assistant to the late venerable Dr. Milnor, Rector of St. George's Church, New York, but soon accepted an invitation to a parish at St. Croix, W. I., where he remained for several years, and had the happiness of seeing his labours crowned with most abundant success. But his health suffering from the effects of that warm and debilitating climate he returned to the United States; and remained in the vicinity of New York, until the discovery of the gold

den region in California exciting such a vast tide of emigration thither, his ardent spirit was inspired with the desire to "preach among them the unsearchable riches of Christ." He departed to that distant scene of his short remaining labours, and had just succeeded in gathering a large and devotedly attached congregation, and in erecting a suitable temple to his Master's honour, when his frail body gave way, and his spirit entered into rest.

For the following account of his last hours we are indebted to a correspondent of the *Calendar*, in a letter from San Francisco, dated August 11.

Our Rev. and beloved Brother, FLAVEL S. MINES, departed this life on Thursday evening the 5th, at a little past 8 o'clock. His last sickness was protracted more than eight months, although from first to last without local pain. The consumption of his lungs was gradually and finally entire. A distressing cough and increasingly difficult breathing with large expectoration, were the predominant features of his illness; but both cough and expectoration diminished gradually as his end drew near, until shortness of breathing, daily and at length admonished us of the final scene. He died without a struggle, or even a motion of the limbs. His breathing ceased and he was gone. But when a brother dies we always feel disposed to know how he died. Did he realize the consolations of faith? In this it is my rare privilege to assure you, having enjoyed from first the unrestricted intimacy of that sacred chamber of death, and an unreserved communication of his holiest and heartfelt emotions, until having knelt alone with him and his consort by his bedside in the use of the "Prayer commendatory for a sick person at the point of departure," he died as I uttered the words "presented pure and without spot before Thee." You well know his clear perception of things, his calm demeanor under all circumstances, and his warm but ever chastened exhibition of mind and heart—so characterized were all his spiritual expressions. He fully exemplified upon his death bed all he had inculcated of the consolations of faith from the pulpit, and taught us there how a Christian, and a minister of Christ should die. During many weeks he received the Holy Eucharist at my hands every Thursday morning, and those communion seasons, I am free to say, were the holiest and most precious I have ever witnessed or enjoyed—at every successive occasion, his aspiration rose higher, and appeared more holy, until it became manifest, that he had quite overcome the world and vanquished the king of terrors. On the day of his decease as I entered in the morning for my usual Thursday's office he took me warmly by the hand, with a smile which I can never forget drew me down to him (for he could speak only in a whisper) and said, "brother, it is the last time." The solemn service over, he beckoned his little boy to him, and laid his hand upon his head, and prayed with and for him. It was indeed the blessing of a dying father. But I am entering perhaps minutely into a detail of the scenes of that sacred retreat, the holy chamber whence the good man's soul took his flight from earth. My mind reverts to that chamber by day and by night, and never, to my latest breath, can I forget those scenes; I love to dwell on them. They form an era in my life, a privilege rare beyond description. His mind was never more sound, healthy and clear than during his last sickness: and without any ecstasies, calm, placid and serene, he stepped without one fear of misgiving, from time into eternity, from earth to heaven. So let me die.

Of his labours, privations, and success in San Francisco, you will learn in detail hereafter. Suffice it to say, he shrank from no toil or privation in his Master's cause, evening, morning, and at noon day, until he had gathered around him a large congregation, not inferior in intelligence to any one I have ever seen; and had erected a fine large Church edifice, filled to overflowing, and entirely free from debt—in which he was allowed to preach but once before being prestrated on his bed of death. He died universally beloved and respected, and of course lamented. His funeral, which took place on Sunday last, was attended by an immense congregation of hearty mourners, and we laid him down under the chancel of his Church, to rest till the great resurrection in the last day.

THE POWER OF ABSOLUTION.

1 The Ordination Service.—In the ordination of priests the officiating bishop is directed to use a form of words, founded upon those of our Lord, recorded in John xx. 22, 23, to which serious objections have been sometimes made: viz., "Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands. Whoso sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whoso sins thou dost retain, they are retained. And be thou a faithful dispenser of the word of God, and of his holy sacraments; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. Now, our Church cannot be supposed to claim for her ministers by the use of these words, any higher authority than the Lord himself meant to confer, and actually conferred, upon his apostles by the use of these or similar words.* It must be either an equal, or an inferior authority. And that it is clearly an inferior and limited authority is evident from the fact that our formula is a modification and adaptation of the Lord's words, so far as they may be applicable to the functions of a presbyter—to "the office and work of a priest." For our church adapts the Lord's words to present circumstances, saying, "Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a priest."† And

* Not even to the apostles themselves was given the authority to forgive the sins of the impenitent and to retain those of the penitent. Dr. McNeill in his "Lectures on the Church of England" shows that the apostles themselves evidently considered the commission given to them by our Lord by the use of those words, to be purely ministerial: and quotes Acts v. 30, 32, x. 40, 43, xiii. 38, 39, xvi. 29, 32; 1 Cor. iii. 5, 7, and 1. John i. 3, 6, as examples of the manner which they exercised it. (Lect. ii. pp. 75, 93.) See also Rev. J. B. Marsden's Discourses for the Festivals, xvii. pp. 418, 419. In Acts xvii. 18, 23 we read both how St. Paul received this authority, and also how he exercised it. The only judicial power of absolution ever exercised by the apostles, or delegated by them to others, recorded in the Scriptures, is that of absolving from ecclesiastical censures, and removing the sentence of excommunication, as we find it recorded in 2 Cor. ii. 10. "To whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also: for, if I forgive anything, for your sakes, forgive I it in the person of Christ." That this was no more than ecclesiastical absolution, or restoration to the privilege of church-membership is evident from the preceding verses (see verses 7, 9). From 1 Cor. v. 2, 4, 5, it would appear that this offender had been dealt with in accordance with our Lord's command in Matt. xviii. 18, 20.

The Rev. J. Bayly thus explains Matt. xviii. 18, 20. That is, your forgiveness of your repentant brother, shall be accompanied by the divine approbation and forgiveness in heaven; and the stubbornness of an unrepentant brother who will not yield to thy solicitation to reconciliation will be visited by the divine displeasure, and he shall still remain under the weight of his transgressions." Again in 2 Cor. ii. 10, he remarks, "The unclean liver has not only sinned against God, but he had brought a scandal upon the church to which he belonged: and his example might have been the means of leading others astray. In a word, he had sinned against his brethren: for his two-fold sin he had manifested contrition—the church forgave him; and, he being penitent, what they had loosed on earth was loosed in heaven." (Institutions, p. 81, and p. 82.)

Between the authority of the inspired apostles and the uninspired ministers of succeeding ages, there is a great difference respecting the power of the keys. The teaching of the apostles was to be received, "not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the word of God." (1 Thess. ii. 13.) The apostles too, could inflict miraculous diseases and even death itself upon grievous offenders, so that "great fear came upon all the church"—(Acts v. 11). But the preaching of their uninspired successors becomes effectual for the salvation or increased condemnation of their hearers (see 2 Cor. ii. 14, 17,) only so far as it is agreeable to God's written word, by which it is to be tested and tried. The means, too, whereby open offenders are to be punished "that others may fear to do the like," is by their being "rebuked openly" (34th article, and 1 Tim. v. 20,) and by the due administration of the discipline of the church and the Lord's sacrament.

† It has been observed that, "highly as we may deem of the apostolical character, it was surely a more surprising act of condescension in the Saviour to say to any created being—'As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.'—than to transfer that authority from any one frail mortal to another, for the highest apostle was certainly far more unworthy to be placed on a level with Christ, than the humblest Christian is with an apostle" [Rev. E. G. Marsh's Sermons, p. 52.]