

The Church Guardian

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CALENDAR FOR JULY.

- JULY 4th—2nd Sunday after Trinity.
- " 11th—3rd Sunday after Trinity.
- " 18th—4th Sunday after Trinity.
- " 25th—5th Sunday after Trinity.
- " 25th—St. JAMES, A. & M.

TO SUBSCRIBERS IN NEW BRUNSWICK, AND NOVA SCOTIA

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THE LORD BISHOP OF FREDERICTON, METROPOLITAN, ON ORDINATION AND THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MINISTRY.

From the address of the aged Metropolitan to his clergy at the late Synod we take the following:—

We who are called by the church to the office and work of priests in the church of God, who did not shrink from the awful responsibility of the message committed by our Lord to his Apostles, and through them conveyed to us, had need often to ponder in our hearts the words which no subtlety of reasoning can explain away: "Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a priest in the church of God." We know that they are the Lord's own words, which the Church uses, because they are His, and because the promise is given us of His presence with us "all days even to the end of the world." We know that not the Bishop but the Bishop's Lord and Master can alone bestow this or any other spiritual gift. We know that this is given by the channel of human instrument, because it pleases Him to work by human means, and to employ "earthen vessels." We know that the gift which the Lord bestows to render our ministry valid, and his sacraments effectual means of grace, is not to be confounded with the personal sanctification of the priest, which must be sought for by him as it is sought for by every Christian, by humble and constant prayer, and diligent use of all the means of grace. But, on the other hand, he to whom the church says "Receive," must believe that the church has wherewithal to give. And that this gift is the gift of the Holy Ghost, for the effectual discharge of our ministrations is evident, for from the spirit of God "every good and perfect gift" proceeds, and surely that gift which is bestowed on us "for the perfecting of the saints, and the work of the ministry," when we have ourselves who deserved this office, when the church,

after due examination, has bestowed it upon us, when the church calls us priests and our order a priesthood, it were an act of ingratitude and of cowardice to be ashamed of the name when we use the office. None of us take this "honor unto himself but he that was called of God," as was Aaron, and yet Aaron's priesthood was disputed. Aaron himself was "compassed with infirmity." The people made the calf, which Aaron made. And in that great miracle, when water issued from the rock in Kadesh, Aaron shared in the unbelief which led to the exclusion of both Moses and Aaron from the promised land. If our priesthood be not the sacrificing of bulls and of goats it is none the less a real priesthood, because the Lord Jesus Christ confers it upon us. Aaron's was a typical priesthood. Ours comes from the Great High Priest in heaven, who says to us, "As my Father hath sent me, even so I send you." But does this gift make us arrogant? Does it not rather humble us in the dust? The more our priesthood is connected with the Word of Him who cannot lie, the higher it is above the ancient sacrifices of the Mosaic rites, the more true and real and awful it becomes, and the more holy we ought to be. If our office be something far nobler than the hire of the people for a morsel of bread, if we seek to please God rather than man, if we await the judgment of our Master whose word "pierces us even to the dividing of soul and spirit, and discovering the thoughts and intents of the heart," what manner of persons ought we to be? What integrity, what diligence, what faithfulness, what serious study, what nobleness of purpose, what loyalty to the church, what discretion, what deadness to the world, what weighing of the Scriptures, what "ripeness and perfectness" of age in Christ, what watchfulness in prayer, what patience and humility, what courage and steadfastness, what care for every soul committed to our charge should we continually show? Surely the time of a Bishop's visitation should be a time of close reckoning with ourselves! How imperfectly have we fulfilled our ministry! What shortcomings are there in all our services! In the forty-second year of my Episcopate, no less than fifty of the clergy have been called to their account. As I cast my eyes sorrowfully over this number, and wonder at God's sparing mercy to myself, I shudder at the thought that I may prove wanting in that zeal, steadfastness, courage and humility which may make me an example to you who shall remain among us. "The Priest's lips should keep knowledge." Earnestness and integrity of purpose are great gifts, but the present critical age demands more of us. The knowledge which the priest's lips should dispense is of wider range, and of various kinds. In former days poor and ignorant people took for granted all that their pastor said, and made no further inquiry. He must know what was right. They were simple and confiding. That was enough. But it is not so now. Everything is called in question, and the whole world is turned loose to inquire, to agitate, to debate to applaud or condemn. What chance has the simple minded clergyman who merely reads his chapter without thought and performs his office without knowing the history of the Prayer Book, and what is essential to a right understanding of it? The priest's knowledge should above all be Bible knowledge, for this is the point in which so many of his hearers are deficient, and this involves constant labor, and the most diligent inquiry. It is easy to select scraps of the English version and quote them authoritatively on all occasions. But if we consider how the Bible is constructed, what knowledge is required, of history, of the gradual education of mankind, of successive eras of progress, of the typical fulfilment of prophecy in the birth and ministry of Jesus Christ, of the foundation, laws and progress of the Christian Church, of development of Christian doctrine in the letters

of the apostles, of the history of the Jewish nation since the destruction of the Temple, we must see that no small task lies before us.

The priest's lips should keep knowledge. How careful should we be that in answering the objections of the scoffer we do not insist on unwise and traditional interpretations of Holy Scripture which the text does not contain. How sparing should we be of attempting to lay down a scheme of future events instead of stating clearly the certain fulfilment of the past. What deep knowledge is required in explaining the history and unfolding the meaning of those ancient creeds, whose root is in the Scripture, whose accuracy of definition was obtained by men deeply learned in Bible truth, who were not only defenders of the faith, but sufferers on account of their maintenance of it. Nor is the knowledge of the foundation and progress of the church less necessary when our portion in the Catholic faith is denied by some, and the continuity of the church both before and after the Reformation is set at naught by others. Happily, the greater the difficulty of acquiring such knowledge the more abundantly are we supplied with commentators of orthodox principles and extensive learning. And every year books multiply on us which illustrate some separate portion of Holy Writ, and throw light on its acknowledged difficulties. Among our numerous benefactors of this kind must be specially enshrined in our remembrance the honored name of the late Venerable Bishop of Lincoln, whose deep and extensive knowledge of Holy Scriptures and of the works of the primitive fathers, and whose unserving loyalty to the church, is a safe guide to studious clergy: whilst the unsparring liberality has enabled us to enjoy the benefit of his labors at one half the price which we should otherwise have paid. Such knowledge is indeed a possession forever, a treasure which in this new country we could not otherwise secure, for which no gratitude of ours can be too great, no love can be too fervent.

(To be continued.)

EDITORIAL NOTES.

In every Diocesan Theological College, or Training School for the Clergy, is to have the degree-conferring power (and if one, why not all?) the suggestion of a member of the Synod of Quebec, that the degree so granted should be tenable only in, and for the particular Diocese conferring it, and be not recognized beyond its bounds, might be worth consideration. This would accord with the unique proposal, and also with the position advanced by those advocating the Montreal College Bill, that the matter was one purely diocesan, and with which the Church at large had no concern. If so, the Church at large should not be liable to be affected by the diocesan action in this respect, and the degree should be purely local. If this could be secured, perhaps those opposing the movement might feel less anxious about it.

It seems lamentable that, not alone in Synods, but also in the columns of the religious press, there should be "false accusers" of the brethren, and attempts to injure the usefulness of prominent men by affixing to them epithets intended to be understood as partizan and extreme. An example of this occurs in a late number of the *Evangelical Churchman*, which, referring to the election of Canon Liddon to the See of Edinburgh, takes pains to characterize Dr. Liddon as "a thorough-going sacerdotalist," and to intimate that his election would only serve "to impress upon Scotch