

The Church Guardian

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See page 14.

CALENDAR FOR JUNE.

- JUNE 3—1st Sunday after Trinity.
 " 10—2nd Sunday after Trinity. (*Notice of
St. Barnabas Day*).
 " 11—ST. BARNABAS. A. & M.
 " 17—3rd Sunday after Trinity.
 " 24—4th Sunday after Trinity.
 " "—Nativity of St. John Baptist. (*Notice
of St. Peter's Day*).
 " 29—ST. PETER. A. & M.

SPECIAL.

We are obliged to ask our Subscribers to be forbearing for a few weeks and accept a "half" instead of a whole paper. We have thought it better to diminish our labours rather than suspend publication entirely, in the hope that we may so far regain strength as to be able to carry on the work as usual, or if not that some one else may be found to take our place.

PULPIT EXCHANGES AND CHURCH UNITY.

The question of Church unity should be kept distinct from other and lesser questions. It does not turn upon denominational tenets or party claims. Neither Presbyterians nor Episcopalians, neither evangelical nor ritualistic Churchmen may dictate its terms. If Christian sects and factions cannot sink their differences and find some common ground of mutual tolerance in the same Church, or within the same Church system, there is an end to everything like organic oneness, as distinguished from mere sentimental fellowship.

Accordingly, the proposed terms of Church unity are so stated as to exclude most thoroughly all denominational tenets and partisan opinions. Even the denominational tenets of the Protestant Episcopal Church are largely ignored as well as the ecclesiastical parties within its pale. The Holy Bible is insisted on, but not the Prayer Book; the Nicene Creed, but not the Thirty-nine Articles; the two sacraments, but neither the evangelical nor the ritualistic view of their efficacy; the historical episcopate, but neither the high nor the low theory of its prerogative. In like manner, the Presbyterian Church, in acceding to such terms, could not insist upon its own Directory for Worship and Confession of faith, nor dictate any special views of ritual and polity. The two bodies, while adhering to the same Scriptures, creeds sacraments and ministry would still have a wide margin for their denominational forms of doctrine and worship.

These distinctions apply with special force to the last of the four conditions. The historic episcopate, if defined in any partisan sense by Church authority, would cease at once to afford a ground or bond of unity. Its own supporters would rush apart into schism. According to the definition made, the ministry and sacra-

ments would either be declared void of all that they meant to the one party, or charged with meaning wholly repudiated by the other party. And among the denominations of the Church at large, such a doctrinal definition would be still more divisive, repelling them toward the extremes of Protestantism and Romanism. It is but a truism to say that the right and left wings of Christendom could never be conjoined into an episcopate which should take sides dogmatically with either against the other.

If this be a correct view, it is not easy to see how true Church unity would be promoted by exchanges of pulpit services between Episcopal and non-Episcopal ministers. Sooner or later such exchanges could not but involve a divisive definition of the Christian ministry itself. For a time, indeed, they might serve some good ends. Superficial observers might rejoice in them as signs of Christian fellowship and clerical amity. In some worshipping assemblies they might lead to effusive manifestations of fraternal feeling, and on charity platforms to more or less practical co-operation. But at length a breach would be opened which had been concealed, and harsh recoil would follow the hasty union. When the black-gowned preacher in the pulpit stood contrasted with the white-robed priest at the altar, a difference would become visible to their respective adherents in the pews—a difference as absurd as irritating, should it be known that the priest meant to recognize the validity of the preacher's ministrations, while the preacher claimed to have the other functions from which he was debarred. Each party would be put in a false position. The visiting minister would publicly take the place of a layman, and his Low Church brother would be forced to appear against him in the absolution or the communion, though both held substantially the same views of the clerical office and the Holy Supper. Is it not to be feared that a few such object lessons might put an end to every hope of unity in the pulpit as well as at the altar?

Let it be observed that we are now looking at this question from the standpoint of Church unity alone. I am not here maintaining the truth or falsity of any doctrine of the Christian ministry, nor asking others to take high or low Church ground as to its powers. Indeed it is not upon such ground merely that intelligent Episcopalians may be supposed to withhold recognition from learned divines of unimpeached orthodoxy and piety. It is because they know that the recognition would draw after it a train of other questions involving at length the unity of their whole Church. And they value such unity more than any chance fraternization or mere visionary fellowship. In other words, the historic episcopate holds them together in the essential faith, notwithstanding their diverse views of the ministry and sacraments and in spite of their leanings toward either extreme. In like manner it might draw together other denominations with which it has more or less affinity. On a large scale in the Christian world it might embrace the same schools and parties which are now found within its pale. Its expansive unifying power is no mere theory, but an exemplary fact. All this power, however, it would lose were it dragged aside to any partisan ground, high or low, evangelical or sacerdotal. By recognizing faithful ministers or preachers not episcopally ordained, no doubt it would meet many noble Christian impulses and please some sections of Protestantism, but it would alienate the rest of Christendom, as well as rend its own body asunder. Whatever else it might retain, it would forfeit its potential capacity for collecting and combining the scattered ecclesiastical elements of our divided American Christianity. For such reasons it is quite conceivable that a true lover of Church unity might deprecate the proposed interchanges, not as undesirable in themselves, but as likely to do more harm than good to the cause which he has at heart. He might think

a lasting peace better than any hollow truce and be disposed to shun mere sentimental compact for the sake of more intelligent agreements.

Unity is a plant of slow growth. It cannot be forced. It will require time and thought and study, as well as prayer and effort. The present race of clergymen may have to pass away. Another generation may need to be educated to a higher point of view. In future ordinations which cast no seeming reflection upon a former ministry, or which may involve some practical, without a formal legitimation of Presbyterian ministrations, a degree of essential unity may be reached before which the freest interchange of pulpit services would sink into insignificance.

In all candor and fairness it should be added that this is not the time to urge a new concession. It is the time for some concession from the other side. The Right Reverend Bishops have presented four terms of unity, three of which might be adopted at once, and have so stated the fourth as to open the way toward conference and agreement. They believe, too, that they would give more than they could ever receive. Let other denominations and churches offer to grant or give as much, and they will then be in a good position to discuss the minor question of pulpit courtesies.—CHARLES W. SHIELDS in *North Dakota Churchman*.

CHURCH MISSIONS.

The following is the text of a letter from the Board of Missions read by the Archbishop of Canterbury, to the Upper House of Convocation, at its recent session:—"Memorandum on the Responsibility of Churchmen with respect to Foreign Missions, prepared by Dr. Westcott, and adopted by the Board of Missions of the Province of Canterbury, April 23rd, 1888.

"The facts disclosed in a statement prepared by the hon. secretaries to the Board show beyond question the necessity of pressing upon Churchmen their responsibility with respect to foreign missions. Nearly a third of the parishes in the whole Province of Canterbury, and more than a fourth of the parishes in London, contribute nothing to the two great missionary societies of the Church. No further argument is required to prove that an active participation in missionary work has not yet obtained its proper place among the common duties of the Christian life.

A more minute analysis of the financial reports of the two societies emphasises this conclusion in one special application. The contributions of the upper and wealthier classes to missionary objects are wholly out of proportion to the funds which they provide for other religious and charitable objects. The total annual amount given by titled subscribers to the Church Missionary Society is little more than one thousand pounds, one two-hundredth part of its whole income.

Some facts become intelligible only when we come to recognize that the true relation of missionary work to the corporate work of the Church has not yet been fully realized. Hitherto missions have been treated as in some sense supplemental to normal Church work. They have been founded by personal devotion, and directed by the unwearied energy of great societies. We still require to learn the universal obligation which lies upon us as Christians, as Englishmen, as English Churchmen, in order that the great resources which are as yet untouched made be made available for the foreign missions of the Church.

1. Christianity is essentially aggressive. The field which it claims to occupy is the world. The last command of the risen Christ to His disciples, and the first gift of the ascended