

The Church Times.

Rev. J. C. Cochran—Editor.

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Calendar.

| CALENDAR WITH LESSONS. | | MORNING. | | | | EVENING. | | | | | | |
|------------------------|----|----------|-----|------|---------|----------|-----|---|---------|----|-----|----|
| Sept | 13 | 8 | alt | Tris | 3 Kings | 18 | Mat | 4 | 3 Kings | 18 | Rom | 4 |
| | | | | | Amos | 8 | | | Amos | 8 | | 8 |
| | | | | | | 7 | | | | 7 | | 7 |
| | | | | | | 9 | | | | 9 | | 9 |
| | | | | | Jonah | 1 | | | Obadiah | 1 | | 10 |
| | | | | | | 4 | | | Micah | 1 | | 10 |

Poetry.

THE STILL SMALL VOICE.

BY CHRIS

It is not when the thunder's crash
Resonates on high,
It is not when the lightning's flash
Illuminates the sky,
Nor is it when the raging wind
Uproots the sturdy oak,
In none of these that voices we find
Which to the prophet spoke.

When upon Horeb's trembling mound
The Hebrew prophet knelt,
Waiting with awe some dreadful sound
To make God's presence felt;
Behold the rocks in pieces fly,
A wind the mountain rent,
But in that wind the Lord most high
His presence had not sent.

Scarce had the wind its fury spent,
When lo! the heavens grew black,
And, near the gloomy firmament
The sea in fear shrinks back:
Trembles the earth, the mountains melt,
The trees in terror nod,
But in this earthquake was not felt
The Hebrew prophet's God.

Around the firmament on high
In glorious beauty shone,
When seel what sweeps athwart the sky,
That red and fiery zone;
A moment more, and all around
As far as eye can see
The wreathing flames, from mound to mound,
Rolls onward like a sea,
They reach to where the prophet kneels
In humble fervent prayer,
But as the flames sweep by he feels
His Maker is not there.

The flames are gone, nor left one stake,
The winds have sunk to rest,
No more the earth with terrors quake,
And all is calm and rest,
No sound is heard unless a wave
By gentlest zephyr stirred,
When hark! from out the mountain cave
A still small voice is heard.

This gentle voice the prophet heard,
And though no thunders told
That he who spoke was God the Lord,
Creator of the world,
He rose and with an humble mien
Towards the cave he trod,
For well he knew that voice had been
The still small voice of God.

Windsford, C. W., Aug. 2.

Religious Miscellany.

DEACONS IN THE CHURCH.

We will the late movement of our Church, in the matter of the Diaconate, as one of the best signs of the times. It is an indication of a conviction, on the part of Churchmen, that they are not doing what the Church was designed to do, and what it is capable of doing, in the work of "preaching the Gospel to every creature;" while it affords the most gratifying evidence of a disposition to return to the practice of Apostolic times, in the due employment of every order of an Apostolic ministry.

Here, in this country, as in other parts of the world, there are multitudes who must be reached by immediate personal efforts, if they are ever to see the Gospel. They are to be sought for—the Word of God is to be presented to them, as they are to be found in the haunts of pleasure, or sin, or

in both—amid the engrossing cares of that daily toil, which monopolizes the powers of both mind and body. Such are multitudes in our cities and thickly-populated towns; they are to be found in the dense population of our manufacturing villages, and throughout the sparsely-inhabited regions of country where many seem to live as if the offices, duties, and enjoyments of religion, were matters which did not concern them. The almost countless numbers of foreigners who are peopling the West, together with the black population of the South, present to the Church classes of men that need the Gospel as much as any—who will perish without it—and yet rarely receive the tidings of salvation, in the ordinary ministrations of the Gospel, as they are maintained in regularly organized parishes. Yet, for these Christ died; for these He has provided abundant means of grace in His Church; and to these He has commanded His Gospel to be preached, without any exception whatever. Nowhere do all sorts and conditions of men more fully abound than in this New World, where towns and cities spring up as if by enchantment, and sovereign States, or, come into being without asking leave of the rest of mankind. Here at this moment, in the broadest sense, is the Church's opportunity. But she cannot improve it, without employing that instrumentality, which infinite wisdom ordained to this end, when a three-fold ministry was established, as the ministry of the Christian Church.

Diocesan Bishops and Parish Priests have their appointed spheres of duty, where, if true to their calling, they may do great good to a great number; but, however faithful and devotedly laborious they may be—however exemplary in their lives, and nerving in their efforts to preach from the pulpit, and to warn the people from house to house, yet a vast multitude of precious souls will, nevertheless, not hear the truth from their lips.

Under the conviction that there was in our Church a great lack in this particular, the General Convention at its session, in 1847, passed a canon, providing for the ordination of a class of persons, who with much less literary and theological qualification than were required by the general Canon, were allowed to be admitted to the Diaconate, without being eligible to the Priesthood. This was intended for a class of pious laymen, who with respectable talents and limited learning, might be very useful to the Church as Deacons, and who did not intend to be advanced to the second Order of the Ministry. The demand for this new measure came chiefly from the South and the West. The Canon was passed, and was regarded by many as the beginning of a better state of things. But the measure was a failure. Very few were ordained under it. It had a two-fold defect, and that was enough to nullify the good it was designed to accomplish; it virtually created a fourth Order of the Ministry—a sort of sub-deacon—since a broad distinction was made between those ordained under this Canon, and such as were ordained under the old Canon, with the intention and expectation of being advanced to the Priesthood; there were thus created two distinct classes of Deacons. Now, there is not, and is not to be in the Apostolic ministry sub-Deacons, any more than there is to be sub-Priests and sub-Bishops. The people asked for Deacons—Apostolic Deacons, and the General Convention authorized the Bishops to answer this call by ordaining and sending them a supply of sub-Deacons. But besides this, it was provided that before the Canon could go into effect, in any Diocese, the Diocesan Convention should first give its sanction to the measure, before the Bishop could act under the Canon; and when this permission was granted, the Bishop had a right to refuse to admit any one to this sub-Diaconate. So that, however urgent the demand of the people—however willing the Convention—however pressing the necessity of the circumstances of any particular case—and however fit and well qualified the candidate—the Bishop had the power of his own will to frustrate the whole matter, and, in some instances, we are well aware, that our Rt. Rev. Fathers were not very backward in exercising this prerogative.

In 1853, the General Convention repealed this Canon, and enacted another, by which both errors which distinguished and extinguished the Canon of 1847 were rectified by being excluded altogether.

This Canon provides that every person hereafter to be ordained Deacon, shall be examined by the Bishop and two Presbyters, whose duty it shall be to ascertain that he is well acquainted with the Holy Scriptures and the Book of Common Prayer; and who shall inquire into his fitness for the ministrations declared in the Ordinal, &c. Such person is required to be a candidate for one year. He is not allowed to be settled over a Parish or congregation, until he shall have satisfactorily passed the three examinations prescribed in the Canon of the preparatory exercises of a candidate for Priest's Orders,—and cannot officiate in any parish or congregation, without the express consent of the Rector, and the Bishop.

The Diaconate is thus placed upon its primitive foundation, and if it be not used with primitive success, it will be our own fault.

The door is now open for every pious layman who has the ability and the disposition to serve the Church as a Deacon, to do so. There are many men of talent and piety, whose early opportunities did not admit of their studying for the ministry, and who are engaged in some secular calling, not wholly incompatible with faithful service as a Deacon, who are desirous of improving the talent which their Divine Master has committed to them, but hitherto they have been compelled to stand at a distance from a duty which they would be glad to perform, whereby they might be instrumental of great good, in extending the Kingdom of Christ on earth.

But it has been objected, that such a lowering of the qualifications for the Diaconate, will flood the ministry with a multitude of unlearned men. We have no reason to believe that there is any ground for serious apprehension in this particular. If a tent-maker, or tax-gatherer, or a fisherman or two should obtain Deacon's Orders, under this Canon, we have no fears that the Church would be turned upside down, or that there would be any sensible loss of that dignity which belongs to true godliness and real greatness.—*Boston Christian Witness.*

THE FIRST VERSE OF GENESIS.

The unbeliever in revelation, who bases his objections to the Bible upon the discrepancy which he supposes to exist between the Mosaic account of the creation and the discoveries of modern geologists, says to us, "Here are rocks which existed fifty-thousand years ago, others that have existed four times as long, and others again that were created at a period too remote for human comprehension to understand. How then can you say that none of these were in existence more than fifty-nine centuries ago? How can I believe the declarations of Moses when they contradict what science teaches me?"

To this we have to answer, that we do not assert that any such statement is deducible from the account of Moses; that we derive from his account a belief that the matter of which the earth is composed was arranged in very nearly its present form about fifty-nine hundred years ago, but that he nowhere asserts that this was the period of its creation.

Let us carefully examine what Moses does say of the period of the creation. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (verse 1.) When was this beginning? only fifty-nine centuries before the present moment? Not so. Let us explain scripture by scripture; let us turn to the first verse of the Gospel according to St. John, where we read: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God." Here the expression means a remoter period than the human mind can conceive of the past eternity. With no propriety can the phrase, in the first verse of Genesis, be cramped to express a few centuries, that are but a moment in comparison with eternity.

The second verse says, "And the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep."

By the word form we must understand regular form, and by being without form, being in state of chaos. But to suppose that it was needful to tell us that the earth had no regular form before it was created would be absurd. That would suppose that we might imagine matter to exist without its properties; and as there was a deep upon which darkness was, proves that a period subsequent to the creation