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LESSONS FOR SUNDAYS AND HOLY DAYS.

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Morning—Isaiah v; 1 John ii, 15.
Evening—Isaiah xl, to li or xxiv; John xvii.

Appropriate Hymns for Second and Third Sundays in Advent, compiled by Dr. Albert Ham, F. R. C. O., organist and director of the choir of St. James' Cathedral, Toronto. The numbers are taken from Hymns Ancient and Modern, many of which may be found in other hymnals.

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Holy Communion: 196, 316, 320, 533.
Processional: 45, 305, 391, 392.
Offertory: 51, 214, 216, 226.
Children's Hymns: 217, 565, 568, 569.
General Hymns: 47, 52, 54, 288.

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Holy Communion: 51, 178, 313, 318.
Processional: 47, 48, 355, 362.
Offertory: 186, 272, 293, 352.
Children's Hymns: 180, 188, 336, 566.
General Hymns: 191, 193, 353, 587.

The Observance of Sunday.

Steadily the old habits and rules of behaviour and observance are being broken down. It seems as if any excuse to introduce irreligious habits was eagerly seized at, and the most flimsy excuses invented so as to overturn our old decent living. It is true that as cities grow and customs change, old usages must be modified, but it is quite unnecessary to introduce regimental drill and discipline on the Lord's Day. Suppose it were proposed to introduce church-going as essential, what an outcry at such tyranny would be raised, and yet where is the difference?

Archbishop Temple on Religious Observances.

Observances have two uses for every soul. If the Lord is absent, it is by them that we seek Him. If the Lord is present, it is by

them that we meet Him. He leaves us altogether sometimes, or seems to do so. Perhaps we have driven Him forth by doing wrong, for He cannot stay where sin is. We know that He is not with us, because we know that we have sinned and have not repented, and the sin still stands before us whenever we try to go to Him. We ought to confess, or we ought to surrender some pleasure, or we ought to make some reparation, or we ought to force ourselves to do some duty, and we shrink back from this, and Christ is not with us for we would not have Him. Or it may be that we do not recollect any fault that has compelled Him to leave us, but somehow we are left. We have lost our warmth, our resolution, our interest in His service. We do not care to please Him. We know our duties, but we have no desire to do them. Christians have sometimes to pass through such states as this. But in either case, whether we are conscious of sin or not, whether what keeps us away from God our Father be the sense of wrong or coldness of heart, it is quite certain that the recurrence of Christian seasons is often the greatest aid. If we need repentance, the order of Christian observances gives the opportunity; smooths the way; makes repentance easier, more natural; supplies the motive. If we are cold, what can warm us more than to think of the life of Christ, and what can remind us of His life more than the services of His Church?

Proselytism.

Men ought never to forget how fearfully heavy is the responsibility of a new convert. You have unsettled all the man's habitual convictions; are you prepared to labour night and day to replace them with others as effective over the heart and life? If not, you have done him an irreparable wrong. Motives to righteousness, low, mixed, uncertain, as it may be, are greatly better than none; and there can be no doubt that he who has lost so many he once possessed, requires constant, earnest, indefatigable exertion on the part of the teacher, who undertakes to supply their place. What care, what skill, what persevering patience does it need to repair the shattered principle of faith in one whom you have succeeded in convincing that all the deepest, practical convictions of his whole past life are delusions.—Wm. Archer Butler.

Faith.

He who destroys faith destroys life; for full life among the rationally intelligent cannot exist without the constant exercise of faith. Faith in the myths and legends of the past goes far towards lifting it above its brutal facts and wild usages. Faith in the thousand-fold agencies and possibilities of the present is the parent of all hopeful enterprise. Faith in the untrodden future as the

grand harvest field of both past and present, is the life and soul of all progress. Faith in man is the bond and blessing of all domestic life, social intercourse, and business relations. And faith in God is the living link between the natural and the supernatural; between the dependent finite and the infinite Supreme. He, then, who either in the professed interest of science or religion destroys faith, without first providing a sure and potent substitute, is the enemy of his kind, and a subverter of the divine system. In that system, "Faith, Hope and Charity" are a necessary and comprehensive triad; but Faith comes first in order, though charity be the greatest.

Time Changes All.

It is comforting in these days to find that just as hard things were said of politicians by our grandfathers as we read now. Sidney Smith's epitaph on Pitt, which summed up the opinions of the old Edinburgh Review, are republished in an abbreviated form, to show the present Edinburgh how it has forsaken old prejudices and principles; a lesson to us all to be moderate in denouncing others: "To the Right Honourable William Pitt, whose errors in foreign policy and lavish expenditure of our resources at home have laid the foundation of national bankruptcy, this monument was erected by many weak men, who mistook his eloquence for wisdom and his insolence for magnanimity, by many unworthy men whom he had ennobled, and by many base men whom he had enriched at the public expense."

Vanity of Vanities.

Speaking in one of his lectures on Revelation, Prof. Sanday writes: "The best evidence for the reality of that Revelation was the clear and strong conviction on the part of those who gave expression to it that it was no invention of their own, but that it was put into their thoughts directly by God. Unless we would explain away the language of the Bible altogether, we must needs believe that there was an impulse from above working through and guiding those processes (by which the prophet's words came to him). Certainly the Biblical writers imagine themselves to be doing something more than using metaphors (in describing their symbolical acts). We may think that they were mistaken, and to a materialist this is the only explanation possible, but if we once believe that there is a spiritual Being, Who does hold any sort of converse with the soul of man, then it becomes far more reasonable to take the prophets at their word. The alternative is to explain away not only these but a myriad of other facts of human consciousness in like manner. And if that were done we might as well close the book of human thought altogether, and content ourselves with inscribing 'vanity of vanities' outside."