

The Church Times.

"Evangelical Truth--Apostolic Order."

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Calendar.

CALENDAR WITH LESSONS.

Day	Date	MORNING.	EVENING.
S.	17	1st John	1st John
M.	18	2nd John	2nd John
T.	19	3rd John	3rd John
W.	20	4th John	4th John
T.	21	5th John	5th John
F.	22	6th John	6th John
S.	23	7th John	7th John

* One of the Luther Week Collects to be read on this day and each day in this week.

Parry.

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow.—Matt. vi. 28

Sweet dwelling of the vernal set,
Bathed in soft airs, and fed with dew,
What more than make in you lies
To fill the heart's fond view?
In childhood's sports, companions gay,
In sorrow, on life's downward way,
How soothing! in our last decay,
Memorials prompt and true.

Belts ye me of Eden's bowers,
As pure, as fragrant, and as fair,
As when ye crown'd the sunlit hours
Of happy wanderers there.
Yell'd all beside—the world of life,
How is it stain'd with fear and strife!
In Reason's world what storms are rife,
What passions range and glare!

But cher'ful and unchang'd the while
Ye first and perfect form ye show,
The same that won Eve's untraced smile
In the world's opening glow.
The stars of heaven a course are taught
Too high above our human thought:
Ye may be found if ye are sought,
And as we gaze, we know.

Ye dwell beside our paths and homes,
Our paths of sin, our homes of sorrow,
And guilty man, where'er he roams,
Your innocent mirth may borrow.
The birds of air before ye fleet,
They cannot brook our shadows cast—
But we may taste your solace sweet,
And some agree to-morrow.

Ye fearless in your nests abide—
Nor may we scorn, too proudly wise,
Your silent lessons, unadorned
By all but lowly eyes:
For ye could draw th' admiring gaze
Of Him who worlds and hearts surveys:
Your order, wind, your fragrant maze,
He taught us how to prize.

Ye felt your Maker's smile that hour,
As when the peac'd and own'd you good;
His "sing on earth's primal bower,
Ye it all renew."
What care ye now, if winter's storm
Sweep ruthless o'er each silken form?
Christ's blessing at your heart is warm,
Ye fear no vexing mood.

Alas! of thousand hosoms kind,
That daily court you and caress,
How few the happy secret find
Of your calm loveliness!
"Live for to-day! to-morrow's light
To-morrow's cares shall bring to sight,
"Go sleep like closing flowers at night,
"And Heaven thy morn will bless."

—Keller's Christian Year.

Religious Miscellany.

THE APOSTLE PAUL IN COMMON LIFE.

We hear much in the present day about religious and secular education; but, even for the present life, the Bible is the best book after all. No situation in which man can be placed, either collectively or individually, is omitted in its pregnant pages; for every such situation we may find an example, a promise, or a warning. The famine and the pestilence are there; the battle and the tempest are there, the journey by land and the voyage by sea; the siege and the ambush; the furious mob and the grand assembly; the shout of victory and the wail of defeat. Every incident in domestic life is there; the marriage and the funeral; the joy for a first-born son, and the grief at parting with an aged parent; the sweets of home-bred affection; the horrors of fraternal discord; the mortification of the proud; and the calm enjoyments of the humble.

It is our intention, in the present paper, to select a few incidents in the life of the Apostle Paul, for the purpose of showing his manly and practical common-sense in business and intercourse of life. We do not mean to expatiate on his apostleship, which he received not from man, nor by the will of man, nor on those letters of theology and morals which take

their place among the "other Scriptures,"—an inheritance forever to the Church and mankind, far more precious than all that Greece could boast as entitled to that distinction. Nor shall we dwell on any of those orations in the Acts, where he adapts his sentiments and language with such manly dignity and propriety to the character and circumstances of his hearers. A few transactions and advices, not particularly prominent in his history, but well worth attending to, are the following:

I.—There was a sect called Hellenists among the ancients by the name of Stoics, whose pretensions to wisdom and virtue were of the loftiest character.—"Their wise man was not only a man, but equal to the gods. They counted virtue the only good, and vice the only evil; outward things they reckoned to be quite indifferent. They spoke loftily concerning oppression: neither pain, nor exile, nor imprisonment, nor death, made any impression on them—*Neque mors neque vincula terrent*. On one occasion, St. Paul showed that he had no sympathy for such transcendental apathy. When he wished the highest good for those royal and august personages, before whom he was pleading his own and his Master's cause, he said: "I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether, such as I am, *except these bonds*."

II.—Epaphroditus, one of the apostle's companions in his travels and preaching of the gospel, had been dangerously ill, and the knowledge of this had occasioned great sorrow in the hearts of his Christian friends at Philippi. No doubt they were persuaded, that to their pious friend death was but the entrance into life eternal. St. Paul had told them, in this very letter, that to himself to live was Christ, and to die was gain; yet, still, the universal feeling of human nature is, that when our friends are sick, we should like them to recover, and accordingly, we find the great apostle speaks as a plain, everyday man, when he says, "Indeed he was sick, nigh unto death; but God had mercy on him, and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow."

III.—At Philippi, St. Paul and his companion, Silas, had been shamefully treated, scourged with many stripes, and their feet made fast in the stocks. There, in the inner prison, they sang praises to God; and God by His mighty power interposed in their behalf, loosened the bands of every prisoner, and made their keeper a trophy of redeeming grace. The magistrates, who had so barbarously misused them, whether from some misgivings as to their own proceedings, or terrified by the transactions of the night, sent a message by their factors in the morning to let them go. Their new convert no doubt completely softened in temper by his wondrous change, was delighted to give them tidings of their delivery, and to bid them go in peace. But Christian as he was, the apostle felt as a man; he had been unjustly handled, and he would not sneak away like a craven felon. "They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? Nay, verily, but let them come themselves and fetch us out." And they did come, and had to own themselves in the power of those whom they had insulted; they besought them and brought them out.

IV.—A vexatious persecution, on the part of the Jews, had subjected the apostle to much inconvenience, and even to imminent danger of his life, both from popular tumult and from a conspiracy for his assassination; and although not quite in a dungeon or in the stocks, the time-serving and bribe-loving provincial magistrates had kept him a prisoner for more than two years, so that he determined at length to endeavour to obtain justice from the higher powers. We can easily imagine some zealous countryman of his own attempting to dissuade him from this step. Would you sanction by your acknowledgment of his authority the usurpation of the emperor over the land of our fathers, or plead your cause before a tyrant infamous for every crime, and stained with innocent blood? I find, might the apostle say, I find in the Providence of Him who gives the kingdom to whom he will, that this man has power over the Roman world; I inquire not how he got that power, nor with what crimes he is chargeable;

I can be actually can control all inferior judges; "I fly from petty tyrants to the throne;" *I appeal unto Cæsar*."

V.—We have little idea in our times and in countries professing christianity, what difficulties beset the hourly path of the first converts from heathenism. Living in cities wholly given to idolatry, surrounded by temples of surpassing beauty, lured on every hand to practice rites well adapted to please the sensual appetites of fallen man; where the ox, as Gibbon says with great gloom, at once appeased the gods, and furnished a supper for their joyous votaries, it was no easy matter for the newly-enlightened converts to keep themselves unspotted from the world. If they ate things offered to idols, it was equivalent to owning their existence and their sacredness, and thus denying the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he had sent. We can suppose the weak and the timid telling them their need of the utmost circumspection, that it was their duty to abstain from the appearance of evil, and not to eat a morsel of meat, till they had inquired diligently whether it was in any way connected with an idol. No one knew better than St. Paul, what a precious jewel a tender conscience is: in this he exercised himself "to maintain a conscience void of offence towards God and men." But he did not perplex himself with needless scruples, nor did he lay undue burden on his beloved converts. Even in the licentious Corinth itself, he tells them to go to the public market, eat what is sold there, asking no questions, for conscience sake.

It would not be difficult to select, from the sayings and doings of the great apostle, many more instances of his noble, manly, practical character. No monkishness or misanthropy is to be found in him. A heart burning with zeal for the eternal interest of his fellow creatures, was united with a frankness and common sense view of common things, that would have made him a delightful companion, even if he had never travelled beyond his own street or village. The inference we wish to be drawn from this paper, by our readers, and especially by our young friends is this, that it is as true now as of old, that God's word is the best lamp unto their feet, and the best light unto their path; that its hidden treasures will reward all their search; that it should be read and read, and read again, till it truly becomes the engraved word, which is not only able to save your souls, but to teach them to order the affairs of this life with discretion.—*Excelsior*.

"I DO NOT LIKE THE PREACHER."—But you should not attend church, merely to hear the preacher, for Christ says that "His house is a house of prayer," and prayer is as superior in importance to preaching, as receiving a blessing is to hearing it. This going to hear the preacher, is likely to prove a species of man-worship, and the devotee will at length think heaven depends on some particular mortal, who would doubtless do well if not spoiled by such flattery. The effect of this is seen in some congregations that do not like any one to take their pastor's place for a Sunday, and some pastors so yield to this feeling, that they hesitate in extending the courtesy of an invitation to their brother ministers. A lady some years ago, on her pastor's going to a neighbouring city, actually followed him to hear his sermon, and thus avoid the substitute he had provided. But while such persons cannot tolerate other pastors than their own, some do not like their own preacher. What has yours done that you dislike him? Why, perhaps nothing in particular,—or some one has slandered him, or he has plainly told the impatient that they must repent or perish, or he has reproved kindly one of his flock who was openly breaking the promises of confirmation, or he did not know immediately when Mrs. S was taken sick, and consequently did not go until sent for, or he does not visit Mr. B. every week, sick or well, or he visits Mrs. C. more than Mrs. D., or his wife does not please every body.

But perhaps you like the man well enough, but do not like his sermons. Do they contain false doctrine, contrary to the Church's understanding of Holy Scripture? "No! but he is so cold, and does so little good; crowds do not flock to hear him as they do to hear Mr. —;" that is, he does not scream as though his people were deaf, nor does he say things which suppose his people are wanting in com-