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CALENDAR—AUGUST.

- 1. Tenth Sunday after Trinity.
8. Eleventh Sunday after Trinity.
15. Twelfth Sunday after Trinity.
22. Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity.
29. Festival of St. Bartholomew.
24. Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

We have this week sent out all accounts for Subscriptions due to 31st December next, and we have to request that remittances will be made without delay, in registered letters, addressed

TO THE PROPRIETOR, "Church Observer," Montreal.

Acknowledgments of which will be made in due course.

In requesting payment for the "Observer" to the end of the present year we would remind subscribers, that the terms of payment are "in advance." Those, therefore, who have not yet paid for the year 1869, have, in reality, been receiving the paper during the past eight months on credit, and are now only asked to pay for the next four months in advance.

Church Observer.

"One Faith;—One Lord;—One Baptism." MONTREAL, 25th AUGUST, 1869.

CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE.

In two or three numbers, a few weeks ago, we made some remarks upon the influence of Christians. We propose to-day bringing those remarks to a close. We all possess, in some degree, the influence spoken of. The poorest have those who trust them implicitly, and who would be fearfully injured in their moral and spiritual nature by error or misdoing. But there are those who wield tremendous power for good or evil. We do not now speak of those who hold the ministerial office,—God only knows how we shrink and tremble before its awful responsibilities, and cry to Him, who alone is our sufficiency. We speak rather of that influence which ministers share with people in the social relations of life. We, as parents, masters, and mistresses, could hardly be more the recipients of the faith and trust of those around us, as guides and models, if we were messengers from heaven; and those who thus trust us will have their whole life, and, it may be, their eternity, affected by what those are to whom they look with so much affection and admiration. And there are some who may number by hundreds the hearts that thus look up to them. Is there not thus a noble career opened up to believers? Is it not worthy a

Christian's energies to be a leader of hundreds of immortal souls?—to be a leader on and up, from glory to glory, in the march and conflict against evil and the spirits of evil, and, onward still, into the city of the living God,—the Heavenly Jerusalem? Surely Christians should not refuse this high privilege, this noble heritage, this glorious responsibility; and surely they should pray for that grace which is abundantly given, that they may be able to stand in the day of trial, to triumph in the hour of conflict, and that they may be crowned in the day of the Lord's appearing.

We would remind our fellow-Christians that though we may not make souls to offend, by calling upon them to dishonor God, in giving the Sunday to secular employments, or in doing a dishonest action, or speaking a lying word for our advantage or convenience, yet we can retard their progress and hinder them by an indifference to their spiritual well-being, and, still more, by a word that throws slight upon religion, and by a conduct that seems to regard sin as a light thing, and godliness as a mere matter of convenience.

In the near relations of life, moment after moment, by a mysterious law, we are receiving lasting impressions for good or for evil. We have known, for example, a wife or a husband absent from the table of the Lord, waiting for the undecided one, and who knows what is lost? We have known children careless and undevotional, and inattentive in the sanctuary, whose conduct could be traced to the example of parents and elder relations; and who can tell what barriers they thus may have been to salvation?

May our good and gracious Father give us grace and wisdom, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to help and bless all those, especially, to whom affection makes us any way influential.

IRELAND PACIFIED!

One of the many arguments confidently brought forward by the advocates of Gladstone's spoliation bill, was, that relieving the Catholics of Ireland of the payment of the Tithe Rent charge would pacify that quiet and troublesome portion of the British Dominions; and although it had been clearly proved that no cause of complaint of the kind had existence, save in the views of men who would not see, and the utterance of demagogues to whom lies are more natural than truths, still the pseudo argument was urged, and now is the time to test its value. The only period in which tithes caused disturbance in Ireland, to any alarming or wide extent, was about fifty years back, when large mobs assembled at various places, chiefly in Kilkenny and Tipperary, Carlow and Cork counties, under the pretence of playing hurling matches (the national game of Ireland, as Lacrosse is of Canada, and much like it), and hence the anti-tithe rioters were called hurlers. At that time the tithes were paid by the holders or tenants of the land, (unless a landed proprietor cultivated his own land he paid no tithes), and a person employed by the rector of each parish valued the growing crops on all the farms, small and large, and fixed the sum to be paid by each farmer to the clergyman; which practise, as might have been expected, caused constant conflicts between the valuator and farmers, and the parson and the payers of tithe. Lord Stanley, now the Earl of Derby, having been chief secretary for Ireland, passed a bill in Parliament removing the payment from the occupying tenant to the land owner, had all the lands valued, (not the crops, but the land) and made the landlord responsible to the clergyman for the tithe of all his land, giving 25 per cent. as compensation for the change; which measure, although it deducted 25 per cent. from the rector's income, was well received by all parties interested; and worked well until the cry was lately raised against any state support for the Church in Ireland; it being generally admitted that landlords who had received estates subject to this charge had no cause of complaint, and the tenants having nothing whatever to do with tithes!

However, Fenianism, Romanism, and Radicalism, the heads of the political Cerberus growled, and were set on to growl by demagogues and political incendiaries (we refer our readers to the letter of Jeremiah Vaughan, P.P., in another column, as a specimen), and the endowment of the Irish Church was given by Gladstone to the noisy three headed dog to let him pass safely into power;

while he boasted he would satisfy the animal, so that, he would be quiet in future. If he believed the abolition of rent charge would satisfy "all Ireland" he must have been "more fool than knave," (and he must be either,) for bold boy or snarling dog has never been permanently quieted by concessions, as the present state of Ireland exemplifies, where Fenians boast of their victory, and loudly declare the have only frightened England into giving a small instalment of their demands, where "agrarian crime seems to have received a new impetus." (see Daily Witness, Aug. 15th) and where tenants are more than ever engaged in the pleasant sport of shooting landlords.

Gladstone on the Church, and Bright on the land question, have done more to engender, strife, and create disaffection in Ireland, than the power of any government can remedy, and, having yielded so much to the popular cry, must yield more: the former has struck a deadly blow at true religion. Ireland, which we believe to be Heaven's own penitentiary; and the latter has encouraged the blood-stained hostility of tenants against landlords; and "the end is not by and by." We believe truth will prevail, but its success is not aided, but opposed by such men as Bright and Gladstone, and shall be caused by the power of Him who can bring good out of evil, make "the wrath of men to praise him," and cause "all things to work together, for good to them that love Him."

Correspondence.

We are not responsible for any opinion expressed by our correspondents.

DROWSY SERMONS.

To the Editor of the Church Observer: DEAR SIR,—It yet remains a mystery to my mind how a church which retains such an inspiring liturgy could have such drowsy preaching—how men could go through with the "Te Deum," with the "Gloria in Excelsis," without one thrill of inspiration, or one lift above the dust of earth, and after uttering words which we would think might warm the frozen hearts of the very dead, settle sleepily down into the quietest common-places?

This passage occurs in Mrs. H. B. Stowe's last novel, "Oldtown Folks," and hard as it may appear, we must say it is for the most part correct as regards the pulpit oratory of our church. On all sides the complaint is heard that our church is dead, cold and formal—that there seems to be no vitality whatever in her midst. It is said this state of apathy arises either from the indifferent, listless style adopted by the majority of her ministers in preaching, or from the attention paid by others of them to the minor matters of detail in her services, to the neglect of those which are far more important. In too many instances these assertions are, we fear, well grounded. It is a fault equally to be deplored that our ministers are not sufficiently in earnest in dealing with the immortal souls committed to their charge.

The people do not require so much, great learning to be displayed in sermons, as they do plain talking, accompanied with downright sober earnestness. The secret of the success of the Plymouth Brethren—of whom so much has been said of late—is that those who are their leaders, in expounding the Scriptures, employ simple language, and give people the impression at once that they believe every word they are saying, and desire to do those they address all the good they can. This imparts weight to their preaching, and it has done not a little in drawing off members of our church to their ranks. It would be well for our clergymen everywhere to strive and possess the same power.

It does not follow that a man to be in earnest should exhibit any extraordinary gestures in the pulpit, or that he speak in an unnaturally loud voice; and yet many think this is what they are required to do, if they would appear in earnest. Let each minister go into his pulpit feeling that he is about to deliver a message from God—to point men to heaven—let him but realize the great responsibility attached to his office—let him, each time he rises before his congregation, "Preach as though he never shall preach again, and as a dying man to dying men;" And he will soon discover what is meant by earnestness. Whatever action comes naturally, let him use it, and it will not be out of place. Anything studied in the art of delivery destroys the effect of the most excellent sermon. There is nothing, perhaps, more adverse to the usefulness of our clergymen than the absurd ideas they have formed on what is clerically earnest in the pulpit. The dread of being considered excited has caused many a man to deliver his sermon in the most sleepy, humdrum manner. "Rather," said a friend of Dean Ramsay, as he tells us in "Pulpit Talk," "than see you dull and common-place, I would see you bordering on the eccentric and startling." It is time all these petty, stupid conventionalities should be thrown aside. Let clergymen but speak and act from their hearts un mindful of self, and God will bless and honour their labours. Let no man be afraid to declare the truth with decided boldness. There is great need in this age of this being done—that the "trumpet should give no uncertain

sound;" and even though to some what he says may be very unpalatable, yet they cannot fail to admire and respect him.

If our clergymen would deal more farvently than they do with their hearers—speak to them as one man to another in all kindness and earnestness—the charge of dullness, which Sydney Smith said "he thought in a sermon was the sin against the Holy Ghost," would not be brought as often as it is against them.

There is much room for improvement in sermons, and considering their vast importance in moulding men for eternity, it surely becomes the duty of every faithful ambassador of Christ to pray that the Holy Spirit may enable him to discover what he most requires to make him more useful in building up the Church of God, and to fill him with zeal and warmth in doing his Master's Work.

Yours, W. C.

To the Editor of the Church Observer:

Sir,—In looking over your paper of the 11th instant, I observed in a letter from "Episcopalian," the following quotation, in which he describes a scene which took place at London Bridge, "much more like an Irish election row than a religious assembly."

Why the writer should particularize that unfortunate land, (which at the present time is about to suffer from the grievance of Mr. Gladstone's Bill,) I am at a loss to understand.

"They who live in glass-houses should not throw stones." Is "Episcopalian" an Englishman or Canadian? If the former, I refer him to some of the late English "election rows"; also a row which took place at "Mold," in Denbighshire. And if a Canadian, we have not so far advanced beyond the threshold of youth, that we should forget the late election riots of our Canadian home.

I do not like holding my peace, when I hear the land of my birth traduced. England, I claim as my mother country, but Ireland, as the spot of my birth. Were it not for Mr. Gladstone's Bill, I would pray they might be long united.

I do not like a "wordy war," through the medium of a newspaper, but, (that Irish but,) my Irish blood runs counter, when she is unfairly assailed.

Apologizing for taking up so much space, and not desiring to appear under a cloak.

I remain, yours truly, S. THOMPSON.

Montreal, Aug. 17th, 1869.

THE TRUE CROSS AND THE CRUCIFIX.

To the Editor of the Church Observer:

Sir,—Will you kindly insert in your valuable paper the following extract, which I think is well suited to the spirit of the times.

Yours truly, W. H. HOWITT.

NEW YORK, Aug. 1st, 1869.

The instrument of our Redeemer's sufferings is often metonymically used in Holy Scripture to signify the doctrine connected with those sufferings; and by "the Cross of Christ" and "the preaching of the Cross," St. Paul expresses, in a pregnant and compendious way, the salvation wrought upon that Cross. Indeed, we may go further, and say that, under this laconic phrase, "the Cross of Christ," is briefly and sententially expressed by the apostle the whole system of the gospel. Thus by the phrase of "enemies of the Cross of Christ," we must clearly understand him to denote the enemies of Christianity itself. For as by the metonymy of "the sword" is expressed, shortly and compendiously, all the operations and implements of war; so, by the parallel metonymy of "the Cross," is as briefly and compendiously expressed by Holy Scripture the whole religion of the gospel. And what are we to infer from the use of such a metonymy? Surely this, that the great sacrifice performed upon the Cross where Jesus died is the grand central fact of our religion—the sun of the whole system; from which all its other doctrines, and its other truths, are radiations. Christianity is full of gracious invitations, full of "exceeding great and precious promises;" but they all issue, directly and exclusively, from the work accomplished on the Cross. Christianity has a multitude of holy truths and lessons, of holy precepts and commandments; but the reception of those truths, and the obedience to those precepts and commandments, must be grounded on the motives which the Cross of Christ supplies. Every service, to be welcome, and every duty, to satisfy God's eye, must take, as it were, its colour and complexion from the precious blood of Him who died upon the Cross. Its motive must be love, inspired by a reception and enjoyment of a crucified Redeemer's benefits, and the stains and defects of its performance must be bathed, as it were, in "the blood of the Cross," to be white and clean in the Lord's sight.

The Cross—understood in this metonymical sense—must be the banner constantly held up by every faithful minister. He must, in this sense, never preach without the Cross, never visit his people, but with the Cross in his right hand. He must carry the Cross about with him in all his ministrations. It must be paramount in all his sermons. He must be determined not to know anything among his people save "Jesus Christ, and him crucified." God forbid that he should glory, except as the blessed apostle to the Gentiles, "in the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, whereby the world is crucified unto him, and he unto the world." "The preaching of the Cross" may be to them that perish "foolishness;" it may be revolting to the taste of our modern philosophical divines; but "unto them which are saved it is the power of God;" and it is only as Jesus Christ is "evidently set forth crucified,"

pictured, as it were, "before the eyes," as he was preached by Paul to the Galatians, that men can be brought, under God's blessing, to "obey the truth."

But there is a "mystery of iniquity;" and that term, which seems to be applied to the manoeuvres of Satan with reference to Christianity, might lead us to expect some peculiarly deep schemes for overthrowing our religion. Now, certainly, it is hard to conceive of any subtler measure for the purpose, than the employment of the very facts and ordinances of our Christianity, as the artillery for battering its walls. How glorious, to genuine believers in the gospel of Christ Jesus, are the associations connected with the Cross! Our hopes are clustered at the foot of it; they all spring out of the act performed upon the wood of Calvary. What more subtle, therefore, than by the Cross to overthrow the Cross—to destroy the doctrine of a crucified Redeemer, by the means of the very instrument on which it was effected! Yet this has been the policy, the too successful policy of Satan. With all the ingenuity of diabolical manoeuvre, he has availed himself of the fact, that Jesus hung upon a cross, to palm thereby upon the visible professing church a system of idolatry. It was natural that, by thinking much of Christ, and him crucified, and of the precious benefits resulting, Christians should think much also of the Cross; that the very sign and figure of it should be frequently before their mental eye; that they should be led even to represent it, in a manner, to their eye of sense. Yet this, under the subtle management of Satan, was the plausible, though apparently devotional commencement of a huge abomination. By a process imperceptible, an act which in the first instance, was innocent of evil, grew into superstition, and from superstition rose into the dimensions of idolatry.

It would be difficult, probably, to ascertain the precise time when the crossing of the forehead, as an outward sign of inward faith, began to be considered as a charm; certainly, by the time of Jerome and Prudentius, this was an opinion much in vogue, for we are told, in Jerome's prose, that "we must fortify our forehead with the frequent signing of the cross, lest the destroyer of Egypt may find a place in us." (Ep. xvii, ad demet.) And we are instructive by the muse of Prudentius:—

"Fac, cum, vocante somno, Castum petis cubile, Frontem, locumque cordis Crucis signa signes, Crux pellit omne crimem; Fugiant crucem tenebras, Tali dicata signo, Mens fluctuare nescit."

But the Cross has been exhibited in a more material and palpable manner than by signs; it has been a long step from the first rude etching of its figure in the catacombs of ancient Rome, where it forms the simplest possible memorial of the faith of early martyrs, to those elaborated crucifixes which modern Rome and all her votaries adore. And here, perhaps, we might almost fix upon the date when what seemed innocent before began to take the form of the grossest superstition. And the date would be the all-important epoch in the history of superstition, which is technically called "The invention of the Cross,"—in plain words, the alleged discovery of the true Cross by Helena the Empress. An invention indeed, in the more ordinary acceptation of the word. The story, with more or less of its miraculous adjuncts, is to be found in three writers of Patriotic eminence—Ambrose, Socrates, and Paulinus. By each of these we are assured that the true Cross was disinterred under the auspices of Helena, and in connection with the two crosses of the malefactors. They vary, however not a little as to the mode in which the cross of our Redeemer was distinguished from the other two. If we are to credit Ambrose, there was no difficulty in the matter, for Pilate's title was still extant; but if we are to credit Paulinus or Socrates, we must believe that the knot was only solved by an appeal to miracle. But here again, as to the magnitude of the miracle resorted to, we must choose between the Bishop of Nola, and the ecclesiastical historian; for, according to Paulinus, the crosses were applied to a dead body, and the true one was immediately distinguished by its quickening the corpse; whereas, according to the more modern narrative of Socrates, a dying person was recovered, not a dead one brought to life. But howsoever the true cross was ascertained, and whensoever (for Rome's legendary writers are not agreed as to the time) this invention gave no little impetus to the trade of superstition, and has proved an important item in the Pope's revenue. Various have been the stories set afloat as to the appropriation of the nails by which this invented cross was still bedusted. Believe Ambrose, and a bridle was manufactured out of one to adorn the horse of Constantine; the second was interwoven in his diadem; the third and fourth were kept by Helena herself, the one for show and the other for devotion. Rely, however, on Socrates and Theodoret, and then you must believe that the emperor engrossed the whole; and that not his bridle only, but his helmet also, was consecrated by these nails. Believe another writer still, and he assures you that one of these four holy nails was cast into the Adriatic to assuage the fierceness of its storms. As for the wood of the true cross, its splinters were soon multiplied to an extent which made it necessary, even in the days of Paulinus, to explain why the fragments put together would far outstrip in size any cross that is conceivable; and he does so in a way that can hardly fail to remind us of the "old wives' fables" of St. Paul. For the wood, as he would have us to

"Take heed, when sleep invites you to your bed of purity, to sign your forehead and your breast with the figure of the Cross. The Cross expels all crime. Darkness flies the Cross. The mind which is consecrated by such a sign as this, knows not what it is to aver." (Hymnus ante Somnum.)