

The Church Guardian

— EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR: —

L. H. DAVIDSON, D.C.L., MONTREAL.

— ASSOCIATE EDITORS: —

REV. H. W. NYE, M.A., Rector, Bedford, P.Q. REV. EDWYN S. W. PENTREATH, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Address Correspondence and Communications to the Editor, P.O. Box 564. Exchanges to P.O. Box 1950. For Business announcements See page 14.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

* SUBSCRIBERS IN ARREARS are respectfully requested to remit at their earliest convenience. The very low price at which the paper is published renders necessary a rigid enforcement of the rule of payment in advance. The label gives the date of expiration.

Will Subscribers please examine Label, and REMIT PROMPTLY!

CALENDAR FOR SEPTEMBER.

SEPT. 6th—14th Sunday after Trinity.

" 13th—15th Sunday after Trinity.

[NOTICE OF EMBER DAYS.]

" 16th—Ember Day.

" 18th—Ember Day.

" 19th—Ember Day.

" 20th—18th Sunday after Trinity.

" 21st—St. Matthew, Ap. E.M.

" 27th—17th Sunday after Trinity.

" 29th—St. Michael and All Angels.

CHRISTIANITY AND WOMAN.

It is hard for us in this nineteenth century of the Christian Era to realize the marvellous change which Christianity has effected in the position of Woman. The Master found woman deposed from her rightful place in society. The man had suffered not less than the woman by this her humiliation. Jew and Gentile had conspired together to bring about this disastrous result. The Hebrew Rabbi and the Greek philosopher alike had gone astray. It is the recorded saying of a famous Jewish doctor that the words of the law were better burned than committed to the keeping of woman. It is an opinion ascribed to the most famous Athenian statesman, that woman had then achieved her highest glory when her name was heard amongst men least, either for virtue or for reproach. A moral resurrection was needed for womanhood. It might seem to the looker-on like a social death, from which there was no awakening, but it was only the suspension of her proper faculties and opportunities, a long sleep, from which a revival must come sooner or later. It was for Christ, and Christ alone, to open the door of her sepulchral prison, and resuscitate her dormant life, and restore her to her proper place in society. We ourselves are so familiar with the results, the position of woman is so fully recognized by us, it is bearing such abundant fruit every day, that we are apt to overlook the magnitude of the change itself. It is only when we turn to the Harem and the Zenana that we learn to estimate what the Gospel has achieved, and has still to achieve, in the emancipation of woman and her restitution to her lawful status in the social order. To ourselves the large place which woman occupies in the Gospel and in the early Apostolic history seems only natural. To contemporaries it must have appeared in the light of a social revolution. The very

opening of the Gospel is charged with Divine messages communicated to us through women—Mary, Elizabeth, Anna; women attend our Lord everywhere during His earthly ministry. The sisters Martha and Mary are set before us as embodying the two contrasted types of character, the practical and the contemplative. To a woman, and to a woman alone, is given the promise of an undying hope beyond the glory of the mightiest earthly princes. Of her it is said: "Whosoever this Gospel is preached in the whole world, there shall this which this woman has done be told for a memorial of her." To a woman were spoken those gracious words of pardon, most tender and compassionate, the consolation and the stay and the hope of the penitent to the end of time: "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much." Women are the chief attendants at the Crucifixion, and the chief ministrants at the tomb. A woman is the first witness of the Resurrection, and as it was in Christ's personal ministry, so it is in all the life of the Apostolic Church. In the first gathering of the little band after the Ascension, women are found assembled with the Apostles. This is a foreshadowing of the part which they are destined to play in the subsequent history of the Church. We cast our eyes, *e. g.*, down the salutations in the Epistle to the Romans. There is Phoebe, a deaconess of the Church of Cenchrea, commended as having been the succorer of many, among others of the Apostle himself. There is Priscilla, who with her husband had laid down her neck for his life, to whom not only he himself, but all the Church of the Gentiles gave thanks. There is Mary, who bestowed much labor upon himself and others: Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labored much in the Lord. There is Persis, to whom the same testimony is borne. There is the mother of Rufus, who had also been like a mother to himself. There is Julia, and there is the sister of Nereus. A long catalogue to appear in the salutations of a single epistle.

If we turn again from the Church of which St. Paul knew least when he wrote to the Church of which he knew most, the Church at Philippi,—we find that he addresses himself first to the women who resort to the places of prayer among the individual women with whom he came in contact. At Philippi, we read of Lydia, his earliest hostess in this city, of the damsel from whom he cast out a spirit of divination, and then of Baodias and Syntyche, women who labored with him in the Gospel; and, indeed, we know more of the women of Philippi than of the men.

But it was not only this desultory, unorganized service, however frequent, however great, that women rendered to the spread of the Gospel in its earliest days. The Apostolic Church had its organized ministration of women; its order of deaconesses, its order of widows. Women had their definite plan in the ecclesiastical system of those early times, and in our own age the awakened activity of the Church is once more demanding the recognition of the female ministry. The Church, deprived of woman's ministration, is married of one of her hands. No longer she fails to employ, to organize, to consecrate to the service of Christ, the love, the sympathy, the tact, the self-devotion of women.

Hence the revival of the female diaconate, and the multiplication of sisterhoods. But these, though the most definite, are not the most extensive developments of the revival of woman's work in and for the Church. Generally, it is in the greater, less obtrusive, more homely way that she is called to test her power, certainly not less real or less beneficent, though it may be less striking, than the power of man. She is a mother in her own household, her own kindred, her own parish, her own neighborhood; the guide, the helper of men. Yes; a priestess and a prophetess to the young, the sick, the frail and erring, the poor and needy. It is the province of the Church acting by the spirit and in the name of Christ, to develop the power of woman as one of the greatest instruments which God has put into her hands for the accomplishment of her mission in the regeneration of the world.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

THE Unitarian sect, both in America and in England, is gradually declining in influence, notwithstanding its natural approximation to the Positivist form of scepticism. One of its leading lights, Col. Higginson, declared at a meeting of the body recently held in Boston, that Unitarianism was "unmanageable" in the East, and identified with "free religion" in the West. The men in not a few places, he added, are Atheists, and the women would be but that they are women. In the same address, Mr. Higginson expressed his conviction that George Eliot, if she had ever held a dead babe in her arms, would have wanted something better to console her than the philosophy of Herbert Spencer.

THE "Kist o' Whistles" controversy is almost at an end in Scotland, and even among Irish Presbyterians the organ is beginning to have a tolerated existence. At the Assembly held in Dublin, the other day, resolutions were adopted in favor of the use of instrumental music in public worship, and declaring that any attempt to exercise discipline against those congregations that might adopt it, would be fraught with disaster to the Church. Some of the speakers spoke strongly on the subject, and one of them said that if the Assembly attempted to exercise discipline in this matter, they would *dance on the Assembly*. Happily, it is being recognized everywhere that the more pains we take in our worship, the more real worship becomes, and hence the struggle between the Puritan and the progressive parties is not likely to be of long continuance.

THE new Austrian Sunday Observance Law is very strict in its provisions. By it all labor is prohibited between the hours of 6 a.m. on Sunday and 6 a.m. on Monday. There are notable exemptions, such as domestic service, and still more notable inclusions, one of these depriving the public of their Monday morning newspaper! Coming concurrently with the German Chancellor's proposed plebiscite on Sunday labor in Germany, this remarkable movement will, we hope, exercise a beneficent influence on other countries in which efforts are being made to throw down the fences which