

The Church Times.

"Evangelical Truth--Apostolic Order."

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Calendar.

CALENDAR WITH LESSONS.

Date	Lesson	MORNING.	EVENING.
S. July 26	18an. of Titu	2 Sam. 21	John 14, 2 Sam. 24
M. 27	Jerem. 19	16; Jerem. 20	Titus 2, 3
T. 28	21	16	Philim.
W. 29	23	17	11eb. 1
T. 30	25	18	28
F. 31	27	19	28
S. Aug. 1	28	20	30

Poetry.

PRAYER FOR THE PRESENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

ISAIAH, LXIV. 1.

AWAKE, Thou Spirit, who of old
Didst fire the watchmen of the Church's youth;
Who faced the foe, unshrinking, bold,
Who witnessed day and night th' eternal Truth,
Whose voices through the world are ringing still,
And bringing hosts to know and do thy will.

Oh! that thy fire were kindled soon,
That swift from land to land its flame might leap;
LORD, give us but this priceless boon
Of faithful servants, fit for Thee to reap
The harvest of the soul, look down and view
How great the harvest, yet the labourers few.

LORD, let our earnest prayer be heard,
The prayer thy Son Himself hath bid us pray;
For lo! thy children's hearts are stirred
In every land in this our darkening day,
To cry for help with fervent soul to Thee,
O hear us, LORD, and speak: thus let it be.

Oh! haste to help ere we are lost;
Send forth Evangelists in spirit strong,
Armed with thy Word, a dauntless host,
Bold to attack the rule of ancient wrong.
And let them all the earth for Thee reclaim,
To be thy kingdom, and to know thy name.

Would there were help within our walls,
Oh! let thy promised Spirit come again,
Before whom every barrier falls,
And, ere the night, shine forth once more as then.
Oh! rend the heavens, and make thy presence felt,
The chains that bind us at thy touch would melt.

And let thy Word have speedy course,
Through every land the Truth be glorified,
Till all the heathen know its force,
And gather to thy churches far and wide;
And waken Israel from her sleep, O LORD,
Thus bless and spread the conquests of thy Word.

—*Lyra Germanica.*

Religious Miscellany.

TORONTO.

The Rev. Mr. Van Rensselaer, who was present at the late Synod of Toronto, writes warmly in the *Gospel Messenger* :—

It was most gratifying to witness the obliteration of the class feeling between the Clergy and Laity, the barrier seemed broken down under the influence of their frequent synodal meetings, and many questions which had previously been discussed under strong feeling, and with reference to the bearings on the influence of either class, were calmly settled on their just principles. The expressions of courtesy towards the clergy on the part of the laity, and vice versa, and the readiness to concede points which hitherto had been tenaciously insisted on, were most delightful tokens of the harmony and peace which Church Synods and Conventions, by the blessing of God, are producing.

It was impossible to look without the deepest interest upon the gray heads and furrowed brows of those faithful missionaries who, in the vigor of manhood, had left their home for the waste places of the Western world, and had borne the burden and heat of the day—the companions of Mountain and of Stewart.

To a stranger, it was an impressive and affecting sight to behold the venerable Bishop, now in his 80th year, and at his right, the Senior Archdeacon, the Ven. Dr. Stuart, who was ordained three years before the Bishop. They only remain of the few clergy who, in the earlier part of this century, ministered in the wilds of Upper Canada. What wonderful changes have they not witnessed! And now they have survived to see a new, and, let us fervently pray, an improved era in the Church, which their labors and self denials aided, by God's grace, to

found and nurture: May they still be kept to behold her lengthening her cords and strengthening her stakes even beyond her present borders, and at length receive the Master's approval, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant!"

He acknowledges gratefully the kindness so repeatedly and so pointedly shown to the Church of the United States:—

It was delightful to see the spirit of harmony which prevailed throughout their deliberations. Those who have dreaded discussions as the result of Church Synods, especially with the lay element introduced, would have learnt a lesson not to be forgotten. Men were there who differed widely, yet they labored together with one heart in the Church's works, and with a spirit of deference and conciliation which produced the happiest results. No questions of importance were decided in a partisan spirit, but on their real merits, and although some seemed to have an immediate bearing on the favorite views of many, these were not allowed for a moment to interfere.

The wise, firm, and temperate hand of the venerable and indefatigable Bishop was manifest in every proceeding, and the deference paid to him was universal. We hesitate not to say, that a more dignified, self controlled, serious, and laborious body cannot be found than the Synod of Toronto, nor one that better exhibits the true spirit of the Church, which is the genuine fruit of the spirit of Christ.

And most cheering and animating were the expressions of admiration, respect, and love towards our Church, uttered both by clergymen and laymen. "That Church," as a clergyman eloquently said, amid uncontrolled applause, "with the vigour of youth, with giant stride, has stepped across the continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and embraces in her arms each State, from Maine to the Gulf of Mexico."

"We must learn from you," they were continually repeating, and many were the questions we were called upon to answer about our polity and experience. And after every expression of cordial good will and fraternal affection had been exhausted, the Bishop closed the Synod with these words, which he may rest assured will be devoutly treasured by us:—"I must also notice the kindness with which our brethren in the United States have always treated us. It is not a new thing. I was treated with the same kindness in 1816. There has been a growing affection between the Mother Church and her daughter daily increasing, and we can hardly conceive the good that has been done in ameliorating the feelings of those two countries towards each other, and even in softening the horrors of war, when war has unfortunately broken out; and I hope that the same feeling will go on increasing, and that the spirit of amity growing out of this union between the Churches may extend to both countries, and that we may have no more war with each other; and that the races of the Church will continue to flourish and spread, until they are extended with their civilizing and Christianizing sway and mild rule to the Pacific Ocean."—*N. Y. Ch. Journal.*

HINTS ON PREACHING.

It is a great mistake, which many preachers fall into, (and not young preachers altogether,) to suppose that conversion will be effected by simple appeals to self-interest—exhibitions of the advantages of a religious life, or the disadvantages of its neglect. There is a condition of spirit in which such considerations may have determining weight, but they cannot possibly originate any spiritual action. Repentance springs from faith in the love of God, in Christ Jesus, and cannot result from self interest; for self interest, for the life to come, has no more holiness in it than for the present life. Faith is the spiritual life in constant exercise, and is the gift of God by belief of the truth, and Jesus is the Truth. The recurring to consequences, by way of determining the action of a wavering will, is well enough; but to arouse the will, the truth must be set before men. And there is that in the baptized which will respond, in a greater or less degree, to the manifestation of the truth. Jesus Christ is in them, "unless they be reprobate," and when He is set before them they will know and feel it, and thus, if in any way they can, will be led to repentance.

I have sometimes heard sermons of late, and from different schools of preachers, in which I have asked myself the question, "What single thought or suggestion has that sermon which can in any way profit a single soul who has heard it?" And yet there was warmth and earnestness which, in a measure redeemed it from utter condemnation. But although they knew not how little good they derived, it might be said—

"The hungry sheep looked up, and were not fed."

Preachers should have confidence in the power of the truth, set forth in the demonstration of the Spirit, to cast down strongholds and bring every thought into subjection to the obedience of Christ. I once supposed that it was good to analyze experiences and consciousness—to show men the operations of their own minds—to exhibit the rationale of religion—to answer objections, and cavillings, and attempts to remove difficulties; but I never found any edification to result from such kind of discourse. Faith is the gift of God; and faith is produced by setting forth with authority the Truth who is its object.

It is not well, either, to repeat too often the first principles. Judge Marshall, I believe, once said to a lawyer who was before the Supreme Court of the United States, recapitulating some of the first principles of law, "Sir, there are some things which this court may be presumed to understand." So in a Christian congregation it may, or should be taken for granted in general, that they understand their relation as baptized men and women—i. e., their Catechism. If they do not, let it be taught to them as plainly as possible, and then be assumed as the basis of all further exhortation and instruction. When the milk, which is suitable food for babes, is fed out continually to men, they grow weary of it—they cease to regard it with the same reverence, and they are conscious that they are not growing strong and vigorous by means of it. The doctrine of Baptism has an importance which cannot be overestimated, but when it is continually in a formal way dwelt upon, it fails to edify. The Church is to leave the principles of the doctrine of Christ and go on unto perfection—not to be continually laying again foundations, but entering into the higher truths which the initiated should understand.

A still more serious fault in preaching is to deal with the truth as if it needed to be proved to be true. The very suggestion of the possibility of the Christian faith being the subject of a doubt or needing an argument in its defence, is an absurdity.—There has been a time within the last century when there seemed to be occasion for some such discourse, but that was a time when the clergy needed the arguments almost to convince themselves, and is not to be taken as a rule of action. The theological literature of that period has no practical utility for us. It was an anomalous state of things, which was death. We have learned better things. Our work is to testify to the truth, not to treat with baptized men as if it were possible that there were no hereafter. Faith is belief of testimony, not conviction resulting from evidence, and the only condition of mind which is at all favourable to spiritual progress is that which receives the truth by faith. The Church and the Ministry in the Church is sent to "testify the Gospel of the grace of God." The word is to be uttered with authority, whether men will hear or forbear. The preacher who sets out to reason with men as to the truth or reasonableness of what is propounded to their faith shows a want of appreciation of his ministry. St. Paul "reasoned with the Jews," but it was on the basis of their own Scriptures—and the same kind of reasoning is of use now, but this is not what I now refer to. It is a process of reasoning for the truth of God upon abstract principles, apart from revelation, which, I conceive, saps the very foundations of faith. It is worse than useless. The preacher had better be silent, and "send the people away" when the prayers are done.

I might extend these remarks indefinitely, but have, perhaps, said enough on this point. It is to be regretted that public opinion exacts so much preaching from the clergy. A sermon well constructed demands a much larger amount of thinking and of feeling than from its length might be supposed, and a man's capabilities in this respect are limited. In a given time he can only produce a given amount