

The Church Times.

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Calendar.

CALENDAR WITH LESSONS.

		MORNING		EVENING	
Gen.	31	Luke	9	Gal.	2
Mat.	23	John	8	John	8
Mat.	24	John	9	John	9
Mat.	25	John	10	John	10
Mat.	26	John	11	John	11
Mat.	27	John	12	John	12
Mat.	28	John	13	John	13
Mat.	29	John	14	John	14
Mat.	30	John	15	John	15
Mat.	31	John	16	John	16
Mat.	1	John	17	John	17
Mat.	2	John	18	John	18
Mat.	3	John	19	John	19
Mat.	4	John	20	John	20
Mat.	5	John	21	John	21
Mat.	6	John	22	John	22
Mat.	7	John	23	John	23
Mat.	8	John	24	John	24
Mat.	9	John	25	John	25
Mat.	10	John	26	John	26
Mat.	11	John	27	John	27
Mat.	12	John	28	John	28
Mat.	13	John	29	John	29
Mat.	14	John	30	John	30
Mat.	15	John	31	John	31

* The Athanasian Creed to be used.

Religious Miscellany.

CHINA.

The usual objection of the Chinese against Christianity has been, that it is the religion of foreigners. The insurgent edicts reply to this taunt by saying that China once acknowledged the God of Israel, and that when the Chinese saw God, they glorified him not as God, nor as God in their knowledge: (Romans i. 21.)

Some almost say erroneously, that to worship the great God (Shang-Ti) is to imitate foreigners; and remembering that China has her histories, which are open to investigation. From the time of Pwan-ku (the first man of whom the Chinese speak) down to the period of the three dynasties, both princes and people honoured and worshipped the great God.

The fact is, that, according to the histories of the Chinese and foreign nations, the important part of worshipping the great God, in the early ages of the world, several thousand years ago, was alike practised both by Chinese and foreigners. But the foreign nations in the west have practised this down to the present time, while the Chinese only began to do so in the last century, since the time they have erroneously followed the devil's path, and allowed themselves to be deceived by the lies of Babel. Now, however, the great God, in His compassion to the children of men, has displayed His great power, and delivered men from the bondage of the evil one, causing them to retrace their steps, and again to practise the great duty which was performed of old.

But strange customs and superstitious rites have been reported as observed by these imperfectly-converted men. Apparently borrowing the institutions of the bread from the Jewish tabernacle, or offering to the service of the true God their former modes of honouring their false gods—they make offerings of food before each of the Three Persons of the Trinity. There occur in their published books statements of a personal communication with the Almighty, and claims of a now and special revelation, which may render the future course of the foreign missionary instructors one of difficult and dangerous. With all due abatements on account of the suspicious channel of hostile authorities through which many of their excesses have been reported, they nevertheless appear to pursue their Tartar operations with all the sanguinary destruction which was practised by the Israelites under Jehu of old, and the associated executors of God's judicial wrath, on the nations of Canaan.

The waters of the Yang-tze-keang have floated in their bosom the scattered and drifted wrecks of the idols of broken idols. The temples have been demolished, the emblems of superstition have been destroyed, and, in cases of resistance, the priests have been put to the sword. The first principles of civil liberty, freedom, and of constitutional Government have yet to be imbibed from the same fountain- whence they gained their knowledge of the prominent truths of the Bible. The national policy of China seems as yet to have received no benefit; and, like the Israelitish monarchs of old, the great chiefs appear to have a plurality of wives. To make an external submission to Christianity a mark of adherence to their cause; and all the consequences of such a compulsory profession expected to prevail in the hypocrisy of fanaticism among their multitude. The various and striking observables in their books, and the great pretensions proclaimed in some of their

* Concluded from last week.

edicts, lead to the conclusion that probably two classes of Christian professors are to be found in the movement—some enthusiasts, on the one hand, impelled by a conviction of their divine mission to extirpate false religion from the empire; and political adventurers, on the other hand, less palpably under the influence of religious motives, and willing to employ the arts of knavery, or the pious frauds of a middle-age Christianity, for overawing the multitude and banishing treachery from the host. Many facts however, which have been ascertained respecting them, exclude the supposition that such adherents as the latter class form a general specimen of the religious character of the insurgents. The lawless rabble of members of the Triad Society—who have recently risen against the local authorities and captured the cities of Shanghai and Amoy, and whom we have seen to be addicted to the practices of idol-worship and opium-smoking—are in no way to be confounded or identified with the character and cause of Thae-ping-wang. They have endeavoured to conciliate foreigners in this city by hoisting the flag of Thae-ping-wang, and by issuing a copy of one of his religious proclamations. But it is a mere device intended to excite foreign sympathy.

A recent visitor, an American medical missionary, relates of the insurgent forces within the city of Chin-keang, that among them the Sabbath was kept holy—[although, by an astronomical error in their calendar, they kept as such the seventh, instead of the first, day of the week]—public religious services were regularly held—appointed officers, like Cromwell's generals of old, preaching to the troops—and the general signs of order, morality, and decorum prevailed. At each dawn of day, the rebel garrison assembled for prayer in the various military guard-houses; and there, to the sound of martial music, they sung hymns, chants, and doxologies to the Trinity, all kneeling devoutly in prayer to the Almighty. Could we hope that even a small portion of this vast multitude operates as a leaven of religious sincerity to give a Christian character to the general mass, it would be a spectacle partaking of the sublime, to witness tens of thousands of native patriots banded together for a great political and religious end, and, whose a little while ago idolatry reigned uncontrolled, to hear doxologies of praise and hymns of prayer ascending to the one true God through one Saviour of mankind.

How long the true character of this movement will be open to a closer view. In the mean time, we judge only from published documents and authenticated facts; and such a mingled aspect leaves opposite impressions on the mind—much that is hopeful combined with not a little that is dubious and unsound. While there is much that should render us indisposed to raise unduly the hopes of the Christian Church at home—to sound the notes of premature triumph—or to identify the continued stability of Protestant missions with the fortunes of the Thae-ping Dynasty; we may leave both sides of the picture—its lights and shadows—its bright colours and its sombre hues—its hopeful features and its dangerous aspects—to the careful, observing mind; promising only, that it requires the powers of a more than human foresight—it belongs only to the secret counsels of Him whose overruling Providence will assuredly direct the result—to know and to predict in which direction the religious bearings of this question may terminate. The mere political problem seems likely soon to be solved; and the dynasty of the Manchow Tartars is apparently falling or fallen to rise no more.

News Department.

THE BOURBON-ORLEANS CONSPIRACY.—A Remarkable letter addressed by the Duchess of Orleans to the Duke of Nemours, eldest surviving son of Louis Philippe, has appeared in the public papers.—It is French, but “done into English” runs thus:—“Eisenach, Dec. 10, 1853. My royal and dear brother-in-law—I have received your last despatch, by which you engage me to enter ‘frankly’ into ‘the fusion’ which you have concluded by your visit to Frohsdorf. If I were to enter, it would assuredly be ‘frankly,’ and I could wish, on the principle of peace which is the basis of the Christian Religion, to

immediately adhere to the proposal which you now address to me with so much urgency; but the same motives which prohibited my consent when this question was debated in the presence of our august and very dear mother, at Claremont, still necessarily influence me to persevere in my reflections, and to delay my entry, or rather that of my son, into this union. I will once more explain myself, and that as clearly as possible. I am not ignorant, my dear brother-in-law, that you, as well as others, will tax me with obstinacy. If the question, indeed, was mere personal to myself—If it only regarded the peace of a family—I would join with you heartily. I have not sown discord, and therefore would it be easy for me to co-operate in establishing peace. But it is the sacred rights of my sons that are in question. They are orphans. They have me alone for their support; and by defending their rights, as far as may be, I defend in them the principle of elective royalty which issues from the revolution of 1830—a principle which was the guide of Ferdinand, my poor husband, whose memory will always be dear to me, and for the maintenance of which he knew how to conciliate the opinions of the great majority of the French. To enter into this union, this political compact, is nothing else but to fully and entirely recognize the principle of legitimacy; and whatever respect I may individually profess, and even by right of my birth, for this principle, it is impossible that I should consequently forget the circumstances under the influence of which your father became King, and under which also I, a woman, braving all dangers of a momentary state of popular excitement, dared to present myself within the Chamber of Deputies to claim the throne which I had dreamed of for my son, and—what do I say?—which I dream of for him still. Men, people, may change. Providence, impenetrable, reveals the hour of trial His will and His eternal justice, written down before time on his golden page. In Providence I have faith. Providence will repair the wrongs which I have undergone—which we have undergone—without any fault on our side.

“HELENE, DUCHESS D'ORLEANS.”

In conclusion, we may remark that the letter of the Duchess has excited the wrath of the Fusionists generally. Its authenticity, too, is denied by them. If it be not authentic, why are they angry? A denial of its authenticity has appeared in Paris under the signature of the chivalrous Duke de Nemours—the man who, with ten thousand troops under his command, delivered the Tuileries to a mob, and left his wife and family to escape as well as they could! But who shall assert that the alleged letter of the duke is authentic? And, if it be, what does it amount to?—That the duchess has not written the document put forward with her name! Who ever thought she had? Who did not recognize in it the hand of M. Thiers?

THE BISHOP OF NEW ZEALAND.—We are informed that a printed letter has been received from Bishop Selwyn by his friends in England, dated St. Barnabas-day, 1853, in which he notifies his intention to leave New England about this present month.—Among the objects of his voyage, we are informed is the permanent settlement and endowment of the two new bishoprics at Lyttelton and Wellington, and the consequent subdivision of his extensive diocese. It is also his intention to abandon his contemplated scheme of founding a college at Auckland for native missionaries from the Melanesian Islands, as he finds, upon experience, that the damp climate is not suited to the constitution of youths who have lived on what he calls “large reefs of coral.” The other objects of the bishop are understood to be connected with the establishment of a college of Church schoolmasters, and a scheme of synodical action for the Church of New Zealand.

A CENTENARIAN.—Died at Great Bentley, on the 10th inst., James London, aged one hundred years.—The deceased, who completed his hundredth year in August last, preserved to the last a beautiful head of hair of raven blackness, with scarcely a tinge of “telltale gray.”