

The Church Guardian

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See page 14.

CALENDAR FOR JUNE.

- JUNE 3—1st Sunday after Trinity.
“ 10—2nd Sunday after Trinity. (*Notice of
St. Barnabas Day*).
“ 11—ST. BARNABAS. A. & M.
“ 17—3rd Sunday after Trinity.
“ 24—4th Sunday after Trinity.
“ —Nativity of St. John Baptist. (*Notice
of St. Peter's Day*).
“ 29—ST. PETER. A. & M.

EPISCOPACY.

BY THE REV. R. S. BARRETT.

All Christian bodies belong to one of three great families—the Episcopal family, the Presbyterian family and the Congregational family. The Episcopal family embraces about *eighty one per cent. of Christendom*; the Presbyterian about thirteen per cent.; and the Congregational about six per cent. (*Encyclopædia Britannica vol. xix, p. 826, and Schaff-Herzog's Encyclopædia vol. iii 2026*) Congregationalists make each congregation independent. Each congregation governs itself and ordains its ministers. Presbyterian churches are governed by elders: a presbytery governs and ordains. Episcopalians believe in a government by Bishop. We have three orders of ministers, (1) Bishops; (2) Presbyters; (3) Deacons. The Bishops are successors to the Apostles. They alone govern the Church and ordain its ministers. The presbyters and deacons do the teaching, ruling and pastoral work of the local congregation and are subject to their bishop. This paper is designed to give the scriptural argument for Episcopacy.

First of all, let me call attention to the fact that we base nothing on the word “bishop.” for bishop is used interchangeably with elder or presbyter. The use of the concordance for half an hour will satisfy any one that nothing in this discussion can be decided by names. In the New Testament the words are used in a general, not in technical, sense. Thus Christ is called bishop (1 Peter ii 25). An apostle is called bishop (Acts i. 20). And elders are called “bishops.” Again, apostles are called elders (1 Peter v. 2; 1 John i), and also deacons (Cor. iii. 5). Yet with all this interchangeable use of words, we clearly distinguish between the apostle and the elder (Acts xv. 6), and again between the elder and deacon. This use of words has been noted by all of the best defenders of Episcopacy. Thus Hooker says in this connection; “Things are always ancienter than their names.” The old writers, Chrysostom, Jerome and Theodoret, noticed the same. Thus Theodoret says, (Com. 1 Tim. iii. 1). “The same persons were anciently called promiscuously both bishops and presbyters, whilst those who are now called bishops were called apostles.” We are contending for things, not words. Words are the daughters of men, but things are the sons of God.

This is an important subject. It lies at the basis of the Christian constitution. It is a ques-

tion of government. The beginning of every government is the institution of its forces and the appointment of its officers. So with the Kingdom of Christ. Our Lord, early in the ministry, “called unto Him His disciples, and of them He chose twelve, whom also He called Apostles,” (St. Luke vi. 13). To these He assigned an honorable and distinct position. “I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you,” (St. John xv. 15). “Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and ordained you” (St. John xv. 16). “Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven,” [St. Matt. xviii. 18]. In His last prayer He distinguishes the Apostles from the rest of the followers [St. John xvii. 20. From all the references to them we learn that ministerial agency and authority was a leading principle of His Kingdom. Let it be observed, also, that these Apostles were chosen, not from below, but from above; not by the people but by Christ. Jesus gives His final commission to the Apostles when, after His resurrection, He meets the eleven by appointment in Galilee. Read it in St. Matt. xxviii. 16-20. This commission is full, absolute and perpetual. “Lo, I am with you, alway, even unto the end of the world.” This text alone meets the assertion that the apostolic office was limited to the twelve.

Matthias makes twelve; for the inspired writer speaks of “the twelve” after the Pentecost, but before St. Paul was converted [Acts vi. 2]. St. Paul is thirteen. Barnabas is fourteen [Acts xiv. 14]. Thus the charmed number of twelve is broken. St. Paul's case alone refutes the definition that an apostle must be one who had “compared” with Jesus from the beginning. Witnessing to the resurrection was not peculiar to apostles, for the commission to be witnesses [St. Luke xxiv. 48] was given to the disciples of Emmaus and others besides the Apostles. Five hundred brethren could witness to His resurrection. Inspiration was not peculiar to them, for six of the Apostles gave no evidence of inspiration, while St. Luke and St. Mark do. Others besides apostles worked miracles (1 Cor. xii. 10). Christ said to the Apostolic College: “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”

After Christ's Ascension the Apostles exercised supreme control over the entire Church, and those who believed “continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship” [Acts ii. 42]. Every man's goods were placed at the Apostles' disposal [Acts iv. 35]. Barnabas laid the price of his lands at the Apostles' feet [Acts iv. 37]. The Pentecostal Church was not democratic, but an oligarchy, ruled by twelve persons, who were neither appointed nor removed by popular will.

Hitherto no other ministry is mentioned. But now the Apostles appoint seven “Deacons.” Although not called deacons in the Acts, exegetical tradition is almost unanimous in favor of this view, and the latest and best critics sustain it. The Apostles appointed these deacons and ordained them. “Look out among you seven men whom we may appoint over this business” [Acts vi. 3].

Then we read next [Acts xi. 30] of *Elders* in the Jerusalem Church, but we are not told in the Acts when this order was constituted, or what precisely were its duties. However it is here.

So, then, we have in the Jerusalem Church three orders of ministers—viz. [1] *Apostles*, or supreme rulers and ordainers, [2] *Elders*, [3] *Deacons*. These last two never ordained.

But it was not destined that the twelve should remain in Jerusalem forever. One of them, “James, the brother of John, Herod killed with a sword,” [Acts xii. 2]. The Apostolic College is broken up, and we never read again of the twelve as before. The government of the twelve at Jerusalem is now exchanged for the presidency of one man—“James, the Lord's brother.” From every notice of this man recorded in

Scripture he seems to exercise episcopal powers over the Church at Jerusalem. St. Peter sends tidings of his release to “James and the brethren” [Acts xii. 17]. Next we see him presiding over the first Council and delivering his sentence: “My sentence is, that we trouble not them.” [Acts xv. 19]. So again, St. Paul, on coming to Jerusalem after his third missionary journey, “went in unto James; and all the Elders were present,” [Acts xxi. 18]. These and other notices incidentally confirm the truth of the testimony of all antiquity, that James was the first bishop, or perpetual president, of the Church of Jerusalem.

The few notices of Church government which we have in the Acts all teach one principle, viz: Apostolic merging into Diocesan Episcopacy.—*The Silent Missionary*.

CHRISTIANITY PRACTICAL.

Christianity should find its home in the heart, not the brain. It is no speculative philosophy, which men may be content with dreaming, wondering, and talking over. It need not find vent in words, but it must be shown in our daily lives, for it is entirely practical.

Numbers of persons professing Christianity go to church either for the sake of respectability, or because they like to hear an eloquent sermon. They will listen and approve, deceiving themselves into thinking that they are really Christians, when all the while they are simply giving a passive intellectual approval, quite satisfied with going so far, and with no intention of going farther. Such persons are perhaps the most difficult to deal with. Their mental grasp of the tenets of Christianity is mistaken, even by themselves, for Christianity itself. They have a way of passing the precepts of the Gospel away from themselves, as if they did not need them, and applying them to other people. Their Christianity is a thin crust on the surface, not a leaven which influences their whole lives, even the least thought and action.

St. James deals sharply with those who talk very well and do no more (ii. 14-17). He cuts into the root of the matter showing that Christ must dwell in our hearts, and then we shall act for love of Him; but if we are content with hearing and talking, it is a proof that we do not yet know Christ. We may notice that when a man is truly converted to God, he asks, not “What shall I believe” or “say,” but “What shall I do?” (St. Luke iii. 10, 12, 13; xviii. 18; Acts ii. 37; ix. 6; xvi. 30). We may contrast with this the feeble excuse in the mouths of many people, “I never did anything very bad” or “I have done no one any harm.” Christianity is *not negative*, contenting itself with the absence of active and outrageous evil. There must be renunciation of evil, and a positive and practical result in our lives.

Nor is it sufficient that we should hear the Word of God, either from the Holy Scriptures themselves or from sermons or discourses with a vague general resolve. There must be the particular application to different parts of our character, and our resolve should bear fruit in action. For instance, we hear that it is Christ's will that we should forgive injuries done to us, but this is of no use unless we resolve to forgive any particular injury that we may have suffered. Our actions must be ruled by God's Word, and we shall thus go on step by step building (edifying) ourselves up by God's help. Failures will distress us, but we need never despair, if we see that the thing of chief importance is that each precept of Christianity shall be made a rule of action. We want the constant help of God, and such beautiful prayers as the Collect for the day will help us to obtain it, so that we can follow our Master's steps until we come to His presence in Heaven.—*Selected*.