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Calendar.

CALENDAR WITH LESSONS.

Day	Date	MORNING.	EVENING.
R.	Jan 11	18. of Eph.	18. of Eph.
M.	12	19. of Eph.	19. of Eph.
T.	13	20. of Eph.	20. of Eph.
W.	14	21. of Eph.	21. of Eph.
T.	15	22. of Eph.	22. of Eph.
F.	16	23. of Eph.	23. of Eph.
S.	17	24. of Eph.	24. of Eph.

Poetry.

THE BELLS ON SUNDAY MORNING.

Up, up, the day is broad awake,
The stars have gone to bed,
The glorious sun is spreading fast,
His banner o'er our head;
And hark from the heights the merry bells ring,
"Tis a message from heaven to earth they bring;
"Up, up, from your sleep break away;"
The morning breeze wafts the chimes along,
Arousing the birds to their morning song;
"Think of the Lord—
Think of the Lord,
Who has given another day."

The mother wakes her little one,
And teaches him to pray,
And praise the Lord who has begun
Another blessed day;
The night has gone with its chilling fears,
And the warmth of the cheerful light appears,
And the bells ring merrily;
She bends with a pious heart to hear
The voice which the chimes are wafting near—
"Praise ye the Lord—
Praise ye the Lord,
Who has tenderly guarded thee."

The sick man tosses to and fro,
Trying in vain to pray;
The cheerful sun, but comes to show
A sad and suffering day.
"Who cares for a suffering soul like me,
Who cares for the sick in their misery?
Alas! there is none to hear."
Then suddenly bursts from the heights above,
The chimes of the bells with their voices of love:
"Rest on the Lord—
Rest on the Lord,
Who treasures up every tear."

The rich man on his bed of down,
Is scarcely roused to hear
The merry chimes; alas they fall
Unheeded on the ear.
Then idler, awake, each moment of time
Is a talent but lent by a Master divine,
Be ready the bond to pay!
Then hark to the chimes as they're floating past,
They tell thee thy moments are flying fast.
"Think of the Lord—
Think of the Lord,
And the awe of the judgment day."

Oh, holy, blessed Sunday bells,
Ye bring us from above
The tidings which each bosom swells,
Of God the Father's love:
Long may your echoing chimes rebound,
And over the heathen lands resound,
"Till all in one harmony blend.
Then arouse to the voice when the matin bells ring,
For a message of love from the heavens they bring.
"Think of the Lord—
Think of the Lord,
Who pities and loves to the end."

Religious Miscellany.

(From the Literary Churchman.)

DR. CUMMING'S WORKS.

THE LAST OF THE PATRIARCHS, OR LESSONS CHIEFLY FROM THE LIFE OF JOSEPH. By the Rev. John Cumming, D. D., F. R. S. E., Minister of the Scotch National Church, Crown court, Covent garden, Author of "Apocalyptic Sketches;" "Sabbath-Evening Readings," &c. (London: Hall, Virtue, & Co. 404 pp.)

If we accept high pretensions as a test of merit, self-sufficiency as a guarantee for worth, there is not in all England a goodlier person than Dr. Cumming. The lofty temper with which he looks down upon all the churches of Christendom, including the sects, admitted by him to the name of churches,—the happy ease with which he disposes of all the great questions which have at divers times vexed the church, and exercised the minds of her most eminent divines,—the evident consciousness of

something very like papal infallibility with which he pronounces his theory, and lays down the law of the Gospel,—the bold, unhesitating freedom with which he not only interprets but enlarges and paraphrases Holy Writ, making it speak the precise language that suits his purpose,—all proclaim him a man of extraordinary gifts or of singular effrontery,—a mighty prophet or a great charlatan.

To which of these two categories he properly belongs, it may not be inopportune, nor considering how perseveringly he keeps himself in the public eye, can it be impertinent to enquire. If, in order to do this, it were necessary to drag our readers along with us through the whole of the voluminous publications, the catalogue of which is lying before us, we might well shrink from a task at once so arduous and so tedious. Fortunately, however, the Cumming type of mind reproduces itself with so little variation in all his books, that any one of them is a fair sample of the whole.

From his preface we learn why Dr. Cumming has thought fit to write the present volume. "In no preceding volume had he been able to unfold the very suggestive, beautiful, and popular incidents in the life of Joseph." To have left a life so "full of interest," or "rich in useful lessons," so calculated to "edify and instruct both old and young," unadorned by his pen, would have been on the part of Dr. Cumming most unnatural, and to the public a serious loss.

Instructive, however though the history of Joseph be, it did not, at least not under Dr. Cumming's hands, furnish sufficient materials for an average sized volume; and therefore, in the true spirit of book making, the life of Jacob, with scraps from the histories of Sampson, of Naaman, and others still more far fetched, are dragged in to make up the deficiency. Five chapters only, out of the fifteen, treat of the "suggestive" life of Joseph; for eight more Jacob supplies the subject-matter, or at least the starting point of the discourse; after which, leaving the "last of the patriarchs," as well as his progenitor, far in the rear, we find ourselves in the presence of Nathaniel, the "Israelite without guile,"—and finally we arrive, by means of a more astounding leap, in company with the most unpatriarchal that can be well conceived,—a body of "young men" whom the Doctor is lecturing on the duty of being sober minded. It thus appears that even the insertion of the word "chiefly" in diminutive type does not exonerate Dr. Cumming from the charge of taking in such of his customers as may be simple enough to buy the book, in the supposition that it is a volume of "lessons from the life of Joseph."—With two-thirds of the volume, in fact, Joseph has no connection. The announcement that old and young are to be instructed and edified out of the stores of heavenly wisdom laid up in Joseph's biography, as given by the sacred penmen, turns out to be, like the label round a patent medicine, a mere device for pushing the article in the market.

What would Dr. Cumming say, we wonder, if, after buying a guide book to the Alpine regions for his summer tour, he discovered, on consulting it, that while giving an account of nature's mountain fastnesses, it was made up principally of copious details of the back streets of London? He would scarcely think that he had been honestly dealt by.—And is a Divine's rule of honesty less strict than that of a tradesman? But in truth Dr. Cumming has in him quite as much of the tradesman as the divine. The smell of the shop is potent upon his labors. Not content with a catalogue of his numerous publications attached to his book, he admits the public behind the scenes, and informs it that, "if he be spared in health, he should like to publish his remaining lectures on the characters and incidents developed in the march of Israel from Egypt into the promised land, so full of startling phenomena, expressive types, and suggestive lessons, under the title of 'The Church in the Wilderness,'" a theme which, if handled after the manner of the "life of Joseph," will afford ample scope for sundry chapters on Dr. Wiseman, the Madians, Puseyism, the Evangelical Alliance, the Scottish bishops, and the Free Kirk.

Passing on, however, let us enquire into Dr. Cumming's qualifications for the offices which he claims to exercise, that of "a master in Israel." In vain

do we look for evidence of these in the volume before us. Even that portion of it which is devoted to the "richly instructive" life of Joseph, exhibits a painful poverty and meagreness of thought, indifferently disguised by an affected and inflated style, which continually betrays the insufferable conceit of the writer. The lessons which he draws from the incidents in the life of Joseph, are for the most part trite common-places, which like sermons that would fit a hundred texts equally well, might be introduced with at least equal propriety *a propos* of many other incidents of sacred history. That sin springs from the heart as its fountain; that to correct a wrong life we must first correct a wrong heart; that God alone can change the heart; that nevertheless it is our own fault if the heart be not changed; that although God changes the heart He does not make men perfect; that a sure means of getting rid of evil thoughts is to cultivate good thoughts; that envy is a particularly hateful passion; that all things work together for good to them that love God, &c. These and many more lessons of a like elementary character it is doubtless very proper and suitable to enforce from the pulpit, whether in connection with Joseph's history, or with any other portion of Holy Writ which may afford an opportunity of inculcating them. But when a man announces with a great flourish of trumpets that he has lighted upon a particularly rich mine of divine instruction, the treasures of which he is anxious to impart to old and young for their edification, we are entitled to look for something beyond mere routine observations, such as would have suggested themselves to the mind of any decently educated schoolmaster or Scripture reader. The only conceivable reason why they should be printed and published to the world in a new book, is the supposition that their intrinsic value is greatly enhanced by the fact of their being propounded by Dr. Cumming. And this, we take it, is the Doctor's own modest opinion.

But let us not be unjust. Though nothing can well be more common-place than the "lessons" that he deduces from the history of Joseph, and from other incidents of sacred history, we should be giving our readers a very erroneous impression of Dr. Cumming's book, if we led them to suppose that it contains nothing out of the common way. On the contrary, there is much in it that is strangely uncommon. Not a few of the author's opinions, many of his illustrations, and a goodly number of his assertions, are original to a fault. A few of them must suffice here, by way of example.

And first, as to historical facts: we learn a good deal that neither we, nor, we suspect, any one else, ever heard before. It would be satisfactory, for instance, to ascertain upon what authority Dr. Cumming asserts that when Jacob took his journey to Padan Aram with his father's solemn blessing upon his head, he "had lost his early and deep sense of the power and presence of a personal God,"—that "the impressions of his God were covered up or effaced," in his mind. The statement is a bold one, to say the least of it, more especially since Dr. Cumming himself, in another chapter, predicates of the same Jacob, that "in all his life he displayed his sense of his need of salvation, and his knowledge of that salvation, by outward and visible proofs;" that his history is an unceasing exhibition of the "recognition of God;" and of "the constant habit of worship." For the nonce, however, it suited Dr. Cumming's purpose to picture him a reprobate, and as such he accordingly went forth. The next thing we learn is, that the "certain" place in which he "tarried all night because the sun was set," and rested his head on a pillow of stones, "a blank solitude, a bare heath, a miserable desert." We turn overleaf, and, lo, the bare heath is covered with trees, the tops of which are all irradiated by the trail of glory which the heavenly vision has left behind. Well, then, on this richly wooded bare heath, this desert copse, Jacob, a "refugee," lays down, "weary and way-worn," and, as Dr. Cumming thinks highly probable, "without a thought of God." This is a strong insinuation, and our readers may possibly be of opinion that the patriarch has some reason to complain of his biographer.

(To be continued.)