

The Church Guardian

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See page 14.

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4. The courts have decided that refusing to take newspapers or periodicals from the Post office, or removing and leaving them uncalled for, is *prima facie* evidence of intentional fraud.

CALENDAR FOR JUNE.

JUNE 1st—TRINITY SUNDAY.

" 8th—First Sunday after Trinity. Notice of St. Barnabas.

" 11th—St. BARNABAS. Ap. & M.

" 15th—2nd Sunday after Trinity.

" 22nd—3rd Sunday after Trinity. Notice of St. John Baptist.

" 24th—Nativity of St. John Baptist (Athan. Creed), and of St. Peter.

" 29th—4th Sunday after Trinity. St. Peter. Ap. & M.

THE PRAYER BOOK.

(From the Living Church)

Churchmen hardly realize what a priceless treasure they possess in the Book of Common Prayer. Even as a missionary agency there is nothing like it. A strong reason for deprecating the growing use of "leaflet services" is founded upon this fact. The difficulty of making use of the Prayer Book in its complete form, even among those who are entirely unfamiliar with it, is greatly over-estimated. Those who with the volume in their hands begin to perceive the beauty of the public services, are easily impelled to search further into its treasures. Dr. James Lloyd Breck and the other pioneer missionaries of the Church in the North-west were keenly alive to the value of this use of our great devotional manual, and to teach a new congregation the right use of it, was felt to be a most important part of their work. Again, it may almost be said, that where the Prayer Book is there is the Church. The isolated layman may, if he will, by the use of it keep alive the fire of devotion and the sense of union with the Church at large, by reading it with his family, at least on Sunday at the usual hour of public worship; or, if he be alone, in the retirement of his closet. He has no call to join himself with an alien worship, merely because he is far removed from the Church of his affections, still less to allow his children to grow up in separation from the Church. Here is a true field for the exercise of the "priesthood of the laity." The father is the priest of his household, and, under the circumstances which we have supposed, a heavier responsibility rests upon him

than is the case with those who live within the sound of church bells.

The religious dialect in which the Prayer Book is cast makes it, like the English Bible peculiarly dear to the devout heart. But beyond this is the deeper consideration that we possess here in this chaste and beautiful language a true presentation of the liturgical system of all the Christian ages. We have in our own tongue the forms in which the Christian Church from the earliest days has made her approaches to God, whether in the Holy Mysteries or in the daily offices of prayer; and still more we have, wrought into many a prayer and rubric and confession of faith, the precious doctrines of the Gospel, as the great Councils of ancient times expressed them and many martyrs died for them. There they stand, untouched by the hand of time or the destructive thought of modern days; and there we believe they are destined to stand long after the conflicts of the nineteenth century are forgotten. Revision now ended, we trust for many a day, has passed by these things untouched, and has, on the whole, only strengthened and emphasized the permanent features of the worship of the Church.

The inestimable value of such a treasure in our own language, would of itself almost justify the English Reformation, even if there had not been other considerations of vast importance involved in that movement. No one feature of the Reformation was so effective in meeting the requirements of the new age of printing and the spread of general intelligence, as the translation and simplification of the services. This is better appreciated by others than by ourselves. The Roman Catholic Church, in this as in the matter of boy choirs, shows a strong tendency to copy after our example. It is reported that in at least one R. C. church in New York city the Vesper office is now sung in English, and a recent writer in *The Catholic World* is urgent that the principle should be extended. "The reasons," he says, "for the growth of Protestant Episcopalism in this country, a growth proportionately far in excess of the increase in the general population, and dependent almost exclusively upon births and accessions from other Protestant bodies; a growth which exemplifies the secret of the accumulation of material wealth, making and saving, taking from others and holding what is taken; the reasons, we say, for this growth are not hard to discover. They are found in the fact that the Anglican Church, and her daughter in this country, has had the prodigious advantage of influencing the people by the public use of many of the choicest parts of the Catholic liturgy, having them constantly and impressively read in the churches."

From the same writer we quote also the following significant passage, notwithstanding its assumptions: "We maintain that in English-speaking countries, and brought face to face with intelligent English-speaking Protestants, the Catholic Church [i. e. the Roman], cannot successfully hold her own, still less draw as she should from the Protestant bodies, confronted as she is with the disadvantage of having another body or bodies using in their public worship the Roman (?) ritual translated into English. Especially is this true when the body mainly instrumental in doing this arrogates to itself the name of Catholic, adopts the externals of Catholicity, and by the sophistries of grave and learned champions presents to the unlearned or the credulous, deceptive arguments in favor of the truth of its claims." He concludes that in order that the Roman Catholic Church may maintain a proper standing, "contemplative processes of individual worship [italics ours] in the public services of the house of God must yield to prayers read in the vernacular in the full hearing of the congregation, to confes-

sions of sin recited in common by the people, to ejaculations and songs of praise given and sung in the full voice of the assemblage." We can forgive the distortions of truth on the part of this writer, charitably setting them down to the account of "invincible ignorance," in consideration of the important though unwilling testimony which he bears to the power of the Prayer Book.

Early in the last century, "a good man in Guilford," says Dr. Beardsley, in his history of the Church in Connecticut,—"blessed be his memory! had a Prayer Book, which he put into the hands of the youthful Johnson, before he left his native town, and he read and re read it until his mind was charged with its contents and he began to feel as the celebrated George Herbert of old felt and said, when he lay on the bed of death, 'there are no prayers like those of my mother, the Church of England.'" This Johnson was a Puritan minister of that day, whose first ministerial work lay in New Haven, and it was in no small measure through the influence of that one Prayer Book that both he and seven of the faculty of Yale College announced to the trustees in Sept., 1722, their doubts of the validity of Presbyterian ordination, and were compelled to resign their positions. This was the beginning of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut, and the foundation also of that strength of conviction and tenacity to Church principles which has always characterized her. Many instances might be cited of the same kind, though on a smaller scale, to which the Roman Church can produce no parallel. A New York secular paper, for instance, has recently printed the history of a Prayer Book, which, picked up on a battle field during the civil war, brought about the conversion of its finder who carried it with him during the rest of his army life, and after the war was over, carrying it with him to his home in the far West, "read it through many times." The result is not only a faithful Churchman, but the foundation of a parish in the place of his residence. In view of such histories, let Churchmen realize better the value of the inheritance they have in this book, and cherish it with jealous affection against all attacks from within or without. It is in fact the true bulwark of faith and worship, and the only form in all the world in which the ancient devotions of the Christian Church are open to be read and understood of all men.

THE "SOCIAL ELEMENT" AGAIN

The Christian duty of refraining from even innocent acts because thereby our brother may stumble or be made weak, is so generally accepted by Christian people, and so definitely stated by St. Paul in Romans xiv., that I surely need not refer to it. The highest motives should influence all earnest Christians, and, need I say it, the Brotherhood of St. Andrew.

What does Jesus require of His followers? "If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple" (St. Luke xiv., 26, 27). "Because ye are not of the world but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (St. John xv., 19).

How does St. Paul speak of Christians? "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. iii., 3); "I am crucified with Christ" (Gal. ii., 20); "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life" (I. Tim. ii., 4); "Denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world" (Titus ii., 12). St. Peter also: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people" (I. St. Peter ii., 9).