

# The Church Guardian

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## CALENDAR FOR OCTOBER.

- OCT. 4th—18th Sunday after Trinity.  
 " 11th—19th Sunday after Trinity.  
 " 18th—20th Sunday after Trinity.  
 " 18th—St. Luke—Evangelist.  
 " 25th—17th Sunday after Trinity.  
 " 28th—St. Simon and St. Jude, (Apostles and Martyrs.

## THE CHURCH AND IMMIGRATION.

(An Ante-Congress Paper, by Rev. G. Jemmett, M.A.)

The purpose of the present paper is to review some of the leading points bearing on the claim arising from immigration on the general sympathy of the Church.

First. Emigration will be found to follow much the same rule as exportation. To this day for many of the minor dependencies of England,—whose demand is limited, and capital almost nil,—any refuse of the home market is thought not amiss; and it is not many years since important colonies, as Australia or the Cape, were the reservoirs into which the very scum and dregs of the population of the mother land were systematically drained, or into which, at best, those were received as settlers who soon were found to contribute more inmates to gaols than did the native inhabitants. The newcomers were, in fact, made up mainly of such as had been deported from or had voluntarily "left their country for their country's good." But, apart from such cases—the history of which we may consider closed—it may be assumed that neither England nor any other country sends abroad, as a rule, its best material. This is but what might be expected. In the exportation to a new and struggling settlement of manufacturing or other products, it is not for articles, we do not say of intrinsic value, but of the highest quality, that demand arises or an outlet is sought. So, too, the circumstances which make emigration a necessity—for it is from pressure, in some form or another, that home and kindred are, in general, given up—forbid our considering immigrants, socially, morally or religiously, the fairest representation of the country they leave. It is not, in fact, sections of every rank of life that we receive: not all the strata are represented: and so, from the nature of the case, the highest social positions, and the best qualities of mind and heart, are not ordinarily to be found.

Again, in what light are immigrants gene-

rally regarded? Do we invite them to our shores in the spirit of Israel's leader of old:—"We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give you; come thou with us, and we will do the good?" Is immigration, in fact, regarded generally from a moral or religious point of view, or in what may be called its mere physical aspect? Is it, in a word, souls we count up each year as added to us, or so much mere sinew for the opening up and development of our vast natural resources? It is greatly to be feared that our whole view, as a community, of this question is secular to the very core—"of the earth, earthy."

But, further, immigrants, as we have said, are not generally the best, in every respect, of the community they leave. On the contrary, they but too commonly bring with them irreligious habits acquired at home; and our own experience and self-knowledge are sufficient to teach us—from the effects we observe in ourselves of mere change of scene and associations—that the step the emigrant takes in becoming such has in itself a secularizing tendency. And not only this, but the one thought, be it remembered, that possesses him is, the bettering of his worldly condition—in a word, money-making. Thus, in the struggle that ensues, religion encounters rude jostlings, the restraints of moral principle are relaxed, and the higher sensibilities blunted or perverted; whilst precisely those faculties are sharpened which do service to the lower portion of our nature, and which are mostly employed in attaining ends limited by the shroud and the grave. And the effect, in morals and religion, on the people amongst whom they come, no less than on the immigrants themselves, is a weighty consideration: for we are not to suppose that heterogeneous elements can be introduced into any social system without creating social disorder, to stem which counteracting and remedial measures must be adopted. Heavy, then, must be the responsibility of any Church into the peopled or waste places of whose bounds these disturbing forces find an entrance and a home.

But, besides the considerations already advanced (which are applicable to immigrants of any race or from any country,) we have others of a special character, which, taken into account, should make us think. "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation" received, in the earliest days of the Church, some portion of its fulfilment in the quiet manner in which the Gospel was communicated from one Christian to another. Numerous instances might be adduced in which we have no more information about the first introduction of Christianity into any country than we have of its original peopling. We trace, however, much in the same way whence the people and the religion respectively came; a similarity of language in the one case, in the other a church rule or custom, suffices to direct us to the right source. But, however this may be, each individual Christian, wherever he journeyed, looked upon himself as a soldier carrying on a single-handed contest with the powers of this world. Because for a time he, as it were, fell out of the ranks and became mixed up with the heathen, he laid aside neither his uniform nor his weapons; he was, like Daniel, a convert among unconcealed enemies; and he did not, like the Chinese pagan now-a-days, leave his religion behind him with his country. Which does a Christian now the more resemble? His ancient brother, or the modern pagan?

Now, this consideration, we submit, only makes the new element the more dangerous to the moral and spiritual life of the community into which it finds its way, and thus adds to the claim on our Christian sympathies.

But there is another point to which we would call attention. The English Church immigrant knows nothing in practice of the maintenance of his own pastor. Accustomed, as he has been, wherever he might go through the length and breadth of his native land, to find

the ministrations of religion at hand and at call without cost to himself—not having, in fact, inherited or acquired any other impression of a Church but of one established and endowed from time immemorial—he finds it difficult in a new country to realize the fact that, if he would have the ordinances of the Gospel, he must make a pecuniary sacrifice for the maintenance of those whose office it is to supply them. He has, in fact, traditional associations of very long standing to unlearn, and to acquire in their room those of a directly opposite character; and as this is difficult and ever a slow process, he stands in need of the consideration and substantial aid of those whose lesson is to some extent learnt, and for whose wants provision is already made.

Let us now awhile have in our mind's eye some howling wilderness of dense forest and impenetrable marsh. Shanties here and there are dotting the surface. Wolves, bears and the like take note that they are no longer in serene, undisturbed possession. Season after season fresh settlers pour in, till, in due course, the wilderness bids fair to flourish as a garden. The outside world begins to think that some gain may be gotten from opening up a connection with this new home of man. So magnificent a farming or lumbering region must be developed. Ere long, on an iron road, its products speed, hundreds of miles, to some lake or seaside depot, whence wind and steam bear them to minister to man's needs and comforts in other and distant lands.

Now, with respect to a vast region into which the soldiers of this world thus pioneer and make good their way, what is the Church's course? Months, perhaps years, roll by, and at length one solitary picket is posted there. His position, we will not resist the temptation of adding, brings forcibly to our recollection a cartoon, during the Crimean War, of the Paris *Charivari*. Every one has heard of the great *entente cordiale*, to foster and preserve which resort was had to all kinds of expedients. Amongst the minor and, perhaps, not least efficacious means, the *Punch* of our Gallic allies was pleased, in enthusiastic admiration of British "*solidite*," to represent a solitary Highlander as sentinel, within an inch of a frightful precipice, and with his back to it. A cry of amazement comes from one or two passers-by; but, says his companion, "Ces soldats ne reculent jamais." True this is, too, possibly, of the commissioned soldiers of the Cross; but there is One who, "knowing what was in man," Himself sent forth the first such "two by two."

At best, as we have said, one detached, forlorn unit is thus placed in a position of great trial and peril, to grapple—unaided, inexperienced and without counsel at hand—with the whole array of Satan and his evil angels. "Longo intervallo" comes a second; and, after a like pause, a third or more. Yet so it but too often is. The world is "wiser" than the Church; and each instance of the many that might be thus adduced but adds another link to a long chain of similar supineness and "unwisdom." But not the world only rebukes the Church. Separatists in countless variety have ever the start of her; and thus, in a field already prolific of ungodliness and irreligion, are sown the bitter seeds of "false doctrine, heresy and schism." The tree and the fruit are as the seed; and the Church's opportunity is for ever gone.

We have necessarily, in the above, done no more than glance at a few of the leading points bearing on our proposed subject. They are such the full, thoughtful and earnest consideration of which is well calculated, with the Divine blessing, to awaken all to a deep sense of their personal, individual responsibility with respect to the souls of those less favored than themselves; and to lead them to esteem it a blessed privilege, as well as duty, to give back, for their sakes, to God of that which He has, in the first place, given them.