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# Dominion Churchman.

THE ORGAN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN CANADA.

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## LESSONS for SUNDAYS and HOLY-DAYS.

1st SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS.  
Morning—Isaiah xxxv.  
Evening—Isaiah xxxviii. or xl.

THURSDAY, DEC. 30, 1886.

**THE BIBLE A LIVING ENTITY.**—In these days, when even some of our own clergy are satisfied that the Holy Bible should be sent adrift out of our Public Schools in order to make way for a set of selections, compiled so as to eliminate everything contrary to Romanism, it is well to ask all Christian people to reflect upon what the Bible is and what it is not. If the Bible is God's Word, then to cut out part of it is to cut out God's Word and to present the "balance" as the Bible is an act of blasphemy, as well as a wicked fraud. Yet this is being done! We are asked to be thankful that so many persons "are heaped to read the Bible," when in fact they are only reading an emasculated set of texts cut and carved out of the Bible. To call a set of scraps out of the Bible "the Bible" is like calling the fragmentary bits of glass a vase when that vase has been smashed into those fragments. Our clergy know, or ought to, Dr. Westcott's "Bible in the Church," and therein they will find a startling section on the *living unity of the Scriptures*, which is the supreme glory of the Bible, a glory it shares with no other book. We are glad to see this put well by Dr. Thomas, a Baptist minister in Toronto, thus: What the world wants to-day to settle its disputes is the Bible; to read just its tangles; to build up its manhood, and solve its problems of politics and sociology. It is no mere compilation of laws; it is a living, breathing thing. It has softened the hearts of savages and refined their natures. And what is it that makes it an instrument of such great power? It is the Christ which it embodies and unfolds. As all the light that illumines the earth came originally from the sun, so every ray that beams from the blessed Book comes originally from Jesus Christ. In conclusion he said: Take this book to your bosoms; make it the man of your counsels; make it the solace of your sorrows. The glory of this house will be this Book.

**THE LESSON OF JOSEPH.**—We are indeed fallen upon strange and dangerous times, when one of the noblest moral examples which ever glorified humanity, and one of the divinest moral lessons ever set by

God for man to master, are condemned as too obscene or perusal by young people. Mr. S. H. Blake, President of the Toronto Young Men's Association said publicly on the 18th Dec., that the story of Joseph in Potiphar's house was too indecent to be used for the instruction of young people of advanced youth. He also said in effect that whoever wished so to use this story had a morbid taste for licentious literature. In the year 1852, the celebrated infidel lecturer, G. J. Holyoake, at Edinbro, said the very same things in an attack upon the Bible as immoral. Dr. Alexander, a Presbyterian divine, sprang upon the platform and demanded a hearing. The Dr. said, "We are told what kept Joseph pure in the midst of a fearful temptation, his fear of God, now what would keep Mr. Holyoake pure in such a temptation, as he has no fear of God before his eyes?" The audience almost screamed with delight at Dr. Alexander's clever retort.

**THE NAME OF THE CHURCH IN AMERICA.**—At the recent convention in Chicago, a discussion took place conducted with much learning and skill upon a proposition to change the title of the Church in America from "Protestant Episcopal" to "American Catholic Church." The following address by the Hon. L. B. Prince, New Mexico, is of especial interest, showing as it does what able and sound laymen our sister Church in the States has in her old. Much of the argument has a close bearing upon the condition and future of the Church in Canada.

"There is one objection, to a change of name, which has the sympathy of my heart—it is that which is based upon sentiment, which looks upon the present name as that used by our fathers and our forefathers, as that by which they knew and loved the Church, as hallowed by the devoted lives and saintly death of the many who have gone before us, and therefore dear to the hearts and rooted in the affection of all those earnest churchmen, and I feel that it is a sentiment worthy of all consideration, and that no change should be made for the mere sake of change, and no change for the sake of greater propriety—nay, I would go farther than this, and say, if the present name is not evidently and naturally a hindrance to Church progress and a stumbling-block and obstacle to those who would otherwise enter into the kingdom of God, it would be better to let it stand as it is. But if it is shown that great good will come from the change, that the Church's government will be far more influential, that the congregations will be largely increased, and that a large number of people who know the name of Christ can by this means be brought more effectively into the Church, and the indifferent become interested in religion, then no sentiment, however dear, ought to stand in the way.

"The land in which we live is full of infidelity. Your Christian ministers and Christian laymen who live at home among Christian neighbours, and are only brought in connection with Christian people, have very little idea of the extent of the prevailing infidelity and heathenism in the United States. I do not mean those who are blatantly opposed to Christianity, but to those who are living as if Christianity did not exist, as if Christ had never come upon earth, and it is an appalling thought that the majority of the American people to-day are exactly in that condition. Now, why is this? The great argument of every anti-Christian preacher is from the divisions of Christianity. They say, On the face of the earth there are three hundred Christian sects. What kind of a religion is this, with thousands of devotees? If all of these are not right, thousands must be wrong? That is a very plausible argument, and from a sectarian standpoint it is almost impossible to meet. But the Church idea meets it in a moment, and the reason that it is so generally held, and so powerful with a vast number of people, is that they have never heard of the Church idea in their lives, that

they do not know that there is any body of Christians in this country that claims to be the American Church, responsible for the souls of every one in the country and claiming the allegiance of every one in the country. Place before them the name of the Church which claims to be the American Church, and it would give them an insight at once into that claim and that idea which would take a great deal of general preaching to give to them. I think that Christian ministers do not appreciate the utter ignorance on this subject among the public at large. The *Churchman* in New York had an article, almost three years ago, in which it stated—I cannot take the time to quote to exact words—that it was unnecessary to have a change of name, because everybody assumed that the Episcopal Church was the American branch of the Catholic Church. No one but a clergyman would make that kind of an assertion; no one but a person who did not go round among men of influence and know at all what the ordinary intelligence and thought of the American people is. We need to meet that in order to get the true Church idea to this great class of people, and to bring them to Christianity.

"Then, with regard to foreigners who come to our shores. There are a vast body of Scandinavians who come, and they belong to the Church of Sweden. They expect when they come here to belong to the American Church, but if, on landing in New York, they asked some one which is the American Church here, they will be told there are lots of churches—dozens—which one do you want? They could get no more intelligible answer than that. So with the Christian sects around us. They know nothing even of the name of the American Church, but, by the simple designation, its name would throw abroad the standard of Christ's Church in this country. We would, at any rate, set up a landmark that they could see, a guidepost which would lead them and then they have an opportunity of knowing the truth. So with the Romanist. Their church is commonly called the Catholic Church. Now, we can only overcome the Romanists by true catholicity. Against them we should set up our own antiquity, against their religion from Trent, we should set up our own from the Apostles, and we have to set it up visibly before the faces of men, so that they may know, at any rate, that there is reason in it; and we can do that by proclaiming, Here is the American Church. Christian unity requires it. We cannot expect men of other names to come into a church of sectarian name, but we can ask them, with good grace, to come into the American Church, comprehensive as the nation itself. That name, too, would arouse a national spirit. It would bring up a spirit of Americanism to oppose the domination of any Bishop of any foreign country, living at Rome or elsewhere. It would give us, I believe, the increase in the Church that we need.

"There is very little now to call the young men of energy and ambition into the ministry of the Church, which seems to be a sect; but plant the banner of the American Church high above their eyes and you set there an object of noble ambition, which, I believe, would draw all the best and most intelligent and energetic of the young men in our country. They might not choose to die for the Protestant Episcopal Church, but it would be glorious to die for the American Church. I heard the objection raised yesterday that it would be a piece of presumption to take this title. Presumption! It seems to me, sir, that that only shows too much self-consciousness in the people who suggest it. This is not our Church; it does not belong to us. It is God's Church. It was here long before we were born. It will exist long after we go hence. We are but the trustees for the moment, and I insist, sir, that we have no right to betray that trust by hitting the identity of the Church—by putting its light under a bushel, so as to prevent men from knowing that it is there."

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