

Dominion Churchman.

THE ORGAN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN CANADA.

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Frank Wootten, Proprietor, & Publisher,
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FRANKLIN B. BILL, Advertising Manager.

LESSONS for SUNDAYS and HOLY-DAYS.

April 15...THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Morning—Numbers xxii. : Luke xii. 35.

Evening—Numbers xxiii. or xxiv. Galatians v. 13.

THURSDAY, APRIL 12, 1883.

The DOMINION CHURCHMAN has removed into larger and more commodious offices, No. 11 Imperial Buildings, 30 Adelaide St. East., west of Post Office.

THE BLASPHEMY PROSECUTIONS.—The agnostics in Canada are in an uproar over the punishment just inflicted in England upon a scoundrel named Foote, editor of the *Freethinker*, who had issued a vile, outrageous blasphemy of more than common indecency. A paper remarks that while the State "has no power now to resent insults to Christ, it has a clear right to prevent persons wantonly insulting Christians." It has often puzzled us to account for the delight felt by infidels in uttering and reading the coarsest blasphemous indecencies. One would have supposed that men who have a mission to correct the whole Christian world, who claim to know more than all Christendom has done for eighteen centuries, would have some sense of mental and moral dignity.

A FRIENDLY WORD TO AGNOSTICS.—Of course we are superstitious and stupid, being Christians, but we fail to see any danger to Christianity in men standing in a dung heap of scurrility and throwing up the dirt which seems (if we may use such a phrase) to be their native element, in the attempt to befoul the religion of Jesus Christ. We would suggest to agnostics that as religion has created a certain love of decency in the world, they would do well not to outrage this sentiment, vulgar blasphemy hurts nobody's faith, it only shows the mental and moral darkness consequent upon rejecting the Light of the World. The question is asked by people of clean tongues and clean lives and clean brains, "If agnosticism now amid the blaze of Christian light is so very dirty in its habits and speech, what would its literature be like if unchecked by Christian sentiment?" There is no danger of the world, cleansed by Christ, returning like a washed hog to wallowing in such mire as agnosticism now revels in.

A CASE IN POINT.—Look for a moment, for to look longer is not advisable, hardly indeed possible, at the two divorce cases just reported in the English court. A marquis is proven to have struck his wife and she the daughter of a Duke, struck her like a coal heaver, because she protested against his keeping another titled lady, the daughter of an Earl, as a concubine. This vile creature was parted from her titled husband because both preferred living a life of open vice. The men in these cases were notorious agnostics, and to say the truth,

carried their negation up to its logical issue. It is often remarked how much more woman is devoted to religion than man. She may well be, for without it she would be quickly degraded into the position her sex held in heathen times, the position an agnostic marquis and an agnostic Earl of this day put her into "for our learning."

THE TABLES TURNED ON DISSENT.—The author of "The dead hand in Free Churches," has set forth in detail the intent and object of no less than fifteen Acts of Parliament, which extend or exercise State patronage and control in the religious concerns of dissenting bodies, the bodies which are so active in an agitation to free the Church of England from State patronage and control! These Acts even extend to a definition of their doctrines and to a declaration of the ultimate authority in cases of dispute. So that our good friends who cry out so valiantly against the law because certain legal decisions are not as they would desire (nor for that matter as we should prefer) are after all only in the same fix as the dissenting bodies. We fear that the man who wishes to live without the States' control, even in religious affairs, must go up into the clouds or keep his religion to himself, for as soon as it begins to effect the rights and property of others the State must be recognized and no Church Court could be organized outside the authority of the State.

AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE NEED OF LAW.—We are all of us familiar with the working of the benevolent societies, such as the Masonic, Odd-Fellow's and Forrester's orders. These societies are trying to do a good work with no small success. Their strength, their whole power of doing good arises out of their unity, hence their chief watchwords. Now suppose a member wiser than the rest were to say "I dislike the ritual of my lodge or court, I will open a lodge or court and call it "Our Lodge" or "Our Court." I will do this without permission from the regular authority of the Order whose function it is to grant such power. What would happen? We all know he would be "sat upon" without ceremony and those who joined "Our Lodge" or "Our Court" would be disciplined promptly into obedience or, if stubborn, by excommunication. Yet "Our Lodge" or "Our Court" would be trying to do good and possibly doing it. Is it not strange that men can see the necessity of all this in a secular organization in order to preserve the strength of unity, and yet will not see that the Church of God also must have laws, authority and discipline in order to maintain its strength of unity?

A PLEA FOR A CHURCH SOCIETY.—It is seen on every hand how popular debating societies are. But in such societies, and very wisely so, religious subjects are tabooed. Now, why should not Churchmen meet with equally keen interest to discuss what the secular Society leaves alone? There are lots of questions about which Churchmen may find room for difference of opinion without overstepping the wide bounds of Catholic Dogma, and I feel that such debate would greatly tend to the formation of sound opinions on many questions of Church policy. I find two classes of people objecting to frequent Meetings: I may call them Pessimists and Optimists. The former will treat you to a Jeremiaid on the evil days in which we have fallen. They may, perhaps, grant that elsewhere work and progress is possible; but as to the particular portion of God's vineyard in which their lot is cast, the ground is of such Calvinistic sterility, or so overrun with weeds of Orange hue, the air is so chilled with Liberationist blasts, that they consider all they are called upon to do for Mother Church is to exercise the Englishman's proverbial privilege of complaint without emulating the diligence to which his grumbling is but the accompaniment. So writes the president of a Church Society in England and we give his words space in order to say that there is a great field here for Church of England Societies, either as Guilds or otherwise named, to associate

our young men and help them to means of self-instruction, innocent recreation and for training them in habits of Church work.

THE GRAND PRE REQUISITE.—For such work, for all work indeed, the writer of the above adds. "To spread our cause the first requisite is enthusiasm, that force which, generated in the human breast (just as steam gives motion to machinery), may be said in very truth to move the world. And I need not remind you that enthusiasm is the outcome of Faith, and that consequently all our action must spring from our consciousness of the absolute truth of our position as Members of the Catholic Church, of the vital need of the maintenance of the Catholic character of the branch of the One Church to which we belong, and of the great importance of our society as the chief existing organisation for the defence of the Faith."

JELLY-FISH CHURCHMEN.—"This thoroughness of purpose is the one thing needful, and the one thing so often absent from our lives. People look too much on all Church work as if it were a sort of recreation with which to fill up the idle hours left unoccupied by the real business of life. Now this sort of jelly-fish Churchmanship will gain us neither influence nor respect. In secular affairs such a temper would not get the parish pump repainted, much less will it move the lead weight of prejudice, ignorance, and laziness which we are called upon to deal with. Indifferentism and half-heartedness are non-conductors for the electric spark of enthusiasm. To evoke zeal we must first be zealous, we want men and women who are proud to be permitted to guard God's ark. Let us realize that we are pledged to a holy cause, one as sacred as mission work among the heathen at home or abroad—viz., the maintenance of that essence of Catholic truth without which the outward form of the Church is as salt which has lost its savour, and the want of which would paralyze Christian efforts in every direction." We like the phrase "jelly-fish Churchmanship," it so very exactly describes the kind of Churchmanship which is the whole secret of our weakness and want of enthusiasm. A jelly-fish cannot be enthusiastic, no Churchman can be a zealous and devoted Churchworker whose Church ideas are in a state of pulp, half water, and air. A jelly fish Church is far gone towards melting away.

WHAT funny people there are in the world! The Rev. J. M. Sangar, of Dryport, near Hull, has published a wretched penny tract reviling the Bishop of London for his conduct in the Mackonochie case; but he has printed in an appendix the correspondence relating to that gentleman's resignation. A more complete answer to Mr. Sangar's railing could not be conceived. The Rev. W. Adamson, vicar of Old Ford, has also rushed into print with ludicrous results, for his argument is based upon the theory that God has endowed Evangelical Protestantism with a Revelation, and endued it with Reason—a fact which, if it could only be substantiated, would place Mr. Adamson very high amongst the sons of Adam that have distinguished themselves as discoverers. What we principally object to in such writers is their utter imperviousness to reason. We should have thought that no one outside the establishments of Hanwell and Colney Hatch would have dreamt of contending that litigation had "settled for the Church and the country the laws of Church and State," and "defined the limits of toleration and comprehension." Again, anyone that could reason would know that the sole object of the suit against Mr. Mackonochie was to compel him to perform the service in a certain way at St. Alban's, or to leave the parish. He has left it, and the Court has no further control over him. If it had, he would not have been admitted to the benefice of St. Peter's, London Docks. It is, therefore, the merest drivel to talk about the perfidy of the Bishop of London.