

Dominion Churchman.

THE ORGAN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN CANADA.

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LESSONS for SUNDAYS and HOLY DAYS.

Jan. 18th.—FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.
Morning.—Isaiah li. Mark viii. to v. 18.
Evening.—Isaiah li. 13 & 53 or 64. Acts viii. 5 to 26.

THURSDAY, JAN. 10, 1889.

The Rev. W. H. Wadleigh is the only gentleman travelling authorized to collect subscriptions for the "Dominion Churchman."

ADVICE TO ADVERTISERS.—The Toronto Saturday Night in an article entitled "Advertising as a Fine Art" says, that the DOMINION CHURCHMAN is widely circulated and of unquestionable advantage to judicious advertisers.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

All matter for publication of any number of DOMINION CHURCHMAN should be in the office not later than Thursday for the following week's issue.

A quantity of Correspondence and Diocesan News unavoidably left over for want of space.

LAYMEN READING CHURCH LESSONS.—The Rev. Stephen E. Gladstone, writing from Hawarden on the subject of his father, the ex-Premier, reading the lessons in church, says:—

1. Usage justifies a layman in reading the lessons at public worship. It is a very common practice in the Church of England. It is habitually done in college chapels, where one of the students is chosen for that purpose. In some churches of bygone years it was a very usual custom (for example, in the Channel Islands) for the parish clerk to read the lessons and give out the hymns, and I believe this custom still survives.

2. No rule of the Church forbids the practice. The canons forbid a layman to undertake public preaching or ministering the sacraments in the congregations.

3. Precedents justify it. During the first two centuries it was probably the custom for laymen to read the Holy Scriptures from the pulpit—that is, the reading desk placed in the nave of the churches, and to leave the reading of the Gospel to the deacons from the bema or the chief pulpit near the altar.

In the third century there is abundant evidence of an order of readers having been appointed for this purpose—that is, laymen chosen for their fitness and admitted by authority into the order; but not admitted necessarily into the higher orders of the ministry. Even catechumens could be readers in the church of Alexandria. Going further back it was the usual practice in the Jewish synagogues for chosen laymen to read the Scriptures in public.

4. The Catholic doctrine of the priesthood of the laity teaches the fitness of any faithful and baptized member of Christ's body to perform any proper religious action which has not been expressly reserved by apostolic or ecclesiastical authority to the several orders of the ministry.

BISHOPS AND SUNDAY DRIVING.—Those who have criticised the Bishop of Liverpool for driving from one church to another on the Sabbath day in his carriage, have evidently overlooked the teaching conveyed in our Saviour's question, "Have ye not read in the law how that on the Sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are blameless." They profaned it merely by the necessary duties of their office, and were held "blameless" because the work was necessary for the services of the temple. The Bishop who uses a carriage when he cannot possibly help it is in very much the same position as were the ecclesiastics of old. Probably some hypocritical Pharisees found fault with the priests, but our Lord held that they were "blameless." We know that they found fault with the Lord of the Sabbath for healing a sick man on that sacred day, and probably it is the same captious spirit that makes some find fault with the Bishop of Liverpool for using a carriage, which he cannot avoid doing if he is to proclaim the Gospel tidings which alone are able to heal sick souls in the present day. There is no paper that has done more than the *Rock* to deprecate Sunday desecration, and we should not hesitate where a Bishop was concerned more than if anyone else were the culprit, if we considered him really guilty of Sunday desecration. A hypercritical spirit, however, does a cause more harm than anything else and we cannot believe that these critics have so much regard for the day as that they are glad of an opportunity to throw mud at a good man.

ABOUT PREACHING.—There is one aspect of this controversy which ought by no means to be lost sight of. It may be suspected that, like other commodities, sermons have fallen under the law of supply and demand. If the market is flooded with bad sermons, it may be that the public will not take good ones, prophets being dangerously apt to prophesy according as they find 'the people love to have it.'

Of all the products of modern civilisation, the average British Churchgoer is the oddest. What does he go to Church for? Partly from habit, partly from a sense of propriety, partly for the quieting of his conscience, partly (if a pew renter) to get his money's worth out of his pew, partly to receive the edifying assurance that the things he already believes and does are the right things to be believed and done. The very last thing he goes for is instruction. Anything that sets him thinking, anything that makes him uneasy, anything that convinces him (after the manner of Socrates) that he does not know anything, is painfully repugnant to his feelings, and 'most unsuitable to the pulpit.'

The laity have much to answer for in this respect. They have usurped Queen Elizabeth's function of 'tuning the pulpits,' and it is no great wonder if the instrument gives an 'uncertain sound.' 'A clergyman,' said an earnest and intelligent layman in my hearing only last week, 'ought not to mix up in political party contests. It is his mission to preach peace.' Now, observe. Party contests are either incompatible with peace (in the Biblical sense) or they are not. If they are not,

the remark above quoted is merely pointless; if they are, then the laity have no more right than the clergy to make them: for though particular callings involve particular duties, the principles which should govern all Christians are identical. Now it is patent to all that without party contests the Queen's government cannot be carried on, that party contests are as necessary to the body politic as meat and drink are to the body individual, and that consequently if evil attaches to either, it lies not in the things themselves but in the abuse of them. Whether, then, a clergyman ought or ought not to mix up directly in party contests, he cannot pretend to ignore them. Like all human interests, they would furnish him with a text, and his sermon might do worse than expose and denounce every form of 'corrupt practice' besides those specified in the Act. The result would be to provoke to wrath everybody who was guilty of corrupt practice. In his opinion the preacher would have 'gone too far,' the reference would be voted 'injudicious' and 'bad form,' matters like these are better let alone, and clergymen should remember that it is their mission to 'preach peace'—in a style that shall be decorous, conventional, inoffensive, and useless.

I have given but one sample of what I take to be a widespread sentiment. It is a sentiment which has contrived to put asunder two things which God joined together, viz., preaching the Word and applying it. And the men who have brought about the severance are the men who complain that preaching is inapplicable to their needs, and that the clergy ought to be more men of the world, when, not content with restricting their religious guides to their proper sphere of action, they seek even within those limits to reduce their guides to impotence. So writes W. R. W. in *Church Bells*.

HINTS TO WRITERS.—To writers of less assured position, the matter of making clear, well-arranged, well-punctuated "copy" is a very practical consideration indeed. An editor may be willing to puzzle and stumble through a written article which he is sure he will find to be good; but to thus bother over a dozen manuscripts, of whose quality he has no notion, is to much for human nature.

To those who cannot or will not study the niceties of punctuation, it may yet be worth while to say that there are three rules, which comprise the "weightier matters of the law," and which, if invariably observed, will do wonders for "copy," that would otherwise be intolerably bad. Surely, it cannot be a very great task to keep in mind these three simple things:

1. Make sentences. Put an unmistakable period at the end of each; leave a wide space (as in print); and begin the next sentence with an unmistakable capital.

2. Make paragraphs. Do not make them long; and begin the first line of each far in from the margin.

3. Write proper names and unusual and technical words very plainly.

Even with many shortcomings, if only these three rules be carefully attended to, "thou shalt be (comparatively) upright, and thou shalt be innocent from the great transgressions."—*Queries*.

HUMILITY.—Humility is the vital principle of Christianity; that principle of which, from first to last, she lives and thrives, and in proportion to the growth of which, or decline, she must decay or flourish.—*Wilberforce*.

SINCERITY.—Be in reality what you would appear to be. If you observe you will find that all human virtues increase and strengthen themselves by the practice of them. Take my advice then and labour to acquire them.—*Townsend*.

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