

Dominion Churchman.

THE ORGAN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN CANADA.

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LESSONS for SUNDAYS and HOLY-DAYS.

FEBRUARY. SEXAGESIMA.
Morning—Genesis 14. Mark iv 1355.
Evening—Genesis vi. or viii. Romans x

THURSDAY, FEB 25, 1885.

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

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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

LAY CO-OPERATION.—Lord Nelson in a recent letter on re-union writes: "Lay co-operation is a thing that should be eagerly sought after; but here again, if you want to get the laity you must have the meetings at hours suitable to their mode of life. They are pleased at the management of their Temperance meeting and club, they should be pressed to join parochial associations. The school, and the clothing, and fuel, and medicinal clubs, should have working men of all religious views on their committees. The choir, the missions, the election to the Synod, and curate's meeting of churchwardens and synodsmen, should be regulated by a voluntary committee of Churchmen; and in all these things the rector or vicar would gain much more real power by winning his way by sound argument than by dictatorially making alterations without previous consultation with his parishioners. By the want of lay organization the parson is compelled to be an autocrat. He would have much more real power and win more sympathy as a limited monarch, with a voluntary body of lay workers, male and female, with whom he could take counsel. I know many parishes near London where many Nonconformists of the middle classes are coming over to the Church, but the universal testimony of the clergy is that these men always ask for work to do; this has been taught them by the zeal of the Dissenter, and it is a true lesson, for there can be no real living interest in a Society unless each member has some practical self-denying task to fulfil for the good of the whole body. Besides this combined effort of the various classes in a parish has a wonderfully healing influ-

ence, and would give the parson himself much greater knowledge of and sympathy with the male members of his congregation than he could ever gain in any other way, except in the rare cases of sickness, or once in a life when preparing the young men for Confirmation. I will allow it will give more trouble, but it will give more influence and many a blessing.

But the great desire is to extend these improvements to all classes, which can only be done by forming voluntary parochial councils from all sections of our people—church-goers, communicants, male and female, by election, and Church-workers duly appointed *ex officio*. To this body the approaching work of the Synod would be communicated, and all intended Church legislation, if any. But such a reform could easily be brought about by voluntary effort, and would only be a reality without State assistance.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION.—The Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, preaching recently at Bristol, took for his text the opening of the Book of Revelation, "The revelation of Jesus Christ," and said he believed that blessed book was not read, and was especially not used for devotional purposes, as it certainly ought to be. To many it was a sealed book; and yet it was especially commended to them by their Church, and at that solemn season, under present arrangements, read almost entirely through—this holy, blessed and consolatory book—at the concluding part of the year. As they knew, the Book of Revelation was not read in their Church until very lately, he remembered well the solemn joy that filled his heart and the hearts of those who thought with him when they succeeded in persuading all who formed part of the Revision Committee, of which he was one, to suggest for the reading publicly in their Church the Revelation of St. John. As they knew, there had been doubts and difficulties arising from the mysterious book from the first, but it was read publicly in the ancient church; and one of their councils decreed that it should be read during the time between Easter and Pentecost, that being the time deemed by the ancient Church, as it were, one continued Lord's day. No book had suffered more at the hands of the interpreters, from the days of Augustine down to their own times, than this Holy Book. It would seem as if every interpreter, however competent he might be in other portions of Holy Scripture to set forth God's truth, was here apt to be led away. The details of the book, rather than its broad and general scope, seemed from the first to have occupied and exercised the ingenuity of interpreters. And so, scarcely one interpretation of this book could be said, to agree with another. There was, as it were, a whole literature wholly concerned with the history and interpretation of St. John's Revelation. No doubt this very seriously impeded the devotional reading of the book. Now, thank God, a change had come over them, and the general aspect, the purpose and the broad outlines of the Book of Revelation were now more clearly recognised by their best interpreters. Now that pitiful ingenuity—for so he might speak of it—that was devoted to the details of the book, to setting forth its mysterious numbers, was, he trusted, gone for ever. Now they could take the blessed book in their hands with deeper reverence, and regard it as the text that was declared to be, the revelation of Jesus Christ that was disclosed by, and made by, their Lord and Master. This book they had the almost unanimous voice of the early Church commending as the writing of St. John the Apostle. Most of them knew that upon that point there had been, and still remained, some difference of opinion; but he ventured to say that if they consented to be guided by the unanimous voice of antiquity, they must put their doubt as to the authorship on one side. He therefore would speak of the book throughout unhesitatingly as that of St. John, for the more he read it the more he was persuaded that it came

from that beloved apostle. There could be no doubt as to its divine purpose—to reveal to them the things that should be hereafter, and more particularly the closing scenes in the history of the Church and the world; and in all, and through all, to bring nearer and more home to them the deepening struggles between the anti-Christian powers of the world and the Church, and the coming of Christ. If they read it in that spirit, it would bear a blessing to their souls which no words could overstate.

LIGHT DAWNING.—The speeches at the Islington Evangelical Clerical meeting this year are a striking illustration of the educational effect of the late crisis. The popular view of the Church of England used to be that she was created by the State at the Reformation, and endowed with the plunder of the old Catholic Church of England; that the visible Church of Christ was as purely a human institution as the Wesleyan Conference; that the Church in the New Testament sense of the word, meant no more than those whose names will at the last be found written in the Book of Life, that its constituents were therefore unknown to man, and that it was beyond the reach of human patronage or malice. On this theory, nothing effectual could be said in favour of the Church of England, and she must soon have gone down, had it not been for the appearance of the School, the leading tenet of which was that the Church of Christ spoken of in the New Testament always meant a visible Society built by the Master upon His Apostles, with one rite for initiation, another rite for maintaining membership, and with officers charged with authority to govern it, to censure offenders, and to expel the impenitent. This theory involved the admission that the Church's holiness would be blurred by unworthy members, it was pointed out that Christ had always said that tares would be mingled with the wheat till the day of harvest. Hence the Oxford School found no difficulty in maintaining that even if the faults of the mediæval Church were as great as some writers with much exaggeration insisted, there would be no reason for denying that it was a living portion of the Church which the Lord had founded. And now we find Sir Emilus Bayley reading at the Islington meeting what the *Record* calls "the paper of the day," and boldly saying "For thirteen centuries"—that is for the whole period since the coming of St. Augustine—our Church has held aloft, often in troublous times, the banner of the Cross, and helped to make England what she is!" Thus the Liberation Society has done us the inestimable service of welding High and Low together, or rather, we should say, of completing the slowly perfected work of the last half century.

HIGHER EDUCATION FATAL TO SECTISM.—Dr. Fairbairn, of Manchester, who is trying to write up a scheme for establishing a dissenting college at Oxford, has made a painful, but we should have thought not an unexpected, discovery. It is that "the education which they had so long struggled for"—that is to say by abolishing tests at the Universities—is proving a serious disaster. And he certainly proves his case; for out of twelve men who went up to the University from Tottenham only one has become a minister; and of the forty who have gone up from Mill Hill only two. Fifty-five Churchmen who went up from Manchester Grammar School yielded twenty-nine clergymen, whereas seventeen Dissenters only one minister. From Bradford Grammar School out of thirty-four who graduated ten have taken Holy Orders, and only one became a Dissenting preacher. "What," asks Dr. Fairbairn, "do these figures mean? It is that Nonconformity in all its branches is losing its choicest and its best sons;" But what could he expect? He surely did not suppose that men of education and culture would find any attraction in the Independent pulpit?