

Dominion Churchman.

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LESSONS for SUNDAYS and HOLY-DAYS.

May 6. SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION.
Morning—Deuteronomy xxx.; Luke xxiii. 26 to 50.
Evening—Deuteronomy xxxiv.; or Joshua i. 1 Thess. iii.

THURSDAY, MAY 8, 1888.

A COB WEB DILEMMA.—Professor Goldwin Smith is very fond of spinning cob-webs which he speaks of as though they were iron cages. He seldom writes about the Church without indulging in some oracular but illogical utterance; indeed, his very literary style and fame leads him into flippant dogmatism. Bystander presents us with this choice specimen of a *non sequitur*: "Either the immense majority of the bishops are heretics, in which case episcopacy can be no security for truth, or the Anglican Church is a schism: from this dilemma there is no escape." Now, in the first place, in numbering the bishops he omits those of the Eastern branch of the Catholic Church, a fact which vitiates his argument at the first stage. Then the implied statement that the Anglican Church regards the bishops of other branches of the Catholic Church as "heretics" is not true. The Roman branch of the Church Catholic being now under the supreme dominion of the Papacy, a power distinct from, alien to, the Church of Christ, is foolish enough to regard our clergy as heretics. But when the Catholic Church of Rome is freed from this tyranny, as it will be, Catholic principles will prevail over the present nonsensical bigotry now imposed upon her system by an usurping anti-Catholic power—the power we designate—"Popery." The Catholic Church of England having thrown off this tyranny, is too faithful to Catholic principles to imitate the policy of Popery, and therefore recognises the orders of Rome as valid. To speak of the Church of England as a "schism" in regard to Rome is to talk Popery, not history, not fact. Bystander's dilemma therefore is a mere cobweb which will only snare a few dilapidated sectarian flies.

NUMBERS NO TEST OF TRUTH.—Supposing we regarded the large body of Roman Bishops as heretics, that would have no logical relation whatever to the question of schism, excepting on the ground that truth is tested by the number of its adherents, a position which Prof. Smith manifestly commits himself to. Instead therefore of putting us into a dilemma from which there is no escape the professor has simply exposed his preference of a smart saying to a logical one. Episcopacy may or not be "a security for truth,"—the phrase is to us a very mysterious riddle, but verbal snap is not logic. If the professor wishes to put Churchmen into "a dilemma from which there is no escape," he must show us how we can be schismatics, cut off from a Church which is an integral part of the same Body to which we belong. A finger may be diseased and out of order, but it is still part of the hand.

IRRELEVANCE RUN WILD.—The choicest bit of irrelevance we have met with for years occurs in the attack made by Bystander upon the claim of

the English Church to antiquity, which seems to be a very irritating topic to this writer. The topic is a bit of red rag as it were, which makes his feathers rise, and his comb redden. Bystander says, "not until the reign of the second Stuart, was the communion table removed out of the body of the church to the chancel, or the congregation compelled to come up to the rails to receive the sacrament. This fact in itself would be total ruin to the argument from unbroken and immemorial tradition." We feel disposed to offer a prize to be given to any person who will discover the point of argumentative contact between these two sentences. We may tell Bystander that if the church thought proper an altar might be put in the porch without touching the argument of her antiquity. We have seen altars in all manner of places, rooms, fields even. The whole passage is a muddle of inaccuracies and irrelevancies.

ANOTHER SLIP BY THE PROFESSOR.—In the same paper as that in which Bystander confuses in a very odd way the standpoint of the Romanist with ours, he says, "the question must be what the Church of England really was during the first century of her independent existence," and he then goes on in the next sentence to speak of what happened in the reign of the first Stuart as evidence of what the church was in this "first century of independent existence." All this is very melancholy in a man of such position as Prof. Smith, who ought to know that the Church of England's first century of independent existence was not within many centuries the era of the Stuarts, or the Tudors even. This sort of talk won't do nowadays, our children know better than to swallow the Romanist bogus theory which makes the English Church a product of the Reformation. It is unworthy of a writer of Prof. Smith's powers and erudition to repeat the babble of the sects and of Rome merely because such babble is hurtful to the English Church. A historian far away above Prof. Smith, says: "The English Church, reverencing Rome but not bowing down to her, grew up with a distinctly national character. By the end of the 7th century the independent insular Teutonic church had become one of the brightest lights of the Christian firmament." Freeman's Norman Conquest (1.c. pp. 19. 20.)

THE HISTORIC POSITION OF ALTARS.—Bystander tells us that the English Church altars were taken in the reign of Charles out of the body of the church into the chancel and that such removal is fatal to our church's claim to antiquity, because, such is the argument, antiquity shows that the altar was placed in the east end of the chancel. A more tangled web of inaccuracies and irrelevancies never was spun. The oldest known altar stands in St. John's Lateran, Rome; it is of wood, and it is not in a chancel, it stands in the body of the church. The position of altars varied in different localities. The primitive altar was placed in the centre of the church and the celebrant stood on the east side and consecrated in full view of the worshippers. Later on the altar was moved more eastward. In the eastern church from the earliest times, the altar stood in the midst of the central apse, or body of the church. The stone tombs of the early martyrs served as altars in the catacombs, and in the 7th century portable altars came into use and later on were in constant requisition by travelling ecclesiastics. There are churches in England where the altar stands to day where it stood at the conquest, in the chancel; there are churches also where the altar is not in a chancel, nor ever was, nor ever probably will be. The contention, therefore, that the English Church or any part of her ceremonial is not ancient because certain of her altars were put into the chancels after the Reformation is so utterly unhistoric, so purely fanciful, that it deserves a place alongside the Roman and sectarian theory that the English Church was made at the Reformation. That theory is as false a one as Rome ever inspired or sectarianism ever swallowed.

THE SPOLIATION SOCIETY'S TACTICS.—The society in England which has the most extraordinary title of "Liberation Society" is inspiring its agents to tell untruths about Church property in two ways. First, they exaggerate largely the amount paid in tithes, then they state that this amount is paid to the church, and then they wholly conceal, suppress the fact that whatever the Church does derive from this source is as much her own as any man can call property of any kind his own, that it stands on the same footing as the endowments of the nonconformist bodies. As a matter of fact only about half of the total tithes, or a total of two and a half millions of pounds goes to the Church, the balance is paid to lay men. These tithes are absolutely the private property of the Church and have been since ages ago when Churchmen gave of their substance to provide for the Church. It is downright Communism to attempt to spoil the Church of this property. We have in the Land League Dynamite party an illustration of the natural result of robbing a Church in order to please a mob and satisfy the greed of Romanism. The so called Liberation Society in England should study the commandment, Thou shalt not steal, and try to liberate themselves from criminal covetousness.

THE POWER OF MUSIC.—There is something very invigorating in a bright frost, and the fresh morning air and sunshine are tonic alike to soul and body, and almost involuntarily tune the voice to a song of praise and joy. Music is surely essentially a heavenly gift. Our earliest thoughts of heaven are connected with singing and praise—so much so, that there have been times when it has seemed, maybe, that the "ever praising" of heaven might be wearisome. But does not this idea merely arise from the fact that song and melody are the only expression we now can give to an intense uplifting of heart, the outburst of long-pent joy and love? To the best of us as yet a language only half understood, to some even a painful jargon, it may there and then be the glorious medium of converse between God and His perfected creatures; and they who have known something of His "talks by the way" now, will be satisfied then with a power of response which here they longed for and lacked—the soul-filling language of heaven. There are few, probably, who have never felt a need of or longed for more power of expression. Words are often so painfully bare and weak, and unsuitable to the thoughts we wish to express. A man's God-given thoughts and teaching are so often lost to his fellows, unless, like Handel, Mendelssohn, and Beethoven, he can give forth his heart teaching in music; but even then it is the few only who hear with understanding. While the law of Babel lasts it must be so. The new earth alone will bring in the glorious voice of harmony.—Miss Jean, or Lives that Tell. S. P. C. K.

THE BRETHREN.—An estimable and scholarly member of the body known as Plymouth Brethren has called to complain of our using the word "Plymouth" to designate his co-religionists. This is not reasonable. He wishes us to say "brethren" only. Now, "Brethren" is no designation at all. We Churchmen are called "Brethren" by the Church in all her offices. There are also "Brethren" who are known as Moravians and others. Therefore to speak of a certain community by this word would be like calling a town "streets and houses," instead of by its proper name. He also says that the sentence "Let both grow together until the harvest," which upsets the Donatist heresy of the P. Brethren, means let them grow together in the "world," not in the Church because "the field," says our Lord, "is the world," and the world is never used except as the opposite of the Church. That won't do either, for in S. John's Gospel xvii. 11, Jesus used this word in the sense of a locality embracing the Church as well as those not of the Church; He says "I am no more in the world," so that if the world invariably means the opposite of Church, as the P. Brethren say, then the Lord Jesus was one of the world, that is one opposed to the Church!