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The Church Guardian.

Upholds the Doctrines and Rubrics of the Prayer Book.

"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."—Eph. vi. 24.
"Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."—Jude 3.

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CONTEMPORARY CHURCH OPINION.

The Church, (Philadelphia) after outlining the Bishop of Algoma's sermon at the opening of the last Provincial Synod says:—

The Bishop takes too much for granted when he assumes as a fact that all Churchmen will accept the statement that the *Christian communions about us hold all essential truth*. A well known Doctor of Divinity, who himself a few years ago took prominent part, with one of the most Protestant of our Protestant sects, in a celebration of a great anniversary of theirs, does not hesitate to say "that the spirit, which is the very spirit of Anti-christ, is largely developed among those who bear the Christian name, and are taken by the community for representatives of the Christian religion." Again he says, "the spirit of anti-dogmatic, anti-sacramental, and anti-sacerdotal Protestantism" is a "mitigated form of that very rationalism which denies the supernatural, rejects revelation, and finds no place for God in the world, or for Christ in the human heart and soul." While there is a rhetorical character about such sentences which cannot but amuse the sober student, the fact remains that some of our writers teach that the "Christian communities" about us do not hold the faith, but deny it in some of its most essential parts, and in this condemnation they include also not a few who are in the membership and Ministry of their own Church. The difficulties of the problem of reunion are all to be considered if we would guard against the indulgence of hopes that cannot be realized, and if we would propose plans and schemes which will not add to the divisions already existing in the Church of Christ.

The *Living Church* says:—

Some Churchmen excuse themselves from taking a Church paper on the ground that they get all the Church news they care for in the dailies. It may be true that they get all they care for, even in the monthlies, but in no secular periodicals do they get very much or very accurate Church news. There is scarcely any mention in the dailies of important events transpiring in the Church of England, and matters of great interest in the American Church are generally dismissed with a paragraph. We searched in vain.

The *Church Press* points out that the schismatic rents in Christendom are formidable hindrances to the rapid progress of the Gospel. Millions of dollars are annually wasted to strengthen schismatic walls of separation. If the Convention of the (P. E. church of the U. S.) of 1886 can adopt resolutions that will facilitate "the organic union of Christians," and our branch of Christ's Church will do its part to answer the prayer that "all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace and in righteousness of life," then our Church and missionary treasures could sound a prolonged Jubilate, and the dirge, "The Treasury is Empty," be no longer heard. And if Christians were one organic fold there would be ample

means to employ missionaries to preach the Gospel to all the heathen in foreign climes, and all the heathen in the vicinity of Christian churches.

North and East.—(Maine) under the head: Re-union of Christendom says: Re-union, that is the joining together in one, things which were once united. The re-union of Christendom, as we understand it, must mean the gathering together of all the different religious bodies into the one Holy Catholic Church. As a loving Mother anxious for the spiritual welfare of her children, the Church Catholic desires to show her readiness to receive back into her fold all those who are now holding different views the truth from those which she holds.

The spirit shown at the time by our branch of the Church is indeed most commendable. The cry for unity is heard throughout the land, and memorials are being largely signed urging the General Convention to take this great matter to heart and give forth some expression of opinion upon it which can be made in some way practically helpful. The discussion of this question can but do good, though it is open to very grave doubt whether any action of a practical nature will be taken by the Convention. It will have served a good purpose if it induces churchmen, both clerical and lay, to work more earnestly and devotedly than ever for the welfare of the Church, and by zeal and love for the truth, manifested always in consistency of life, to show to the world the power of the religion which they have within them.

The *Church News* (St. Louis) well remarks: Tell some people, who think themselves justified in being shy of religious truths, that such and such a thing is a "scientific" fact, and they implicitly believe it. Many scientific men are dogmatic, and very certain of their opinions injuring the cause of science, as Virchow said many years ago, by their hastily formed and unsupported theories. The scientific men have heretofore been immensely wise concerning earthquakes, when lo! an earthquake visits the earth behaving itself so contrary to all previously-held theories, and shaking the earth so extensively and extraordinarily that the scientific men have had all their knowledge, and wisdom, and theories about earthquakes shaken out of them. This late earthquake is a lesson in humility if nothing else, and teaches with emphatic clearness that the mysteries of nature are not suddenly to be solved.

The *Family Churchman*, (London, Eng.), asserts: that the popular scepticism of the age is producing its natural counteractions. Our best men are declaring themselves, with more and more directness and force, on the side of Christianity. In the memoir of the late editor, Dr. James Wakley, the *Lancet* says he made a special request that a confession of faith should be introduced into any notice of his life, and asked that it should be known that he was not among those scientific experts who reject religion. "Feeling (he said), my deep responsibility to God for the position in which, in His providence, He has placed me, I desire to

testify to the comfort derived during my sickness from a lively faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and that I die in the sure hope of a glorious resurrection." Dr. Wakley was a Churchman.

"Church Bells," lately contained a letter from I. R. V., in which the following occurs in reference to a remark of the Bishop of Leche field that he was 'tempted to regret the prevalent abandonment of the old custom of a private prayer offered in the pulpit itself.'

Now, is the church the place for private prayer, when once the service has begun? Is not the whole, between the beginning and ending, a service of common prayer and praise? Earnestly should the preacher pray, before preaching; but should not this private devotion be before, and during the preparation of the sermon; and in the quiet study, before he comes to lead the worship of the congregation? In the evening (and sometimes in the morning) there will be a hymn before the sermon. Does it commend itself to the mind as suitable for the leader of the worship to be (while the congregation is engaged in the service of praise) engaged in private prayer in their midst? I trow not. Neither can it be suitable, in going to the Altar, to kneel in private devotion during the hymn after the Litany. A pause before the Prayer of Consecration, when all the congregation is silent also, and the people are kneeling, is a different matter. But one valid argument against the black gown for the sermon was just this: Why should the priest be shut out from the hymn (to which he has just invited the people) in order that he may effect a change of vestments for preaching.

The *Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette*, has the following from a correspondent, which is of interest to Canadian Churchmen in view of their elected Bishops. Upon what principle do we give the title "lord" to our bishops? Upon this reasonable principle—the superiority of their rank, and the nature of their office have a right to recognition, and especially from them over whom their office is exercised. A judge is styled "My Lord" from the nature of his office. So, too, is a lord, president; so, too, one who rules. It is not necessary that any of these should have an inch of land. By party of reasoning a bishop may without scruple be addressed as "My lord." For what are his functions? *Archein kai ierateusin*, says Ignatius. "To rule and to judge," says the Pastoral Epistles. He is a *Proestos*, or President, says Justin Martyr. Now, when there is a rightful claim to any or all of these functions, surely as long as bishops are bishops they have a right claim to be entitled "My Lord Bishop." Your correspondent asks for some authorities for the title. I give a few which occur to me. St. Augustine, in Sermon xciv., begins thus—"My lord and fellow-bishops have deigned to visit us." Theodoret entitles them "Most honourable" (Eccles. Hist. V. c. 8.) Justinian terms them "Your highness," "Your blessedness," (Cod. i.) A few days ago a Scottish bishop, on presenting the Patriarch of Jerusalem with a Greek copy of the divine Liturgy of the Scottish Church, styled his brother as