

The Canadian Churchman

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Hymns from the Book of Common Praise, compiled by Dr. Albert Ham, F.R.C.O., Organist and Director of the choir of St. James' Cathedral, Toronto.

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

(October 5th.)

Holy Communion: 262, 373, 397, 525.

Processional: 377, 599, 601, 635.

Offertory: 463, 478, 631, 638.

Children: 509, 702, 703, 707.

General: 11, 309, 317, 710.

The Outlook

The Ontario Provincial Synod

The first meeting of the Synod of the new ecclesiastical Province of Ontario, held in Toronto last week, was in several respects a noteworthy gathering. We welcome it as indicative of the necessary and legitimate development of our Church life, and we hope that its influence may be felt in all parts of the Province. In discussing the question of religion in our schools, the Synod was dealing with one of the most pressing problems of our day, and we are particularly glad to know that a Committee has been formed to consult with other Churches on this vital question. It is strongly felt by many earnest Christian men of various denominations that the present state of religious knowledge and influence among our children is a very serious factor in the future life of the Dominion, and if only the Protestant Churches can unite on a proper scheme, no Government is likely to refuse it acceptance. Only the other day a leading Baptist clergyman from Australia confessed quite frankly to the change of view he had experienced by reason of his contact with conditions in Australia,

making him an enthusiastic supporter of the policy of the Bible in the schools. It ought not to be impossible to arrive at a solution of this question, and our Synod would be well-advised to make enquiries as to the plan adopted in England in the syllabus of religious teaching in County Council Schools, arranged by the Religious Tract Society. This plan has been at work for several years with decided success, and there seems no reason why a modification of it should not have the same results in Canada. Another matter of discussion was whether the Synod should meet as one House, or with two separate Houses for the Bishops and for the clergy and lay members. Our own convictions and sympathies go entirely with the pleas so ably made by Provost Macklem and Archdeacon Ingles in favour of one House, as not only more suited to these democratic days, but as in every way more likely to conduce towards the more thorough efficiency of our Church life and progress. The majority in favour of the separate Houses was so small (31 to 30) that we may well hope the welcome change will be made before very long. It would be as advantageous to the Bishops as it would be to the Church in general, and, as efficiency is rightly insisted upon to-day, we must not allow our Church to lag behind.

The British Association

Nothing could be more strikingly in contrast with the address of last year's President of the British Association, Professor Shaefer, than Sir Oliver Lodge's presidential address at Birmingham this year. A year ago Dr. Shaefer adduced reasons for believing that science has approached very closely to the proof that mankind is nothing more than a mass of matter. This year Sir Oliver Lodge argued in support of the contention that life is infinitely more than matter, and that the non-material element cannot possibly be ignored. As long as these two diametrically opposed views are championed by leading scientists there need be no question as to the relations of theology to science, just as though everything scientific were tending in one direction. While Dr. Shaefer spoke of "Life," Sir Oliver Lodge addressed himself to the subject of "Continuity," and urged that it is impossible to stop with the purely physical, and that the supernatural must of necessity be included. Sir Oliver Lodge has more than once discussed the subject of continuity after death, but his recent pronouncement is the boldest statement of his belief up to the present time. Whether his view of Psychological Research is true or not, there is no doubt that the great mass of the best scientific thought of to-day is in favour of a spiritualistic, not a materialistic, view of the universe. Professor Shaefer's address naturally gave a great deal of concern to Theistic and Christian thinkers, but Sir Oliver Lodge's address will have precisely the opposite effect, and show that "there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of" in present-day materialism.

"The New Agnosticism"

The London "Times" has an article on Sir Oliver Lodge's address under the above heading, and refers to the way in which science during recent years has tended more and more in the direction of infallibility:—

"The whole discourse is a protest against arrogance. In recent years science has been asserting its claims against a dogmatic theology. Perhaps some over-

assertion was necessary, but over-asserting there certainly was. The public awoke to find that they had only exchanged one priesthood for another. The laws of science were more sacrosanct than Holy Writ. Nothing which could not be weighed or measured was allowed any validity. In the mildest form this bigotry called itself agnosticism."

This is a welcome word, and one that will do great service to the cause of truth. In our avoidance of what has been called the "odium theologium" we must be particularly careful not to be troubled by any "odium scientificum." Knowledge is knowledge whencesoever it springs, and we must not hesitate to distinguish rigidly between fact and theory, between certainty and assumption. Hypotheses may be brilliant, suggestive, and valuable, but after all they are not necessarily convincing in their truth.

The Origin of Life

The British Association has been discussing the question opened last year by Professor Shaefer regarding the origin of life. Several solutions were suggested and many differences of opinion revealed. But it is interesting to know that on one point there was entire agreement. It was that we are no nearer the solution of the origin of life than people were a century ago. Professor Moore, of Liverpool, expressed the belief that he had found the first step in organic evolution. Sir Oliver Lodge criticized this statement by describing Professor Moore's discovery as "potential living matter"; not the origin of life, but the vehicle which life can use. Another Professor, well known in the realm of chemistry, expressed his inability to accept the contention that it was even possible they would ever arrive at the chemical production of life. All this is particularly interesting to those who are old-fashioned enough to believe in the first words of Genesis. Life must come from a Life-Giver, and however far back we may push our researches and whatever may be discovered as to scientific facts, the great minds of science will only be able to tell us about method, not about source. We shall always need to be taught the old truth that life in its origin can only come from God.

A Solemn Illustration

The other day a store collapsed in Peterboro', Ontario, resulting in the death of five people, and, according to an opinion expressed at the inquest, the collapse was due to a wall carelessly built fifty years ago. The work was not properly executed, and the result was that when special strain was put upon the structure it gave way, causing the outer walls to bulge and the floors to fall in. The beams used where the wall between the two stores had been removed rested only upon six inches of a solid brick wall, and the collapse was due to weakness which had been crushed down by the weight it had been required to carry. A Toronto architect also said that the bricks were soft, and the mortar was very poor; indeed, he was of the opinion that he could have pulled down the wall, brick after brick, with his hand. It is most searching and solemn to realize that all these deaths, with their attendant sorrows, are due to an error of fifty years ago. What a suggestion it gives of the significance of life, of the absolute relation between cause and effect, and of the necessity of truth and genuineness in all our relationships! Work that lasts, in any department of life, must spring from true character.