

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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NOTHING BETTER THAN CHRISTIANITY.

We have learned to look upon Jesus Christ, the founder and life of our religion, as perfect. We have never thought or imagined of a purer being than He. Even they who hold that we have not arrived at the true form of religion, concede to Jesus the best of motives, and the noblest of characters. Among all the founders of religions Jesus stands pre-eminent, and when we have experienced His love, when we have become acquainted with His life as it is revealed to us in His gospel, we must exclaim that under the heavens there never breathed a purer, lovelier, holier and more sympathetic being than Jesus. Now when these men advance the idea of something better than Christianity, they must take into consideration the finding of a purer and better character than Christ. It will be impossible for them to substitute anything better than Christianity until they have some one better than its founder. But where will they look for this being? Where is the prophet who can ever hope to approximate even to the purity and unselfishness of Jesus Christ? He stands alone among men, "the chiefest among ten thousand," and the one "altogether lovely." He is the only perfect flower that has budded out of the human race. Even His enemies have borne testimony to the excellence of His character.—While they have denied His supernatural claims, and have endeavored to destroy His religion, the unparalleled perfections of His life have compelled them to accord to Him the highest place among the sons of men. Now if the religion of this Christ is too narrow, if they want something wider, more liberal, more rational, their want implies the necessity of a being of wider knowledge, of greater sympathy, and of purer motives than those of Jesus. Can such a being be found? These men might as well seek for a source of heat that is in advance of our sun, which gives warmth and light and life to our planet, as to seek for any one who is in any manner an improvement upon the Sun of Righteousness.

What improvement could there be upon Christianity in the matter of sympathy, of actual help and encouragement for those who are cast down and in trouble? Men in all ages have propounded ways, and in their worldly wisdom have devised means whereby the race might be healed of its sorrow, and all have failed. What paganism did for Greece and Rome is shown by the graphic description of their terrible immoralities given us in the first chapter of Romans. The religion of India offers very little of comfort and help to its people, which may clearly be seen by the degradation of the nation. It is the same with the religion of Mahomet. These religions may all teach man his misery, but leave him in it. They know not a way out of it. They have not felt the healing influence and power of Him who said, "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." If men in their dreams and fantasies have ever imagined anything better or higher than this, why do they not propose it? Why do they not state it plainly, so that the burdened, the oppressed, the weary, with their heavy loads and aching hearts and tearful eyes might look to this better healer, and be relieved of all their woes? But they are silent, and the human soul craves nothing better than Jesus.—*Christian World.*

OUR CHURCH'S MISSIONARY WORK.

The Bishop of Minnesota, in his address to the Twenty-fifth Annual Council of his Diocese, speaking of "Missions," and of the influence to be exerted by our race, says:—

"Ours is a historical Church which has preserved the faith, the ministry, and the Sacraments which our Lord appointed for the salvation of men. Ours is a missionary Church which bears our Lord's commission to go into all the world and tell all men everywhere the message of God's love. Ours is a pure branch of the one Catholic Church, and ought to be in this land 'the Church of reconciliation,' bearing the olive branch of God's peace and breaking down the hedges of man's building in the garden of the Lord.

"In the conflict with unbelief which is at hand, all Christians have the right to expect the Church to take her place in the thickest of the battle. We have no right to limit our responsibility to the field which is at our own door. These truths are indisputable.

"1. God has made of one blood all nations. The black man of Africa, the yellow man of China, the swarthy Islander of the Pacific, the red Indian and the white man have one common humanity. They suffer from the same diseases. They are healed by the same medicines. They all feel hunger, thirst, cold and heat. They fear, they hope, they love, they hate, they suffer, they die, they are men.

"2. Jesus Christ has redeemed this humanity. From the realms of Paradise He looks down upon all who share His human nature with the same un-failing pity and love. The humblest man who bears this humanity may be elevated to sit on the right hand or the left hand of Christ in His kingdom.

"3. There are no limitations in His commission to favored races of men. Missionary work is a condition of the existence of the Church. It is the law of our personal union with Christ. A man cannot love God who does not love his brother also. Brothers, are our gifts, our labors and our prayers the measure of our privilege and duty? Bear with me. I fear they reveal our lack of faith and our lack of devotion to Him Who has redeemed us by His blood."

CHRISTIANITY VS. ATHEISM.

The Bishop of Manchester, in one of his recent addresses, drew this striking contrast between the demands on men's faith in regard to Christianity and Atheism. He said:—

He would admit that Christianity had its difficulties, and there were points on which they might desire that the revelation had been fuller and more clear; but those things were ordered for them by One whom they believed to be wiser and whom they knew to be stronger than themselves. There was sufficient light for a man to walk by who did not deliberately choose darkness, and he was not going to try to escape from those small difficulties by plunging into accepting the infinitely greater difficulties and perplexities of the creed of atheism. To call upon him to believe that this wonderful universe, with its varied courses and wonderful controlling mechanism, these worlds upon worlds in space, until he was lost, and his mind and brain became dazed in the contemplation of them—to ask him to believe that all these things came by

chance, and that he himself, with all the wonderful faculties with which God had endowed every human being, was developed by protoplasm from a germ without any designing providence of God governing him, was asking him to believe what to his mind was absurd and impossible. And so because there were difficulties in his faith which he could not explain, he was not going to accept the infinitely greater difficulties of the creed of atheism, for it did not make the theory of life easier, but a thousand times more difficult to say there was no God, no Christ, no Holy Spirit, no soul, no life beyond.

POLITICS AND THE CHURCH.

We have several times pointed out that the non-political temper of the English Church, and the unwillingness of the clergy of the present day to identify themselves collectively with any party in the State, bring with them moral advantages which more than counterbalance the wrongs inflicted by Parliament in the dissenting interest upon the National Church during the last thirty years. What Nonconformists have been gaining with one hand, in the shape of encroachments on the rights of Churchmen, they have been losing with the other in the decrease of spiritual vitality amongst themselves, ever since they have copied the worst fault of the Church of England as it was but lately, by looking to Acts of Parliament, rather than to internal reforms, to political drill and organization, rather than to piety and diligence, to strengthen and assure their religious position in the country. Just so, the remarkable strides which have been made by the Church in the United States during the last twenty years, is attributed largely by competent observers to the fact that the Church pulpits were the only ones which were not turned into political rostra during the civil war; the Church was the only place where words and thoughts of peace could be found through that prolonged agony.—*Church Times.*

EVANGELISTIC EMPYRICISM.

The tide of public sentiment is turning us to the propriety of making use of sensationalism of any sort to attract the people to Houses of Worship. Thoughtful and shrewd men of the world see through the trick and appreciate it.

The Presbyterian *Christian Observer*, of Louisville, Kentucky, is outspoken. It is certain that Barnes, the "Mountain Evangelist," produced no permanent good results in Kentucky.

"But such men," it says, "do a vast amount of evil. They 'burn over' the field, scaring and killing consciences. The difference between genuine Gospel preaching and sensationalism is always seen by this infallible test. Under the faithful preaching of the Word, consciences become fresh and vital, like grass, and that freshness never fades, but the spiritual element in the soul becomes predominant; while both intellectual faith and moral sensibility suffer the greatest harm from the trifling of such 'Evangelistic' simoons."

Men of the stamp referred to above have brought religion into disrepute, and have led very many to turn away from it with almost loathing. And yet on every hand we hear of bold imposters, whose abilities to speak has gained them pulpits where they may do harm.