

## Church News.

ENGLAND.—The following petition was laid before the Convocation of York, which met on the 6th ult.:

The humble petition of the undersigned (clergy or laity),

Sheweth—1. That this realm is grievously injured by its religious divisions, whereby Christians are separated from one another in the common acts of worship.

2. That, according to Holy Scripture and primitive antiquity, nothing more was required for union among the faithful than Baptism, the reception of the Holy Communion, and the holding the Creeds of the Universal Church.

Your petitioners therefore pray that your honourable house would be pleased to take some steps for the healing of these divisions, either—

1. By an appeal to unity, based on the grounds above mentioned; or,

2. By appointing a committee of your honourable house to confer with Nonconformists on the terms of union, and to devise the way whereby the ministers of the various Nonconforming bodies may be brought into co-operation and unity with the clergy of the Church.

After an interesting debate, in which the strong desire of the Convocation for unity was very manifest, the resolution, amended as follows, was unanimously adopted, viz:—

That whereas the union of all faithful Christians is earnestly to be desired, and as many of the causes which led to the separation of the Wesleyans from the Church of England are sensibly diminished, this house would cordially welcome any practical attempt to effect a brotherly reconciliation between the Wesleyan Body and the Church of England.

About eleven years ago a movement was made in the Convocation of Canterbury towards the same end, but came to nothing, because the mode of admission offered by the Church to Dissenters was simply absorption,—“lay down your arms and come in.” But now, some propose that the Wesleyan body be invited to come in, not individually, but as a Body, ordination thenceforth to be Episcopal, and the preachers (not ordained) to be allowed under Episcopal supervision, still to labour as preachers, but that the Sacraments be administered by Episcopally ordained clergymen. Men of mark, it is proposed, shall be made bishops. It is not too much to say that such concessions in Wesley's days would have retained the Wesleyans.

The desire for the increase of the Episcopate is rapidly working its way. The following resolution passed in the Convocation of York, with but two or three dissenting voices;—

That in the opinion of this house, an extension of the home Episcopate is urgently needed, and that such extension will be best secured by the creation of three new sees, and by the appointment of a Suffragan Bishop in each diocese containing not less than 500,000 souls.

The question of popular education, forced on by the recent enlargement of the franchise, is now exercising the English mind a good deal. The “godless” system, or that which excludes doctrinal (religious) teaching from the public schools, is very distasteful to the more religious part of the nation. The Prussian system of compulsory attendance at the schools does not find general favour. The free-school system, without these drawbacks, is gaining ground, viz., free schools in which religion is permitted to be taught at stated times during the week to all children who are permitted by their parents to receive such instruction.