

SUMMARY OF CHURCH NEWS.

As is usually the case at this time of the year, but little is to be found in the Ecclesiastical intelligence which is of general interest. We have gone over most of our exchanges and have scarcely been able to glean anything which we deem suitable for our periodical. We have not yet heard anything of the effects of Dr. Colenso's return to Natal, but the latest tidings from those quarters inform us that in a letter to the Minister and Churchwardens of St. Paul's, D'Urban, the Bishop of Capetown had reiterated his "determination to ex-communicate Bishop Colenso and his adherents should he resume his Episcopal functions."

We notice that two new Colonial Bishoprics have been founded, that of Dunedin, New Zealand, and that of New Westminster, British Columbia. Rev. Henry L. Jenner, L. L. B., vicar of Preston-next-Wingham, near Sandwich, has been nominated to the former, and the Rev. John Postlethwaite, M. A. Incumbent of Coatham, Yorkshire, to the latter. We are also informed on the best authority that the Bishopric of Victoria (Hong Kong.) vacant by the resignation of Dr. Smith, will not be suppressed, as there was reason to fear it would be.

When our last number was issued we had only received a part of the report of the Church Congress at Norwich. Of the remainder perhaps the most interesting discussion was on "Preaching—Its adaptation to the Present Time." At the risk of bringing before some of our readers what they have already seen we make an extract or two from the addresses. Dean Alford, who opened the discussion in the course of his remarks said:

"Most of our written sermons are too long. It is not the fancied requirements of the subject, but the well-known effect on the hearers, which is to be considered. Few sermons of forty-five minutes or an hour might not have been better compressed into half an hour, which should certainly be our *maximum*. If, in the condensation, the expletives are struck out, and fine writing pruned away, so much the better. We all aim too much at rhetorical effect. We all confuse our arguments too much by illustration. In composing, we ought to ask ourselves what is most likely to penetrate the hearts of our hearers and to abide there; and the answer, if we give it honestly, unbiassed by personal vanity will be, earnest thought expressed in simple words. We are apt to forget, even while we profess it, that 'we preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord;' and while in the matter of our sermons He is chief, in their diction and style we are often aiming to get ourselves credit by the setting forth of Him. There is nothing which requires more unsparing self-denial than the really effective sermon. All mere display of learning, all 'pride that apes humility,' all that savours of petty cleverness, all that, when read over, flatters the man, should be ruthlessly erased. Let the sentences be plain and intelligible, going about their work, and nothing but their work, freed from the hindrances thrown in its way by unusual words, startling or obscure thoughts, and traps laid for applause."

Rev. J. C. Ryle said:

"There was a vulgar error abroad that an educated clergy were not the people to deal with the poor. He did not believe it. There were many who said, 'It is all very well for the clergy to educate the middle classes and the upper ten thousand, but if you want to do good to the poor, send some Nonconformist minister—some city missionary, or Scripture-reader, who has never been at Oxford or Cambridge. He is the man to do good to the poor.' This was not true. Many of the Nonconformists used words far more above the comprehension of their hearers than those employed by the clergy. Superficial and half educated men were far more apt to cover their want of knowledge by long-winded dictionary words than men of education. They ought never to concede that the Church of England and the Prayer-Book were not admirably adapted for the wants of our country parishes. He did not concede that the times in which we live demanded anything new in the matter of doctrine. The old Gospel of Christ was not worn out or effete. They had only to follow the old paths which had been the power of God unto salvation in days gone by. In their country pulpits they must forget the style in which they had written at Oxford and Cambridge, and endeavour to suit the intellect of the persons they addressed. They must give expression to ideas the humblest could comprehend, and use language the most ignorant could understand. As St. Augustine said, a golden key might be a very beautiful thing to look at, but if it would not unlock the door a wooden key was much better."