

Symposium.

WHAT ATTITUDE SHOULD THE CHURCH ASSUME TOWARDS THE LABOR QUESTION ?

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WHEN the writer received an invitation to take part in a *Symposium*, he did what he thought was a wise thing—consulted a Lexicon. Imagine, therefore, how his sense of propriety was shocked when he learned, that Symposium signified a merry feast, a convivial party, in which the guests drink together and have a jolly time of it ! This seemed rather suspicious on the part of a journal conducted by theological students, and issuing from halls within which morals and decorum are carefully guarded. But reflection brought about a revulsion of feeling. It is to be a sober gathering, after all, with a capable symposiarch at its head, to check any tendencies which there might be to undue hilarity.

The theme commands our respect—"THE CHURCH AND THE LABOR QUESTION." It may be necessary to ask—Is there a Labor Question ? and if so, What is it ? By putting it this way we place interrogation marks after many broad interests, and cover some of the most promi-

nent phases of modern Socialism. Among the triumphs of this nineteenth century must be placed its discovery of the working man. He has come to the front and says he will stay there until he gets his rights. Newspapers, magazines, politicians and parliaments, are giving time, thought and space to the discussion of subjects which bear upon his interests. "We are all Socialists now," is the admission of Sir William V. Harcourt. There is a Labor Question, and it is, -How best to improve the social and material condition of the working man ? This is the question of the hour. When Christian governments put power into his hands, it required no oracle to inform us that he would use it for his own advantage. He has a new conception of the rights of labor ; but this conception does not always take into account the rights of his neighbour across the street.

To obtain an intelligent view of the question before us, it is necessary