

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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ECCLESIASTICAL NOTES.

BISHOPRIC OF WAKEFIELD.—The Bishop of Ripon has arranged to preside at a series of meetings to be held in the towns of West Yorkshire, in aid of the movement for raising the £90,000 required for the proposed Bishopric of Wakefield; towards which about £25,000 has been promised. In aid of this object a meeting will also be held in the Mansion House, London.

SUNDAY SCHOOL WORK IN IRELAND.—The Archdeacon of Dromore, Dr. Stewart, preaching the annual sermon on behalf of the parish schools of Holywood parish, near Belfast, on Sunday week, mentioned in the course of his address that there were some 30,000 children attending the Sunday Schools of the united dioceses every week.

CANADIAN CHURCH CONGRESS.—Archdeacon Farrar will leave for Quebec in September next. He expects to spend some time in the States, but has intimated his intention to accept, if possible, the invitation of the Congress Committee and take part in the next Congress of the Church in Canada, to be held in the City of Montreal in October next.

THE NATIONAL SOCIETY WORK.—From the sixty-fourth report of the National Society (of England) it seems that the Church of England has now 2,454,788 school places, with 2,121,728 pupils on the registers, and 1,607,823 in average attendance. The voluntary contributions of the Church last year amounted to £585,071. The accommodation in Church schools increased in the year by 41,112 places, and the average attendance by 45,310. Large sums were also expended on building and improvements. During the existence of the National Society, the Church has spent about thirty millions sterling on education.

FREE AND OPEN CHURCH ASSOCIATION OF THE P. E. C. IN THE U. S.—A fund has been established by this Association for the purpose of aiding in the erection of Free Churches. This fund is to be held by the Treasurer separately from other moneys of the Association, and payments from it, except when specially designated by the donors, to be made by the order of the Board of Council only.

Very satisfactory progress has been made in public opinion favorable to the principles it advocates during the ten years of its existence. This progress is shown, not only by the number of parishes which have been converted to the Free System, but by a more willing disposition throughout the Church to discuss fairly and dispassionately the questions at issue. Nearly two-thirds of the Churches and Chapels of this country, excluding those of the Missionary Jurisdictions, are now free. In the Diocese of Florida, all the Churches are free, and in a number of other Dioceses there are only a few parishes depending on pew-rents. And in the Diocese of Maine there is only one Church wholly supported by pew rental, and one in which pew rental and offertory are combined. The offertory, also, as a means of support, has grown more and more into favor, many parishes depending wholly upon it.

Of the whole number of Churches and Chap-

els in the respective Dioceses of the U.S. viz.—3055, 2106 are free.

It may then be confidently asserted, that the absolute gain in free Churches in six years has been more than fifty per cent, or 756 parishes; and that as the entire increase in parishes was but 300, no less than 456 of the older ones have been converted to the system, supposing that every one of the 300 new ones is worked upon that system.

RELIGIOUS LIFE IN ENGLAND AS IT NOW IS, CONTRASTED WITH WHAT IT WAS EIGHTY YEARS AGO (BY A WORKING MAN).—Almost as great a contrast might be drawn between the religion of our land as it now is, and as it was at the beginning of the century. It needs no pen or paint-brush to describe it as it is, for evidences of its life and activity are visible everywhere. New churches and conventicles of beautiful architecture have sprung up in all our large towns, and amongst the green trees of isolated hamlets. Pay a visit to the church of any well-to-do village, and ten to one but we find that it has lately been either rebuilt, or restored, or repaired and beautified. Its stately tower, like a stony-finger, points incessantly heavenwards, reminding the living of the life beyond the grave. Under its shadow lie the earthly remains of those who have already "shuffled off this mortal coil." Above them the grass is green and well kept, the grave-stones are clean and white, and all the flowers and evergreen shrubs are in nice order. Then the doors of the sacred edifice are ever open for the benefit of those who wish to retire apart to meditate, and the bell frequently tolls, calling worshippers to pray. Inside all is warm and bright, and beautiful and clean. The free and unappropriated benches show that here

• "The poor man meanly dressed
Is as welcome as the best."

SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL.—The annual meeting of the S.P.G. took place on Wednesday afternoon, June 3rd, at St. James' Hall, under the presidency of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The report states that the income of the Society during the last year was £110,039, an increase on that of the previous year, though £2,450 less had been received in subscriptions and donations. The number of ordained missionaries now on the Society's list is 544. Of these 168 are laboring in Asia, 135 in Africa, 17 in Australia and the Pacific, 197 in North America, 26 in the West Indies, and 1 in Europe. There are also in the various missions of the Society about 1,600 catechists and lay teachers, mostly native, and about 350 students in the Society's colleges; 221 persons were added to the list of incorporated members during the year 1884. The report gives interesting accounts of the progress of the Society's missions in all parts of the world, especially in India. The Archbishop said the report contained a record of continual progress, and he hoped the withdrawal of any grants was only temporary. He showed how missionary work had passed through three phases—1. The personal phase; 2. The governmental phase; and 3. The society phase. In very early days men of great power and capacity, with mighty ideas of the unification of churches and peoples, did the work. This

Armenia was converted by Gregory the Enlightener; Ethiopia and Abyssinia by two brothers, Ireland by St. Patrick, and Gaul by St. Martin. Next came the governmental epoch; when rulers converted nations, as did Charles the Great, by offering their people the option of the rivoer or the sword, and after naming several saintly men living during that violent time who really did the work, he especially mentioned Cyril and Marthusius, who converted Bulgaria and South Russia, as brilliant lights, whose motto was especially appropriate in our day—"The Word of God in the common speech of men."

THE DEATH OF BEDE.—We have a simple, but most graphic, account from the pen of one who was present, one of Bede's devoted pupils. There are few things more touching in the whole range of English history. For two weeks before Easter, in the year 735, he had been suffering from severe attacks of asthma, but, nevertheless, continued his usual devotions and teaching; and, being skilled in English poetry, he would remind his pupils in simple verses of death's stern "must go," and of the need to consider beforehand the account one will have to give. Besides his teaching, he was striving to finish two works for the use of his scholars, some extracts from the works of St. Isidore, and a translation of the Gospel of St. John. At the dawn of the fourth day of the Ascension week (Wednesday) he told his pupils to write diligently that which they had begun, and they did so until nine o'clock. Then they had to leave him for the services of the day. But one of them remained with him, and said to him: "Dearly beloved master, one chapter is still wanting; but my asking any more questions seems to be painful to you." But Bede replied: "It does not trouble me; take your pen and be attentive, and write quickly." At three o'clock, he told his scribe to fetch the presbyters, that he might divide his small possessions among them—spices, kerchiefs, and incense. He addressed each of the brethren singly, and entreated them to be diligent in celebrating masses and praying for him. They all wept until he said: "It is time that I returned to Him Who made me. I have had a long time upon the earth. The merciful Judge has also been pleased to ordain for me a happy life. The time of my departure is at hand, for I have a desire to depart, and to be with Christ." And, talking in this strain he lived on till evening. Then the lad, who had been acting as scribe, said to him: "Still one sentence, dear master, remains unwritten." He replied: "Write quickly." After a while the boy said: "Now the sentence is finished." He answered: "You have spoken the truth; it is indeed finished. Raise my head in your hands, for it pleases me much to recline opposite to that holy place of mine in which I used to pray; so that while resting thus, I may call upon God my Father." And, being placed upon the pavement in his cell, he said: "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost," and, as soon as he had named the name of the Holy Spirit, he breathed out his own spirit, and passed away to the kingdom of heaven. "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."—Dr. Plummer.