

# 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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## CHRISTIAN MISSIONS.

IN the minds of many professedly Christian people there lurks a practical skepticism regarding missions. They would not seek to controvert the broad general theory that the Gospel of Jesus Christ should be preached to all people, and that every creature should hear the glad tidings of His salvation, but when it is proposed to adopt that theory as a ground work for action, when men in a spirit of self-abnegation, out of personal devotion to Christ, offer themselves for His work in distant lands, or for the waste places of our own country, and members of the Church at home are earnestly appealed to for gifts, and prayers, and sympathy, to support those who have gone forth, the response but too frequently denotes the indifference which many feel toward such enterprises, or doubt as to their value. "What good will it all do?" is frequently on the lips or in the minds of those thus solicited. "Why need we fret ourselves over the condition of distant heathen, while so many are without the knowledge of God at our very door?" The first grand foundation upon which Christian missions rest is the imperative command of Christ. "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."

So long as the Church shall remain loving and loyal to her Master, that word is sufficient warrant for her advance, even though the fruit of her labors should be hidden from her eyes. If we believe Him all-wise and omniscient, we may tread in faith the path to which He points, though ignorant of its course and its termination.

But what man of experience, or of earnest desire to know the truth, can imagine that the Divine commandment is our only witness to the excellence of this work, and that there are not numberless proofs of the blessings which it confers both upon those who labor to advance its interests, and those who partake of the good things which it truly gives. We are persuaded that this skepticism, of which we speak, regarding the necessity of missions, and doubt as to the benefits which they confer, is founded mainly upon ignorance of that happiness which flows from Christ-like labor for others, and the spiritual and material advantages which it affords to those who in no other way could obtain them.

Who are they who are most earnest and devoted in this cause? Who give prayers and time and money abundantly to its support? Those who take the deepest interest in the welfare of men and women about them at home, and concern themselves most assiduously with the Church's work at their own doors. They have found that the command of Christ bears its blessings with it, that in doing good to the least of these His brethren, they have done it unto Him. They have come to believe that if Christ, their Lord and Master, stooped to wash the feet of His disciples, they should deem it no shame to wash the feet of one another, since by such acts of humility they enter into the mind and work of Him who died for them.

It is here, we think, that the first glory and reward of missions is found. They are the native air of a living Church. As missions fall into disrepute the Church's life becomes faint and low. Like the fountain which, out of very fullness bursts forth on its course of refreshment from hillside to valley, the Church pours out her blessings because she has received so much, and by giving

shall receive more again. It is by this act of giving that the individual soul, or the Church, that great body of living members, united into one Communion, increases and strengthens our spiritual life. But the grandest gift of Christian missions is for those to whom they bear the knowledge of Christ, the poor, the despised, the sinful, lying on the border of civilization, or beyond its pale, who, ignorant of its customs, fall an easy prey to the lust or cupidity of unscrupulous men, when no friendly arm is present to interpose its shield. How many a hard heart would melt with sympathy and the sealed purse pour forth its contents, could the work which missions are to-day doing in many a dark and distant field, be brought in its reality to the knowledge of men. Could they but see with their eyes and hear with their ears, the works wrought and words spoken in the name of Him with whom all things are possible.

Leaving untouched the question of advantages conferred by a knowledge of spiritual truth, even what man of the world can afford to scorn the work of mission schools and Church, or deem them unimportant factors of civilization, who has ever had the opportunity to note their triumphs; to behold the children whom they have clothed and fed and taught; the men and women once savage and degraded, whom they have rescued from superstition, vice, and idleness, and have transformed into peaceable members of the community and sober seekers of their own living?

Surely, a deeper interest should inspire us all to renewed effort toward the maintenance and development of this noble branch of the Church's work; an effort not of momentary, but steady enthusiasm, built in the love and faith of Jesus Christ, and guided by the Holy Spirit to the completion of a perfect work.

HERBERT WELSH.

## THE CHURCH NEWSPAPER.

WE doubt very much whether our people appreciate the value of a good Church newspaper. The laity certainly do not. If they did, few families would be without their Church paper. It is doubtful if our clergy, even, have any adequate notion of the real importance of the Church paper. There may be some reason for it, so far as the clergy are concerned. Some of them have come to know how much mischief a paper may make. If it be disloyal to the Church, as some, in time past, have been; if it be a stirrer up of strife, or admit into its columns the contributions of disloyal or foolish men; if it be given over to a blind partisanship or to the advocacy of mere notions and fancies, then the "religious paper," so-called, has a very irreligious influence. Feeling this, more than one clergyman has been tempted to discourage the circulation of the "Church paper" altogether. But if the Church paper be what a family Church paper ought to be, then it is a very important and needful agency for the edification of our people. They cannot have that interest in the Church which they ought to have, unless they know what it is doing; and this they cannot know without the Church newspaper. It imparts a knowledge of a thousand things which can be brought before our people in no other way. It tells what the Church is doing. It defends the faith, explains our customs, observances, ways; justifies our principles, incites to zeal and good works. In a thousand ways it educates our people in Church traditions, life, feeling and sympathy

A good family Church paper is especially needful in our smaller and weaker parishes and missionary stations. Almost invariably, in such parishes, there is but little Church knowledge, and so but little interest and spirit of self-sacrifice in giving, working, and praying for the upbuilding of the Kingdom. Let the clergy of such parishes see to it that their people take a Church paper of the right sort, and they will find it an important aid in the formation of a right knowledge and spirit. The denominations around us make far more use of the press than we do. It is particularly so with the Methodists. Every minister among them reports regularly the number of papers taken, and of new subscriptions received. To every village post office throughout the land goes every week a goodly bundle of Methodist *Advocates*; and their preachers are as careful to report the number of papers taken as of converts received. The interest as to their denominational paper is well-nigh as great among the Baptists. Why is it not as great among us? Is it not true that our clergy do not so much appreciate the value of the Church paper? They can do far more than any other class among us in the matter. They can speak about it in the Church. In many places they can get subscribers when no one else could. If every family among us throughout the land took a Church paper of some sort, it is safe to say, that it would be the beginning of an awakening in all Churchly life and interest among us. Let our clergy at least awake to an adequate sense of the good that a Church paper of the right sort will do for their people.—*Living Church*.

## UNSCIENTIFIC SKEPTICISM.

A STRANGE wave of doubt is passing over the Religious world. Like all exaggerations of the tides in human affairs, it will subside in time; alas! leaving the wrecks along the shore. Its peculiarity is an *Unscientific Skepticism*. Science is knowledge; but the peculiarity of the thought of the present day is that Speculation is substituted for Knowledge; and possible theories are made the basis of conclusions as if they were undoubted Truths. Such Skepticism having no foundation in eternal verities, like the baseless fabric of a vision will disappear.

But meanwhile, Materialism, which has become the prevailing factor in the movements of the age, banishes the influence of spiritual realities. Consequently our danger arises from the pressure of material interests; and our protection can come only from the source of spiritual strength. We are to call in our recollections of spiritual achievements, revive our experiences of Divine comforts and encouragements, realize again as we have in moments of spiritual refreshment, that spirit answers to spirit, that the spirit of God has communion with our spirit, and that in our life of faith in the Son of God, this world of things seen, is less real than the worlds of things unseen, spiritual and therefore eternal.

This insight is not to be attained or strengthened by any oversight. It does not come to us by converse with signs or symbols, or any material things. It is an inflowing of truth from the Source of all Truth, and a strengthening of our powers of spiritual perception and realization, by the one great Spirit, to Whom all truth is open, and from Whom the knowledge of all truth proceeds.—*Bishop Bedell*.