

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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THE ENGLISH CHURCH CONGRESS.

The twenty-second of these annual assemblies in the Church of England was held at Derby. "The mark of the year," says the *Spectator*, "has been a certain tolerance of differences of opinion." During the entire congress, there was not a trace of bitterness or even of partisan feeling, although all parties of the Church were represented as usual among the speakers, and although they were very free and outspoken in the utterance of their convictions. Very manifest was the general and intense desire that the Church should commend herself as the helper of men's joy to the whole people. As specimens of the way in which English Churchmen talk, and as instructive and suggestive in thought, we give below two or three extracts from the addresses made.

BENEFITS OF CHURCH CONGRESSES.

THE President, Bishop Maclagan, in his opening address, said:—"Discussion is always fruitful in good if it serves to clear away misapprehension, to strengthen true conviction, or to stir men's minds and hearts to greater interest in their duties, a greater earnestness in their work. The practical result may not appear in a manifesto, or a resolution, or in the prospectus of a new Church society, nor in the outburst of a new religious movement; but it is found in a clearer grasp of truth, a deepened sense of responsibility, and not least in a feeling of brotherhood, a deeper realization of the communion of saints. And it is from minds and hearts thus elevated and strengthened and stirred that there spring forth, not in the arena of the Congress, but in widely scattered homes and distant spheres of labour, new efforts and agencies, ventures of faith and works of love. I am firmly convinced that many a man, and many a woman, who has come to a Church Congress only to listen to the discussion of certain interesting topics, has gone home with the whole soul kindled by a sympathetic fire to begin some new work, or to labour with new power and earnestness. But besides this, there is a most real gain of a more general kind. In an age like ours, specially marked by its independent thought and intellectual activity, it is impossible but that there should be strongly marked divergencies of thought in matters of religion. It is true, indeed, that no age has been free from them, not even Apostolic times—nay, we may fairly add, not even the Apostles themselves. Differences must exist, because we are human, but the truth is one, because it is divine; and one most helpful means to neutralize these divergencies is to bring them together to take counsel concerning them in a spirit of brotherly love, where each may help to supply what is lacking in the other, and to receive what is lacking in himself. . . . We meet face to face as brother men, brother Christians, brother Churchmen; not to oppose each other, but to understand each other; not to confirm our prejudices, but to adjust our differences."

The Bishop does not believe that the cause of unity is served by the suppression of convictions, or by preventing their utterance.

"It is often alleged," he says, "that at meetings like this we are apt to suppress our differences, and to make believe that we are all of one mind. This is certainly not my experience of Church Congresses. Again and again I have heard from both

sides the boldest expressions of opinion upon subjects concerning which men differ most widely; only with this happy change, that whereas some ten or fifteen years ago such utterances not unfrequently called forth from the audience expressions of violent disapprobation, we have now learned to listen with patience to much which we may not appreciate or approve. . . . Let every man say boldly, but kindly, what he believes that God has taught him; let him speak not a spirit of defiance, but in a spirit of love; . . . above all, let him remember that the grand object which we have here in view is the attainment of truth, the discovery of the wisest methods of work, the strengthening of peace among ourselves, the firmer cohesion of the members of the body. By such a course our very differences may serve only to bring out more clearly the unity of our faith and of our desire."

IS PROPERTY SACRED?

Here is a scrap of what Archdeacon Watkins said on the relation of the Church to the rich and the poor:

"Let the Church say, and by leavening public opinion let her make the truth felt as well as said, that a Christian's tenure of property is that of a trust committed to him by God for the good of man; that the doctrine of the dependence of rights upon duties is true of the rich man's acres as it is true of the poor man's claims. If the holders of property assert that it is sacred, let her teach them to regard it as sacred. Is the lesson unnecessary? A hereditary peer gambling away the estates of his fathers; a manufacturer sweating by farthings from the weary toil of women and children the thousands which he squanders on wasteful, and therefore sinful, luxury; a capitalist gloating over his profitable returns, though they may have come direct from the gin palace and the haunts of vice, and every gold piece be stained by the blood of souls; a Christian woman wasting more on useless ornament than would rebuild or drain a squalid court and give to a hundred of her sisters the possibility of a Christian life—are such lessons rare, some of them very rare? Let the charity which hopeth all things, hope that they are; but let those who teach them remember that the masses are apt learners; that one's deeds say more than a thousand words; that every owner of property who violates its sacred character and ignores its solemn responsibilities is placing the axe in the hands that will surely seize it. And let the women and men of our Church of England in the name of our Master Christ, protest against such deeds."

WORKING MEN AND THE CHURCH.

Here is another scrap of Archdeacon Watkins' paper:—

"The working men of England will listen whenever they find that more than a voice is speaking to them. Did they not listen to Frederic Maurice? Did they not in this diocese listen to their Bishop Selwyn? Did they not in the East of London listen to the layman, Edward Denison, to the priest, Charles Lowder? They are men, do not reason about them as though they were machines. They are men, do not be afraid of them as though they were brutes. They are men, do not expect them to be faultless, as though they were angels. They

are men, do not feed them with spoons, as though they were children. They are men, with sharp, God-given intellects and great, God-endowed souls, and they will hear the Church of Christ, for she has God's truth to tell them, and God's love to give them."

FREE INQUIRY.

A scrap from Bishop Benson's opening sermon: "Within the last fifty years the value has been felt, in ever-increasing ratio, of the great Church principle that Fearlessness of Inquiry is a paramount duty; that the true faith has always appealed to reason; that what reason could not extract from Scripture or doctrine without contradicting reason, has never by her been held to be of faith."—*The Kalendar*.

THE AGE OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

SOME little time ago it happened in the course of events that a long lease of land belonging to the Church expired, and notwithstanding the many attempts on the part of Romanists and Dissenters to dispute the claim, it came to be realized that the Church, as she now exists, is the same Church that existed when the lease was made a thousand years ago. A leading Canadian secular paper, speaking of this, says:—

"The age of the Church of England has long been an open question, good Churchmen insisting that it is in the direct line of apostolic succession, Romanists and Dissenters insisting that it dates from the quarrel of Henry VIII. with the Pope of Rome. A legal decision has been rendered in England which may be set down as a judicial establishment of the fact that the Established Church antedates Henry's coronation at least 626 years. A piece of property, which had been leased in A. D., 883 for 999 years, was claimed by the Church by right of reversion, and the court held that the claim was good. The great soldier and statesman, Alfred the Saxon, founder of the British navy, and almost of English literature, was on the throne of England when that lease was executed."

HERBERT SPENCER'S VIEW ON POPULAR EDUCATION.

Whatever may be thought of Herbert Spencer's theology, or lack of it, he has very clear and very very sound views upon popular education in one aspect of it. In an interview with a newspaper reporter, he points out very plainly, that the education which contents itself with merely developing the intellectual facilities will not save the nation from demoralization; it changes the nature of the crimes against the community, but does not decrease them, perhaps even adds to their magnitude. His views and declarations go to show, and to emphasize, the necessity of a larger measure of moral (not to say religious) training in our public schools.—*The Kalendar*.

In the minds of thinking Christian people the theory of Evolution as an explanation of the phenomenon of the universe received a severe shock by the letter of Mr. Darwin. That posthumous publication went to show that the tendency, at least, of Darwinism or Evolution is in the direction of disbelief in the truth of any revelation.