

SUMMARY OF CHURCH NEWS.

A public meeting of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, was held in St. James's Hall, Picadilly, April 30. The Archbishop of Canterbury, who presided, addressed the meeting, saying that they were met under circumstances of a peculiar and very interesting character. The S. P. C. K. appeared for the first time since its foundation on the public platform.

The Society had been in existence 170 years. It took its origin from its having been noted by some very excellent men that the vice and immorality which at the end of the 17th century prevailed in the United Kingdom, was greatly owing to gross ignorance of the principles of the Christian religion, and they met together to consider how they might be able by due and lawful methods, to promote Christian Knowledge.

In the convocation of Canterbury May 1st, the subject of Lay co-operation, and of the establishment of a minor Order was discussed, and the Lower House was directed to take both subjects into consideration.

Letters were read from the Bishop of Capetown and the Dean of Maritzburg, asking in substance the questions:—

1. By the Bishop of Capetown—Whether the Church of England holds communion with Dr. Colenso and the heretical Church which he is seeking to establish in Natal, or whether it is in communion with the orthodox Bishops who, in synod, declared him to be *ipso facto* excommunicated?

2. By the Dean of Maritzburg—Whether the acceptance of a new Bishop on our part, whilst Bishop Colenso still retains the letters patent of the Crown, would in any way sever us from the mother Church of England?

By the Dean of Maritzburg—Supposing the reply to the last question to be that they would not be in any way severed, what are the proper steps for us to take to obtain a new Bishop.

The Bishop of Oxford and two other Bishops proposed to answer these questions in a straightforward manner, but several of the Bishops present hesitated and doubted about the expediency of giving an answer. The Archbishop, however, in his out-spoken way, said that "He had never for a moment hesitated to give his advice to the Bishop of Capetown, for whom he felt the greatest sympathy."

A resolution was passed "to consider and report on the best mode of providing assistance for Bishops who from age and infirmity are unable to discharge the duties of the Episcopal office;" the retiring of Bishops and the election of Suffragan Bishops are included.

A resolution by Archdeacon Denison was passed that the present Court of Final appeal in Ecclesiastical causes is open to grave objections, and its working is unsatisfactory.

The petition from the Provincial Synod of Canada for a general Anglican council was presented by Canon Hawkins. It was unanimously resolved that the Archbishop be requested to appoint a committee to consider and report upon the petition of the Provincial Synod of Canada.

The Lower House adopted a resolution praying for sub-division of Dioceses and the appointment of coadjutor Bishops.

May 3rd.—The Lower House passed an amendment relative to Lay co-operation to the effect that a more extensive employment of the Laity is desirable; and that a new office or order be instituted in which Laity might be engaged in assisting the Clergy, either by the name of Sub-deacon or Reader.