

Ecclesiastical.

[From the London Guardian, Oct. 25.]

There was a large and interesting meeting of the members of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, held yesterday at their rooms, 70, Pall-mall, in reference to the providing religious consolation to the sick and wounded soldiers at the seat of war. The Bishop of London presided, in the absence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was unable to attend except at great inconvenience, but the objects of the meeting had his entire concurrence. The Bishop of London, in opening the meeting—"Would not say that the Roman Catholics had set us an example, but they had done their duty, and grieved indeed should he be if the Church of England were backward in treading in the same steps. There was no reason, however, to fear that. It was most gratifying to find that already, even in the first movements of this endeavour, devoted men were coming forward and offering their services to go out and spend their time and strength in the good work, without any reference whatever to remuneration—without looking to any other reward than the answer of a good conscience towards God, springing from ministering to Christ in the persons of his suffering servants.—They had present among them two or three persons who had come forward to dedicate themselves to this work of piety. Three or four more had offered themselves, and he believed the difficulty the society would have to encounter would not be to find a sufficient number, but to choose from those who offered themselves for the work of charity. He (the Bishop) was authorised to state to the meeting that the movement now about being commenced would receive the most cordial encouragement from her Majesty's Government, who had volunteered to do all they could, and who had expressed themselves most thankful to the society for so warmly taking up the matter. He might add that the clergymen who might be sent out by the society would go forward with the joint concurrence of the Church and the Government of this Christian country." (Cheers.)

Mr. A. J. B. Hope, in moving the adoption of the report, pointed out the necessity of succouring our fellow Christians in the East, and how wisely and well the society had met the difficulty. Mr. Hope suggested that a Bishop should be sent out:—

"Why should not the society go up to the Government and ask at once for the appointment of a Bishop? He did not know whether any of our present Bishops could undertake the duty. If the Bishop of New Zealand, for example, could delay his return to his distant diocese for a short time, his presence at the seat of war would be hailed with acclamations of delight by our soldiery, for he was indeed a missionary Bishop. (Loud cheers.) There were very few legal difficulties in the way of sending out one of the chaplains as Bishop, for there were various acts to render the consecration of Bishops more easy than formerly. The Suffragans Bishops Act of Henry the Eighth, which had been long dormant, might be revived.—The clergy in the East were peculiarly under the episcopal superintendence of the Bishop of London, who might appoint suffragan Bishops, such Bishops, on their return from the East, being eligible for preferment, although retaining their episcopal orders. This proposal might at first startle people by its apparent singularity, but would eventually recommend itself by its applicability to the present emergency. With a Bishop camping with the soldiers and labouring in hospitals, they might hope to see the triumph of the cross in connection with our political and military victories—a consummation which should be the object of their dearest aspirations."

The Bishop of London and the Chaplain-General of the Forces pointed out that the Government had not neglected their duty in sending out chaplains; never had so many been sent out with an army, but it was impossible to supply them with as many as could be wished. Mr. Gleig said further:—

"He had authority to state to the meeting that for every clergyman whom the society might send out under its auspices, whatever might be allowed him out of the funds of the society, Government would give as much. (Cheers.) He had authority to state also, that a free passage would be provided for each clergyman sent out, and that he would receive the same rank, rations, and quarters as though he was a chaplain on the Staff. He did not think the Church would expect more from the Government. He doubted whether an itinerant Bishop would be in his right place in a war. If they succeeded in evangelising the East, then would be the proper time to send out a Bishop."

"The Rev. Prebendary Murray, on the part of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, offered to assist the movement by the grant of any number of books that might be required."

"The Chaplain-General to the Forces said, he had that day bought books to the amount of £70, on behalf of the Government, which would be forwarded forthwith to the Hospital at Scutari."

"The Bishop of London wished to add that St. John's House, Westminster, of which he was President, had sent out six of the number of nurses, who had come forward the moment they heard of the want that existed. They expressed great eagerness to go, without saying anything about remuneration. They would be accompanied by the Rev. C. P. Shepherd, the chaplain of the institution. The Revd. Edward Owen, Fellow of Jesus College, Oxford, and the Rev. C. E. Hadow, Curate of Crayford, who were in the room, were going out, and in the name of the Church he (the Bishop) thanked them for the disinterested zeal which had led them to encounter such great difficulties for the sake of Christ and his Church. The Rev. Mr. Dealtry, a son of the excellent Bishop of Madras, had also offered his services, if required."

Selections.

The *Christian Times* gives some particulars of the Kirchentag, just concluded, at Frankfurt:—

"The assembly of the Kirchentag numbered 1,616 enrolled members who took no part in the deliberations; several hundreds more from the neighbourhood, though not enrolled as members; and, at times, above 2,000 auditors admitted, each one by ticket previously procured at the office of the local committee. All our Universities were represented by some of the most distinguished professors, and the best known ecclesiastical bodies by their chief members."

Saturday, the 23rd ult., was the chief day, when two special subjects were named for discussion:—

"First—'The Relations of the Church and the Civil Legislature in the matter of Divorce.' To comprehend the reason for the selection of such a topic your readers must bear in view three particular facts in German customs and institutions. 1. The frightful number of divorces pronounced in certain countries of Germany, to the great prejudice of Christian life in the family. 2. The scandalous facilities allowed for divorce by legislation. 3. The tyranny to which the consciences of pastors are frequently subjected in this system of National-Churchism, by their being obliged to bless the marriage of persons divorced, contrary to the Word of God. The Kirchentag determined to make a spirited protest against these irregularities. An eminent theologian, Dr. Julius Müller, had been entrusted with the introduction of the subject; he did so with his usual depth of thought, and viewed the question in the light of Scripture and of morality. He was followed by a distinguished lawyer, distinguished no less for his talents than his piety, Dr. Thesmar, of Cologne, who read a thorough treatise of civil law on the question. All this had its interest as far as it went, but it was too restricted a view of the matter for so large an assembly. But while it could not be otherwise, must we not deplore the confusion of civil and religious matters that reigns in Germany, and which ever and anon produces a thousand inextricable difficulties? But our dear German brethren are unwilling to see all the faults of this system of State religion: there it is, they say, the order of things willed by God; and civil marriage, the only institution which allows Church and State each its legitimate action, is, in their eyes, an abandonment of Christianity, and all but an invention of the Evil One."

"After these two learned and distinguished persons had handled the subject, the morning being now far spent, the president put the question to the meeting as to whether a discussion should take place; they decided in the negative, content to adopt two propositions; one, to the effect that a petition should be addressed by the Kirchentag to the Governments of Germany, begging that the legislation on divorce be brought back to the principles of Holy Scripture; the other, sent to all the ecclesiastical authorities, praying them to protect pastors having conscientious scruples as to the propriety of celebrating the marriage of divorced persons."

"The other subject next in order for the second day was, 'The Justification (or defence) of Infant Baptism.' You are aware that it was intended to combat the influence of the Baptist missionaries who are at work in several countries of Germany, and whose views are opposed to those of nearly all the German nation. This subject was entrusted to Professor Stein-

meyer, of Bonn; and he managed it in an earnest, a thoroughly theological, and certainly a novel manner. That is to say, the professor, in order to apply the mysterious doctrine of Scripture on Baptism to the case of infants, could only see a negative side to the doctrine—the putting off the old man, not yet the putting on of the new; the death with Christ, not the new life which follows; repentance, not regeneration, &c. He thus called forth opposition from all quarters, as was pretty evident in the discussion which followed. Some could no more conceive of the negative side in infant baptism than of the positive; another party had no fancy for a doctrine of baptism split in two; all, or nearly all, fell into the error so common in Germany, which consists in applying to the baptism of infants those profound sayings of Scripture that apply to the baptism of believing and regenerate adults; and thus they are led either to admit a certain magical process on an unconscious being (baptismal regeneration), or to minimize the doctrine of baptism and adapt it to the child. There was not a single speaker that kept boldly to the only view of the case which can justify infant baptism, the covenant of grace, which Scripture authorises the admission of infants to the Church, and in which the God of Mercies has reserved such rich blessings for them. The discussion led to nothing, notwithstanding the eminence of the men who took part in it, MM. Ball, Sauder, Dörner, Ebrard, Wichern. This might have been expected, for a question of theological dogma can never be discussed successfully before a large audience."

CHINA.—The rebel chief having achieved a sufficient degree of success, appears to be turning his attention to the foreign residents at Hong Kong, whom he threatens in the following letter:—

"I, Hung-Seu-Tsene, by the grace of Heaven bestowed in the course of time, reviving, after an interval of ages, the Prince of Peace (Ta-Ping-Wang), recognised by Heaven as Emperor (Kwangto) of a new dynasty, the Ming restored, a great (or stout) Chinese, signify my pleasure to you, barbarian slaves and foreign devils, saying:—'You, ye foreign slaves, are but as fowls, apes, or dogs by kind. You are ignorant of the five relations; you are not susceptible of civilization. It was solely because the rulers of the south—faithless to China and coveting their money—fostered the men from afar, and invited you, ye slaves, to bring tribute and to trade, that you obtained authority to build houses and trade in Chusan and Ningpo, in the provinces of Fokien and Chekeang—that you were suffered to anchor at Macao and Whampoa, in Canton, and carry on your commerce. For years you have brought tribute and came as guests, you were obedient to our laws, you submitted to the influence of our people's feelings. You had been as women for 200 years, when you gradually (or secretly) became pretentious, and the imbecile governors of the 18 provinces were hand-tied as far as coming with you went."

"In 1838, when Lin burnt your opium, and Admiral Kwanz died gloriously in action with you, Jesban and Lungwan sold themselves like traitors. Keuben and Keying sold you Hong Kong and lied to the Emperor—a matter of gnashing of teeth. You usurped territory, plundered the people, defiled their women, took their houses, desecrated their graves, ruined their fields, burnt their temples, &c., with the heart of the fox, affecting the fierceness of the tiger."

"Ayya! Is not your worthlessness low even to ridicule? But you looked not for it that the wisdom of Heaven would give its clue to the virtue of man, and that the hearts of the people would resume their allegiance to China."

"I, the King, have spoken of war, and have talked of the movements of troops. We have many thousand guns of divine power, weighing millions of pounds. We have many myriad vessels a hundred clang in length, which without wind can convey themselves hence to the throu Kiang provinces. On a lucky day, which we shall select, we shall descend straight on the province of Canton, and in the autumn shall send you a challenge to fight. Our clustering standards will shade the nine heavens, and with numberless swords and spears we shall enclose the sea. Our divine fire shall consume your ships, our troops your dwellings; our divine weapons shall flash to the pole, and our divine youths and maidens shall be as thunder shaking the skies."

"Now, I hereby signify to you my pleasure that you immediately release such of our people as are in your prisons, and treat Chinese gentlemen with respect. If our horses and wealth are restored, and your foreign guns and devil ships given up to us, we will secure to you your miserable existence. But, if