

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.

VOL. V.]
No. 2.]

HALIFAX. WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, 1883. WINNIPEG.

[\$1.50
PER YEAR.

THE RELIGIOUS QUESTION OF THE DAY.

THE present day is a day of great intellectual activity. There is hardly any doctrine which is not questioned and challenged. There is hardly any institution which is not asked to show its reason for existence. There is hardly any practice which is not required to prove its value by its fruits. And most of this unceasing criticism of all things Divine and human is not, as such criticism ought to be, quiet, patient, deliberate, and, as far as possible, profound, but uneasy, restless, hasty, superficial. I do not at all deny that underneath the uneasy surface there is at work a profound and wise examination of the sources, the limits, and end of all that is criticised; but, whatever there may be underneath, there is undeniably before our eyes a swelling up of restless and superficial questioning of all truth and all authority; side by side with this great intellectual activity there is, as there always has been, a corresponding vehemence of emotional activity. Men are moved and delight to be moved, by strong impulses, and especially by those impulses which find their expression in crowded masses of people. Sympathy is a great power at all times, but just now especially powerful and marvellous effects seem to be produced. One would fancy that an age of inquiry would be an age of inactivity; but, on the contrary, men are eager to act; and they are swayed in their action much more by feeling than thought. It is, however, always absurd to stand still and find fault when there is this stir about us. This stir has its proper place and its proper use. We may be sure there is a purpose in it. Many of us—probably, in some degree, except the very old, every one of us—are ourselves touched and moved by it. But those who are less moved by it themselves will make a great mistake if they determine simply to stand aloof, and content themselves with pointing out what indeed is very easy to point out, the faults and follies that inevitably attend all movements of this kind. So when we see men asking for more instruction, for clearer, for vivid, for more striking teaching, or when we see them asking to be roused, to be startled, to be carried along, it is foolish to stand aside and refuse to have anything to do with it. All this is a real part of the history of our time, a real fact in the lives of our people. We cannot ignore it, and the question is ever recurring to us—What shall we do with all this restless movement and energy? Above all, what are the clergy, the commissioned teachers of the Gospel, doing? It is around us constantly. It takes perpetually new forms. It penetrates into all life, and especially into all religious life. We see it in the revivals of the Nonconformists; in the Missions of our own Church; in the Salvation Army and its operations; in the enthusiasm which carries along the advance-guard, as we may say, of the temperance advocates. We see the same thing, in a quieter form, in the distaste for plain services, in the demand for brightness in worship, in the preference for extempore over written sermons, in the general desire for life, for variety, and the sort of pervading sense that among all faults to be found in a religious system there is no fault so serious or so fatal as dullness. What shall we do with this universal demand? * * * * * Whatever judgment is to be passed on the causes which are at work, the effects of those causes are undoubtedly

a call to you for redoubled exertions of your own quiet kind. If you will look you will observe that all the best of those who have taken any part in the work of stirring and rousing men from stagnation confess unhesitatingly that the value of their work ultimately depends on the quiet, persevering, generally unnoticed toil that ought to follow on the awakening, and ought to discipline and teach the awakened souls, and gradually ought to change the passion of unaccustomed devotion into the calm, settled purpose of ripened faith. If there is nothing else you are called to, you are called to this. You prefer quiet, unostentatious work, but in these days—and even because of all this excitement—we need more of it, and yet more of it. Stand aloof, by all means, from anything that you cannot, with a quiet conscience, take part in. Stand aloof, and pray that what you cannot join in nevertheless God may bless—may bless it and purify it and sanctify it. But be not content with standing aloof. Work the harder yourself in your own quiet way, and be sure that God has a place for your work, though it may make very little visible show, as well as for the other work which, for reasons known to himself, He seems to be blessing with abundant success. Of all things you can do at such a time as this the worst is to stand still and do nothing, for we are sent to help one another in all this.—*Bishop of Exeter's Visitation Address.*

CONFIRMATION.

I LAY little stress on confirmation work, which is so formal and perfunctory as not to reach the souls and hearts of the candidates for confirmation. Simply to prepare them to answer questions in the Catechism, and then leave them to themselves is not to do what we ought to do as our duty to our flocks. We are fellow-labourers with God. Such is the Divine will, and if we neglect any part of the work assigned to us we have no right to expect, and, moreover, we certainly shall not find, that God will do it for us. We are bound to prepare those who are intrusted to us for the reception of God's grace; we are bound to teach them how to use it when they have received it, and not only to teach them, but to help them. Our preparation of children for confirmation ought not only to reach their understandings, but their hearts as well; not only to be instructive, but devotional. We are not only to teach them what to believe, but we are to teach them how to pray and examine themselves, and how to seek God's grace. We are to make them feel, and not merely to say, that private prayer is at once a duty and a blessing; that public worship is at once a duty and a channel of grace; and that the Holy Communion is the very food of the Christian soul. We are to draw them to God and the Saviour, and not merely to tell them about the Divine nature and about His worshipful salvation. The time of preparation for confirmation is thus a precious opportunity with which it is hardly possible to compare any other. If this opportunity be rightly used I know nothing else which can be put by the side of it for the certainty of its future blessing to the Church. It is true that it is impossible for us who know what human life is not to feel some sadness at the contrast which is to be found between the high hopes and the bright promises of confirmation, and the fallings away and the defeats and backslidings that very often follow. But, nevertheless, depend upon it, it is

this work more than any other which contains the future of the Church within it. Many of those who slip away afterwards, nevertheless remember the time of confirmation as an epoch of religious awakening; many who have strayed away will be recalled by this memory; many will find in what they then learnt an abiding holdfast which cannot be dislodged from their lives. * * * Our Church has made the Catechism expressly a mental preparation for confirmation, and that same Catechism a means of instruction and early Christian education. It is impossible to miss the meaning of this arrangement. It shows as plainly as anything can show that our teaching of little children ought to be a perpetual preparation for confirmation. The purpose is not merely that children shall learn certain leading doctrines concerning the sacraments and the life to which we are pledged by those sacraments, but should be trained and disciplined with that religious life steadily kept in view.—*Ibid.*

SOME WORDS OF THE NEW ARCHBISHOP.

THE Archbishop of Canterbury in a speech delivered in the library at Canterbury on the day of his enthronement said:—"You will not think it presumptuous if I say that the Archbishop is called upon to be in some sense the representative of Christianity in the world. Woe be to him if he does not represent it! I may well say, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' No man can be sufficient except the prayers of the Church, year after year, hold up his hands to heaven. The Church of England is called upon to be free from superstition, and to go back to the primitive model, searching fearlessly the Divine oracles, and reforming everything needing to be reformed. The Church of England must represent the Church of Christ in its freedom; she must have the same freedom as she had in the days when it was necessary for apostles and people to brave death; her temperate soul should be inspired with the principles which animated them. But in seeking spiritual freedom we do not seek what some of the greatest who have sat in this chair have sought—temporal dominion in the world. Whenever there has been a grasping to gather into the bosom of the Church temporal dominion which she had no right to claim, and no power to use, there has been my dear friends, a heavy account to settle, if it were two or three centuries after. The Church of England has taken this great position in the world. She should never be afraid of intelligence, because she is persuaded that intelligence is of God, and that the result will be to establish every word that God has given to man. Other Churches may fear, and even devotional spirits among ourselves may fear; their prayers will guide them at last to a truer courage. The Church need never be afraid of education, need never be afraid of research, or of what science and philosophy may find out, because science and philosophy have their fountains in the throne of God."

THE Earl of Carnarvon recently said: What the Empire was to England the colonial Church was rapidly becoming to the Church of England. Even politically the Church of England abroad was doing a great service. When other things failed a community of faith would still be the strongest bond that would hold Englishmen and Englishwomen together in all parts of the world.