

WHAT THE CHURCH OWES TO OPPOSITION.

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MUCH good has often come to the Church out of apparent evil, and frequently the opposition that has threatened to destroy her present organic existence has increased her vitality, inspired her with new vigour, and incited her to unprecedented efforts in her own defence which have signally defeated her opponents. Attack has led to defence, and, had it not been for organized attacks, organized defence would never have been necessary.

The Church of England, as the National Church, might have had worse enemies than those who have so zealously laboured to bring about her Disestablishment and Disendowment. Their very efforts to deprive her of her established position and to secularize her endowments have aroused Churchmen to action. The attack upon her sacred citadel has called forth a large army of Church defenders who, apart from this attack, never dreamt of engaging in any ecclesiastical warfare.

To the Liberation Society and its efforts to carry out its scheme of Disestablishment and Disendowment we owe the origin of the Church Defence Institution and kindred societies for the defence of the historical and legal position of the Church, with her property and endowments. To the erroneous assumptions, fallacies, and misrepresentations of history by which, on the platform and in the Press, the attacks upon the Church have been carried on, we owe the origin, growth, and rapid accumulation of Church defence literature and the widespread study of Church history in recent years. Further, to the organizations of the opponents of the Church throughout the kingdom, which have had for their

object the influencing of the electorate of the various constituencies to vote for Disestablishment and Disendowment, we owe the existence of the numerous parochial committees in every Diocese, whose work is the defence of the established position and the endowments of the Church. And it is not too much to say that to the efforts of the Church's opponents to circulate in every parish and hamlet in the country tracts and leaflets written to prejudice the minds of the people against her we owe the vast, extensive circulation of cheap Church literature, by which it is sought to refute current errors and misrepresentations, which for a time have tended to prejudice the minds of uninformed people and hinder the Church's usefulness.

The result has been the general enlightenment of the people on Church matters, the safeguarding of their minds against wrong impressions, and the rendering of them proof against anti-Church statements by which previously they were liable to be misled. Nay, more than all this, the opposition of the opponents of the Church and the efforts of Churchmen in her defence have led thoughtful Churchmen to give their special attention to the subject of the great and inestimably valuable spiritual and ecclesiastical inheritance they have in the ancient Church of England and the Church of their fathers, and have inspired them with the resolve to defend that inheritance when attacked to the utmost of their power.

As it has been with the Church in the past, so it will be, we believe, with reference to the Church in the future relative to all attempts by her opponents to compass her Disestablishment and Disendowment. All such attempts will fail if Churchmen will only meet them with earnest, united action. For political and other reasons there is at present not only a lull, but a dead calm in the storm of Church opposition. But the opposing forces are not extinct. They are held in restraint for only a short time. They may break forth much sooner than we expect, with manifestations of greater power than ever; but Churchmen have only to unite, combine, and withstand to the utmost the attack upon their spiritual inheritance, and it will, as we have said, fail, as it has hitherto failed, and Churchmen will come out of the conflict in defence of their rights and privileges victorious, and the Church herself will be strengthened and consolidated in her historical position, and will be more and more recognized as not only the Church of England—the National Church—but the Church of the people.

PRAYER-BOOK KALENDAR.—*October 1, Remigius, Bishop; 6, 18th Sunday after Trinity, Faith, Virgin and Martyr; 9, Denis, Bishop; 13, 19th Sunday after Trinity, Translation of King Edward; 17, Etheldreda, Virgin; 18, St. Luke, Evangelist; 20, 20th Sunday after Trinity; 25, Crispin, Martyr; 27, 21st Sunday after Trinity; 28, SS. Simon and Jude, Apostles and Martyrs.*

Jesus said: "I and My Father are One."

ST. JOHN x. 30.