

ANGLICANISM.

[FROM THE LONDON TIMES, OCTOBER 5, 1892.]

The Congress, at Folkestone, affords a new illustration of one of the happiest characteristics of Anglicanism. The Church of England has never been separated, either in theory or in practice, from the common life of the English people. The prelates and the clergy have always been citizens as well as ecclesiastics. They have neither claimed, like the Roman Catholic hierarchy, the position of a sacro sanct and celibate caste, nor, like the ministers of Nonconformist communities, have they considered their allegiance to be primarily due to some special section of the nation. As Englishmen not less than Churchmen they recognize their duties and fulfil them. If practice has not always kept step with theory, this proves nothing more than that the Church has her share of the weakness and fallibility of all things human. But vigorous efforts are made from time to time to bring the actual into closer correspondence with the ideal. During the past century the Church of England has been profoundly modified, within and without, by the revival of the spiritual conception of religion, by the development of the historic sense of continuity, by the recognition of the many-sided character of truth, and by the growth of a large and tolerant temper in dealing with difference of opinion. The work of the present generation lies to a great extent in another sphere. Without losing hold upon what High Churchmen, Low Churchmen and Broad Churchmen have done in the past for earnestness, spirituality and liberty, the Church is now striving most energetically to give practical effect to that which the ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY in his presidential address puts forward as one of the greatest advantages of the English clergy, their "alliance with civil life." To strengthen and to widen that alliance the Church Congress have in recent years been powerfully operative. They have shown characteristic defects; they have not failed to present peculiar dangers. But on the whole their influence has been for good. They have brought the clerical mind into closer contact with the practical problems that arise in and agitate society at large. As the clergy, conscious of their civil rights and of their civil duties, do not turn aside from these questions, there is ground for hope that the influence of the Church may be made available to help in unravelling or in cutting more than one tangled social knot.

This position has had a marked effect in abating the jealousy with which the Church has been long regarded in certain quarters. It is impossible for the most suspicious and irritable of Nonconformists to disparage the endeavours of Churchmen, lay and clerical, to ascertain the best methods of promoting temperance, of improving education, of putting down cruelty towards women, children, and animals, and of bringing about a reconciliation between capital and labour. At Folkestone, the Congress, after an address of welcome by the MAYOR and the ARCHBISHOP'S response, received a cordial and sympathetic greeting from a Congregational minister, who dwelt earnestly upon the large area that lay open to co-operation for generous objects among Englishmen of all classes and creeds. In the ARCHBISHOP'S presidential address, and

in the sermons preached by the BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH and the DEAN OF CHRIST CHURCH, the various aspects of the problem how to bring the spiritual forces of the Church to bear upon the practical difficulties of the day were examined in turn. The question is perpetually changing its form. As the ARCHBISHOP pointed out, not more than one or two of the subjects which were set down for discussion at the Congress could have been discussed—could, indeed, be said to have any substantial existence whatever—half a century ago. Take the principal points enumerated by the ARCHBISHOP as those on which light was as eminently to be desired as it might reasonably be expected. The attitude of the Church towards all that is summed up in the comprehensive word "science" is no longer one either of intolerant denial or of "faithless panic." It is one of "earnest expectation," of confidence that discovery, speculation and criticism will continue to furnish "worthier and more consistent ideas" of the fundamental doctrines of religion. In view of recent controversies, it is worth noting that the ARCHBISHOP expresses the opinion that all criticism and its results may be and ought to be perpetually re-examined. Quite as difficult would it have been fifty years ago to persuade Churchmen to look at missionary work, not as the mere conquest of heathenism, but as a process involving both a fresh moral energy and a carefully sympathetic study of the systems we are called upon to surrender. The greater number of the educational problems with which the Church has now to deal were non-existent in the early years of the present reign, though then, as now, the question of questions was how school training could be made to shape individual character. To that question, as the ARCHBISHOP'S language, indeed, implies, even the collective wisdom of the Church Congress cannot be expected to give more than a partial and a doubtful answer.

It is rather remarkable that there is no reference—not even an indirect one—in the ARCHBISHOP'S address to the fact which probably will give his Primacy its historical importance. We mean the confirmation on appeal to the Privy Council of the principles laid down by him in the Lincoln judgment, reversing the previous decisions and settling the law of the Church on the basis of reasonable toleration in matters indifferent. The ARCHBISHOP is cautious as well as modest and, as the judgment as practically closed, at any rate for the time, a controversy that threatened the peace of the Church, it may be well to let sleeping dogs lie. It was impossible to pass over equally in silence the thorny subject of the interference of the Church in disputes between capital and labour, which, in fact, figured most prominently in the programme and gave rise later on to a somewhat animated debate. The remarks of the ARCHBISHOP were temperate and sagacious, but they do not practically carry us very far, and will certainly fail to satisfy extreme partisans on either side. It is perfectly true that the Church has no more to fear or to hope from democrat or plutocrat than from autocrat or oligarch, if she holds her own straight, honest, and impartial course. To preach justice not to one class, even if it be the largest and most powerful, but to all classes, to enforce the obligations of tolerance and generosity, to insure to the masses opportunities for setting forth their

notions and claims, and to promote conciliation wherever there appears to be a chance for it—these are duties that are often laid upon the clergy. But, as the ARCHBISHOP pointedly said, in praising the successful efforts of the BISHOP OF DURHAM and the BISHOP OF CHESTER to put an end to labour conflicts in their dioceses, the work of peace and reconciliation should be effected in the exercise of the pastoral office "without the least interference in any business of detail."

NOVEMBER FESTIVALS.

The 1st of November brings us once more to the close of the Christian year. The festival of All Saints is emphatically the mourners' feast. On that day the Church in an especial manner commemorates those faithful servants of her Lord "who have departed this life in His faith and fear," and who, though divided from us for a season, are still united with us in that Catholic Church which is the blessed company of all faithful people.

It is much to be wished that Christians of the present day would take more pains to acquaint themselves with the lives of eminent saints of God, who, having done their Lord's work here, are now resting and enjoying His presence in Paradise. Such books as the lives of Bishop Pateson and Bishop Hanington, who were God's faithful martyrs among the heathen; the life of Mrs. Hannah More, by Miss Yonge; the autobiography of John G. Paton; the life of Norman McLeod, and others which could be named, should be in every parish library. Such reading is wholesome and inspiring to the strong, while the weak and doubting disciple is encouraged to perseverance by learning that others before him have passed safely through the deep waters which threaten to overwhelm him, and have lived to do God all the better service for that trial.

The festival of St. Andrew concludes this month and occurs on the 30th of November, Advent beginning with the nearest Sunday, whether before or after. We only hear of Andrew a few times in the Gospel, and not at all in the Acts after the first chapter; nor is his name mentioned in the Epistles. Yet it is very worthy of note that every time we met this apostle he is busy with some act of kindness and helpfulness. He was one of the two disciples of St. John Baptist, and his very first act was to find his brother Simon and bring him to Jesus. Again we see him at the feeding of the multitude, introducing the lad with the five barley loaves (John vi. 9), and once more, when the Greeks at the feast expressed their wish to see Jesus, it was to Andrew that Phillip turned for advice and help (John xii. 23). We have no certain account of his after life or of his death.

St. Andrew is the type of a class of Christian persons happily not rare in the Church of God. They are the quiet helpers—the people who make little noise, and are rarely conspicuous, but who are always ready on an emergency, whether it is to teach a class for a Sunday or two, or to take a troublesome or unpopular office in the guild, to visit a disagreeable old woman or try to advise and help a perverse young one. People often think and say little about them till they are gone, and then one hears very often: