

the deaths of even a small percentage of the citizens, who is responsible for these deaths if they are not? They govern the city. There is, indeed, as is said a "dreadful responsibility" resting on the citizens of Toronto in this matter. And does it not rest primarily on the governing body of the city? Could there possibly be a clearer, sadder or more impressive illustration of the urgent and absolute need of government by a competent commission than Toronto affords if Dr. Amyot's reported statements are founded in fact?

#### Bishop Bickersteth's Letters.

A household name in the Church is that of the devout Bishop of Exeter, religious poet and writer and one of the truest friends of missions. In one of the Bishop's letters there is a most interesting reference to two of his great brethren of the Episcopal bench, Bishops Lightfoot and Westcott of Durham: "Did I tell you," asked Bishop Bickersteth, "that Dean Vaughan said to me that Westcott was staying with him at the time of Lightfoot's consecration; and Vaughan said to Westcott, 'Now, friend, do tell what is the difference betwixt you and Lightfoot?' And Westcott answered, 'Well, Lightfoot is never content till he has made a subject definite, and I can never be content till I have made it indefinite.'" Dean Vaughan seems to have thought the criticism true, and that both characteristics were of value, as all truths need clear definition for practical application, and yet in their application to the things of eternity they are indefinable.

#### Modern France.

The Right Rev. Dr. Wilkinson, Bishop of Northern and Central Europe, spoke at the recent Yarmouth Congress on "The Religious Life of the Continent." This is a subject on which he is well qualified to speak and his description of France is for that reason appallingly dismal. "The religious life of France," he says, "is a very sad story, indeed, and reads us a more terrible lesson than that of any other country in Europe. We have there the spectacle of a nation openly, ostentatiously and of set purpose ignoring God. The French Government of to-day neither by act nor deed makes mention of God, of Providence, or a Divine Law. It enforces a strictly secular education in all primary schools and removes all religious symbols from all public buildings. The very fact of attending the services of the Church, or giving religious education, sets a mark upon public servants, and creates a bar to their advancement. It is the formal determined purpose of the French Government to organize a state without any reference to God. . . . In 1870 Heaven sent her the most terrible warning it was possible to send to any nation. She underwent a chastisement that no nation could suffer twice and live. She did not learn the lesson God endeavoured to teach her, and she has gone since then and is going still from bad to worse, for the transformation is far from complete, and what lies in the future no one can say." Such an account by a Christian Bishop of any so-called civilized nation after nearly 1,900 years of the preaching of Christianity is discouraging and depressing in extreme degree. "Worse than heathenism" is his description of the present condition of France, and he traces that condition to the rejection of Christianity from the schools and warns the British nation to count the cost before they destroy the religious character of their schools or lower the religious standard of the nation in the direction proposed by some radical politicians of the present day.

#### Mohammedanism.

Not only does the Church Congress form the best thought of the British Empire on the various topics there discussed, but it awakens and stimulates the thoughts of all earnest Christians who read its interesting reports. In the discus-

sion on Mohammedanism, the Rev. Dr. St. Clair Tisdall said some things that ought to be made known still more widely. He said the only two great missionary religions before the world were Christianity and Mohammedanism. There are in India alone, 62,458,077 Moslems; and in the whole British Empire only 53,000,000 professing Christians. Mohammedanism made rapid increase in Africa and slow, but steady, progress in India; and Pan-Islamism or the union of all the Moslem forces was one of the great dangers of the future. Half truths, a warlike spirit and a lax moral code accounted for the rapid spread of this fanatical religion and one weapon, on which they relied much, was controversial literature. A large number of controversial writings were found in Urdu and other languages and every book on the Christian side was at once met by a reply on the Moslem side, and yet Christianity has won some striking triumphs among the Moslems. Of seventeen native C. M. S. clergy in the Punjab, eleven were Moslems and hundreds of converts can be found at almost every mission in Moslem centres.

#### Finance and the Negro.

"It was an interesting lecture that Mr. Carnegie delivered to the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution lately on 'the negro problem' in America, the gist of it being that a partial solution might be expected through the operation of economic causes," says the "Guardian." "The negro multiplies fast, and he lays up money. In 1880 the coloured population of the United States numbered some six millions and a half; in 1900 it amounted to nearly nine millions. Its aggregate wealth Mr. Carnegie put at £60,000,000, an estimate which we should imagine to be under the mark, especially if it be true that the Church property of the negroes is valued at over £5,500,000. At any rate they are getting too rich not to find before long the means of protecting themselves from oppression, and in the end to achieve a good deal more than that negative result. Certainly their hap is not worse than that of the Jew in Mediaeval Christendom, and we see where the Jew stands to-day. True, he belongs to one of the finest types of the human family, but he has won his present position simply by patient endurance and industry. And on the evidence of figures the Ethiopian is not without his share of these qualities."

#### Thoughts On Unity.

An able co-temporary gives expression to the following excellent thoughts on unity: "To any Churchman who really values the unity of Christendom many subjects for prayer and thought will suggest themselves, as, for example, the unity depicted in Scripture; the wide divergence from this seen in the Christendom of to-day; the loss in money and men and energy and time incurred through division; the hindrance through division to the work of God at home and in the mission field; signs at home and abroad of the wish to 'heal the divisions of the Church; the spirit of lowliness, meekness, long-suffering, etc., which is needed for keeping or restoring unity; the spiritual unity of Christ's servants which exists in spite of divisions; the help towards higher forms of union to be found in brotherly co-operation; the need of caution in every step, lest unreality or re-action should be the result; the duty of not surrendering principle, and of maintaining intact the trusts committed to each generation in turn; and the many-sided efficacy of prayer for Unity."

#### THE ENGLISH CHURCH CONGRESS.

The Congress has scored another notable success. As we said last year the almost unvarying success of Congress after Congress is an impressive testimony to the vitality of the Mother Church. That it should be possible, year by year,

to maintain the interest of the Church and nation at large in the doings of a purely ecclesiastical gathering surely establishes the fact that the English people as a whole regard the established Church with anything but feelings of indifference. The good Bishop of London has, we see, since his return to England been bewailing the intensity of party spirit in the Old Land. There is this, however, about it, that English people do take their religion seriously enough to be very much in earnest about it, even if they do contend at times with undue warmth about matters that are perhaps not of prime importance. And it is questionable, if in any other country in the world, a gathering of the character of the Church Congress could arouse equally widespread interest among all classes of people with scarcely a break ever since its foundation considerably over a generation ago. The Congress of 1907 will not go down to history as an epoch-making or specially notable one. None the less was it eminently useful, and calculated, we firmly believe, to be productive of solid and permanent gain to the Church at large. The opening sermon of the Archbishop of Canterbury, while not in any respect particularly striking, was earnest and practical and accorded well with the whole tone of the subsequent proceedings. Bishop Sheepshanks, of Norwich, who presided, gave a most interesting and practical address on disestablishment, a question which always comes to the front when the Liberal party are in power. Though opposed to disestablishment it has no terrors for the Bishop of Norwich, who, as a missionary, for six years in British Columbia, saw enough of the workings of the "voluntary system," as it is called in England, to be able to contemplate its possibility with perfect equanimity. The Bishop treated the question with great frankness and impartiality and gave many reasons why the Church might conceivably gain by being disestablished. On the whole, however, he was strongly opposed to disestablishment. It would remove a strong barrier to Roman aggression, and religion would undoubtedly suffer in the rural districts. He took a hopeful view of the present outlook and strongly deprecated the idea that the nation as a whole was irreligious, and as someone recently said, "needs reconverting to Christianity." The discussion on the "Prayer Book and Modern Needs" warmed up the Congress. Representatives of both schools in the Church, made it plain that they were perfectly satisfied with the Prayer Book as it stands, and that they desired no change in the rubrics relating to the "ornaments of the Church and minister." Dean Kirkpatrick, who is well-known in Canada, read a very valuable paper on "How to Teach the Old Testament." Other papers followed and then a discussion. All the utterances on this subject were most helpful and suggestive and constituted a noble defence of the Old Testament on its own intrinsic merits as the greatest teacher of righteousness the world has ever known on historical record, and as a preparation of the world for the Christian religion. Every paper is well worthy of the most careful study, and was manifestly the result of painstaking research. The papers on "Ancient Faith and Modern Thought" also reached a very high level. Their tone on the whole was decidedly hopeful. The fact that the old materialistic school of a generation ago is being everywhere discredited was made unmistakably plain. The Rev. Dr. Inge, of Cambridge, a very distinguished member of the university, strongly advocated the serious study of "Christian Science" and kindred cults. Among the other subjects discussed at the Congress were "Sunday Observance," "Temperance," "Elocution and Reading," "The Means of Spiritual Revival," etc. With the one exception of the debate upon the "ornaments" question, which, trivial as it may appear to some of us on this side, appears to invariably arouse the fighting instincts of the average English Churchman, the whole proceedings were characterized by great harmony. The men's meetings were well attended and the gen-