

The Church Guardian.

UPHOLDS THE DOCTRINES AND RUBRICS OF THE PRAYER BOOK.

SENSATIONAL RELIGION.

We print some sensible remarks from a sermon by the Bishop of Manchester delivered last month.

He said the quiet and orderly religious services of our forefathers did not seem to be sufficient for the present day. He supposed the general tone of society affected more or less the general tone of religion, and they knew perfectly well what it was that society, as it was called, craved for in the present day. It was excitement, a new sensation, some novel attraction. Old ways got wearisome, and perhaps sometimes justly wearied us; old ways sometimes became droning ways and sleepy ways, and they did not want to come down to sleepiness in matters of religion. But the pendulum had now swung right to the opposite side, and they were now almost wild in their craving after novelty and excitement on all hands.—And when they had got large congregations by means of these attractions, were they sent away wiser and better for what they had heard and seen? He confessed he had his grave doubts on that head. He doubted whether the people were always willing to be so taught and whether teachers were always ready to teach. He did not want stern denunciations from the pulpit, or anything to be said which would discourage the timid or shrinking; neither must they encourage the wicked in his ways, by promising him life on easier terms than those on which God had promised it. What the public seemed to look for now in religious services was excitement, sensationalism, and, if he might coin a word, spectacularism, and according to the difference in temperament, some men wanted a languid excitement and some excitement of a more violent kind. Some went, therefore, to churches where cultured taste was exercised, where the music was soft and flowing, and what he might call the scenery and drapery of the services, satisfied the aesthetic sentiment, while others preferred ruder and rougher excitement, and liked to march through the streets behind a flag and a band, gathering in worshippers in no very calm frame of mind to hear the simple message of Christ. He had not a single word to say against any effort, sincerely made, to win souls to Christ, but he must say that he had grave doubt about the spiritual success, real and permanent success, of either of these methods. They might succeed in catching the people for a moment, for a week, or for a month, by excitements of that kind, but whether those they caught were brought to the feet of Jesus clothed and in their right mind was altogether another matter, and one that was very often lost sight of. He did not want to see the people carried away from the safe ground of reason and conviction by appeals to the passions which were oftentimes hysterical and extravagant. The religion of the Bible was not a mere matter of taste or idle sentiment; it was a matter of life or death; and the words of the Saviour to the woman who cried out to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee," showed that the repression of excitement was far more wholesome than the fostering and stimulating of it.

MISSIONARY ENTHUSIASM.

"Properly speaking, the Church of Christ is the one great missionary society. Over her gates we read, from age to age, the inscription which was traced by her great Founder in almost His parting words—'Go, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' If the Church of Christ could cease to be missionary she would be utterly untrue to the plainest commands of our Lord, and the missionary spirit is not by any means only the spirit of actual missionaries; it is the spirit of all true Christians, who have the faith at heart, who have their Lord's honor at heart.

Every serious Christian is a missionary in intention, and within the limits that his providential work makes possible, though he may never have looked upon the face of a heathen in his life; just as every serious Christian bears within his heart the spirit of the martyrs, though he may never be called upon to witness his faith with his blood; for the wish to spread the knowledge of the love of Christ is, if I may so speak, a strong overmastering impulse in every man, in every woman who really knows and loves Him. The man who knows the happiness of peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ cannot but desire that other men should share it; and this desire, in its higher, its stronger, its more heroic forms, is one of the greatest gifts of God to His Church. It is that divine enthusiasm of which our Lord Jesus Christ spoke in the words, 'I am come to send fire on the earth.'—*Canon Liddon.*

SEPARATION.

The strength of the Church of God consists largely in its separation from the world. Christians are called to forsake all and follow Christ. It is the policy of the deceiver to mingle all things, good and bad, sacred and profane, in one confused and jumbled mass. God calls His people to come out and stand aloof, and thus escape the contaminating influences of the world. Persons sometimes excuse their conformity to the world by claiming that they join with them in order to do them good; but if a man is mired in a bog, we do not extricate him by plunging in with him; if a boy has broken through the ice in a pond, we do not dive in with him in order to bring him out. We keep a safe distance, and push a plank towards him, and bid him to take hold of it, and escape from his perilous position. So if we desire to benefit the world, we can best accomplish our object by living in holy separation from it; and while thus separated from the world and consecrated to the Lord, we have power with God and also with man. Mingling with the world we lose our fellowship with God and our testimony to man. So long as Christians and worldlings are so mingled in business, in pleasure, and in religion, that no one can tell them apart, so long will the Church be powerless and the world triumphant. "Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Cor. vi. 17-18).—*The Christian.*

THE GAIN OF SUNDAY REST.

Of course I do not mean that man will not produce more in a week by working seven days than by working six days. But I very much doubt whether, at the end of the year, he will generally have produced more by working seven days a week than by working six days a week, and I firmly believe that, at the end of twenty years, he will have produced less by working seven days a week than by working six days a week. The natural difference between Campania and Spitzbergen is trifling when compared with the difference between a country inhabited by men full of bodily and mental vigor, and a country inhabited by men sunk in bodily and mental decrepitude. Therefore it is we are not poorer but richer, because we have through many ages rested from our labor one day in seven. That day is not lost. While industry is suspended, while the plough lies in the furrow, while the exchange is silent, while no smoke ascends from the factory, a process is going on quite as important to the wealth of the nation as any process which is performed on more busy days. Man, the machine of machines—the machine compared with which all the contrivances of the Watts and Arkwrights

are worthless—is repairing and winding up, so that he returns to his labor on Monday with clearer intellect, with livelier spirits, and with renewed corporeal vigor.—*Lord Macaulay.*

DEATH.

Very striking and beautiful are St. Peter's views and feelings in the contemplation of death. He speaks of it as putting off this tabernacle; or as the word means, an exodus or departure from this world. He speaks of it as a mere dissolution of the earthly dwelling. He speaks of it as an exodus—a going out and a going away. So those who have laid up treasures in Heaven, who are rich in faith and heirs of the Kingdom of God, have nothing to fear in departing from this world. The change will be blessed and glorious to them. The expressions which St. Peter uses regarding his decease gives us to see something also of his prospect after death. It was the prospect of a glorious emancipation. In this life he was in a tabernacle, confined in a kind of prison-house. The soul, acting here through the bodily organs, is often painfully conscious of the manner in which the body hampers its energies and clogs its aspirations. Faintness, giddiness, pains, or other bodily sensations, may interfere with the strength and activity of the mind.

We have often seen Christian people seeking shelter from the demands of the foreign mission work behind the pitiful plea, "We have enough heathen at home. Let us convert them first before we go to the heathen abroad." "That plea," says Phillips Brooks, "we all know, and I think it sounds more cheap and more shameful every year. What can be more shameful than to make the imperfection of our Christianity at home an excuse for our not doing our work abroad? It is as shameful as it is shameful. It pleads for exemption and indulgence on the ground of its own neglect and sin. It is like the murderer of his father asking the judge to have pity on his orphanhood. Even the men who make such a plea feel, I think, how unheroic it is." As to the relative importance of home and foreign mission work, it is sufficient to say: "This ought ye to have done, and not leave the other undone." "All the world" is the field of the Church, and the Master's imperative, urgent "Go ye!" is still thundering through the ages, rebuking the sloth and weakness of the disciples, and inciting to the most heroic devotion and effort for the salvation of the world.

The laborers in the religious vineyard are entitled to a fair day's wages for a fair day's work, and when they get that there will not be any difficulty, we comprehend, in securing them. The clergymen of the country are the worst paid men in it. It is all very well to say that their possessions are not and should not be of this world, but the men who are hired to watch souls should be paid at least as much as those who are hired to watch banks. Fifty per cent. of them are not so paid. Beef and broadcloth, children's stockings and shoes are not sold any cheaper to a minister than to a millionaire. If Churches will remember this fact we shall have fewer complaints in regard to the scarcity of candidates for the Church.—*New York Herald.*

ONE of the suggestions made to the Convention of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, by the Rt. Rev. Dr. Whitehead, and referring to the supplying of the urgent needs of Diocesan Missions, is worthy of general adoption, viz: "That every member of the Diocese should adopt, *con amore*, the axiom that he is personally responsible for the success of the missionary work, and hence has a personal interest in maintaining the missionaries in their labors."