

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.

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ECCLESIASTICAL NOTES.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY ON AURICULAR CONFESSION.—Archbishop Benson, in his primary charge recently delivered, speaks the following word on this subject, which both from his official and theological position may well be pondered :—

"That system seems to have been the fruit of the despair which marked the ninth century. Amid the heathen ignorance and barbaric habits of races Christianized by force, amid the tyrannous and often half criminal careers of the classes that were rudely civilizing them through serfdom and military order, the recommendation at Orleans by Theodulf, and the rapid adoption of auricular confession by the clergy, when public confession was no longer submitted to, introduced a new kind of adult school for barons, soldiers and serfs. Even from the first it was less difficult with women than with men; but it was strongly worked by strong wills and great abilities, and it answered its purpose. But so soon as the first age of modern civilization succeeded to that of the middle ages, its retention was only parallel to the retention of Latin in the Church offices after the maturity of a great family of languages. Then as a system for society it broke down. It has broken the Church with it. The masculine lay intellect may be by various causes accidentally diverted for a while from the generally necessary study of Christian truth. That will come right with discussion; but as to the confessional,—the culture, philosophy, the science, the family union, the civil progress that Christendom has brought forth, all alike exclaim :—

In nostros fabricata est machina muros.

"If the office of the Christian priest be really to help the building of society upon lines laid down in human nature itself by the hand of God, cleared and supplied with labor and with materials by the life and work of Christ, the confessional is no building implement for the architect of to-day."

THE NEXT CHURCH CONGRESS.—It has been definitely settled, with the full approval of the Bishop of Ripon, who has accepted the office of President of the Church Congress for the ensuing year, that the days of meeting at Wakefield shall be October 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th. An influential committee is now being formed to carry out the necessary details and provide the needful accommodation for the large numbers expected to attend at the proposed seat of the new bishopric. Already ten gentlemen have promised 100l. each towards the guarantee fund for this twenty-sixth Church Congress.

THE RECENT DISTRESS.—Addressing a meeting at Rochester, lately, Bishop Thorold said the Church had been in a little trouble, but had got out of it again as most people who knew anything about the Church were convinced that she would do. At the present time she had a great deal to be thankful for to those who had not been showing themselves as friendly to her of late as they might have been, either to her privileges or her endowments. He believed

that many people who had determined that she should be destroyed (and there were many people who were willing to lay hands on her if she was not able to take care of herself), would now be glad to take their hands away, and it would be some time before they laid them on again.

SURPLICED CHOIRS.—The following reasons in favor of surpliced choirs are taken from the anniversary address of the Rev. Dr. Cooper, Rector of the Church of the Redeemer, Long Island :

No one who has the slightest care for decency and reverence in church worship, can for a moment object to the use of the surplice.

1st. It is appropriate, as being the garment used in our Church in all places where regular Choirs have been maintained since the Reformation.

2d. It is seemly, and gives an appearance of order and cleanliness to the Choir.

3d. It is uniform, and thereby reminds them of their equality in the House of God.

4th. It prevents vain or envious thoughts on dress.

5th. It serves to remind the singers of the sacredness of their office.

6th. It shows the congregation they are assistants of the clergy, and not simply musical performers.

AN INTERESTING DISCOVERY.—Some very interesting remains of the ancient Cathedral of Waterford have recently been discovered under the flooring of the present cathedral: the remains of a pier, consisting mainly of red sandstone, just of such a sort as might have been designed in the period after 1210, and could not very well be anterior to that date. In style it is Early English, but of a peculiar and fully developed school—in some features almost approaching the richness of the Decorated. This special form of the Early Gothic had its origin in Wales and Western England, the chief examples being at Wells, Glastonbury, Llandaff, St. David's, and the Abbey of Strata Florida. In Ireland there is a noble specimen in the nave of Christ Church, Dublin, and also the peculiar north transept doorway at Kilkenny. The nave of Christ Church, Dublin, is supposed, by the late Mr. G. E. Street, to have been built during the period 1213—1255, so the work at Waterford may be even a few years older than that at Dublin. The resemblance between the exquisitely-moulded bases now exposed at Waterford, and those in the nave of Christ Church, Dublin, is most marked, and almost suggests that the same designing hand must have been employed on both buildings.

POLITICAL EFFECTS OF THE PEW-SYSTEM.—The Bishop of Chester, in a letter to the Secretary of the London Free and Open Church Association, ascribes the recent voting of the agricultural labourers in many English counties in favour of disestablishment candidates to the operation of the pew system in the rural churches. 'I think,' says his Lordship, 'that the result of the county poll ought to teach a lesson—a lesson I tried to press on our Conference—that the agricultural labourer resents,

and justly, his virtual degradation in the church which is his own. Village churches are more exclusive than most of our parish town churches; the poor are thrust into corners. So we have said and preached, but the dull weight of inveterate abuse always prevails. It is a great distress to a bishop to feel himself so utterly helpless in this vital matter.'

AN INTERESTING EVENT.—Recently a very interesting event took place at Cambridge. The University conferred an honorary M.A. degree on Archdeacon Johnson, of the Niger, a Church Missionary Society negro clergyman of great ability and learning. Quite an ovation was given him by the undergraduates in the Senate House, and it was some time before their ringing cheers subsided to allow the Public Orator to commence his Latin speech. After the ceremony the Archdeacon was received by the Vice-Chancellor and many Fellows of different colleges at Caius College. He dined at Corpus, and afterwards attended a service at St. Andrew's, where Mr. Whiting, of Ramsgate, preached. He was the guest of Canon Westcott during his stay at Cambridge.

MISSION WORK IN ENGLAND.—An interesting and successful Mission has just been concluded in the town of Hanley, in the Staffordshire Potteries. The Lichfield Church Mission has been vigorously at work in this locality since the beginning of 1883, when the work was begun by Mr. Colville, the diocesan lay missionary, under the immediate direction of the Bishop. More than two hundred of the working classes, chiefly rescued from open evil living, were confirmed at the end of that Mission, and the average attendance at Holy Communion rose from 25 to 120. The indefatigable energy of the vicar (the Rev. T. P. Ring) and his curates has carried on and extended the work from that time till now. The early Communion is preceded by a prayer meeting in the Mission-hall at 7.15, preparatory to the 8 a.m. celebration in the church. Many of the potters and others walk two or three miles to be present. *The principle of the Church Mission is to regard the Holy Communion as the one necessary act of worship even for those who have too little education or training to enable them to take part in the Sunday matins or evensong;* and for these simpler services are provided in the Mission-hall. Nothing is more remarkable than the chastened earnestness and devotion with which these humbler Christians, in all the freshness of their quickened spiritual life, draw near to take the holy sacrament to their comfort. The recent Mission, which lasted for a fortnight, was conducted by the Rev. J. Charles Cox, LL.D. There were nightly processions of a large surpliced choir, entirely composed of members of the Church Mission—with cross, banners, and lanterns—halting for short services and hearty singing in the market-place of the busy town, and finally proceeding to the large Mission-hall formerly a Dissenting chapel, holding from eight to nine hundred persons. The procession was received throughout with marked respect, and the open-air preaching listened to with great attention. The hall was crowded on the three Sunday evenings and well filled on other days, notwithstanding unfavourable weather.