

# 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. 2c.  
"Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."—Jude 3.

VOL. VI.  
No. 33

MONTREAL, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1884

\$1.50  
PER YEAR

## ECCLESIASTICAL NOTES.

**CHRISTIANITY IN EGYPT.**—The Association for the Furtherance of Christianity in Egypt is the outcome of the deliberations of some English Churchmen whose hearts have been deeply stirred by the recent events in Egypt.

England has obtained a footing and influence in Egypt which is unprecedented, and which may never occur again. Surely the time has now arrived for the English Church to speak, and to hold out the hand of sympathy towards a Church, to which, in God's good Providence, it may be able to impart some more accurate knowledge of the truth, and some fresh vigor and spiritual life.

This Coptic Church has existed since the Council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451) as a heretical communion, professedly maintaining the heresy of the Monophysites. At the present time it is decrepit and paralysed, sunk into decadence and decay; and it is believed that the particular heresy for which it is distinguished is not now widely or intelligently held.

But there are glimmerings of spiritual life here and there among the Copts, and unmistakable yearnings for better things. There is a venerable Liturgy in the ancient language of the Pharaohs. There are orders of bishops, priests, and deacons, and an organisation of churches and chapels and monasteries all very interesting archæologically. But over all these is spread the spirit of slumber, and, as in the fable, Christianity in Egypt seems to be waiting for the kiss of the coming prince who is to touch it all into life.

The great body of the Copts are utterly ignorant, but they are amiable and facile, and very easily led. Detached missionary efforts would simply excite antagonism both from Copts and Mussulmans. What is needed for success is action in God's strength, taken with the full force and authority of the English Church, as the English Church.

The candlestick of the English Church holds a candle that is, at least, burning; and if it could in some way set fire to the smouldering wick of the Egyptian Church, it would itself receive double light, and be itself a gainer.

It has been decided that steps shall at once be taken to raise (if possible without public appeal) a sum not exceeding £500, for the purpose of defraying the expenses of two gentlemen, to be selected by the committee with the approbation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who shall undertake, as soon as possible, a preliminary visit of inquiry to Egypt, in order to open friendly relations with the native Christians, and to ascertain whether the Copts are willing to receive any offer of assistance from the English Church; and, if so, how that assistance may be best rendered. This visit would be made both to the Orthodox Patriarch of Alexandria, and also the Patriarch of the Coptic Church in Cairo.

Distinct missionary work among those who are not even nominally Christians is left for the missionary societies of the Church to undertake; but the committee of this association are fully persuaded that there is a wide field for their friendly labors amongst the native Christian Churches of Egypt.

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**—The following remarks, taken from the Convocation address of the Right Rev. Dr. I. C. Potter, Assistant Bishop of New York, are not inapplicable to the circumstances of education in Canada:—

Of secular education of every kind there is no lack among us, nor is there any need that we should disparage or despise it. But when everything is said in its behalf, it must still be owned that it is secular and that it professes to be no more. And, therefore, we may not forget that when you have taught a boy to write a hand like copper-plate you have simply opened the way for him as a forger and a counterfeiter, and that when you have taught a young girl to read French as fluently as she reads her own tongue, you have opened a door to the polluting of her mind by the most corrupt literature under the sun, unless you have also taught these learners in the great school of life that over all attainments and accomplishments is God, a moral Governor, to whom His children are accountable, and Christ the Saviour and Regenerator of the moral nature, through the renewing and illuminating work of the Holy Spirit? I wonder that to-day in the face of a deluge of fraud and impurity, of dishonesty and unfaithfulness, domestic, social, and political, which makes the daily newspaper a daily horror and infamy, it never occurs to us to ask, how far our systems of education are responsible for what we see and hear? The debilitated condition of the popular conscience which creates an atmosphere invading the Church itself, and sometimes makes, e. g., its charitable enterprises, a shelter for practices not to be defended or excused—this is a condition of things which implies somewhere the most lax teaching as to the principles of common morality or else nothing at all. And so the Church to-day must bear its witness, and nowhere with sterner emphasis than in the school-room, to those underlying principles of righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come, which are the true power and glory of the Church and the State alike!

LORD NELSON, in *Church Bells*, gives some extracts from the *Free Church Monthly* in regard to a movement which is slowly but surely going forward among the various Protestant bodies on the Continent of Europe towards a union of the various Evangelical Churches and the old Catholics:—

At the General Synod of the "French Reformed Church" the Liturgical question was the subject of a long debate. I quote from Professor Binnie's account of the Synod:—

"The French Church retains the old custom (discarded by the Free Churches) of making large use of liturgical forms, such as the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the so-called Confession of Sins. It is acknowledged on all hands that the service thus provided is not so good as it might be made. M. Bersier, of Paris, uses a liturgy drawn up by himself, somewhat on the lines of the English Prayer-book, and he strenuously urged on the Synod changes in the direction of ample liturgical forms."

Again, in a paper by Professor Paolo Geymonat, of Florence, we read:—

"Our readers are doubtless aware that a movement of a spontaneous and interesting kind is progressing in Italy, having for its object the union of

the various Evangelical Churches. These Churches have long felt that their divided condition was great hindrance to the progress of the Gospel. Now, through the blessing of God and the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, as a spirit of unity among the Churches, there is a movement for union of a spontaneous and practical kind."

And then he foreshadows what the Evangelical Church should be:—

"Instead of the miserable miniature likenesses of Protestantism, broken up into different denominations, the Evangelical Church would present a picture of the unification of all the various forms of life, and would reflect in its spirit 'the depth and height, the length and breadth, of the love of God,' in which it declares itself to be rooted and grounded."

On the 24th of September there was a Conference of Protestant ministers at Biel, Switzerland, at which resolutions were passed which were firmly resolving to stand on the ground of the Reformation, and a separation from anti-Protestant tendencies, they held "the open recognition of the Catholic ideal in its necessity even on Protestant grounds;" and this resolution was expanded as follows:—

"This proposition rests on the belief in a universal Christian Church. The Roman Church claims to be the universal Church, but, in reality, is nothing of the kind. *But the Protestant Church too, is not the realisation of the ideal.* Then first, when she finds a higher union (as well between the sundered Churches and denominations belonging to her as with the remaining Christian Churches—the union in the World-Gospel of Jesus Christ), then first does she help to fulfil the ideal of a really Catholic Church."

And these resolutions at Biel end with an expression of sympathy in a Mutual Conference at Frankfurt, at which papers were read by Lutherans and Old Catholics on the movement, and with earnest wishes for the success of the next Old Catholic Conference.

**THE MARRIAGE QUESTION IN ENGLAND.**—At the Oxford Diocesan Conference, the Bishop of Oxford, speaking to the report of the committee appointed on the question of Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister, said he did not shrink from saying that this was the most important question now before the people of England. He agreed with Lord Hatherly in considering that the proposed alteration in the law would be a worse evil than the landing of 300,000 Frenchmen at Dover. The Frenchmen might be got out of the land again, but such a step in legislation could never be retraced. A door would be opened to greater license which it would be impossible to close again; new interests would be created which could not be overcome. It was an attack on family life, which would rend one family in two, and destroy the present relations of husband and wife to each other's families. It was a proposal which in its present form had no exact parallel in any other nation; but where similar enactments existed, facility of divorce and carelessness about the marriage tie had been found to follow in their train. It was only fair that the principle on which marriages in the future were to rest should be known, but he felt that the proposed system was not good for the nation, it was contrary to God's law, and repugnant to the feelings of the English people.