

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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ECCLIASTICAL NOTES.

It is instructive to notice the awakening earnest desire for liturgical worship among the sects. The Reformed Churches are putting their houses in order. The Methodists and Presbyterians are awakening to the liturgic use of the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments. Representative Divines among bodies extraneous to the Church have put out various books of prayer, formed to a great extent on the lines of our own incomparable Book. The beauties of symbolic architecture; the best of our Church musical compositions; even our very Festivals, have entered into the life and culture of these bodies. The witness of the Church is slowly but steadily making itself felt. May the day come when soon all may be one!

At a meeting of the Free and Open Church Association in Philadelphia it was stated that the growth of the Free system was remarkable. In one diocese (Florida) all the Churches are free, and in several others the Free Churches are in a large majority. It is beginning to be realized that the objections to the free system are mainly theoretic and imaginary, and all it asks is to be patiently and faithfully worked. Over two-thirds of all the Churches in Pennsylvania diocese are now free. Thirty-eight bishops have enrolled themselves as patrons of the association, which has upwards of 500 members, and vice-presidents and local secretaries in every diocese. The wonder is that still so many people "take to themselves the houses of God in possession" when the best interests of the Church at large, and the Parish in particular, would be furthered by free and unappropriated sittings.

THE year 1883 finds the American Church with forty-eight confederated dioceses and fifteen missionary jurisdictions, with sixty-seven Bishops, more than 3500 active clergy, 3000 organized parishes, not including missionary stations, and more than 373,000 communicants. And only forty years ago, there was but a single Parish in all the land which had the celebration of the Holy Communion weekly, there are now some three hundred parishes where it is celebrated as the central act of Divine worship, at least on every Lord's Day.

As a marked incident of the change in the Church, the Venerable Bishop of Mississippi, with deep emotion, told the General Convention that sixty years ago, when he took holy orders, there were but nine Bishops in the United States of America.

THE Luther celebrations recalls the thought that the spirit of religious tyranny has not yet been completely broken down. True enough, it now takes a different form, but the modern Popes are just as bad as the Pope with whom Luther contended. As a recent preacher said, "we want a new Martin Luther every fifty years, to extirpate the many popes that are growing up around us,"—the Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist and also the Parish Popes who would have everyone respond to their shibboleths and follow their dictations. A Modern Martin Luther would certainly find that almost every church door would resound with the thud of his hammer.

"HEAR the Soul dirge! Hear the Soui dirge!" So wrote Bishop Coxe as he heard the pattering feet hurrying away from the Lord's Table, and their dying echoes left but few worshippers behind. It is a sad sight to see so many turning away and it is very disheartening to the clergyman. But are not the clergy, in some measure, to be blamed for this state of things? When our present long Morning Service is finished the people are usually tired out. The service must be shortened, or in other words, the Holy Communion Service must re-assert itself as the central act of worship in our Liturgy. At present it is thrown into the background and brought on when people are tired out with the foregoing service. If on one or two Sundays of the month, the late communion formed the *only* service, at 11 o'clock, then it would preach a very imposing sermon to the Church people who left before the service was ended. Too often the ordinary church-goers thinks that they have fulfilled their duty if they have spent an hour and a half in the House of the Lord and listened to one full service and sermon.

THE Bishop of Bedford is a great organizer, and nothing has succeeded so well with him as the *East London Church Fund*. It was formed in 1880, for the purpose of increasing the active workers in East London, since that time the number of clergy in the district has been raised from 185 to 233, and instead of one clergyman for every 4,300 persons, as in 1880, there is now one for every 3,400. The special Mission services have been the means of drawing together large congregations of habitual non-worshippers. To maintain the work at present undertaken about £9,000 is needed. It is considered that to secure proper spiritual oversight, there should be one clergyman for every 2,000 persons.

WE often need to be reminded that the busiest and fustiest workers in the Church are not always those who serve God best. There is a great tendency in these days of push and enterprise, to judge of everything by noise and apparent results. It is pre-eminently a time of quick growth; but rapid growth is not always a healthy sign. The oak is the growth of years, and nothing is so quick as a cabbage and weeds. Let us hold the true balance: Bless God that we have quick and noisy workers, and bless Him also for those quiet lives wherein His work of grace is silently performed and they become quiet preachers of Christ.

Milton, in one of the most celebrated of his sonnets, tells us of his blindness and declares:

"Who best
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best. His state
Is kingly; thousands at His bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait."

THE Archbishop of Canterbury, in his Congress sermon, pronounced it to be a pressing need of the Church of to-day that she should recognise 'the great truth that there is no function, no region of life or thought, which it is not the Church's duty to occupy. For her nothing is secular but what is sinful.' How are we to blend this great and noble conception of the Church's duty with the simpler aspects of her work in witnessing to the historic faith, and in cultivating popular devotion to its object? By making the regions of life

and thought helpful in pressing home the historic faith of our church. As a rule preachers are dullest when they deal with dogma and distinctive principles. This should not be so. Each article of faith should be pregnant with living duty and with the leading questions of the day. Our Faith is eternal and can be welded with all the daily, personal, social, and national aspirations of the faithful.

A Good Parish Enactment.

A small parish in a western Diocese having had its harmony sadly marred by the complaints of two or three dissatisfied parishioners against the existing administration, a parish meeting was called, which, after passing a vote unanimously sustaining the rector, adopted the following resolutions without a dissenting voice. If every parish in the land would adopt a similar canon and obey it, parochial disturbances and ministerial changes would be the rare exception, instead of being, as now, the general rule.

Resolved, That as representatives of—Parish,—, charged with the duty of promoting, in every practical way, its highest interests, we desire to place on record our hearty disapproval of a practice which is sometimes the cause of much parochial disturbance—namely, the practice of making complaints against the rector's conduct on the part of our parishioners, not to him, but to one another; thus wounding his feelings, marring his influence, and working up strife, prejudice and discontent.

Resolved, That if parishioners feel themselves aggrieved by anything which the rector has said or done, or left undone, it is their bounden duty to go first, and at once, to him, and make a frank and friendly statement of their grievance; and when he has refused to make explanation or to give satisfaction, there will be time enough (if duty requires it) to make complaint in other quarters.

Resolved, That in our opinion, if this course were always honestly pursued, it would prevent a large proportion of those disagreements which too often soil the purity of private Christian characters, mar the peace of the Church and hinder its growth; and we hereby pledge ourselves to our rector and to each other, that we will conscientiously pursue this course, if emergencies demanding it should ever arise.

THE *Living Church* says, that it is sometimes charged against the clergy that while they may exhort fervently, they fail to rebuke. The temptation to prophesy smooth things is very great, especially when the support of a family depends upon popularity in a parish. It has not, perhaps, occurred to many that editors are in a similar situation. Their duty is to warn as well as to defend the Church. They must call attention to error and report failure, with malice towards none, but with fidelity to the Church. In doing this they are liable frequently to offend, and they have to pay for it. So with a conscientious editor, he hates to criticise, but must at times do it, even if he loses by it.

SINCERITY of conviction is a mighty power. It is seldom counterfeited. The semblance has a hollow ring well known to the practised ear.