

the people are left to be practised on by beginners, who halt and stammer in the alphabet of prayer, and only after some years' experience rise to anything like the ease and dignity proper to such a service.

"For this inconvenience, the use of judicious forms presents a remedy. The congregation ministered to by the poorest young deacon with a prayer-book in his hand fares as well as the flock gathered in any 'St. Thomas,' or in any 'Trinity.' He may be a very poor reader (and commonly is) but he cannot spoil his 'exhortation and general confession' drawn by John Calvin, he cannot ruin the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the noble Collects, he cannot wholly mar the divine words of the Hebrew psalmist."

He then discusses the effect of the present system of entirely extemporaneous prayer, first on the minister and then on the people, on neither of whom he thinks it happy, and he finally asks: "Can we not have something better than this? Can we not have, consistently with every ecclesiastical principle of the Westminster standards, worship, not merely for the people, but by the people—worship that shall make the house of God attractive as a house of prayer—that shall draw men with habitual devotion to the sanctuary and keep them there, quite irrespective of the merits or demerits of the sermon?"

He asks further that on this subject four things be considered: First, That it accords with the nature and propriety of things that the people should take some active part in the service. Secondly, The spirit of Protestantism requires that the people shall take part in the public worship of God and thus make it common prayer. The Romish Church during the Middle Ages resolved worship into a spectacle. Protestantism changed all that. It recognized the Christian people as something more than a body of dumb and passive laity. The great reformers, therefore, all of them, prepared or made use of liturgies for the use of the worshippers. There were the Lord's Prayer and the Creed always to be recited aloud by the people. There was the general confession, which every one joined in repeating, making it his own personal confession of sin. There was the reading of the Decalogue to which the people responded, 'Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.' There was the responsive reading of the Psalter, an exercise to which it might seem the most exaggerated Puritanism could make no objection. (And yet there are Presbyterians so prejudiced, from ignorance or thoughtlessness, as to think responses in any form un-Presbyterian and even un-Protestant!)

"It is not," he goes on to say, "the true spirit of Protestantism that imposes the narrow unwritten ritual of the Presbyterian Church. It is the promptings of an ultra-Puritanism, which finds its proper standard of worship in keeping as far away as possible from the spirit and forms of Christian antiquity, which confounds forms (that is, written forms) with formalism, and identifies spirituality of worship with extemporaneous effusions from the invention or memory of the preacher."

The third point urged is that it might be safely assumed that a mode of worship which has been employed by the Church under both the Old and New Testaments must have strong reasons to recommend it. The fourth is that in view of the mild and qualified terms in which objection is made by the Westminster divines to set forms of prayer, it is universally conceded that the question of the use of a liturgy in any Presbyterian Church is simply a matter of discretion.

"Now, to bring this discussion to a head, I observe that it will be the wisdom of the clergy of the Church of which I am a minister to accept such improvements in the conduct of public worship as will meet the changed conditions of our social life. The 'Puritanism' which thrives in the bare meeting-house and in the bare intellectual service it enshrined, had its use and has had its day. A warmer atmosphere, richer growths, more varied products, demand a different culture. A habit of public devotion must be cultivated which will bring people to the sanctuary, not to listen to homiletical oratory, but to worship God. The fluctuating interest in a preacher must be superseded by a fixed sense of obligation to honour and sustain public worship. There are ecclesiastical Bourbons, who never forget anything and never learn anything; but the ministers of a Church which boasts of its liberal-conservatism, its Pauline elasticity and power of adaptation to the varied and ever-changing conditions of society, should not be among them."

"Father Grafton," of Boston, at the beginning of his address, announces himself as "a miserable Episcopalian, High Church Ritualist and Puseyite," yet welcomes all his brethren "as members of one true body," and feels that he would be doing wrong to the Spirit of God and the spirit working within us, if he did not acknowledge as valid the ministry of every Baptist, Congregationalist, Methodist, etc., who ministers in the name of Christ. This is one of the most hopeful points of the Congress, for if the ministers of the Episcopal Church generally are to become as Catholic spirited, one great obstacle to the general unity of the Church of Christ would be removed. His exposition of the High Church idea of "sacrifice" is interesting to those who like to try to appreciate the point of view of those who differ from them on doctrinal points.

The paper of Dr. G. Dana Boardman is another beautiful exposition of the subject of "Worship." After showing that the essence of true worship must ever be spiritual, he goes on to say: "Are we then to dispense with all forms of worship?" To which he replies: "Certainly not. We need all these as helps and therefore must have them; for, at least while we are in this world, the body is the vehicle and the organ and the inlet and outlet of the spirit. Accordingly body and spirit act and re-act on each other."

"No matter what our theory of a Christian life demands that we should be, no matter how exalted our general Christian character actually is, this thing is quite certain: the possibility of a genuine spiritual worship at any given time does depend greatly on our circumstances; or, as the philosophers say, on our environment; for example, the condition of our bodily health, the comfortableness of the temperature, the thoroughness of the ventilation, the freedom from noise and distraction, the manner of the preacher, the religiousness of the music and like circumstances. Even the character of the architecture affects the faculty of spiritual worship, many persons being really aided in their devotions by

The high embowed roof
With antick pillars massy proof,
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light.

"Every one knows that religious music—music that is religious—helps us to praise.

"Here, in fact, is one of the reasons of the incarnation of Deity. The visible Jesus helps us to see the invisible Father. Herein, also, lies the meaning of the ordinances of Baptism and Holy Communion. These are outward acts, palpable to the senses, and therefore have been appointed to help us, body-invested as we are, to grasp the spiritual truths which they visibly symbolize. The great thing, then, is to use forms intelligently, conceiving them as being only aids to worship, mere ladders by which the soul may climb to her eternal habitation. For God is spirit, and, therefore, even spiritual worship must take on some kind of form or liturgy. In fact it is almost impossible to over-estimate the value of worship in promoting the growth of the Church. Worship is more important than preaching, or polity, or even creeds; for these are moral failures, unless they issue in adoration. Worship is the thing for which man was made. God's way is still in the sanctuary."

Bishop Cox, in opening his remarks, modestly presented himself as one of the people called Christians, and objects to the title, "Congress of Churches," as not accentuating sufficiently the unity of the Church, and proposes that it should rather be called a "Congress of Christians," resolving it into a body of Antiochian disciples. He puts in a word for the public repeating of the Creed: "I want to say that the confession of Jesus Christ by a congregation of Christian men in that form of sound words is the highest act of worship, except the Eucharist itself. The union of all in one confession, by one mouth, with one heart, is homage to God. I am convinced (by what I have heard) that this formula of faith is commonly accepted by this assembly and that unity can be developed only out of our common assent to these fundamental truths."

But the discussion would have been incomplete without the truly spiritual address of the Rev. Thos. K. Beecher on the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

He says, among other true things: "The question we are discussing, brethren, will settle itself. I can lead you to a church where once the sermons were from two hours down to an hour in length, the hymns were few and the prayers were scant. But now

the sermons have shrunk to forty or even twenty minutes, prayers and songs and responsive readings do most graciously fill the hour more than full with divine communings. The Spirit has proved Himself triumphant in the great congregation, completing the work begun in the closet."

One extract more is made from the closing paper by Dr. Chase, to show the kind feeling toward Unitarians. "It is one thing to deny the divinity of Christ and another not to perceive it. I congratulate the Unitarian Christians upon the good work they have done in helping us to freedom of discussion. I congratulate them, moreover, for having given the final word in regard to the Fourth Gospel, for having established the fact of its authenticity. I believe they may be led to see the clear truth we see; I believe they may be able to believe all that Christ said of Himself; especially to admit that superhuman consciousness which penetrated to the very heart of the Father and enabled Him to say in those sublime words, 'Before Abraham was, I am.' We are all partakers of His life. In Him dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead bodily. I believe, therefore, it is possible for the Unitarians to stand on Trinitarian ground. I believe this is the only way to go forth as a conquering army. Look to the first Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, in which he addresses all who call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Is there not enough there for the Unitarian and the Ritualist? May our Heavenly Father, our gracious Redeemer, our Comforter and Guide, give us of that spirit which may contribute more and more to that unity of the Church, which shall banish all division and make us all soldiers in the army of God!"

FIDELIS.

EGYPT AND THE BIBLE.

SECOND LECTURE BY SIR WILLIAM DAWSON IN STANLEY STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, MONTREAL.

Sir William Dawson, Principal of McGill University, delivered the second of his lectures on "Egypt and the Bible," in Stanley Street Presbyterian Church recently. The Rev. Canon Norman occupied the chair, and among those present were Ven. Archdeacon Evans, Rev. Canon Mills, Rev. Mr. Hampson, Rev. J. Fleck, Rev. Dr. Cornish, Rev. J. McCaul and Rev. Mr. Frazer. This second lecture dealt more especially with questions relating to the exodus of the Israelites. The lecturer remarked that the charming story of Joseph, so rich in accurate pictures of ancient Egyptian life and manners, forms the appropriate introduction to this part of the relations of Egypt and Israel. Joseph seems to have attained to power in Egypt toward the close of the rule of the Hyksos or Shepherds, at a time when, while still favourable to Asiatic colonists, they had entirely adopted the Egyptian manners and religion. The land of Goshen, called Gesen by the Egyptians, is now known to have been one of the nomes or districts into which Lower Egypt was divided, and to have embraced the western part of the Wady Tumilat, a strip of fertile land extending from the Nile Delta toward the Isthmus of Suez, through which anciently a branch of the Nile and afterward a canal ran, conveying the fresh waters of the Nile to the Red Sea. In addition to this it included a part of the Delta between Wady Tumilat and Heliopolis. It was one of the finest districts of Egypt, rich in grain and pasturage, and celebrated for the fineness of its dates, and it lay in the best route for commerce, being the main artery of communication between Egypt and the countries to the eastward. It still retains this position, being traversed by the railway from Cairo and Alexandria to Suez, and by the Sweetwater Canal, and it was along this route that the campaign of General Wolseley against Arabi Pasha was conducted. If the time of the ascendancy of Joseph was toward the close of the domination of the Shepherds, then the new king, who knew not Joseph, must have been one of the princes of the succeeding native dynasty, the 18th of Manetho, the Egyptian historian. It seems, however, quite probable that the oppression of the Hebrews did not begin, or at least did not attain to its culmination till the reign of Rameses II., who was a great conqueror, an extravagant builder, and devoted to the interest of the priestly caste. In the works of this king certain subject peoples known to the Egyptians as Aperiou, were employed, and were not unlikely the Hebrews. The form of the bondage was one not yet extinct in Egypt, that of enforced labour in gangs on public works. Among other labours