

whether he had followed that other honoured name, no longer ours (Dr. Newman), whose voice I had heard in St. Mary's the only other time that I ever heard a sermon there. Our thanks were mingled with pain—and they were mingled then with even deeper pain than we now feel at those events when our wound was fresh—when we heard that Keble was safe. It was that which fixed many doubtful minds in their allegiance to the Church of England; and their allegiance was strengthened by the continued adhesion of our loved and honoured friend to our holy mother. (Cheers.) I wish Sir Roundell Palmer were here to-day to tell us with his own voice what he has told us so well in his Preface to the *Book of Praise*. And here I must remark what a significant and gratifying thing it is that a man like Sir Roundell Palmer, a great lawyer, should be the person to collect a *Book of Praise*. I couple with it another very remarkable fact—namely, that our own hymn-book in New Zealand was brought out a few months back under the editorial care of our own Attorney-General. (Cheers.) These are coincidences—small though they be—which show that what is said about the decay of religion is simply untrue; and that even amongst our laymen, who are not professionally bound to uphold the truth, there are many, from the highest to the lowest, who are promoting religion by every means in their power; so that even if the clergy of this country were found unfaithful to their duty, the Christian laity would remain staunch. (Great cheering.) But the particular thing which Sir Roundell Palmer so beautifully expresses, and to which I was referring, is the wonderful effect that Christian poetry has in abolishing and obliterating all party distinctions. (Cheers.) So we have found it in our part of the world, where we have often begun a service by singing Toplady's "Rock of Ages," and ended it with Keble's "Sun of my soul." (Cheers.) In saying this I would not, of course, have my younger friends suppose that there is nothing in the differences that exist in religious opinions. That would be to depart from the character of St. Mark as set forth in the collect for his day, and to become like children blown about by every wind of doctrine; but we are thankful to acknowledge that in all religious opinions, though they seem to differ when held by fallible and finite men, there is a basis of truth which will one day be apparent, and which Christian poetry instinctively discerns, so that nobody in reading it thinks of inquiring to what school the author belonged. And as, in chemistry, when the woody fibre is removed there remains the quinine to drive away the fever that would else desolate our homes,—when the cellular tissue is destroyed there remains the iodine to dissipate our tumours,—when the muddy particles are filtered out there remains the clear water to refresh our bodies,—so when the turbid elements of party strife are eliminated, out comes the simple truth which was once taught by Christ, and by Him delivered to His saints. (Cheers.) My personal connection with Mr. Keble did not cease when I left England for New Zealand, but it continued, so far as it could be carried on by correspondence. I received letters from him, and what I valued more than his letters were the continued assurances I received that his prayers were offered for the success of our work in that the most distant of the branches of the English Church. When Miss Yonge had given a great part of the proceeds of *The Heir of Redclyffe* and the whole of the proceeds of *The Daisy Chain* to maintain our mission vessel—(cheers)—our comfort was to know that John Keble followed that vessel with his prayers as it went forth to bear the message of salvation to those hundred isles which still wait for Christ. (Cheers.) What gave us so much comfort was to know that at Hursley and Otterburn there was a little centre of Christian interest and prayer on our behalf—that from what we all knew as the centre of religious poetry and the centre of religious history and fiction there was