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THE

CHURCHMAN

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ART. I.—THE NORWICH CHURCH CONGRESS.

THERE is no violence in stating that hundreds of persons attend Church Congresses from year to year without pausing to inquire into the nature or power of the principle which such gatherings represent. Such persons run their eyes through the programme. They detect in it some topics which arouse their interest, quicken their sympathies, or revive early memories. They observe the names of invited readers and speakers, and freely criticise their capacity to treat the theme which is assigned to them. They express their surprise that some are invited and others not, and they occasionally assume that only those who appear in the programme were asked to place their services at the disposal of the Subjects Committee. Add to these ideas others connected with the preachers of the Congress sermons, the ecclesiastical, historical, or local features of the centre in which the Congress is held, and we have the chief reflections of crowds of visitors to these autumnal manœuvres of the Church militant.

It is not unreasonable to assert that such persons have missed the main idea represented by the Church Congress. They only regard individualism. They accentuate each separate theme, and mainly so far as it presents itself to them. They have no larger field in their consciousness than the isolated speaker or reader of whom they have heard addressing those brought together by the topic under review. This individualism is narrow, is limited, is akin to intolerance, and is most perilous to growth. The man who accepts it will never be helpful to the expansion of opinion, and it will be no little difficulty to him to recognise the value, moral, intellectual, or spiritual, of these great assemblages. An exaggerated individualism is ruinous to the enjoyment of a Congress, for the

leading thought of such gatherings is the corporate life of the Church. They assert the power of the Divine society, together with its vitality, growth, extension, and enrichment. They indicate the regions which are invaded by its intrepid advance. They exhibit, in the themes to be discussed, the vastness and the variety of the Church's field. They proclaim, clearly and confidently, the Apostolic evangel, for surveying the ever enlarging areas of scientific inquiry and progress; contemplating the broad and ever broadening domain in which the associates of the Divine society live and labour and die, at home and abroad, the Congress says, in the name of the Church, "All things are yours."

And modern religion, so far as it is expressed in Church work, justifies this emphatic and enlarging idea. There is not a field of thought which the Church has not touched. There is not a social perplexity which lies outside her message. There is not a class or a section of human kind for which she has not some word of counsel in difficulty, of consolation in trouble, of warning in precipitancy, restiveness, oppression, or discontent. The corporate life of the Church is the fundamental principle of the Church Congress. Here we have the highest ideal of a splendid moral collectivism. Here we have a sympathetic concourse of individuals, animated by the same life, united by the same force, and intent upon a ministry of service, of which rich and poor, learned and ignorant, soldier, sailor, fisherman, waif and stray are the subjects.

There were in all six and twenty sessions in the Norwich Church Congress. Of these five and twenty represented the principle of corporate life. One, and that in the devotional meeting of Friday, recognised the individual life. This fact alone indicates extraordinary progress. Time was when individualism was the one dominating idea in the mind of thousands. It lingers on to-day in far too many vicarages, parishes, pulpits. It has, doubtless, its rightful place in the depths of our nature, in the history of the Church, in the ethics of religion. But, when fostered by selfishness, it engenders conceit, vanity, and exclusiveness, until such a cataract grows upon the moral vision as excludes all wider sympathies. This disease, which shrivels and dwarfs Nonconformity, finds its prophylactic in the Congress.

It will be seen at a glance that the corporate life of the Church has to do with that which underlies all activity, and which is the spring of moral enterprise. It deals, too, with the realm of intellect. It follows the student and the explorer to the ruins of ancient Egypt, to the monasteries and tombs of Palestine. It scrutinizes, with candid care and sacred jealousy for truth, the half-defaced inscriptions upon age-long

monuments. It handles, with gentleness and with reverence, manuscripts which were written five centuries before the Norman Conquest, probably in the great conciliar period, when the decisions of Nice, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon were fresh in living memory. Professor Sayce, in language lucid and strong, exposed, as few men could, the fallacy of some disciples of the German school, who, violating the principles of mediæval logic, built a world upon a "single instance." He showed that the Old Testament was by no means the only literature of the ancient Oriental world. "From Egypt, from Babylonia, from Assyria, nay, from Palestine itself, old literatures and inscribed monuments are pouring in, coeval with the age of the patriarchs and of Moses, and offering numberless opportunities for testing the truth and the antiquity of the Biblical record."

These enabled him to show that the age of Moses was in Egypt a highly literary age—an idea which St. Stephen expressed in his apology before the Sanhedrin. He quoted, with approval and amid applause, the discovery by Mr. Pinches, and a similar discovery by Professor Flinders Petrie, of contract tablets, which render it not only credible, but certain, that Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph lived in the periods assigned to them in the sacred narrative. Mr. Pinches was followed by Sir Charles Warren. Each sustained the conservative view of the authority and credibility of Holy Scripture. Archæology bears the witness of hoar antiquity to the historicity of what St. Chrysostom was the first to term the Bible. Mr. Burkitt's paper was no less helpful. His tribute to the scholarship of the late Professor Bensly was most generous. It was especially welcome to a Norwich audience, since Mr. Bensly was born in this city. Mr. Burkitt's digest of the famous Sinai Palimpsest was characterized by candour, by regard for careful balancing of critical niceties, and by a most conscientious desire to avoid pitting one MS. against another, when each appeared to be of equal value, while containing apparently conflicting statements. This was especially clear when dealing with Matt. i. 16. He accepts the traditional view respecting the virgin birth of our Lord, allowing that, even if the Palimpsest reading be the authentic text, the critical difficulties are as they were. Dr. M. James dealt with the vast amount of documents which were recently given to the world, and made some important observations respecting their bearing upon Christology, early Christian art, literature, and even eschatology.

The session which followed, took the Congress into another region. It was, nevertheless, the region of thought. It revealed the Christian ministry, doctrine, and worship in recent discoveries. Here Professor A. Robinson spoke with authority.

He is one of the editors of the remarkable series of papers known to scholars as "Texts and Studies." He was followed by Professor Chase, and the audience had a rare intellectual treat. Those who had eyes to see, and were gifted with even a modest share of historic insight, could appreciate the way in which both these Cambridge leaders made their way through the darkness of the past, lighted as it is by the glimmering of Apostolic truths and of Christian doctrine, and as each paused to estimate a reading, an inscription, a word, its bearing upon modern and received beliefs was brought out clearly and cogently. In this connection there is not a more interesting field of inquiry than the catacombs. Their inscriptions have been pressed into polemical service by both Protestant and Romanist. This method was avoided both by the Archdeacon of London and Mr. Gee. Not one utterance of a partisan character fell from either. Strange to say, this session, though well attended, did not attract any voluntary speaker. The President announced he had not received a single card. In his perplexity he called on the Dean of Chichester and the Dean of Norwich, and the session was ended.

Once again, the intellectual side of the corporate life of the Church was evinced by the place which was assigned in the programme to what proved to be a most instructive debate, viz., the fixity of dogma and the progress of science. It goes without saying, that the first part of this subject—difficult, daring, but unalterably true—was, when treated by Bishop Barry, in the hands of a master. He made no divisions in the elucidation of his theme. He rather unweaved it gradually, with ever increasing light and power and beauty, until the attentive hearer was enjoying a theme for the hearing of which some had spoken of doing a little knitting, *à la* Exeter Hall. He dated Christian dogma from Pentecost. He regarded it as based on stupendous fact. He saw it in the living, throbbing, sympathizing Christ. It reposed for finality on His glorious resurrection and on His infallible Word. With the skill of the acute reasoner and with the varied learning of a scholar, he generalized the religious fluctuations of centuries, or alternations between dogma and speculation, on the sides of excess and defect. The paper was a masterpiece. It was appreciated by every one of the crowd who flocked to hear it. The Bishop was followed by Professor Bonney, who took a different view, and an intelligent discussion was sustained by Mr. Engström, Dr. Kinns, Rev. Chancellor Lias, and others.

On the following day the Congress had to deal with other phases of the all-pervading principle of corporate life. In the morning the subject was the National Church, its origin and growth; its continuity, in order, doctrine, autonomy; that con-

tinuity unbroken by the Reformation, and what was done at the Reformation. These themes were dealt with by some of the ablest men in the Anglican Church. Dr. Jessopp is one of the most popular literary men in England. The Bishop of Peterborough enjoys a European reputation. Bishop Herzog is one of the most erudite leaders of the Old Catholic movement. Professor Gwatkin has a great, and a deservedly great, reputation in the University of Cambridge, and the Bishop of Salisbury ranks with the Pope and Professor Palmer, of Dublin, as amongst the greatest living Latinists.

Those who were present at that session will not soon forget it. It would be difficult and even dangerous to specialize, where each is so great in his own department. But it must be said the Bishop of Peterborough's deliverance was a cataract of power and beauty. It sparkled. It crashed. It dazzled by its literary splendour. It overwhelmed by its masculine strength. Knowledge gleamed in it. Wit delicate, ironical, incisive, flashed from it. Culture wrought its every argument into a polished shaft; while sheer intellectualism hurled it triumphantly upon the Papal position. When the Bishop had taken his seat, the audience burst into a storm of appreciative applause. The Welsh dioceses were discussed in the afternoon. Here the perfervid enthusiasm of Archdeacon Howell carried all before it. But most persons felt the subject was selected in view of the attack which the nation has discomfited.

The morning and the afternoon of the same day were given to the consideration of hindrances to Christian Unity. Nearly all the morning was given to papers by Canons Garnier and Hammond, the Bishop of Coventry, Prebendary Meyrick, and Mr. W. J. Birkbeck. The Rev. Henry Sutton, the literary and laborious vicar of Aston, protested against the hard measure which extreme Anglicans dealt out to Nonconformists. Mr. Lang recited his speech with clearness, and was in consequence well heard over the entire hall. The Rev. H. E. Fox was opposed to the union of the Anglican Church with the Eastern Churches, because of all he had seen in Palestine. The grave defect of this part of the section was that no one pointed out the numerical dimensions of the Eastern Churches. Some assumed there were but two or three, others forgot their varying ritual, creed, discipline, and history. No one mentioned the straight-from-the-shoulder reply of the Archbishop of Smyrna to the Pope's call to reunion. In the afternoon, the interest of the theme, and of those who were present, rose to a very high pitch. Not in all the session of the Congress was there such enthusiasm, animation, and glow, as when the President called on Lord Halifax, and when, his lordship having sat down, he called on

the Dean of Norwich. Many described it as the duel of the Congress. But whether it was or was not, one thing is certain, there was an entire absence of acrimony. There was banter. There was humour. There was pleasantry. But there was no bitterness, no vituperation, no harshness of statement, or insinuation of sinister motive. It is not too much to say, that such a session, on such a subject, could not have been held twenty, or even ten years ago. The Church Congresses have enabled men who differ widely to extend to each other the generosities of tolerance and the courtesies of Christian gentlemen.

Thus far the intellectual side of the corporate life of the Church has been traced in the subjects which were treated. But as intellectual life, when under the dominating influence of morals, must be expressed in practical labour, we have now to see how far the Congress programme indicates this. We have not to go far to find the object of our search. It is seen in missionary enterprise, at home, in parochial missions, in universities' and schools' missions, in the Brotherhood of St. Andrew, and other Church agencies. These aspects of a sympathetic solidarity, which claims as its concern the youth of the nation in its poverty, and the succour of such by the youth of the same nation in its comfort, were most ably treated by men fresh from the scenes in which these aspects of our corporate life are daily in evidence. Canon Eyre was tender, but manly and strong. He has already made himself a name in Sheffield, as those who knew his work in Liverpool were confident he would. Mr. Winnington-Ingram, of the Oxford House, in the East End of London, was no less interesting and attractive; while the Rev. T. J. Madden brought all his experience in Barrow-in-Furness and in Liverpool to bear upon evangelistic enterprise. The far-off fields of missionary adventure, some of them soaked in the blood of the martyrs of our age and day, elucidated the idea which so far runs through every session of the Congress. The life of the Christ, which is the life of the Church, throbs in Jew, in Japanese, and in Chinese. Travel-stained men came to tell us what they had seen, and to strengthen what we believed. Moreover, the vital enthusiasm which works courageously in congested centres at home, as well as in Uganda, Tokio, Madagascar, or Metlakatlah, is the same heaven-born force that spends itself in evangelistic sympathy towards sailors, soldiers, fishermen, deaf mutes, and waifs and strays. Nor do these spheres of its courageous enterprise exhaust its power.

The message which is delivered by the Church to the age is not even a dulcet song of tenderness, arousing the finer sensibilities of pathos, or compassion. It can be again, as it has

been before this, a message of justice, of equity, of fair play. Such a message is to be conveyed to the capitalist and to the labourer. It is to be proclaimed to the one and to the other, and woe to either if it be disregarded. Socialism, trades unionism, and co-operation have to learn much from the principles of Him Who is the Truth as well as the Life. The higher and the humbler classes must bear to be told that society can hope for nothing which the principles of the Redeemer can not suggest. The complications of our day may be lessened, and their strain may be relieved by loyal obedience to the Spirit of the Church's Founder, Master, and Lord. There is hardly room to doubt that while ready acknowledgment must be made respecting the difficulties of labour, of wages, of foreign competition, none of these are comparable for gravity and for abiding disaster to those evils termed social, and which are represented by impurity and gambling. It is not to be supposed these evils assail the labouring classes more than others. But they do assail and overcome men; and much of their terrible grossness was exposed by the President of the Congress and by others.

The sacred sphere in which, by powerful tradition, as well as by still more powerful instinct, woman is supreme, was not forgotten. That she is influenced by religious faith, and, alas! by the want of it, as well as by reading, by work, by amusements, is to say that she is human. She is more impressionable than man. This makes her training of the most fundamental importance. What she is the nation will be, for the nation is made or marred by its mothers. Passing on to the prosaic theme of Church finance, connected as it is with agricultural distress, it is not too much to say that no more urgent theme was discussed by the Congress than the initiation of a National Church Sustentation Fund. Upon the ruling episcopate a most weighty responsibility lies. This, however, may be said. Few dangers are graver to the Church and nation than a clergy stricken by poverty, depressed by want, and overborne by need. These conditions affect their family life, their pastoral labour, their public efforts. Privation has not caused one murmur to pass from lips, some of which are white with poverty. The people committed to their care cannot help as they would, unless some move is made by constituted authority. In several dioceses much has been done. Liverpool, Ripon, York, Exeter, Worcester, Chester, have moved, but there is an enormous field to be covered. The first feet to fall on untrodden ground are those of the bishops. The nation is waiting to hear what they have to say, and to do what they in their collective wisdom have to propose. There is nothing unreasonable in this. Corporate life involves the care and even the comfort of

those upon whom its most sacred obligations lie. Those who treated this and cognate themes at the Norwich Church Congress knew what they were saying. Men like Mr. Sancroft Holmes, Mr. Clare Sewell Reade, the Hon. E. Thesiger, Chancellor Blofield, and Mr. Gurdon, brought to the treatment of the subject knowledge, experience, legal learning, and sympathy. All that is needed now is initiation.

The curtain has fallen on the Church Congress of 1895. Nearly all of those who took part in it "have gone away unto their own homes." There has been diversity of opinion, unreserved utterance in debate, and solidity of treatment by those to whom papers were committed. Various estimates will be made of the practical outcome of the gathering. It does not lie, happily, with the writer of this article to appraise the great symposium of the Church. This, however, he can and he will dare to say. Never in the history of the Anglican Church was there a nobler sphere before her. Never was it so important that all schools should address their highest and their holiest energies to work, studious, pastoral, homiletical. Never were men readier to hear, if the speaker has aught intelligent and reasonable to enounce. We are passing through a silent revolution, and whatever school of thought in the Church has wisdom to know the times and to take occasion by the hand, will win to God and His Christ the thousands who are now estranged from the Anglican society, now unwon by either Roman Catholicism or Nonconformity, but who can be brought in by that primitive Christianity, ante-Nicene, and yet Nicene; anti-Roman, and yet Scripturally Roman; and which was formulated by hands, some of which were reddened in fire, after they had given to England the matchless liturgy we dearly love and the Articles of Faith, as a Churchman's soundest body of divinity.

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Art. II.—THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE PENTATEUCH.

No. I.—Introductory.

THE quiet, believing student of Scripture has been much exercised by the so-called "Higher Criticism," which professes to be able to separate the Pentateuch into three or four distinct portions, written at periods extending over some four centuries and a half.[1] Fragments of various narratives, it

[1] It may perhaps be advisable to define the expression "Higher Criticism." It does not mean, as some may have supposed, that de-