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And this is the teaching of the Bible. "The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead."

The *Benedicite* is in wonderful harmony with the scientific spirit of our generation. Each new student of the mysteries of Nature brings us more and more marvellous revelations of her greatness. We know more—much more—about God in Nature, His power, His wisdom, and His beneficence, than our fathers did, and therefore we can say more intelligently than they: "O all ye works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord, praise Him and magnify Him for ever!" May we unite with Nature and her works in ascribing praise to God! "O that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men!" "All Thy works shall praise Thee, O Lord, and Thy saints shall bless Thee!"¹

WILLIAM COWAN.



ART. VI.—THE DIOCESE OF LONDON: THE WEST AND THE CITY.²

WHAT might not a Diocese like London achieve for the kingdom of God and for English Christianity, if it were wholly united, wholly coherent, vital in every part, and properly equipped! In London is the centre of every movement, political, commercial, philanthropic and religious. The influence of London is felt to the extremities not only of the kingdom, but of the empire. The responsibility of working in London is overwhelming.

¹ The uncanonical absurdity of singing this glorious pæan of praise during Advent and Lent is merely owing to a slip of the compilers of the First Prayer-Book of Edward VI. They thought there should be an alternative to the *Te Deum* for these seasons, and directed the use of the *Benedicite*. When, however, three years after, they produced the perfected Prayer-Book (the Second of Edward VI., A.D. 1552) they had discovered their mistake, and realized that the *Benedicite* was reserved for the most jubilant and joyful occasions in the Early Church, and they therefore omitted this direction. The Tractarians, in their zeal for the First Prayer-Book, resumed this mistake, which had been corrected during the previous 300 years, and had been in force less than three years. It has now become a point of honour to commit this solecism every Sunday in Advent and Lent, and the unhappy *Benedicite* is dressed up in all kinds of gloomy chants in the vain hope of making its wild jubilation suitable to these solemn seasons.

² I make no apology for putting this statement of facts in a more permanent and accessible form than the reports of the Church Congress.

The Diocese is unique in the history of Christendom. The population, according to the census of 1891, was 3,251,475; it is now nearly 4,000,000. The nearest population to its own in this country is that of the Diocese of Manchester, which has 2,644,822; Rochester has 1,938,000; York, 1,447,000; Liverpool, 1,207,000; and St. Albans, 1,006,000. Not merely to provide for the spiritual wants of such inconceivable numbers, but to stir them to a sense of homogeneous unity, of Christian brotherhood, of mutual knowledge and dependence and realized solidarity, is indeed a gigantic task.

It must be remembered that the Diocese, huge as it is, has been very much restricted. It is now, with a trifling exception, conterminous with the county of Middlesex. The Metropolitan area of London itself is vastly larger. That prodigious part of London which is south of the River Thames is mainly in the composite Diocese of Rochester; some of it in that of Winchester; a small portion in that of Canterbury. The teeming populations east of the River Lea, which makes the border between the counties of Middlesex and Essex, are in the Diocese of St. Albans.

The size of the Diocese has fluctuated greatly in the present century.

In 1832, besides the City of London and the County of Middlesex, it comprised the whole county of Essex, the two Archdeacons of which had stalls in St. Paul's Cathedral; 50 parishes in Hertfordshire, and 4 in Bucks, all of which were in the Archdeaconry of Middlesex.

In 1837, when the County of Bucks was transferred from the Diocese of Lincoln to that of Oxford, the Bucks parishes were withdrawn from the Diocese of London.

In 1845 the Diocese received an enormous increase: the parishes of Charlton, Lee, Lewisham, Greenwich, Woolwich, Eltham, Plumstead and Deptford were transferred to it from the Diocese of Rochester. The idea seems, then, to have been to make the Diocese the same as the Metropolitan area. But the policy was not maintained, and in 1863 these were returned with thanks to Rochester.

In the same year, 1845, the Archbishop of Canterbury gave to the Diocese of London from his own Diocese the parishes of St. Mary Newington, Barnes, Putney, Mortlake, and Wimbledon. These were not given up to Rochester till 1877, at the time that I was resident chaplain to Bishop Jackson.

In the same year, 1845, the Diocese of London received the greater part of South London from the Diocese of Winchester, that is, the great parishes of Southwark, Battersea, Bermondsey, Camberwell, Clapham, Lambeth, Rotherhithe, Streatham, Tooting-Graveney, Wandsworth and Merton.

London was compensated for these enormous additions by the transference of the County of Essex and the 50 London parishes of Hertfordshire to the long-suffering Diocese of Rochester, which for several generations has been the plaything of ecclesiastical politicians.

The idea of making the Diocese of London contain all the urban Metropolitan population was still further emphasized by keeping the 10 parishes now known as London-over-the-border, which are such a terrible burden to the Bishop of St. Albans—Barking, Great and Little Ilford, East and West Ham, Leyton, Walthamstow, Wanstead, Woodford and Chingford. In 1863 the Metropolitan idea had been given up, for these parishes were handed back again, as usual, to Rochester.

It is very unlikely that the limits of the Diocese of London will again be disturbed, as after all these fluctuations and changes of policy, it has now settled down into a comparatively compact area, conterminous with a county, bounded on two sides by rivers, and for the rest by ancient county dividing-lines. The only reason for altering it would be the old canonical rule of one Bishop to one city. This might be carried out either by placing the whole Metropolitan area, with its 5,000,000, under the Bishop of London, with ten or twelve suffragans, supported in the constitutional and legal manner by adequate benefices or canonries; or, what has long seemed to me the better plan, by erecting the Metropolitan area into a province, making the Bishop of London a third Archbishop, and carrying out the canonical principle by raising each of the new municipalities of London to the status of a bishopric. In either case much waste of labour and money would be saved, and many anomalies would be avoided, by having one set of institutions for the total Metropolitan area, with St. Paul's Cathedral as the obvious and visible centre of the whole.

Some such scheme seems to have been at one time the policy of the authorities. Personally, I have advocated it ever since I have had anything to do with the Diocese; but it seems to me, for many reasons, extremely unlikely to be adopted.

Turning to the Diocese of London as it exists, we find that it is divided into two Archdeaconries, which meet at Temple Bar—that of London and that of Middlesex. The first comprises the City, the East End, and a large part of the North; the other, that of Middlesex, the whole of the West End and the country districts. In 1891 the Archdeaconry of London contained about 1,442,000 souls, that of Middlesex 1,807,000: each of these is now larger than any Diocese except Manchester and Rochester.

The Bishop of London is assisted by three suffragans and two assistant-bishops—Marlborough for the West, Islington for the North, Stepney for the East; for the West-central District the eminent late Metropolitan of Australia; and for North Europe, Bishop Wilkinson. The names of Stepney and North Europe remind me that the peculiarities of the Diocese of London are not exhausted; every British subject in foreign parts was at one time, and is very likely now, regarded in law as sailing from the Parish of Stepney, and every child born on the high seas is registered in that parish. This principle gave the Bishop of London jurisdiction over every member of the Church of England outside the British Islands. The Diocese of London is the mother of the whole Colonial Church. From the foundation of the American Colonies in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, until the consecration of Bishop Seabury little more than a century ago, the United States of America were part of the Diocese of London. The shelves of the Porteus Library at Fulham Palace have rows of volumes of documents and correspondence relating to that administration. For the same reason the numerous congregations of English people scattered throughout Northern and Central Europe are under the same episcopal rule.

My object is to speak about the City and the West.¹ About the City very little need be said. It has in its midst St. Paul's Cathedral, where the three chief services are attended every Sunday by great throngs, amounting to not much less than 7,000 during the course of the day. On week-days every morning service is attended by about 100, every afternoon by 400, every Saturday afternoon by 800. In addition to these, there is a multiplicity of services, great and small, daily, or at special seasons, or annual, which make St. Paul's a really vital element in the life of the Diocese. With our present staff of assistants, clerical and lay, St. Paul's could not do more; on many occasions St. Paul's itself is too small for the crowds who wish to attend. Besides St. Paul's, the City has no less than 56 churches for a resident population of not much more than 20,000; this gives an average of less than 400 persons to each church, even if they all belonged to the Church of England, and were all of age and condition to attend. It must be remembered, however, that a million of people enter the City every week-day for their business, and that some of these do attend mid-day lectures at City churches. The problem is exceedingly difficult because, while 10 would probably be enough for the population, the great majority of the churches are of such antiquarian and historical interest

¹ I wrote about the Archdeaconry of London in a previous paper.

that they could not be destroyed. There are 8 or 9 which are of little value: with the rest, much might be done in the way of uniting and specialization. It must be remembered that the wealthier City benefices are mulcted for the benefit of poor parishes in other parts of the Diocese.

But the interests of the western half of London claim a much larger proportion of attention. Here we find 378 parishes, and a population of nearly 2,000,000. About 30 of these are small country parishes which present no difficulty. The larger number of them are huge indeed. Those who come from the provincial and country towns will be startled to hear of the enormous difficulties with which the West End clergy of London have to contend. Among the parishes of the Middlesex Archdeaconry there are 67 with a population over 8,000, each of them equal to the population of a town. Those between 8,000 and 9,000 are 9; over 9,000, 13; over 10,000, 9; over 11,000, 3; over 12,000, 7; over 13,000, 5; over 14,000, 3; over 15,000, 6; over 16,000, 2; over 17,000, 4; over 18,000, 2; over 20,000, 1; over 21,000, 1; over 32,000, 1. And in spite of the very large staff of clergy at some of the wealthier churches, such as Kensington, St. Peter's, Eaton Square, St. Augustine's, Kilburn, Holy Trinity, Chelsea, and the like, the average proportion of clergy working among these vast masses is only one to 4,000. We cannot maintain that in these 67 parishes, except the few wealthy ones, the equipment is anything like adequate for the work of the Church. The successive Bishops of London, and the suffragan Bishop of Marlborough who assists in the West, are constantly urging the extraordinary and lamentable needs of West London; but adequate help does not come. Very few realize the actual state of the case.

The fact is that the population is increasing with such enormous rapidity that we are never able to overtake the neglect of a hundred years ago. In 1818, indeed, Parliament voted £1,000,000 for building churches in London and the great towns; but much of the money was wasted on the costliness of the buildings. The same year the Incorporated Church Building Society was founded. In 1836 Bishop Blomfield inaugurated the Metropolis Churches Fund. During his episcopate of 28 years he consecrated more than 200 churches. Besides the Metropolis Churches Fund, there were in those days local efforts, such as the Islington Church Extension Society, the Bethnal Green Ten Churches Fund, the Westminster Spiritual Aid Fund, the St. Pancras Fund, and the like. In 1854 the Metropolis Churches Fund was reconstituted as the London Diocesan Church Building Society. In 1857 Bishop Tait inaugurated the Bishop of London's

Fund. Noble work has been done in 42 years by that great institution; but it does not grow; for the building operations of the whole Diocese, as well as the increase of the staff of living agents in the western half, it does not produce much more than £20,000 a year, the inadequacy of which sum for the wants of the Diocese is absolutely appalling.

For the people go on multiplying whether we are ready for it or not. In 1836 Bishop Blomfield had to complain that in London and its suburbs the entire population of 34 parishes amounted to 1,137,000, while there was church room for only 101,682, and but 139 clergymen. In 1854 it was computed that the population had increased by 600,000 in 18 years. Between 1831 and 1841 it increased by 30,000 a year. Between 1841 and 1851 the rate was 40,000. That was for all London, the rate is now 40,000 for the more restricted Diocese of London alone. In 1881 the population within the Bills of Mortality was 3,815,000. In 1891 it was 4,211,000. In 1896 it was 4,411,000. The Diocese of London shares in this increasing rate.

Now, the result of all this is that religious influence is at a low ebb. We do not underrate the Christian work of Roman Catholics and Nonconformists; but we do not make anything like provision for our own people. It is impossible for one clergyman to exercise pastoral care over 4,000 souls, many of whom are frequently shifting from one parish to another. Bishop Tait used to aim at one clergyman for every 2,000. The standard looked for now is 1 to every 3,000; but 1 to 4,000 is far below the level of possibility. What did Bishop Temple tell us in his last charge from the pulpit of St. Paul's? That on the previous Easter Day, out of a population of $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions in the Diocese, only 110,000 had presented themselves for Holy Communion. A church and a staff of clergy working amongst a population of 32,000, 20,000, 18,000, 15,000, and the like, are not much more than beacon-lights, casting a gleam, but not illuminating the surrounding country; they influence personally a very small proportion of the people. It is difficult, I said, to realize this. The rich people who come to London for the five months of the season live in a very small area—Mayfair, Belgravia, Kensington, and so forth. They see fine churches, find them well attended, and suppose that it is the same all over the Diocese. They do not know the deplorable needs. The pathetic thing is that a parish when well supplied can achieve wonders for Christian civilization. Mr. Charles Booth, the statistician, in preparing his wonderful books on "Life and Labour in London," said that (in spite of all the difficulties and drawbacks) the one thing that had struck him was the unus-

pected influence of the parish system of the Church of England.

Why are not the new churches which the Bishop of London asks for built, and the old parishes newly equipped? Why are there hardly any imitators of the thirty separate benefactors who each built separate churches in London in the middle of the century? The problem, I feel sure, only needs to be known in order to be solved. The result of the Church Congress in London should be that the Bishop of London's Fund should at once be raised from £20,000 to £100,000 a year. The spirit and the power are still with us if only the need could be realized. London raises upwards of £3,000,000 every year for charitable purposes, and every part of the kingdom and empire is vitally connected with London. If London suffers in the faith, the rest will suffer in response. Each county of England sends her multitudes to London: Kent, 100,000; Essex, 80,000; every county in proportion. It is from the country that the wealthy come up every year. God grant that the hearts of all England may be warmed to feel the spiritual necessities of the capital of the Empire, and that all may take their share in the hard but hopeful campaign which the scanty clergy of London are waging against ignorance, suffering, and sin.

WILLIAM SINCLAIR.

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Reviews.

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De Saint Paul à Jésus-Christ. By the RÉVÉREND PÈRE H. CLÉRISAC
Paris: Librairie Plon. 1899.

THE works of Père Didon have of late attracted much interest amongst English readers. We do not remember having seen a previous work by Père Clérissac, who is also a member of the Preaching Order of the Dominicans. It cannot be said that it is likely that Anglican readers will derive much real information, anything that is new, or even agreeable comments upon what is ancient. The opportunity was a great one, for to thoughtful minds the evolution in the teaching of St. Paul from the plain statements of our Lord is a matter of deep interest and wonder; and it is no doubt quite possible that the "young men" in France and Italy to whom the Dominican Father dedicates his book will be presented with many fresh thoughts; but to English students, besides the shortcomings we have hinted at, the essay is marred by uncalled-for innuendoes and suggestions against Protestantism. Where the worthy Père Clérissac, in his own statement, is labouring to edify young souls who have lost their faith altogether, it is surely not necessary for him to diverge into remarks directed against that faith which is Protestant.

The main argument of the book is sound. The difference that is so often noticed between the Gospels and the Epistles is that Jesus Christ