Statue of Admiral Coligny in Paris.
The Gospel on the Continent.

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FOREIGN AID SOCIETY.

Founded in 1840 for helping the Reformed Churches to extend the Knowledge of the Gospel on the Continent of Europe.

President: The Right Rev. The Lord Bishop of Durham.


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THE FOREIGN AID SOCIETY ASSISTS WITH GRANTS THE

1.—Société Évangélique de Genève.—A missionary society working principally in the south-western provinces of France.

2.—Société Évangélique de France, which works chiefly in Paris and the centre of France.

3.—Société Centrale Protestant de l'Évangélisation, with its some 157 mission stations scattered all over France.

4.—Société Chrétienne Protestante du Nord.—A branch of the above.

5.—Société Évangélique Belge, which for sixty years has faithfully worked in Belgium.

6.—Les Églises Libres, who are chiefly engaged in the South of France.

A COMBINE MUCH TO BE APPLAUSED.
THE SOCIETY'S ANNIVERSARY.

The Society's Anniversary Service was held on St. Barnabas Day, June 11th, and was very successful. This was a new departure, and one which I trust will be followed in future years if God permits.

By the kind invitation of the Vicar, the Rev. F. K. Aglionby, D.D., the service was held in Christ Church, Westminster, at 8 p.m. There was a good congregation, as weekday evening congregations go in the West End of London in the middle of June.

I must make grateful mention here of the devoted help given to the Anniversary by my former verger, Mr. Beenham, who took notice papers to about fifteen churches in the week previous; and would also thank the clergy of those churches for displaying our posters and giving notice of the Anniversary.

The Prayers were read by Dr. Aglionby, and the Lessons by the Rev. Ewart Barter, the Chairman of the Society's Committee.

The sermon was founded on the passage from the Book of the Acts of the Apostles which tells how Barnabas introduced Saul to the timid Church in Jerusalem, naturally disinclined to receive one who had the reputation of a violent and insulting persecutor.

By the kindness of the editor, the sermon preached on the occasion has been printed in The Record for Friday, June 20th, under the title, "L'Entente Cordiale," and has been issued in book form, at the price of one penny per copy. I need not say more about it here. The offertory amounted to £1 12s. 11d.

The Society's best thanks are respectfully offered once more to Dr. Aglionby for his kindness in welcoming us to his church. It is good to be thus connected with a parish full of Christian zeal and activity, and we trust that reflex blessing may redound to the Vicar and his church workers for their hospitality to those who labour for the spiritual good of France.

THE ANNUAL MEETING.

We had an unusually strong platform on the 12th of June. All the speeches were good, and owing to a simple arrangement suggested by the Secretary beforehand, and kindly observed by the
speakers, there was no needless
iteration.

Parliamentary duties kept Dr.
Montague Barlow from being at the
meeting as he had hoped. We were
sorry to miss his bright and cordial
advocacy, but there was no actual
necessity for another speaker, and we
hold Dr. Barlow in reserve for future
help, and are confident that he will
consider himself the Society's debtor.

The attendance was not large, but
much thinner audiences have often
been seen at religious annual meet­
ings. It was specially pleasant to
have with us Mrs. Theodore Howard
and Mrs. Farell, both Secretaries to
Local Branches of the Foreign Aid
Society.

The chair was taken by Viscount
Clifden, who was supported by the
Dean of Canterbury, the Rev. W. P.
Parker, the Rev. Dukes, the Rev.
Pole, M. le Pasteur Boudery, and
the Secretary.

The proceedings were opened with
prayer by the Secretary, after which
the Rev. Pole read a short report
of the work of the Society during
the past year. This report was
merely a very brief summary of the
Society's work and income, and will
form the basis of the full report to
be issued later. We are very sorry
to have to note, however, that the
financial position of the Society
compels it to reduce its annual
grants to the French speaking socie­
ties, and we much hope that through
the continued kindness of our friends
the grants next year may reach their
accustomed total.

After the reading of the report, the
Secretary read letters of regret for
absence from the Rev. E. Barter,
Chairman of Committee; Sir W.
Godsell, who was prevented through
ill-health from attending; and the
Rev. Worthington Alkin.

Lord Clifden then rose and ad­
dressed the meeting. After outlining
briefly the nature and sphere of the
work of the Foreign Aid Society, he
drew attention to the special need of
pecuniary help among the Reformed
Churches of the Continent, because
of the extreme poorness of the Pro­
testant communities in France, Bel­
gium and Switzerland. He pointed
out the excellent work which these
churches were doing in combating
the superstition and infidelity that is
so rife on the Continent, and alluded
to the suggestion that came up
lately in the French Chamber of
Deputies, that teachers in schools
should be warned not to inculcate
the fear of God into their pupils, as
being an indication of the general
level of religious life of France to­
day. Finally, Lord Clifden said
there was undoubtedly a call at the
present day for wider knowledge of
such a Society as the Foreign Aid
Society.

The Dean of Canterbury was the
next speaker. In a most stirring
and sympathetic speech, he dwelt
upon the great debt owed by the
Church of England to the Reformed
Continental Churches. The English
Reformation, said the Dean, was
mainly due to the Reformation move­
ments in Germany and France. The
influence of Martin Luther over the
first great English Reformers was
marked and lasting. The compilers
of our Book of Common Prayer, and
Tyndale in his translation of the
Bible, all worked under an impulse
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from the German Reformation. In the time of Queen Elizabeth, Calvin's doctrines and preaching exercised wide power in Scotland, even more than in England, under the force and eloquence of John Knox. The obligations and debt of the English Church to the Reformed Churches on the Continent were, for at least 200 years after the Reformation, upheld and owned by English Churchmen of all schools. To this day there remains a visible link in the chain that bound the Reformation in England to the Reformation abroad. In the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral a service is held each Sunday by a French Protestant pastor for the descendants of those Huguenots who took refuge in England during the persecutions that followed on the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The use of the Cathedral crypt for their worship was granted them then, and the service survives to this day; so that here in Canterbury, which from its nearness to the coast towns of the English Channel was a convenient centre for the escaped refugees, and where many French Protestant merchants still settle, there exists an association between the Mother Church of English Christianity and the remnants of French Protestantism.

The Dean referred to the double testimony given by Bishop Cozens, of Durham, to the fraternity existing between the Church of England and the Reformed Churches abroad. Bishop Cozens was a distinct High Churchman, yet in a letter to some of his fellow countrymen who were staying in Paris, and who wrote to him asking his advice concerning their religious observances, he wrote that it is not lawful for a Protestant to receive the Communion in a Roman Catholic Church; at the same time giving his formal sanction and approval for the receiving of the Sacrament with the orthodox French and German Reformed Churches. In his will also, Bishop Cozens says "That he desires to die in charity with all the true Christian Churches in the world, which is to be specially understood to be, with the best Protestant Churches on the Continent."

"The position of the Reformed Churches in French speaking countries now," said the Dean in conclusion, "is one of opportunity. Men like Monod and Bercier do much to weaken the spiritual life of a nation, yet the Roman Catholic Church at present is driving the people away alike from Roman Catholicism and from Christianity. Infidelity and unbelief are spreading, and it is for the Protestant Churches to check their growth and bring the people back to the true faith as it is in Jesus. The Foreign Aid Society seeks to assist them in the task. It helps those who help themselves, and is particularly worthy of support because it helps to maintain the specifically Evangelical and Protestant Churches of the Reformation."

The Rev. W. P. Parker, British Chaplain at Calais, followed in a vigorous and interesting speech full of matter, and delivered with much vivacity. He dwelt on the prevalence of indifference and unbelief in the French people, and illustrated his statement with some references to his experience of things as a Chaplain. He spoke with enthusiasm of the high qualities which he had
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noted in the French Pastors assembled recently at a Synod in Boulogne, to which he had been invited; declaring that they were men of zeal, intelligence, capacity and Christian devotion, and had impressed him greatly as thoroughly equipped for the task of evangelising France.

He asked the meeting to send a message of cordial salutation to a similar gathering to be held in Calais on June 23rd, a request which was answered with warm applause. The message was afterwards put into due form by the Secretary, and was duly delivered by Mr. Parker.

The Rev. E. J. Dukes was the last speaker. He pleaded earnestly for federation between the various agencies working for the spread of spiritual religion on the Continent. He briefly described one such work, "La Mission Gallicaine," the representative of which was in the hall, and asked whether there was an Anglican clergyman or layman who would become the Secretary of that movement in England.

He emphatically declared that of all the agencies at work in the common field of evangelising the Continent, the Foreign Aid Society seemed to him that one which was best calculated to become the centre round which the rest might rally for co-operation and counsel. These words were specially weighty, coming as they did from one who described himself as belonging to an old Huguenot family and as a minister of a Christian communion differing in some important respects from the English Church.

The meeting concluded with the Benediction, pronounced by the Rev. Dr. Aglionby. A collection was taken at the door, amounting in all to between £9 and £10.

MEETING AT CLIFTON.

On April 29th, by the kind invitation of Canon and Mrs. Capel, a meeting for the Society was held in the drawing room of their house. The Vicar of Clifton took the chair.

Mr. Decandole, in opening the meeting, referred to the many manifestations of the work of the Holy Ghost now discernible in the world. None had been more remarkable than that appeal from the new Government in China for prayer on the part of the Christian Church; this should encourage us all to strive in the fellowship of prayer and labour for the advancement of the Kingdom of our Lord.

They were met together that afternoon to hear of the progress of the Kingdom of Christ in a part of the world close to their own shores in the beautiful land of France, and of the operations of the Foreign Aid Society in that and the neighbouring lands; and he welcomed in Mr. Marston an old friend, and one who was not quite a stranger to Clifton.

Mr. Marston then delivered an address, entitled "Watchman! What of the night?" He dealt at length with the state of religion on the continent of Europe, and pointed out some grounds for hoping that there were signs of a revived concern in spiritual things, and a reaction against the evil philosophy of the 18th century, through the influence of Bergson. This, if not Christian, was at least akin to those great truths on which Christian faith and life repose.
The meeting was excellent in numbers and in temper; the best thanks of the Society were offered to the kind host and hostess, who, after the meeting, entertained the guests to tea. Offerings were received to the funds of the Society amounting to £2 10s.

THE MEETING AT PENGE.

NEW ground for the Society was broken on Ascension Day, May 1st, when at the kind invitation of the Rev. Walter Abbot, Vicar of Christ Church, Penge, a meeting was held in the pleasant upper room of the Parochial Hall. Tea was first provided by the kindness of some friends in the parish.

The Vicar opened the meeting with prayer and some interesting observations on the work of the Foreign Aid Society. He criticised the name of the Society, which he said conveyed to him no definite idea at all. He had read the booklet written by Mr. Barter, and from it he saw how great the need of the work in France was, and how the Society was doing its best to meet the grave needs of religion in the land that we all knew so well, and to which we all owed so much.

Mr. Marston then delivered the same address as that which he gave at Clifton two days before.

At the close of the address, the Rev. D. Latham, Vicar of St. Pauls, Beckenham, spoke in warm terms of the Society. He asked the Secretary some interesting questions as to the past history of religion in France, which led to some lively and interesting conversation which greatly pleased the audience. Several books were gladly taken by those present, and thus seed was sown in new soil.

Our hearty thanks are due to Mr. and Mrs. Abbot for their kindly welcome to the work in a parish already full of many good works.

NOTES.

Our sincere thanks are tendered to the editor of The Record for giving publication to the annual sermon preached by the Secretary on behalf of the Society in Christ Church, Westminster, on the evening of St. Barnabas Day. The sermon has been reprinted from The Record in small book form, and copies may be ordered of the Secretary, price one penny each.

We regret to record the death of Miss Austin, for many years the Hon. Secretary of the Bath Branch of the Society. She had for long been in weak health, but remained warmly interested in our work to the last. Miss Sanders has kindly consented to act as her successor for the present, and we trust that she may see her way to kindly continue in the office for a long time. She has already been a helper to the Foreign Aid Society in more ways than one, and has not a few gifts that make her a very valuable ally.

FATHER BERNARD VAUGHAN is always diverting, even where he is not impressive. He has the happy faculty for seizing on the immediately attractive points. He is humorous and colloquial on matters grave and profound. It is therefore interesting to us to read these sprightly observations which he made recently at Liverpool on religion in France.

He will assuredly be glad to learn that his observations are corroborated from a quarter which he would look at with a lenient suspicion.
Victor Broux, the Secretary of the Evangelical Society of Geneva, quite lately wrote to me and reported that his colporteurs tell him of a sense of the need for religion reviving in the hearts of the French peasants, among whom their Bible work is carried on. When two such divergent witnesses as Father Bernard Vaughan and M. Broux agree, there is good hope that the facts sustain the deponents.

[Extracted from "The Times."]

FATHER VAUGHAN ON RELIGION IN FRANCE.

Father Bernard Vaughan addressed 5000 young men in St. George's Hall, Liverpool, yesterday afternoon. The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Liverpool was in the chair.

Father Vaughan said that he had lately been to Marseilles, Lyons, and Paris, and had been studying the state of religion in those great centres of French life. In Paris he spent his time between its churches and its schools, its clubs and its slums. Ten years had elapsed between his last two visits. On the previous one he felt pessimistic. Today he was optimistic about religious revival in France. The tide was on the turn, nay, actually coming in. The clergy were no longer tethered to the sacristy. On the contrary, they were in the swim of great social and economic movements, if not actually guiding them. Priests and people were drawing closer together. No matter to what church or chapel he went, he found it full, if not thronged; not as in past years with women and children only, but with young clerks, university students, and professional men, together with a brave show of officers and men of the rank and file. The greatest blessing that had happened to France during the past hundred years was the Separation Bill. By it the Church, which had for a century been chained like a slave to the wheels of the State chariot, had been set free.

He wished that the Christian young men of England would learn a lesson from the Catholic youth in France today. When he turned his eyes from Paris to London, he felt mortified, hurt, and humiliated. How pathetic it was to read Lord Roberts' appeal on the one hand and the Marconi scandals on the other, and to feel that it would all fizzle out, for nobody cared and nothing much mattered but to get rich quick, as they were told in the play. It looked as if some people wanted to put up the Empire to auction, to be knocked down to the highest bidder. Patriotism was languishing, because religion was dead. God alone could resuscitate it.

During the past ten years, while the population of Liverpool had increased 45,000, its church-going people had decreased by 20,000.