

STATESMEN. No. 686.

THE BISHOP OF LICHFIELD.

THE RIGHT REVEREND AUGUSTUS LEGGE, D.D., is a gentleman by birth (being son of the fourth Earl of Dartmouth), a Churchman by choice, and a Bishop since 1891. Born eight-and-fifty years ago, he is an Eton boy and a Houseman who left Oxford on a second class degree (in the old School of Law and Modern History). At the age of twenty-eight he was Vicar of St. Bartholomew's, Sydenham: since when he has been Rural Dean of Greenwich, and of Lewisham; Honorary Chaplain to the Bishop of Rochester, and Honorary Canon of the same place, and Vicar of Lewisham: which last Office he only left to become the ninety-second Bishop of Lichfield: for his See was founded by Oswy, King of Mercia, some twelve and a-half centuries ago.

He is a Churchman of the right sort. Belonging to a family whose members are, and have been, territorial magnates in his diocese, he is acceptable to the "bene nati"; but, being the man that he is, he is also a "people's Bishop." He has been called "a man of liberal views"; but however liberal, they are generally wholesome. He is a good organiser, who has, to some extent, cut down the plans of his predecessors; and he always does thoroughly what he has to do. Probably he is the most business-like occupant of all the Bench. He is an admirable chairman of a meeting, who is able to keep the most clerical of speakers to the point without dictating to them or taking up too much time for himself; and he rules his clergy with so effective a combination of firmness and reasonable moderation that he is supposed to be as popular among them as he is respected. Yet has he even more influence with the laity; for, while the capitalist acknowledges in him a good man of business, the working man recognises him as a friend. Socially, he is a man of better manners than presence. He is at once a retiring Bishop without cant, a good talker, a better listener, and a member of the Athenæum Club.

He is full of sobered enthusiasms tempered by real capacity. He is not a Tom Mann, yet is he a believer in, and a leader of, working men.