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THE CHURCHMAN.

OCTOBER, 1908.

The Month.

The
Lambeth
Conference
Report.

THE Bishops' Encyclical Letter, together with the Resolutions and Reports, can now be obtained in convenient form (S.P.C.K., 1s.), and its contents warrant the careful study they are sure to obtain.

The first Report deals with "The Faith and Modern Thought," and out of the various points of its valuable summary of modern tendencies we wish to call special attention to the following :

"We notice with anxiety a tendency, not unnaturally produced by the concentration of attention on progress and development, to give to the doctrine of man's sinful state a less prominent place than is given to it in Holy Scripture. It was to save His people from their sins that the Son of God became man. It is only by insistence on His redeeming sacrifice and His power to save from sin that the Church can do her practical work of rescuing and ennobling mankind. Any teaching which is truly to represent the religion of Jesus Christ and of the Catholic Church must speak with no uncertain voice on the reality of sin and of redemption."

We are the more thankful for this pronouncement because in several quarters criticism had been passed on the Encyclical Letter and the Resolutions, that no reference was to be found in them to sin and redemption. Everyone who knows what Christianity is as recorded in the New Testament, and also what spiritual work means among sin-burdened hearts, will rejoice in this renewed emphasis on the need of speaking with no uncertain voice on the reality of sin and of redemption.

Church
Finance.

The Vicar of Windsor started a very important correspondence in the *Spectator* last month on the subject of Church Finance, calling special attention to what had been pointed out at the Pan-Anglican Congress—that the Church of England as a whole has no means of control over the vast sums that are raised by voluntary contributions year by year. The result of this lack of control is that the greater needs are often subordinated to the less. Thus, it was pointed out by Canon Bullock Webster that last year £260,000 were spent on Church furniture, while the total contribution to the Clergy Pensions Institution was only £17,000. As the Bishop of Carlisle has recently said: “We are almost in a state of financial chaos, and overlapping is really very great.” It is proposed that a Committee of Inquiry should be appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, in order that the whole subject of Church finance may be considered, with the view to something being done to reduce the present chaos to order. By all means let such a committee be appointed, but to do real work it must tackle the thorny problem of endowments as well as that of voluntary gifts. The seven and a half millions raised annually by voluntary contribution are only a very small part of the problem, and not the most important part. The heart of the matter lies in the present unequal distribution of endowment funds, and until these inequalities are attacked and set right, we are afraid that the laity will not take much interest in Church finance or come forward with their gifts. They have the lurking feeling that in giving at present they are helping to perpetuate an anomalous state of things which ought to have been ended long ago. The examples of our brethren in Ireland and the United States show that the laity will not be slow in the support of their Church if they are met with a statesmanlike scheme of redistribution, or, at any rate, with some definite proposals in this direction. Not only so, the laity must feel that they themselves have an adequate share of authority in the expenditure of Church funds. Meanwhile, as the *Spectator* in its article truly says, “We desire nothing more than that Church

finance shall always appear as a skeleton at the feast till the uneasy spirit which moves it is quieted."

Candidates
for
Ordination.

The discussion of this important subject has continued during the past month, as suggested by the proceedings of the Lambeth Conference and the issue of the Report referred to in our last number. The causes of the decrease in the number of candidates are being investigated on almost every hand. Various reasons are assigned, such as prevalent indifferentism to religion, lack of fair and proper financial prospects, the general upheaval of doctrinal beliefs through the spirit of criticism, and the artificial standards of life connected with ministerial work. Probably all these have their place and call for careful consideration. Our contemporary, the *New York Churchman*, meanwhile makes the following contribution to the discussion :

"Perhaps the greatest reason for the neglect of ministerial life is to be found in the atmosphere of our times. Wherever there is work to be done with telling effect on the life of society and individuals in society, there the supply of workers is not lacking. A feeling that the Churches are inefficient, that they cannot justify their existence in the thought and action of the day, is what makes many young men pass them over as negligible quantities, and makes of the ministerial career an unreality."

It is well to remember that numbers alone mean nothing at all. What we should aim at in the ministry is character and power. Thorough work done by thorough men is our greatest need, and it is not impossible that our truest policy in the long-run will be to insist at once upon a more thorough preparation of the men we have and can get, instead of troubling ourselves about great accessions of numbers. When once we raise the quality by insisting upon a higher standard of attainment and qualification, we shall not be surprised if the numbers are increased.

The
Eucharistic
Congress.

The Roman Church, with all that impressiveness of outward ceremonial which is of the essence of her system, has made the very most of the Eucharistic Congress. We are not sorry that attention has again been

called to the essential teaching of the Roman Church on the Lord's Supper. While some have doubtless been influenced by the Congress in the direction of adhesion to Rome, others have become more thoroughly aware than ever of the fundamental opposition between New Testament teaching and the Roman Catholic dogma on the Holy Communion. Thus, Archbishop Bourne in his Pastoral Letter spoke of belief in the fact that our Lord "ever offers Himself as a Sacrifice on the altar of our churches"; and the Pope in his Apostolic Letter says that in the Eucharist the Sacrifice "offered once upon the cross is renewed in a bloodless manner and uninterruptedly throughout the world." He also describes "this Sacrament as a centre of our faith." And yet there are those in our Church who cannot see that this teaching derogates from the uniqueness and completion of our Lord's offering on Calvary, as Article XXXI. plainly points out. We hope and believe that one outcome of the Congress will be to enable men to realize afresh that Rome is the same as ever, and that between our Church and the Roman there is indeed "a line of deep cleavage." We would fain hope, too, that attention may be drawn to the absolute necessity of our clergy making themselves acquainted with the essential points of the Roman controversy. It is in no controversial spirit, but simply as a matter of self-defence, that we deplore the ignoring of the Roman controversy in the training of our clergy; and the Eucharistic Congress will not have been held in vain if it leads to a further study of the fundamental grounds of difference between us and Rome. With the *Times*, we believe that "England remains unalterably Protestant," in spite of what the article calls "the disproportionate noise made by the extreme sect of the Ritualists, and the much-advertised 'conversions' of High Church curates, weary of the mental struggles necessitated by conscientious efforts to reconcile the Thirty-nine Articles with the Canons of the Council of Trent." At the same time, we ought to know much more clearly than we do the fundamental reasons why we are English Churchmen, and why we are not Roman Catholics.

Just before the Eucharistic Congress two remarkable articles appeared in the *Times* on the state of the Roman Church in Spain. We only note, in passing, the writer's evident animus against all forms of Protestantism in Spain in order to call attention to his remarkable references to those who are professed believers in the Roman Church :

The
Roman
Church in
Spain.

“When we get away from the gentlemen who are Catholic, not because the Catholic doctrine is true, for on that point their minds are blank, but because it is Spanish and traditional and conservative, we come to the Spaniards who do believe. But the question is, In what? After many years' experience, direct and indirect, I should, for my part, say that they believe in the virgin of their own district, or in some other wonder-working image. One of the characters of ‘La Catedral’ declares that she believes a little in God and a great deal in La Virgen del Sagrario, the Toledan shrine. No one who knows Spain can accuse Señor Blasco Ibañez of burlesque. There is near Barcelona a miraculous image of St. Joseph of the Mount belonging to a teaching sisterhood. Thousands of letters are sent to it every year containing petitions. They are ceremoniously burnt on stated occasions, and the belief of the senders can hardly be other than that in this way the contents are conveyed to the saint. Now, we need not inquire by what ingenuities of verbal legerdemain all this is distinguished from idolatry pure and simple. Enough that it prevails to an enormous extent in Spain.”

Not even the most rabid Protestant could well frame a severer indictment against Rome than is contained in these words, and yet this is the Church with which Lord Halifax would have us seek reunion !

There are evident signs among Old Testament critics that archæology is doing its work of disturbing the “assured results” of which we hear from time to time. The article in our pages some months ago on Dr. Baentsch's work on Monotheism was one significant indication of the trend of a good deal of critical thought. Dr. Burney's article in the April number of the *Journal of Theological Studies* was another, in which he argued for the Mosaic character of the Decalogue and for a pure monotheism from the time of Moses. Now again we have a similar

Old
Testament
Criticism.

testimony from another well-known scholar, Dr. Sellin of Vienna, who says :

“ I believe it would be timely for the masters of the Wellhausen school to revise once for all their old copy-books and text-books and to admit the proposition : Against the Mosaic origin of the Decalogue and the Book of the Covenant no reasonable ground can be discovered.”

We are not surprised to observe that the editor of the *Expository Times* realizes the logical result of this position, for, in commenting on Dr. Burney's article, he said that “ If the Decalogue can be shown to come from Moses, or from the age of Moses, the present critical position on the early religion of Israel will have to be abandoned.” It is true that these scholars retain their belief in the literary analysis of the Old Testament, but the literary and the religious aspects are so close that we should not be at all surprised to find the view of the origin affecting before long the literary analysis. One thing at least is perfectly clear, as conservative scholars have pointed out for years : the Old Testament problem is primarily religious, not literary ; and the prevalent trend of critical thought is becoming more and more favourable to the conservative, traditional view of the early origin and pure character of Israel's religion. Facts *are* stubborn things.

The
Administra-
tion of
Baptism.

We are glad to see that the subject of the administration of Baptism has been discussed by a committee of the Wakefield Ruridecanal Chapter, and their report, which may be obtained in pamphlet form (Jackson, Commercial Street, Leeds), is full of wise counsels on this important matter. As the Bishop of Wakefield in his preface points out, the administration of Baptism is one of those things where the practice of the Church falls far behind its ideal. Children are received for Baptism without any due care for the fulfilment of the conditions required. Indiscriminate Baptism is absolutely opposed to the genius of the ordinance as accepted by all the Churches who practise Infant Baptism, and men of all schools of thought in our Church

are uniting in the present day in deploring the lax and mistaken views held by many who bring their children to Baptism. As we pointed out some months ago, even the *Church Times* expressed its strong preference for children to grow up unbaptized unless proper care and teaching on the part of the Church can be guaranteed. We hope the Wakefield Report will be carefully studied by all our clergy. There is scarcely anything that presses more closely upon the consciences of young, earnest men in the ministry than what seems to be the compulsion to baptize the children of all who come to the Church. It will be hard to get back to a proper state of Church discipline on the subject, but it must be done; and those who attempt the task will be doing a work of the greatest possible value, not only for our Church and country, but still more on behalf of the truth and purity of our whole religion. There is no ordinance more Scriptural, more beautiful, more fraught with blessing, than Infant Baptism when clearly understood and reverently observed. On the other hand, there is scarcely anything more deplorable or disastrous than to regard it as something like a charm.

We are glad to see what a prominent place the

Home
Reunion. *Times* has lately given to this important subject. But it is surprising to find how uniformly the real question at issue is either overlooked or avoided by those who advocate what is called "Apostolic Succession." The Nonconformist Churches believe that their ministry is regular, and that their Sacraments are valid. If results are any true test, these claims are abundantly proved, for in everything connected with vital Christianity, individual and corporate, Nonconformist Churches are at least the equals of any other Communion. These are the facts that need to be faced, and the fundamental inquiry is whether our Lord made the grace of Sacraments dependent upon a particular form of ministry. The Bishop of Birmingham allows that the New Testament is silent as to who is to celebrate the Communion or administer Baptism, and the Dean of Westminster believes that Episcopacy is an evolution of the second

century. These positions necessarily compel the inquiry whether anything about which the New Testament is silent, or which only arose twenty or thirty years after New Testament times, can be regarded as essential to the assurance of spiritual grace. If validity means anything at all, it means a guarantee of the grace of the Holy Spirit, and for this nothing short of absolute proof will suffice. So momentous a question cannot be settled by probability, however high. We must have the Divine assurance beyond all question if we are to make grace depend upon a particular type or succession of ministry. From all these considerations, we can see how important it is that discussions on Reunion should be kept strictly within the limits of facts—the facts of the New Testament and of early Church history—and modern experience. We must resolutely rule out everything associated with hypothesis and assumption. This is vital to any proper solution of the problem.

At the last moment it was announced that the **The Government and the Procession.** authorities of the Eucharistic Congress had, in deference to the desire of the Government, abandoned that part of the procession arranged for Sunday, September 13, which involved the carrying of the Host through the streets. Apart from the want of taste shown by the original proposal, it is open to question whether, from the point of view of those who planned the procession, there was anything to be gained by it. It was at least possible that it would provoke violence. Competent observers who watched the crowd say that it would certainly have done so; and, to judge by their precautions, the police authorities evidently expected something of the kind. However much we may desire to extend to Roman Catholics that liberty which they decline to extend to us, it is not open to doubt that the Government acted wisely in prohibiting a procession which would have been clearly illegal, and which was more than likely to cause rioting and perhaps bloodshed.

