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THE CHURCHMAN

January, 1932.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

"The Churchman."

AT the beginning of another year we take the opportunity of thanking our readers for their past support. THE CHURCHMAN has its own place among the magazines devoted to the discussion of religious subjects. It represents to a large extent the thought and the spiritual outlook of the Evangelical School in the Church. We have been able to put before our readers during the past year a number of contributions from well-qualified representatives of Evangelical teaching, dealing with various phases of religious life and thought of special interest to Church-people desirous to see the maintenance of our Church as one of the Churches of the Reformation. At a time when that character is being depreciated, and indeed undermined, it is important to maintain by every means the truths embodied in the formularies of the Church of England. We hope to continue our work in the interests of loyalty to the spirit of the English Reformation. The financial difficulties of the country are affecting all sections of the publishing world, and the necessity for economy is rendering difficult the maintenance of a number of useful publications which in easier times we should regard as essential to the full educational work of the Evangelical section of the Church. We therefore appeal to our readers to give us their support in our future efforts, and to secure for us the help of others. It will be seen from the present number that we have been able to obtain contributions from a number of highly qualified writers, and we hope to maintain throughout the year the high standard which they have set.

A Manifesto on Eucharistic Doctrine.

A Statement on Eucharistic Doctrine was issued during the month of October as an outcome of a conference held at King's College, London, some time previously. The purpose of the Statement was threefold. First, to prove to the world that the Church of England is not hopelessly divided within itself; secondly, to show

that reconciliation is possible and that our underlying unity is far greater than our differences ; and thirdly, to stimulate the right sort of controversy, and discourage the wrong which begins by failing even in the wish to understand what others think and feel. The document was signed by a number of Evangelical clergy as well as by representatives of the Anglo-Catholic and other sections of the Church. Considerations of space do not allow of our giving the contents of the document. Considerable discussion was raised by its statements. The phraseology of the Manifesto was evidently very carefully chosen, but it seemed to avoid any of the usual terms which indicate the chief lines of division in the past. There was therefore an element of ambiguity which allowed for different and even contradictory interpretations of the language used. This ambiguity has actually been defended as appropriate to a subject which is to be regarded of such great mystery that language fails to express the depths of the truths with which it is concerned. It is difficult to maintain this contention, although some with considerable ingenuity profess to find the same ambiguity in the formularies of our Church.

The Ambiguities of the Manifesto.

We all sympathise with the desire for unity among churchpeople, but it is scarcely to be obtained by the signing of a Manifesto which obviously is interpreted in widely differing senses by many of those who signed it. *The Record* in its issue of October 9, subjected the statements in the document to a searching examination, and showed some of the principal points in which it did not do justice to the distinctive teaching of the Church of England. The writer pointed out that "there is no mention of propitiatory sacrifice, transubstantiation or transvaluation, or even of the Real Presence in the elements, or of adoration. On the other hand, no phrase is used which is not compatible with these essentially false doctrines—as we hold. Instead of this our attention is concentrated on Consecration, which, according to modern teaching, is the real essence of Sacrifice." For example, the document contains the statement : "Consecration has a real effect, since the Consecrated Elements are by the will of God now charged with a new spiritual significance and purpose, being the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ." There is undoubtedly a sense in which Evangelicals, who do not believe that there is any change in the Bread and Wine, could use this language, but when it is taken in connection with other expressions used, it is more than patient of the doctrine of the Real Presence, although it does not state this doctrine in definite terms. Unity on Eucharistic doctrine can be obtained by a return to the use of the language of the New Testament, or even by the acceptance of the interpretations of some of the great Anglican divines of the Reformation age, such as Hooker, whose words were accepted even by High Churchmen up to the time of the development of the Rome-ward trend.

The Attack on Evangelical Patronage Trusts.

An attack on Evangelical Patronage Trusts has been carried on for some time by a section of the Church with extraordinary bitterness, not to say unfairness. If the Anglo-Catholics had no party trusts, they might speak on the subject with more justice and authority. If Anglo-Catholics had been careful in the past to respect the traditions of parishes, and had not deliberately set themselves to alter the whole character of the worship of parishes which had long been centres of Evangelical teaching, they might complain with more reason of the changes made in the so-called "Catholic" parishes by the nominees of Evangelical Trusts. It is an interesting fact that in many parishes where the Mass and all the array of "Catholic Privileges" have even for years been forced upon the people, there is obvious joy when the old worship of the Church of England is restored. Evangelical Trusts would not have developed so extensively as they have done, if common justice had been done to Evangelical clergy in the past, especially by some of the Bishops. It is a well-known fact that some Bishops of the Tractarian School definitely stated that they would give no appointments to the Evangelical clergy in their dioceses, and that they might look to the Evangelical Trusts for promotion. Lord Brentford in a letter to *The Times* rightly declared that "it becomes ludicrous when such declamatory terms as 'scandal,' 'menace,' 'secrecy,' 'party' and 'traffic' are being flung about generally to discredit a method of patronage which can show the record of the Evangelical Trusts."

Protestantism.

The subject chosen for the Islington Clerical Meeting this year is "Protestantism." The subject is well timed. Prebendary Hinde in giving his reasons for the choice says that the word has been misunderstood by many, and a certain stigma has been allowed to adhere to it, and therefore "we are seeking to clothe it in its right colours and to show, that fairly considered, it represents in a positive and broadminded way the convictions based upon Holy Scripture which we hold." The papers are well arranged so as to present Protestantism in its true light, as the real succession of the teaching of Christ and His Apostles, and as preserving the spirit of the Gospel, more than other forms of Christianity, which have given an undue place to institutionalism. These have overlaid the primitive teaching with ritual and ceremonial observances, and they have obscured the original simplicity of Christ's teaching with medieval accretions and superstitions. The hope for the future of Christianity is the recognition of all that is implied in the Protestant spirit, when it is recognized as the spirit of liberty and progress. Dean Inge has well said, "it is essentially an attempt to check the tendency to corruption and degradation which attacks every institutional religion."