

the glebe is conveniently situated for the purpose in question; (3) that one incumbent in six is willing to sell; and (4) that one Board of Guardians in four is willing to buy. Then we have our 10,005 parishes where the operation of the allotment clauses of the Bill is possible reduced to 2,001 by consideration (1); further reduced to 500 by (2); to 83 by (3); and to 21 by (4). If this estimate is even approximately correct, it will hardly be disputed that it would be better to confine the Bill to its professed object of "facilitating the sale of glebe," and leave the provision of allotments to the more comprehensive and more trenchant measure lately introduced by Mr. Ritchie on behalf of the Government.

A. M. DEANE.



ART. II.—EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF A
COUNTRY PARSON.

JAMES HANNINGTON.

"Admiranda popularitas vitæ Jesu!"—BENJEL.

IT is never very difficult to bring vague and sweeping charges of neglect of duty against any large body of men. Some of their number are pretty certain to deserve the scourge—otherwise they would not be human. And even if the Corporation which is to be assailed should chance to have done its duty to the best of its ability, inasmuch as the great sea of pain and passion never ceases to pulsate, and is sure now and again to overleap the dykes which have been erected for the preservation of the painfully reclaimed fields, there will never be wanting occasion for the dissatisfied to point out that the said Corporation has shamefully bungled its business, and that the sooner it may be replaced by something more efficient the better for everybody concerned.

Perhaps no body of men has suffered more in our own day from vague and sweeping statements than have the clergy of the Church of England. It is the tendency of the age to consider the claims of the many and various religious bodies with an almost indiscriminating charity. The political position of the Church of England, however, and the keenness of the contest over Disestablishment has almost torn Charity out of the banners of her opponents. While they look at most other denominations through glasses of a rosy tint, the telescopes which they direct at the Establishment are critically focussed enough, even if they are not lensed with bilious yellows and greens. Nothing is too hard to lay to the charge of the clergy. They are aristocratic, and out of sympathy with the people;

they are idle and indifferent; they are busy ritualistic proselytizers; they are shamefully rich; they are disgustingly poor; they are dull-souled tithe-collectors, and prosy preachers of other people's sermons. In fact, they are represented to the working man as a sort of incubus which he had better help to throw off as speedily as possible from the long-suffering shoulders of the nation.

Professor Rogers, in an article in the *Contemporary Review* of May last, quotes with approbation Dr. Jessop's statement that "the east-country peasant looks on the country parson with settled hatred." This feeling, he says, "is well-nigh universal." Such statements are sufficiently astounding to one who knows intimately the country parson and his flock, but they are frequently and confidently made in the most accredited periodicals. A case or two of gross clerical incompetence is perhaps instanced; the income of one or two of the very few richly endowed rectors is quoted; the whole body of the clergy, thus sampled, is then swept together into one mass, and the representative parson is ticketed as "the best paid man, and the idlest, in the parish."

Now we may at once grant that such statements are not without a certain substratum of truth. Were it not so, they would attract no notice whatever. From among the holders of more than 14,000 benefices one might only too confidently assume it as not only possible, but probable—nay, under the present system of private and irresponsible patronage, one might even assume it as certain that *some* shepherds would be found who make it their chief business to feed themselves, while they neglect their flocks. But to one who has any large acquaintance with the clergy, whether in town or country, it sounds just a little too absurd to charge them generally with indifference to either the services of their Church or the affairs of their parishes. Why, the conversation in most clerical households is seldom or never turned from these subjects. Canon Kingsley is said to have made a home rule to exclude "shop" from the fireside chat of his family party. Nor will any who are familiar with the inner life of an ordinary parsonage think such a rule wholly unnecessary. Not to mention the parsonage in the town, where the vicar wears a pre-occupied air, as of one who has to keep countless separate threads of duty from entangling in his brain, and his daughters are unmistakably business-like, practical, and parochial; even in the snug country rectory, amid the scattered hamlets, the talk from morning till night is apt to run—shall we say *ad nauseam*?—upon such topics as old Mrs. Jones's ailments, and the best way to relieve them; young Brown's (widow Brown's son) equipment for sea; clothing clubs, blanket clubs, coal

clubs, night-schools, special services for hop-pickers or harvesters, choir-practices, penny-readings, church-garnishings, and so on—till an outsider, who has no part or lot in these matters, may complain that they “think the rustic cackle of their bourg the murmur of the world;” but he will not, if he be fair, be able to say that either the parson, his wife, or his children, are indifferent to the concerns of their parish.

It is the custom of the class of writers to which I have alluded to concentrate most of their remarks upon the country parson. His brother of the town, unless he be a ritualist, has ceased greatly to interest them. Can it be that his activity, none the less to be acknowledged because so lately born, is fast disarming criticism? However this may be, the public is persistently informed that the *rural* church is an expensive failure, and has ceased to command the confidence of the people. It is common to hear the country Rector described as the champion of the lawn-tennis court and the cricket-field, the farmer of his glebe, the driver of a trim dog-cart, and the friend of the squire. A man who spends the revenues of the parish in living as comfortably as he can, and in providing for his own children. In fact, to quote from an article by a Mr. Crowhurst, he is said to be “a gentleman first; secondly, a man with family interests; lastly, a Christian minister.”

Such a sentence might perhaps describe, not wholly unfairly, the grandfathers of this generation. It is now out of date. No doubt some sloth-like survivals of a former race are still to be found. But their position is not a happy one. Attacked by their own Bishops on the one hand, and by the public on the other, they cannot but feel themselves to be anachronisms. Moreover, in the face of the rising tide of opinion, it is becoming more and more difficult to perpetrate abuses of patronage. Already the sale of spiritual charges is gibbeted. Already the claims of the parishioners to a voice in the election of their own pastors are making themselves heard. The Church is earnestly desirous to commence her own internal reform, and—if the Nonconformist members of Parliament will allow her—she will probably carry it through. In the meantime, we may grant that the condition of the rural Church is far from what it ought to be. (Are the Nonconformist or Presbyterian Churches able to give a better account of their own country stations?) But things are slowly righting themselves, even without the interference of Parliament or Convocation. The tide of universal energy is rolling over the wolds and downs as well as through the courts and alleys of the crowded centres of population. It is not fair to judge the Church of England by the long hibernation of her

past. She must be estimated by what she now is, and by the fair promise of her future. And there has risen up within her borders quite an army of the "sons of the prophets," whose labours are not limited to the towns; country clergy who, like Kingsley, are to be found during the long night-hours watching by the bedside of some sick parishioner; who, like Bishop Fraser, make themselves practically acquainted with every detail of the daily life of the poor, and fearlessly report upon the neglect from which they suffer; men who, like Dean Daunt, will long refuse preferment in order that they may continue to labour in some obscure country district in which their labours seem to continue to be required.

Dr. Jessop notwithstanding, signs are not wanting that the working man does acknowledge and appreciate the labours of the clergy in his behalf. At the same time, the position of the State parson is made one of especial difficulty by the mis-statements regarding him which are ceaselessly poured into the ears of the partially educated. When a man is steadily represented to be a vampire, there will always be some who are ready to credit him with the worst. The writer of this article was, upon a certain occasion, conducted through the great railway workshops at Doncaster. His companion was a young man then serving his apprenticeship as a mechanical engineer. As they passed the bench where the gentleman-apprentice was accustomed to work, his "mate," an intelligent-looking man with shaven cheeks and that foreign-looking tuft upon the chin affected by workmen of a republican tendency, beckoned to him to return. When he had done so, the fellow bid him go back and tell his friend that he "hated parsons"! This with a half-defiant, half-amused look flung at the poor clerical drone who had intruded into this hive of artisan bees. This man's objections to the race of parsons proved not to be founded upon any personal observation of them, or of their way of living, but simply upon the notion that they were paid out of the taxes; in other words, that they "preyed upon the vitals of the people;" also that they were the opponents of progress, the enemies of education, and the general upholders of tyranny and class oppression of all sorts. All these and other charges were reiterated weekly in his Sunday newspaper. In spite of such trash, the convincing argument of facts is making itself felt surely if slowly, and the working man and his wife are turning to the clergy as to their best friends. The superficial sign of this is the evident friendly understanding which so often exists between the parson and his people. Not many weeks ago I was asked to pay a visit to a certain factory in the north of England. My guide was the vicar of one of the poorest parishes. It was quite evident that he was on the

best of terms with everybody. Smiles and kind nods of recognition greeted him everywhere, whether from the men who looked up from the piecework at which they were slaving with furious energy, or as we passed through the crowded work-rooms where companies of girls were plying the sewing-machine or the needle. The same expressions of good-feeling are quite noticeable in villages where the social atmosphere has not been filled with acrid fog by a tithe-war. The countryman has no objection to a gentleman as such; and country districts are commoner than writers of Mr. Crowhurst's school imagine, in which bright greetings of evident friendship pass between the vicar and his parishioners, not merely when he meets a select party of them in the Bible-class, but as he moves among them on the village green, or joins the young men in a game of cricket during the long summer evenings.

It may not be uninteresting to the readers of *THE CHURCHMAN* to see some hitherto unpublished extracts from the diary of Bishop Hannington, written when he was in charge of a poor district of the country parish of Hurstpierpoint. They are full of evidence of the sympathetic relationship which may exist between a pastor and his people. To account for the possession of them I may say that, when writing the Bishop's "Life," I had at my disposal some large commonplace books, in which he was in the habit of entering only such extracts as he thought specially worthy of remark. The original small Letts's diaries, in which he recorded the passing events of each day, have since been discovered, during the removal of furniture from the house which he occupied. I was aware that it was Hannington's custom to keep more than one diary covering the same period of time. This was a habit of his which he continued to practise to the close of his life. Thus, a small pocket diary which was sent back from Uganda was at first, in spite of its very scanty jottings, thought to be the only one which he had kept of his eventful journey. Not long after, however, the complete journal which has been published in his "Life" was recovered and sent home. The slighter journal was evidently written to note separately certain facts which would be useful to travellers who might afterwards journey along the same route; but, had he lived, he would probably have rewritten both, and amalgamated them into one. On looking over these original diaries, therefore, I did not expect to find in them much, or indeed anything, that was new. Nor do they reveal any facts of importance which are not alluded to in the fuller and more finished entries of the later diaries. I do find, however, much that throws a wonderfully clear light upon the secret of his undoubted popularity in his parish, and upon the no less undoubted success which attended him in

his work. I venture to commend these extracts from the diary of one country parson, both to those who have been in a hurry to condemn the supposed idleness and inefficiency of others whose diaries have not yet been published; and also to those who, having hitherto failed to obtain success in their own sphere of work, may not have taken the same pains that he did in order to secure it.

Not long after his appointment to the charge of the Chapel of St. George, Hannington felt the want of a good parish-room in which he might hold informal meetings, such as classes, teas, lectures, and general gatherings of all sorts. As he considered that the preacher should be the first to practise self-denial as well as to enjoin it, he at once determined upon a personal sacrifice to supply what was required. He sold his horse, and, breaking down the partition between his stables and coach-house, soon caused the whole building to be transformed into a sufficiently commodious hall. That hall was seldom empty. He says:

Oct. 5th, 1878.—Have purchased a magic-lantern and apparatus from ——. It has cost me £20. It originally cost £100. Rather extravagant, but I want it for the parish.

This lantern was used to supply instruction and entertainment during many pleasant evenings both in the above hall and at a workman's club which he had been successful in establishing. But it was not only when he made elaborate preparation for their reception that he was able to induce the people to meet him. The diary records that his Bible-classes during the long winter evenings would be attended by as many as seventy men—men of all ages, from the lad of eighteen to the village father of eighty. About the same number of women would assemble on the nights set apart for them. He also notes that it was not unusual for a hundred persons of both sexes to be present at his week-night service in the church. These are remarkable numbers when we remember that his district was a small and scattered one, and that the folk who filled the benches came all weary from their long labours in the fields. But it is quite clear that the working people had confidence in him, and were firmly persuaded that he meant to do them good.

It is a great mistake to suppose that the labourer wants to have his own way, and objects to be led. On the contrary, it would rather seem that he dumbly demands to be strongly led by anyone who is to exercise an influence over him. It is, however, a far more fatal mistake to imagine that the labourer loves to be *patronized* any more than does any other man. This is the unsavoury fly in the ointment of so many rustic enter-

tainments. Do the good people from the hall and the parsonage really expect the poor to be grateful when they, not without ostentation, prepare a frugal feast in which they themselves intend to take no part, except that they will invite their friends to assist with their presence, and watch the rustics feed! Do they really imagine that they are extending the warm right hand of Christian brotherhood to their humble neighbours when they sit upon a platform among the *bene nati et bene vestiti*, and listen complacently to the entertainment or exhortation which is provided only too evidently not for such as they are, but for another class of persons altogether? No doubt they do imagine that the poor ought to be grateful for all this; and it is not uncommon to hear them say so in tones sufficiently loud, it may be, to reach the ears of the recipients of their bounty. But, now and again, they are rudely undeceived. One such occasion I can recall. I was residing with the squire of a certain Gloucestershire village, and a penny-reading had been arranged in which the members of the family were to take part. On the appointed evening we drove to the schoolroom, which was fairly well filled with working people. In consideration for their uncultured tastes we had provided that the recitations should be sufficiently popular, and the music not too severely classical. It may be that our toleration of their weakness was written a little too plainly upon our faces. However, we were all agreed that the evening had gone off very well, and that the people were very pleased. The chairman, in his vote of thanks to us, very properly told them how grateful they should be. It was not without some self-satisfaction that we put on our cloaks and re-entered the covered wagonette to drive home. Suddenly there was a clattering sound upon the roof. Then something heavy struck the carriage with a splash from behind. Could it be? Yes, there was no mistake about it—the lads who had been grinning in the back row during our performance were now pelting us out of the village with mud! Nor did their elders interfere. We thought it a very unfriendly return. And perhaps it was. But, after all, what had we done to invite their friendliness? We had treated them as our inferiors; we need not have been so much hurt that they were behaving to us as such.

James Hannington's diary reveals to us that the secret of his real influence over the people, lay in the fact that, without doing away with the necessary distinctions of classes, he admitted them to his friendship. Such entries as the following are frequent:

Took S. Smith for a walk.

Joe M. (a carpenter) came and spent the evening with us with a home-made microscope. He is quite a scientific man in his way.

Charlie K. came up for a drawing lesson; Tom G. with various questions he wanted to ask me.

Bringing on H. H. in hope of his finally rising to the ministry.

Compassing sea and earth to make a proselyte of H. W.! (And later)—I intend to persevere.

Large Christmas-party to sixty men, to keep drunkards from their drunkenness.

Another entry reveals very touchingly the sincerity of Hannington's affection for those lads whose ghostly father he was: "To my very great regret we have caught — stealing. All very much upset." And later he wrote, "I have forgiven —, as I blame myself for it mostly, having left money and keys about."

As the venerable Vicar of Pendeen refused to allow locks or bars of any kind to be applied to the doors of his parsonage, and even dispensed with an outer bell, in order that he might encourage his rough Cornish parishioners to consider their pastor's home as their own, and to come straight to him without introduction or announcement at any hour of day or night in which they might need his services, so Hannington soon made it felt that no one who really wanted his advice, sympathy, or assistance, would be unwelcome at St. George's. As his diary shows, the people availed themselves largely of the privilege. I do not think that they often, if ever, abused it. Hannington had a quiet and conclusive way of his own of dealing with clearly ascertained fools and bores, which, if kindly, was also effectual.

The little diary goes on to reveal further that Hannington was not content with inviting the people to visit him, but that he was not to be deterred by any ordinary difficulties from visiting them in their own homes. It has been narrated in the "Life," how he braved the opinion of the whole parish, and the prohibition of the officer of health, to carry milk to a boy who was attacked by small-pox, and whom no one dared to tend. Here is an entry made in the winter of 1881:

Struggled through snow-drifts overhead to get medicine to —.

Now that is a kind of thing which the working man understands. He is very apt to look upon literary work as a sort of luxurious imitation of labour. The grinding hours spent in the study are not to him suggestive of toil. But he can appreciate physical discomfort undergone in his behalf. It is all very well that the student should assure the handicraftsman that he himself also is a "working man." The labourer begins to believe it when he sees the scholar putting his hands and feet to some practical purpose. The following extract will show that the curate in charge of St. George's could do this:

Sept. 11th, 1878. — Went down to Mrs. —, who I heard was ill. Found her in great trouble. — had been taken ill; she herself was just crawling about. I washed up the breakfast-things for her.

On another occasion an unfortunate lunatic needed to be removed to an asylum. He was very violent, and it was almost impossible to deal with him. In this emergency the brother turned naturally to his pastor, and asked his help. The entry runs :

— came to see me : brother worse, so I went and saw Dr. Smith about him, and at one o'clock took him to Hayward's Heath. Had a dreadful scene at Burgess Hill, as he guessed where we were taking him. I held him while A. bound him. He was then quiet, and we delivered him over to the asylum authorities.

In fact, in every relationship of life, Hannington seems to have made himself indispensable to his people. They associated him with everything that was going on in the parish, and with many of the events of their own home-life. I have a hopefully written letter sent home by a sailor-boy, from one of our men-of-war, then lying in a Canadian port, in which he speaks lovingly of "the dear kind face of Mr. James." Among themselves the working men would speak of him as "Jemmy." But that did not imply any rude familiarity on their part. There was no man in the whole country-side whom they more cordially respected. The pet name was such a one as the working man is accustomed privately to bestow upon his favourites. Those who know him best, consider it the highest compliment to receive from him some such affectionate sobriquet.

There was in Hannington a human kindness which brought him into direct contact with all, in whatever degree of life, who were capable of making him a sympathetic return. Not only among his humble parishioners and dependents at home, but even among the natives of Africa he found and recognised *friends*. And the recognition was mutual. Few travellers have secured so much and such disinterested devotion from their black servants as was accorded to him.

Possessing such a capacity as he did for appreciating the affection of those who were his social inferiors, it is not surprising to read that one old man died with these words on his lips, "I love Mr. Hannington;" that his servant-lad threw his arms about his neck and "wept passionately" when he decided that he would be unable to take him with him to Africa; and that even the rough soldiery who guarded him during his last imprisonment in Usoga soon became "friendly, almost affectionate."

It would appear, from his diary, that this capacity of his for making friends sometimes gave him a twinge of conscience

lest he should seek nothing more than their friendship. Thus, he was upon a visit to his former parish of Trentishoe, and had invited a number of his old friends from the neighbouring farmhouses to tea. They all spent a chatty evening together, recounting old stories; but, he says, "I had some heart-searchings afterwards as to whether the evening could not have been made profitable." No doubt, at the time, his good sense and tact stood him in good stead, and kept him from introducing any subject which would have checked the harmless flow of spirit, and thrown a feeling of constraint over their pleasant intercourse. And "profitable" such evenings could not fail to be, even though the conversation might not have taken a serious turn. For this friendliness of the people towards him inclined them to listen with the greater goodwill to what he had to say to them, when a fitting occasion offered itself for an exhortation.

And with regard to his exhortations, whether delivered from the pulpit or outside of it, they were generally sufficiently pointed and direct. An entry in his diary of 1881 gives a good idea of the kind of sermon with which he had no sort of patience. Thus, "Mr. — preached. It was rather like setting an oyster-patty before a hungry working man, and telling him to dine off it." In another entry he rather amusingly turns this disgust for delicate dalliance with awful truths upon himself:

I thought that I was going to preach a very wonderful sermon, and the consequence was, that I was merely watery and weak. I just darkened counsel with words without knowledge.

But he was not often caught declaiming windy platitudes. Here is another entry which describes the effect of one of his sermons on a rustic audience:

Scilly, June 31st, 1877.—I took the evening service alone. I could not help noticing the start that went round the church when I began to preach. The churchwarden afterwards said to me, "I whispered to my wife, 'This will do.' You seemed to come down on us like *that*," (giving a hard thump with his fist upon his extended palm).

He notes elsewhere with a large exclamation mark:

Heard — read his sermon out of a book!!

I suppose he means an actual book; a circumstance which must certainly be exceptional; but the ordinary rustic styles any manuscript that may be used in the pulpit "a book," and entertains the supremest contempt for it. It matters nothing to him whether the written pages which are monotonously turned over upon the pulpit-cushion have cost their possessor hours of painful toil in the privacy of his own study, or whether they have been purchased at half-a-crown the score from some professional sermon-monger, or whether they are in

the most literal sense the wisdom of the fathers doled out by the son, who delivers in due rotation the religious essays which he has inherited with the family living—however that written sermon may have been wrought or procured, to the agricultural labourer it is “a book.” That is enough for him. As an under-gamekeeper once remarked to myself with regard to the country-side estimate of the abilities of a certain Church dignitary; “Aye, aye,” said he, “a could preach mysen well enough, gin ye would only give me a bëuk.”

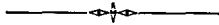
The use of notes, however, is a different thing. They are not obtrusive, and they do not impede that spontaneous flow of words which naturally follows the unsealing of a thought which has taken full possession of the mind of the speaker. I believe that Hannington generally used some notes. He found them necessary to keep his ideas upon the lines upon which he had originally determined that his address should proceed. But he did not let himself be hampered by them. One day, as he was preaching in the West-country, a Methodist shouted out “Praise God!” Perhaps that disciple of an ardent system recognised and thereby greeted some powerful expression which reminded him of his own perfervid exercises; but I do not think that Hannington was at all given to extravagance of expression in preaching, or that he aimed at producing startling effects. The real secret of the influence of his preaching upon country audiences was, no doubt, that his words were not what Carlyle describes as “from the throat outwards,” but conveyed to them homely truths which had first been approved by his own inner consciousness—*veræ voces ex imo pectore*.

There is, moreover, another entry in the little diary which throws some light upon his success as a *pastor in parochia*: “Feb. 7, 1878.—Clerical meeting. M. read a paper on the reform of Convocation; to me a prosy subject.” *Prosy*, because he had other things to do at that time than to turn his attention to the mastering of details which alone could make such a subject interesting. Church government was not always a prosy theme to him. His African letters, written when he was a Bishop of the Church, prove that he could take a vivid interest enough in Church organization when his office required of him that he should do so. But when he wrote the above, he was with all his might “doing the duty that lay nearest to him.” That filled his thoughts. He really did, as he used to say, “dwell among his own people.” To some of his old friends it had seemed very improbable that he would settle down contentedly into the unnoticed way of a country parson. But he did so, and among his own people found for the time interests that filled his life.

No man can be a really successful pastor, in either town or country, with whom it is otherwise. Of course I do not mean to assert that the parish priest who interests himself in the affairs of the Church and the world outside the boundaries of his own parish cannot hope to be successful within his parish. Only this—that the simplest and rudest *pagani* to whom the Divine message is sent require to be studied, and studied both sympathetically and experimentally. The man who is a scholar, author, ecclesiastical statesman, or anything else *first*, and pastor only during what time he can spare from the pursuit of the main ambition of his life, cannot well hope to get beneath the surface and reach the core of humanity which is to be found somewhere within the clod-like husk of the most labour-warped frame. He must be pastor *first*, essentially pastor, if he is to gather around him anything worthy to be called a flock. If all the clergy were such, one might make bold to say the position of the Church would be impregnable; but that there are many more such than it is the fashion to suppose we are fully persuaded.

E. C. DAWSON.

EDINBURGH.



ART. III.—CANON WYNNE'S "FRAGMENTARY RECORDS."

Fragmentary Records of Jesus of Nazareth. From the letters of a Contemporary. By Canon WYNNE, M.A. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

IT was the fashion two hundred years ago to give to controversial books and pamphlets the title of "A Short Way," as "A Short Way with the Anabaptists," "A Short Way with the Quakers," and so forth. Canon Wynne might have called the little book now before us "A Short Way with the Unbelievers," for the whole of his lucid argument might be read, and that with care, in a couple of hours. But the ideas connected with such a title are so quaintly unsuited to the tone and spirit in which he writes that the suggestion might well provoke a smile. As a rule, the stern old treatises to which we refer carry with them a grim implication that a still shorter and surer way with the heretics therein condemned would be the gaol, or perhaps the block, whereas the governing sentiment in the "Fragmentary Records" is a sympathy with the difficulties of unbelief so tender and ardent that the author projects himself into the position of the doubter in seeking to