

THE MONTH.

THE May Meetings on the whole have been successful; well attended, with speaking up to the average.

The speech of Mr. Gladstone on the Clergy Discipline Bill probably distressed many of his supporters. The second reading, however, was carried by 230 votes against 17. A knot of Welsh members have been obstructing the Bill in the Standing Committee.

The Convocations have at length agreed to a Canon in connection with the Discipline Bill.

In the York Convocation, Chancellor Espin, the Prolocutor, referred to the articles in *THE CHURCHMAN* on the "Reform of Convocation," by Mr. P. V. Smith. It was in the course of a debate on reform (we quote the *Guardian* report), when a Proctor asked whether Convocation could reform itself. Dr. Espin, in reply, said :

The law officers of the Crown, and Lord Selborne in particular, had given it as their opinion that there was no way in which the representation of the clergy in Convocation could be in any way altered except by authority of Parliament, and of course the Convocation of Canterbury were very adverse to asking Parliament to pass a Bill authorizing them to reform themselves. The only suggestion he had seen which seemed at all likely to be helpful was one by Mr. P. V. Smith, a lawyer and a member of the London Diocesan Conference and of the Canterbury Lay House, which was embodied in a paper published in *THE CHURCHMAN* some eighteen months ago, and was afterwards described in an article by Archdeacon Sinclair, which appeared in the April number of the *Newbery House Magazine*. The plan was this: to procure from Parliament a declaratory Act, for which there were several precedents, to the effect that whereas doubts had existed whether Convocation had powers by canon duly sanctioned by the Crown to rearrange the representation of the clergy, it be enacted that Convocation should have such power, when the canon had been duly passed under the licence of the Crown. Convocation would not then be asking Parliament to give them power to reform themselves, but simply to make a declaration of that power. That was the only proposal which he had seen for getting over the difficulty which was of the least value.

In the Northern Province a House of Laymen has been formed. The proceedings at the first meeting were full of promise.

The speeches of Lord Salisbury, on the Ulster problem, in London and at Hastings, have been sharply criticised. But is there not a cause for such outspokenness?

The deficiency which so many of the religious societies have this year had to acknowledge, says the *Record*, has in some quarters been accounted for by the sums gathered into the coffers of the Salvation Army:

But the fervent appeal just made by General Booth shows that the Army is worse off than any of its rivals. Of the £30,000 required this year for the "Darkest England" scheme only some £4,000 has been furnished so far, which, together with the deficiency of last year, has "all but brought" the General to a standstill. In addition to this "the spiritual fund is also exhausted and rapidly running behind." This seems a convenient season at which to ask what security those persons hold who, at the suggestion of General Booth, have lent their savings to the Army?

A brief "In Memoriam" of the Rev. James Gyby Lonsdale appeared in the *Guardian* of the 4th. Mr. Lonsdale (son of the late Bishop Lonsdale, of Lichfield) contributed several papers to this Magazine.