

THE
CHURCHMAN

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ART. I.—THE CHURCH AND THE COLONIES.

“That ye may be strong to apprehend what is the breadth and length and height and depth.”—EPH. iii. 18.

“TO apprehend” at once “the breadth and length, and the height and depth,” is, in the famous words of the text, the description of advance in the knowledge of the Divine mystery in Christ. But, since the growth of the Church of Christ is inseparably connected in principle with the growth of conception of Gospel truth, I venture to take these words as our guide to any right idea of that Church expansion over our Colonial Empire, of which I am charged to speak to-day, as not unobscured among the many phases of growth—material, intellectual, political, social—which God has given to us in the last sixty memorable years.

I. It is of consequence to gain some glimpse of that true idea. For the relation of the mother-Church to the colonial Churches has passed, not accidentally, through much the same phases as the relation of the mother-country to the colonies themselves. Of that last relation there was an early phase, in which the colonies were looked upon as mere dependencies, to be ruled by the authority, perhaps in the interest, of the old land. This phase may be said to have been virtually ended by the great disruption, which broke off our first group of colonies, to become what is now one of the greatest of independent nationalities. Next, by reaction, there succeeded a time during which the colonies were left very much alone in respect both of action and of sympathy; their separation from the old country at no distant date was confidently foretold, and practically acquiesced in, if not actually desired. That phase of opinion was strong, possibly dominant, in the rather dreary and prosaic period,

some sixty years ago, when our Queen ascended the throne, to revive gradually and strongly the prestige of royalty, and with it the sense of national greatness. Now, as the celebrations of these last Jubilee days have shown very impressively to the world, a grander and nobler spirit rules; our colonies are frankly and cordially welcomed as living members of a great world-wide body, in a free federation, which constitutes not an empire, but a commonwealth. It was not so much the splendour, as the representative character, of our Jubilee procession through the shouting streets of London, and of the subsequent review of our military force at Aldershot, which was felt to be their chief glory.

So, also, there was a time, unhappily far too long, in which our colonial Churches were looked upon as simply dependencies of the Church at home—denied their native episcopate, which is a necessary condition of independent Church-life—held of little or no account in the estimate of ecclesiastical greatness and power. Hardly a hundred years ago did some timid correction of that fatal error begin. Even at the beginning of this reign there were in all our colonies but five bishoprics—two in British North America, two in the West Indies, one in the whole of Australasia. It is indeed characteristic of the closer and more living force of Christianity that here the second phase of separation and anticipated disruption can hardly be said to have set in as definitely as in secular policy. But still, when the colonial Church began to grow independently, and when every year saw the extension of its bishoprics there was much inclination to look upon its work as altogether diverse from, possibly inferior to, the Church work at home, existing merely side by side with it, so that the one scarcely interpenetrated the other. Now these isolated colonial Churches have not only drawn together in synods, provinces, primatial jurisdictions, but, as the Lambeth Conference so strikingly reminds us, have drawn also closer to the mother Church, gathering with the American Church, which is their eldest sister, on the one hand, and with the missionary Churches on the other, round the chair of St. Augustine, on this jubilee of the thirteen hundredth anniversary of the beginning of the continuous life of the English Church. It is felt now on all hands that the one thing most needful is some true solidarity of life, thrilling through that which was once thought to be a Church narrow and insular, but is now recognised as a world-wide Communion.

But what is the character of this remarkable expansion? Does it fulfil adequately the whole conception of the text? Does it show that twofold growth, that union of visible and

ideal extension, which is so characteristic of all God's works in nature and humanity, as distinct from the artificial works of man?

II. That the expansion is a visible expansion in length and breadth is obvious enough, if we simply glance at its history in the three great groups of our colonies.

We turn first to North America; to the great Republic, which was our oldest colony, and which is still ecclesiastically the eldest sister of our Anglican Communion; to the West Indies, where first we had to deal with the union of our English colonists with one of the subject-races of the world; to the vast territory of British North America, looking from the old colonies on the East to the new growth, startling in its rapidity, of Manitoba and British Columbia on the West. Great is this visible expansion everywhere. It is unhappily true that our Church has never recovered from that fatal error of the past of which I have spoken, and has in consequence never taken, at least in numbers, its right place of prominence among the religious communions of the New World. But yet in these sixty years we have seen in the Church of the United States an increase of bishoprics at home and abroad, from sixteen to something like eighty; in the West Indies from two to nine; in British North America from two to twenty-one. And every new see is, not only in theory but in practice, a new centre of spreading Church life. It means multiplication of clergy and of churches; it means rapid accession or recovery of Church members; it means a certain rise towards leadership of influence and authority in the whole religious life of these great countries.

Then from this vast Western continent of the English-speaking race we look to the other new continent of the South Pacific, in Australia, and the islands great and small of its neighbourhood, in extent as large as Europe itself, with every variety of climate and of resource. There the colony is most completely British in its population, and, like the mother-country, has no frontier but the sea; there, far more than in the older group of colonies, our Church still retains much of its right leadership; there, in spite of the unfavourable auspices of its first settlement and its early history, there is a vigorous life and promise both in Church and State. And there the one bishopric, founded, after nearly fifty years of settlement, only in the year preceding this present reign, has grown to twenty-two—in Australia itself fourteen, in New Zealand six, and two in the outlying missions of Melanesia close at hand and of Hawaii far away.

Once more we go on to our latest group of colonies in South Africa, with their ever-extending spheres of influence over the

teeming native population. There our colonial expansion, perhaps most of all, has been beset with difficulties and antagonisms, and has been marred (as I fear we must confess) by our own errors of policy, our own vacillations of recklessness and timidity. There our Church life, as we all know, has been weakened and distracted by controversy, religious and ecclesiastical, and has perhaps in consequence been behind other communions in growth and power. But here also the one bishopric, only founded in the tenth year of this present reign, has grown to fourteen—ministering, in all cases largely, in some principally, not only to our English people, but to our African fellow-subjects—covering the rapidly-growing area of the colonies themselves, and having its outposts in Mauritius, St. Helena, Madagascar. And in spite—perhaps in some sense in consequence—of the difficulties it has had to face, and the problems it has had to solve, the Church life in this region seems to me to have in it a somewhat unusual decisiveness of idea and vigour of enterprise, promising much for the future. "The city has been built and the wall, even in troublous times."

Yes! there has been here a visible and rapidly-growing expansion for which we may well thank God. Including what was once a daughter, and is now a sister Church in America, there has grown up, very largely during the present reign, a body of some 150 bishops, more than 7,000 clergy, and at least 7,000,000 of professed members. Nor should it be forgotten that each colonial Church, as it takes root, becomes necessarily a new centre of this expansion, both to the advancing host of our colonists pushing out further and further every year, and to the heathen races within and around, with which its very position brings it into living contact. As we look back on the marvellous growth in these sixty years, we may well look also forward with wonder and hopeful expectation to what the next like period shall bring forth.

III. But is this expansion, as it ought to be, one also of depth and height? Is the spread of its water like an artificial irrigation, where extension means shallowness; or is it a great river, which (as in Ezekiel's vision) widens and deepens at once? Is its rise that of an artificial building, or of a tree which shoots up higher, as its branches spread wider and its root strikes deeper?

Now, in regard to the extension in depth and height, in depth of conception and in height of aspiration, there are many things in which the leadership rightly devolves especially on the mother Church at home. Such leadership, in thought, in policy, in the renewal of spiritual life, she is bound to assume, in virtue of her larger national and spiritual

resources, of the vantage-ground won for her by the labours and the munificence of the past, of her greater leisure from the struggle for that visible expansion of which I have spoken, for thought, for study, and for aspiration. But yet there are at least two points, in which the growth of the colonial Church has helped us to a deeper and higher conception of what the Church really is, and of the real secret of her vitality and power.

There has been growth in this deeper conception, I think, through the necessity which has thrown our colonial Churches everywhere on their own internal resources, and on their own free synodical government. They have not, as we have at home, that recognition by the State which we call Establishment, nor that large independence in resource which we call Endowment. Some have never had it; from others it has been gradually withdrawn. Now, I am bound to add, in all frankness, that what I have seen of the consequences resulting both to the State and to the Church from this condition of things makes me prize the national position of the Church at home not less but more, and teaches me to contend earnestly for its preservation, and, therefore, for the reform of abuses, which to some extent mar and pervert it. I could wish that on this matter some ardent theorists could have the sobering effect of a few years' practical experience.

But yet the colonial history of the Church tells us plainly that the true life of the Church depends not upon these things; that without them the Church is essentially the old Church of England still, only having its mission to the Greater Britain; that it has but to organize itself in free self-government, representative of the whole body, praying trustfully for the indwelling guidance and power of the Holy Spirit, and then it can live and grow, and with, I think, increasing power, manifest the soundness of its basis and the vitality of its mission. Year by year, decade by decade, the organization of this self-government grows by necessity. It binds the colonial Churches themselves more closely together, while it provides for the right direction of their future growth. But it reads its lesson to the Church at home. I believe most profoundly that, under God, it is advance towards self-government—not, as the example of Scotland shows, inconsistent with Establishment—which our Church mainly needs, as security for her order and as means for her reform. I cannot but see also that in this advance the one question which must be solved, far more completely than we have solved it as yet, is the relative position of the clergy and laity in right and policy. Therefore I must think that here the growth of our colonial Church may well bring with it to us some increase of depth of Church

principle and faith, which may be our guide to right development whether in peaceful or in troublous times.

And what shall we say of height of aspiration? Surely, this, that this expansion has raised us to a far higher sense of the greatness and the hopefulness of the mission of our English Church, now grown to be the Anglican communion. There was a time when our Church was looked upon, certainly as purely insular, incapable of adaptability and development beyond the sphere of our English life, perhaps as an ill-compacted compromise, which, if it sought to move boldly, must fall to pieces. Now, in the colonial, although even more in the missionary sphere, that narrow and timid conception has vanished by the very force of circumstance, and by the very experience of the world-wide growth of a body, which, having all its members free, yet by their free adhesion to the old doctrine and discipline is essentially one. We begin to see that, as the ideal of the Roman Church is spiritual empire, centred in an authority which by necessity must justify its claim by the assertion of Infallibility, so the Anglican Communion seems called to realize that other, and, as we think, at once more primitive and more hopeful, ideal of a free federation of Churches—mother and daughter Churches, or sister Churches, as it may be—strong in the sense of loyalty and brotherhood, acknowledging no supreme head but the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, expressing its unity in common counsel and determination, organizing itself in the “orders and degrees” which “jar not with liberty, but well consist.” It is a high ideal indeed, with which, surely, in spite of unavoidable imperfections and difficulties, unknown to stiffer and narrower systems, lies the future of humanity, secular and religious alike. It is much that by our Church expansion it has been so vividly set before us. God grant that, however gradually, we may be found worthy of some approach to its realization, which at this moment the great Lambeth Conference seems to represent to us! May it give us the only secret of a living unity among ourselves! May it help us to do something, in what has been called the “Ministry of Reconciliation,” towards the reunion of Christendom itself!

IV. So, my brethren, it seems to me that through this relation of the Church at home to the colonial Churches, we may thank God for expansion of idea and principle, as well as expansion of scope. And the moral suggested by the thought is, I think, that which was taught us not long ago by our Primate—or should I say our Patriarch?—from the chair of St. Augustine. It is the moral of unity in the spirit, which must, if it exist, manifest itself more or less in solidarity of practical relations. Of the certainty of the expansion in

space there can be no doubt. Every year it manifests itself more plainly. But, as in the State, so in the Church: the one question is, "How shall the limbs of the gigantic frame which spreads through the world be one body still?"—each limb free for its own function, yet with the common life-blood, the common nervous energy, thrilling through the whole? For any approach towards the solution of that question we may thank God. For a far fuller solution of it, under His Providence and by His Spirit, we may earnestly pray.

ALFRED BARRY.

ART. II.—PRESBYTERIANISM.

PRESBYTERIANISM, as against Episcopacy, may be said to describe all the various larger nonconforming bodies. Speaking generally, we may say that Dissent is, as a whole, non-Episcopalian. An exception to this statement is scarcely supplied, contradictory as it may sound, by the Episcopal Methodism of America. For it is to be remarked that Wesley's transatlantic bishops were not bishops in a Church of England sense of the word. They were rather governing presbyters than Church officers, possessed of distinctive functional powers. They did in that country what the district Methodist committees did in the British Isles. While, however, the word "Presbyterian" might with tolerable accuracy be taken to describe many communities, varying widely in other respects, it has been appropriated by certain of these in a special manner; and it is with these that our present inquiry lies. These bodies are the Presbyterian Churches in Scotland, comprising the National Church, the Free Church, and the United Presbyterians, and the Presbyterian Church in England. The existence of these offers a protest against the theory that Episcopacy is necessary to a Church.

Is Episcopacy necessary to a Church? It may be expedient at the outset to point out, what perhaps is not sufficiently observed, that the Church of England's attitude towards this question is one of cautious reserve. Nowhere in her formularies does she dogmatize with any arrogance on the point. The late Archbishop Benson was her mouthpiece when a year or two ago he accepted in a public utterance the view that the Episcopal form of government was of the *bene esse* rather than of the *esse* of the Church—a most important concession to the persuasions of that large body of Churchmen who have