

wild and shabby old man, thinking his words were folly, "but afterwards," she says, "I understood them."

There were many, no doubt, who looked upon his perfect contentment as folly. The poorest of the poor, as far as this world's wealth goes, he could yet say :

"I have mental joys and mental health,
Mental friends and mental wealth ;
I've a wife that I love and that loves me,
I've all but riches bodily.
Then if for riches I must not pray,
God knows its little prayers I need say ;
I am in God's presence night and day,
He never turns His face away."

This was the secret of his contentment, and this also was the inspiration of all his work, artistic and poetic. Earth was to him the house of God, and life but an emanation of the Divine.

"He died in a most glorious manner," wrote a friend of his after he had passed away. "He said he was going to that country he had all his life wished to see, and expressed himself happy, hoping for salvation through Jesus Christ. Just before he died his countenance became fair, his eyes brightened, and he burst out into singing of the things he saw in heaven."

"I have been at the deathbed," said the nurse who assisted his wife in his last hours, "not of a man, but of a blessed angel!"

ART. VIII.—THE MONTH.

THE past month has been marked by an interesting incident in the proposal by a committee of clergymen, at the instance and under the presidency of Mr. Russell Wakefield, the Rector of St. Mary's, Bryanston Square, of a declaration of opinion, of which the professed object was "to maintain the Faith, promote the peace of the Church, strengthen the hands of the Bishops in securing obedience to the Church's laws, and to reassure the minds of those of the faithful laity who may be disquieted by present difficulties." The propositions put forward with these laudable objects seem, however, to be singularly ill-adapted for the purpose. In the first place, the signatories "affirm their sense of the sacred obligation imposed by the Declaration made by the clergy under Canon XXXVI. not to alter the services in the Prayer-Book by unsanctioned omissions, or by any additions which hinder the service or which suggest its insufficiency ; nor to introduce other services or prayers without

the authority of the Bishop." Upon this first statement, which in some respects may be deemed satisfactory, it is nevertheless necessary to remark that matters must have come to a strange pass when clergymen find it necessary, for the reassurance of the laity, to state that they really regard as sacred the promises they made at their ordination. But apart from this, it must be assumed that these protesting gentlemen are making a protest against practices which really exist; and, consequently, that in this statement we have a formal admission from all who sign it that there are clergy, sufficiently numerous to require repudiation, who do alter the services in the Prayer-Book by unsanctioned omissions, who make additions which hinder the service or which suggest its insufficiency, or who introduce other services or prayers without the authority of the Bishop. A clearer justification for the "disquiet" of the laity, which it is the aim of the declaration to appease, could not well be afforded. It is some satisfaction that such practices should be formally disavowed by such a body of High Churchmen, not a few of them by no means Moderate, as those who have signed this declaration; but that the mere disavowal of action so flagrantly disloyal can hardly suffice to reassure the laity is at once rendered manifest by the second clause of the declaration.

That clause declares the belief "that the Ornaments Rubric contains the ceremonial system which was lawful under the First Prayer-Book of Edward VI., and that for the peace of the Church this ought to be frankly recognised as a lawful inheritance in the English Church, while at the same time the lesser ceremonial usage which has so widely prevailed ought, as resting on custom, to be equally recognised." A more extraordinary proposal for promoting the peace of the Church could hardly be put forward. If there is one course more than another which would be likely to provoke open and violent dissension, it would be any authoritative recognition of what is probably intended by "the ceremonial system which was lawful under the First Prayer-Book of Edward VI." It is not quite clear what that "system" would include; but, at least, it would include the vestments at the Holy Communion, and there are thousands of clergy in the Church of England and a vast and resolute body of laymen who would regard such an authorization as offering the gravest menace to their position within the Church. If the result of a suit on the question was to declare the legality of the vestments, they would have to consider seriously whether they would leave the ministry, or even lay communion, or whether they would set on foot a determined agitation for the alteration of the law. Either alternative would be disastrous to the peace,

and perhaps to the continued unity of the Church; but one or other would, we are confident, be adopted. Numbers both of clergy and laity who cannot be reckoned among the extreme Protestants regard the vestments, with good reason, as a symbol of distinctively Roman doctrine and practice. For the first six centuries and more the only vestments worn by the ministers of the Church were white, and coloured vestments were introduced in the ages in which Roman perversions of doctrine grew up. Accordingly, a statement was promptly published in the *Times*, signed by the Deans of Canterbury, Norwich, and Peterborough, and by such sober Churchmen as Canon Bernard of Wells, Mr. Dimock, and Mr. Grey of Wycliffe Hall, simply stating "that any such recognition would be so far from promoting the peace of the Church that it would involve the gravest danger of disruption, as we are confident that it would be resisted to the last by a large body of both clergy and laity."

This statement was simply put forward as a note of warning, and no attempt was made to collect other signatures. But others have been offered, such as that of Archdeacon Kaye of Lincoln, an honoured and venerable representative of the best Churchmanship of the past and present. The Council of the National Protestant Church Union have stated that "they desire unanimously to associate themselves with the views set forth in the letter signed by the Dean of Canterbury and others in reply to Mr. Russell Wakefield's declaration, and at the same time to express their heartfelt thanks to the Dean and his co-signatories for their action in the matter." If anything could add to the provocation afforded by this claim for the recognition of the ceremonial system in question, it would be the cool suggestion that the established ceremonial system of the Church of England for more than three hundred years should receive only a sort of secondary recognition, as resting on custom. That established system holds at present the position of the "lawful inheritance" of the English Church, and will not be dispossessed of that position without the severest possible struggle.

Another clause of the declaration points to a question of the greatest gravity, which is to be submitted to a joint meeting in committee of members of the Convocations of Canterbury and York and of the Houses of Laymen of the two Provinces on the 9th and 10th of this month. This clause expresses the further belief "that the future welfare of the English Church largely depends, under God, on the complete restoration of the synodical action of the Church," and the signatories "would welcome any measures for promoting this end which may be taken constitutionally, safeguarding the duties and rights of

laity and clergy alike." The proposal to be submitted to the joint meeting of the Convocations and Houses of Laymen affirms, first of all, "that it is desirable that provision should be made for the calling together of a council representing the Church of England, and consisting of clergy and laity of the Provinces of Canterbury and York." The public will await with some anxiety the result of these proposals, but the first question which will have to be faced is whether they prove to be such as may be taken "constitutionally," having regard to the constitution of the Church as well as that of the State. It will be a very grave matter to propose any supersession of the existing constitutional rights of the Convocations of Canterbury and York, and is quite a distinct thing from the mere question of reforming their constitution. It seems, moreover, to be involved in the scope of the scheme that the laity of the Church of England should for the future be regarded as represented in this new council, and not in Parliament. That is a question on which, we may be sure, that a great deal will be said in Parliament itself when, as will be requisite, the propositions ultimately adopted come before it to be sanctioned.

It seems to us in the highest degree improbable that the House of Commons will consent to transform "the Church of England as by law established" into the Church of England, as its practices, and perhaps its doctrines, may be modified by such a council as is proposed, subject only to the veto of Parliament. It is conceivable that the new council might become an instrument for formulating the wishes of the dominant party in the Church of England for the time being, creating a formidable agitation in favour of changes in the Prayer-Book for this purpose, and then challenging the veto of Parliament, and thus presenting the issue of the moment in the acutest possible form. We ought to be told, in the first instance, for what purposes this new power is required. Except for such purposes as the "recognition" of a long-disused ceremonial system, we do not know what further power is needed than already exists. The Act of Uniformity Amendment Act—which is itself a strong proof of the possibility of carrying reasonable reforms under the present system—has afforded great elasticity in our services, and the Bishops would be supported in allowing reasonable adaptations to the real needs of modern times. But the most dangerous consequences may be apprehended from the creation of an assembly in which proposals would be practicable for altering the formularies on which the various parties and schools in the Church now rely for their position within her, and thus menacing the security of one or the other

We cannot hope for the restoration of peace in the Church

from any of these methods. Peace will be restored when the Reformation and its work are more cordially appreciated in the ranks of the clergy, and when attempts, like those of Lord Halifax, to exclude or eliminate genuine Protestant principles from the Church are frankly and finally abandoned. The disquiet of the laity will never cease until they are assured that the clergy of the Church, as a whole, are loyal to the principles of the Reformation, or—which is the same thing—to the principles of the Church of the first few centuries, before medieval and Roman abuses obtained a hold in doctrine and ceremonial. Everything else is, at the best, a mere palliative, and it only remains to hope that the authorities of the Church will realize that the only way to maintain the confidence of the English nation is to assert by all their influence that which is the only true “Catholic” position, the position, namely, of the English Reformers, and the authority of the Church during those centuries when it was really Catholic.

Notices of Books.

History of Criticism and Literary Taste in Europe. By GEORGE SAINTSBURY, M.A., Hon. LL.D. In three volumes. Vol. II: “From the Renaissance to the Decline of Eighteenth-Century Orthodoxy.” Edinburgh and London: Blackwood and Sons, 1902. Price 20s.

Some time back, when criticising the first volume of this work in the *CHURCHMAN*, we called attention to one grave fault—the frequent uncouthness of its style. We much fear Professor Saintsbury, despite his encyclopædic learning, is in that point incorrigible, for the same uncouthness crops up again in the present volume; and, indeed, some of the sentences do not appear to be constructed on the usual grammatical principles. If Professor Saintsbury’s work were intended for a work of art—which it is not—such a stricture would be serious indeed; as it is, however, the uncouthness aforesaid matters less, because the book, if found valuable at all, will be valued for its vast array of facts, and its varied and interesting sidelights on critical history—or, perhaps we should say, on the critics. As a storehouse of erudition, Professor Saintsbury’s work is not likely soon to be rivalled; as a history from the outside it is exceedingly useful; but of the true inwardness of literary criticism the Professor does not seem to us to be entirely cognisant. Nor is it too much to say that one may learn more of the right relation between literature and life from a single essay of (for example) St. Beuve than