

THE CHURCHMAN.

APRIL, 1906.

The Month.

The Education Question.

THERE has been a lull in the correspondence during the past month. This has probably been due to a desire to wait for the Government Bill, which is expected before Easter. One letter, however, requires special mention—that of Canon Moore Ede in the *Times* of March 3. After showing that even real Church parents care very little for what is called definite Church teaching as compared with general Bible teaching, and after showing that the latter system has been in vogue in Board schools for upwards of thirty years with nearly one-half the children of the nation under instruction, Canon Moore Ede very aptly points out that, notwithstanding the monopoly of the Church schools in rural districts for nearly a century, they have not been able so to train the scholars as to make any large numbers of them definite Churchmen. Very rightly does he indicate the serious danger that faces us at the present moment :

“That at the present time, and in the face of the result of the recent elections which registered the decision of the nation, some Churchmen connected with the Schools Emergency League should enter upon a campaign against undenominational instruction for the sake of that which has proved of so little value in the past seems to me suicidal folly. It cannot succeed in obtaining what they demand; but it may, and probably will, result in exclusion of the Bible from the schools, and the loss of that elementary knowledge on which teachers now build.”

If Churchmen will continue to ignore the fundamental change in the position of Church schools brought about by their being put on the rates, and if, moreover, they will overlook the fact that, as the Bishop of Newcastle recently said, “there was no

doubt that the verdict of the country had been overwhelmingly against the Act of 1902," the result will be disastrous. If, on the other hand, we unite on a policy of Bible instruction in all schools, safeguarded by a conscience clause for teachers as well as scholars, we shall do all that is possible to insure a continuance of Bible teaching in our public elementary schools. And this will be a foundation for that distinctive Church teaching which it is the province of the Churches to give.

The Appeal to Parents. It is well known that the supporters of denominational religious education in elementary schools make much of the necessity of every child being taught the religion of its parents. The obvious fairness of this contention may, however, blind us to the danger of its being used for purely tactical purposes, and it is for this reason we would call attention to the weighty letter of the Bishop of Carlisle in the *Spectator* of March 17. Dr. Diggle points out the curious fact that the leaders in the fray are the Roman Catholics, among whom not the parent but the priest is supreme. One danger, therefore, of the new demand is that "while the mouth is the mouth of the parent the voice is the voice of the priest." We are grateful to the Bishop for pointing out this significant fact and its implications. And the position and known views of Dr. Diggle gives special force to his subsequent remark that for some years he has been "growing (reluctantly, indeed, yet increasingly) certain that a propaganda is spreading, especially in the centre and south of England, from which the schools are by no means exempt, which, if not arrested, will both injure the nation and contaminate the Church." Meanwhile, on the general question of religion in our schools with reference to the appeal to parents, we will reproduce the admirable remarks of the Bishop in his letter to the *Times* of February 17:

"May I briefly ask two questions of those earnest religious people who prefer secularism to undenominationalism, and profess themselves satisfied to leave the adjudication of this matter with the parents of the children?

"1. If the parents should, in an overwhelming majority, themselves

choose undenominational teaching for their children, may the question be regarded by the nation as settled and all strife cease?

"2. Do they really mean that, rather than have children taught in their own way about God, the responsibilities of the life which now is, and the accountabilities of that which is to come, they would prefer that little children should hear nothing whatever about these vast verities as part of the curriculum of the school? If this be so, then by an unerring instinct has the *Times* headed this discussion, not the 'Church and the Children,' but the 'Clergy and the Schools.'"

The country owes a deep debt of gratitude to Bishop Diggle for his definite, statesmanlike, and fearless advocacy of Bible Christianity in our elementary schools. If only our Church could unite on this policy the future of religious education would be assured.

Lord Halifax. We are never in any doubt as to Lord Halifax's meaning, whatever he says or writes, and his recent address at the meeting of the English Church Union formed no exception to his characteristic frankness. He again put forth his well-known theory about the relation of the Church of England to the Catholic Church, and said that the Church of England was from the first in full agreement with the teaching common to both Eastern and Western sections of the one universal Catholic communion; and further, that this was so "whatever may have been the arbitrary action from time to time of the civil authorities in the sixteenth century or even of individual Bishops." This last sentence is, we suppose, a periphrasis for the Reformation. Then we are informed definitely that:

"Such teaching includes: The real objective presence in a spiritual mode of our Lord in the blessed Sacrament; the offering of the body and blood of Christ under the forms of bread and wine in memory of His meritorious death and passion to God in the sacrament of the altar; purification of souls in the intermediate state, and the duty of praying for them, etc. Such devotional practices include: Reservation of the consecrated elements in all parish churches; such liturgical practices include the use of distinctive vestments at the celebration of the Holy Mysteries, the use of incense, the use of lighted candles."

We confess we cannot find any of these things in that Book of Common Prayer which is the authorized and constantly-used

formulary of the Church of England. Whether by "arbitrary action" or otherwise, these things were, as a matter of fact, either removed or not inserted in the sixteenth century, and find no place in the Prayer-Book of to-day. This simple fact of history and present-day experience seems to have no effect whatever on Lord Halifax's mind, though to most Church people it rules the situation. Lord Halifax's position and his theory of the Church of England are manifestly impossible, and it is astonishing beyond measure that he is unable to see it.

In view of some recent proposals from the
The
Vestments. evangelical and moderate side in the direction of compromise, the following pronouncement by Lord Halifax at the meeting above referred to is worth recording :

"I observe that it is not unfrequently assumed that we are on our trial, that the question is whether we are to be tolerated or not, or if not this, that peace is to be secured by what are called concessions all round, as, for example, by balancing permission to use the vestments with permission to dispense from the use of the Athanasian Creed, and with some authoritative sanction for the practice of Evening Communion. We reject all such concessions and bargains. We will have none of them. We neither ask for, nor are we prepared to accept, toleration. We ask for our rights. We insist on our right to use the Eucharistic vestments as ordered by the Common Law of the Church, and that, quite apart from the plain directions of the Ornaments Rubric, which witness to that law. We value the vestments, other reasons apart, because they are a witness to the fact that the administration of the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion is neither more nor less than the Mass in English."

We have often urged that the meaning of the vestments is to be understood, not by reference to their original civil use hundreds of years ago, but by the avowed purpose of those who use them to-day as ecclesiastical vestments. Lord Halifax's words come as an interesting and significant reminder of the true state of the case, and we commend them to all who think that compromise is possible. They prove conclusively, if proof be needed, that the use of distinctive vestments is not in honour of the Holy Communion as compared with other services of the Church, but because, to use Lord Halifax's words, "they are a witness to the fact that the administration of the Lord's Supper is neither more

nor less than the Mass in English." It is also interesting to see that Lord Halifax thinks comparatively little of the Ornaments Rubric as giving authority for the vestments for he goes far behind it. We are glad to have the issues so sharply defined, for loyal Churchmen have now no reason for remaining ignorant as to the true inwardness of the extreme party in our Church.

Voluntary Offerings. The return of voluntary offerings of our Church for the year ending Easter, 1905, shows a total of over £8,000,000, an increase of more than £200,000 on the previous year, though less than the total of two years ago. Eight millions is, in any case, a magnificent figure and shows something of the capacities of the Church of England. More money has been collected for the maintenance of curates, and Easter offerings for the clergy have also grown. Home Missions show an increase, but, unfortunately, Foreign Missions a decrease. Huge though these figures are, we must not allow them to blind us to the fact that they do not represent anything like the proportionate giving that is put before us in the New Testament as the standard of the Christian life. There is scarcely any duty more incumbent on the clergy than that of teaching their people the necessity of proportionate giving, and of showing that God does not look at what we give, but at what we still possess after giving. Some of our readers may be glad to have brought to their notice the Proportionate Giving Union, of which Rev. E. A. Watkins, Ubbeston Vicarage, Yoxford, Suffolk, is the honorary secretary. The Society circulates some very useful literature, which would prove a genuine help in the advocacy of the duty of proportionate giving.

Musical Services. The Bishop of Stepney made some very refreshing remarks at Leeds last month about services and choirs. He called for "enormously increased freedom and elasticity in our modes of service," and pleaded that we should "free ourselves from some of the tyrannies from which we have suffered":

“We must, for instance, free ourselves from the tyranny of our choir—not choirs like those of the parish church, but those in poor new districts, who kept the service out of touch with the people. We must also guard against the tyranny of what was called intoning on a musical, or rather in an unmusical, note. We must eliminate from our service that unnatural voice that often followed a man into the pulpit, and alienated people on account of its apparent artificiality.”

This utterance is as welcome as it is unusual and even surprising. Coming after the Bishop of Birmingham's remarks a year ago in the same connection, it would seem to suggest that the old-fashioned plain services were not so far wrong after all, even though they were not “up-to-date.” The fact is that comparatively few clergy and choirs are capable of properly rendering musical services. Few can retain the note on which they start unless they are continually helped by the organ. Who has not experienced the hindrance to devotion caused by the General Confession or the Lord's Prayer being sung out of tune, and then the organist coming in to set matters right by giving the true note? One thing above all is perfectly clear: in most parish churches the safest way to prevent congregational responding is to intone the service, for the people simply cannot join in. On the other hand, a service read and prayed in the natural voice is one of the best methods of insuring hearty congregational responses. We welcome the Bishop of Stepney's words as the harbinger of a brighter day in the Church of England, by a reintroduction to many of the people of the beauty of our truly incomparable liturgy.

Convocation. The assembling of a new Convocation gives point to the leading article in the *Guardian* on “The Reform of Convocation,” which appeared last month. As the writer truly said, “the Church is gravely hampered by an antiquated routine,” and not only so, it is “all along doubtful whether the voice that is finally heard is the voice of the Church at all.” Three anomalies are then pointed out, the first and foremost being that of the disqualification of the whole of the unbeneficed clergy; then the extraordinary under-representation

of some Dioceses of the Board; then the fact that in the province of Canterbury there are as many as four methods of election in use at the present time; and, not least of all, the law which compels the two Houses to deliberate apart, with all the inconveniences and delays consequent upon a twofold discussion. Truly the Church of England is a longsuffering Church, for in scarcely any other body in Christendom would such anomalies be allowed to remain. No wonder that people are beginning to ask, even though the question be somewhat wide of the mark, wherein lies the necessity of Episcopacy to the "well"-being of a Church where these arrangements obtain. We would therefore endorse with all heartiness the conclusion of the article in the *Guardian*, and commend the subject to all who have at heart the best interests of the Church of England:

"To lay them once more before the minds of Churchmen, who all too easily forget the grave dangers that beset a Church willing to tolerate her blemishes, may be to take one step, however short, towards that definite treatment of the whole problem of reform which recent events point out as a matter of immediate necessity."

Christian
Reunion.

We have received an interesting pamphlet entitled "The Situation of Ireland," dealing with the subject of Christian Reunion, with special reference to the conditions in the Sister Isle. The pamphlet consists of four papers, written respectively by an Episcopal clergyman, and by Presbyterian, Baptist, and Methodist ministers. To us the article by the clergyman is necessarily the most interesting, because it discusses the question of corporate reunion in relation to the historic Episcopate. The writer proposes once again the familiar compromise on the basis of a recognition of the existing ministry in non-Episcopal Churches together with a requirement that all new ordinations shall be by Bishops. He also advocates the consecration of several leading Presbyterian and Methodist clergy as Bishops for the purpose of exercising Episcopal oversight over their particular Churches. The spirit of this and of the other writers is truly admirable, and the entire pamphlet deserves careful attention. We shall not be at all surprised to find that the exigences of Christian life in Ireland will bring the

various Evangelical Churches together sooner than with us in England, and it may well be that the problem of reunion will be pushed forward to a solution as early in Ireland as anywhere. The pamphlet can be obtained from Eason and Son, 40, Lower Sackville Street, Dublin, price twopence.

**Evangelical
Public Schools.** We notice with great satisfaction the recent generous gift of £1,500 to the Dean Close School, Cheltenham, which is doing such admirable work under its able headmaster, Dr. Flecker. This gift, together with another of £60 a year, will be applied to the foundation of a Leaving Scholarship for one of the Universities. Last year Dr. Flecker wrote an article in the *Church Standard* urging the importance of providing each of the Evangelical Schools with a sum of at least £300 a year for Leaving Scholarships. These two gifts are direct results of his appeal. We could wish that wealthy Evangelical Churchmen were far more alive to the importance of this kind of work. If they would only support with greatly increased gifts such public schools as Trent, Dean Close (Cheltenham), the South-Eastern (Ramsgate), Weymouth, and Monkton Combe (Bath), they would be doing one of the most essential services to the cause of true religion. It is impossible not to see that extreme Churchmen have done far more for the cause of secondary education in public schools than Evangelical and Moderate Churchmen, and as a result their work is more widely extended and far better organized. We must leave no stone unturned to bring home to Churchmen the importance of making it possible and easy for the sons of middle-class parents, and also of many of our clergy, to have a good education on the lines of a loyal Churchmanship. We shall thereby be doing much to lay the foundation of the England and the Church of England of the future.

NOTE. — *The Title Page and Index of the Volume of THE CHURCHMAN for 1905 can now be obtained on application to the Publisher.*