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THE CHURCHMAN.

SEPTEMBER, 1906.

The Month.

The Evidence
before the
Royal
Commission.

It is now possible to study the detailed evidence on which the Royal Commission based its Report and made its recommendations, and assuredly no one can deny that the first recommendation, urging that certain practices should "be promptly made to cease," was more than warranted by the facts of the case. The revelations of Roman practices, and the extent and boldness with which they are observed in our Church, are wellnigh incredible, and yet here they appear, proved beyond all question. This is no matter of difference between High Church and Low Church : it is the difference between two entirely different and opposed standpoints of Church teaching and ceremonial. As the Report plainly says (Par. 299) : " These practices lie on the Romeward side of a line of deep cleavage between the Church of England and that of Rome." We call renewed attention to these plain and significant words, more particularly as a prominent member of the extreme Anglican party has been recently speaking of the "niggling differences" between us and Rome. It is obvious that "a line of deep cleavage" and "niggling differences" are not one and the same thing, but represent two absolutely opposed positions. And as to which of the two more truly represents the Church of England in relation to Rome there cannot be a doubt. It is not too much to say that neither in the Prayer-Book nor in the history of the Church of England from the middle of the sixteenth century to the rise of the Tractarian Movement can anything be found to disprove the contention, now confirmed by

the Royal Commission, that between the Church of England and the Church of Rome, on the questions stated and dealt with in Chapter VIII. of the Report there is "a great gulf fixed."

The
Connection of
Ritual and
Doctrine.

One point in the comments of the Bishop of Birmingham on the Report of the Royal Commission seems to us to be worthy of special notice :

"The practices complained of connected with the consecrated elements seem to me quite consistent with the kind of belief in the 'objective Real Presence,' which, in Mr. Bennett's case, was declared by the Privy Council itself to be not repugnant to the formularies of the Church of England. The practices in question are not authorized by the Prayer-Book, or by the living authority of our part of the Church, or by the ancient and undivided Church. They ought not to be allowed. But in disallowing them it is of the greatest importance that no suggestion should be made that a doctrine of the Eucharist such as Forbes and Pusey held is to have its legality called in question to-day. I hope the Commissioners do not intend any such thing."

Is it not a simple fact that the practices here referred to would not be observed at all but for their association with the "kind of belief" mentioned by the Bishop? And is it not this association of symbol with doctrine that makes the extreme party so tenacious of the practices? If then, according to Bishop Gore, "they ought not to be allowed," what becomes of the doctrine they are intended to teach? Surely they cannot be disallowed without virtually denying the doctrines they are held to symbolize? Further, we have long felt it difficult to understand how the Bishop of Birmingham can be satisfied with the Bennett judgment as truly and fairly indicative of the Church of England doctrine. As Mr. Dimock has so clearly pointed out, Mr. Bennett's view was in no sense endorsed as the view of the Church, and Bishop Gore himself, in his book "The Body of Christ," speaking of this and allied doctrines, says the Prayer-Book is at least "patient" of this particular interpretation. Is this really adequate? Is it at all satisfying in the light of history since 1549? Surely the Church teaches something much more definite than this. In connection with the whole subject of the

Church of England view of the Holy Communion, we would call special attention to a pamphlet by Mr. Simpson, Principal of the Leeds Clergy School, entitled "The Thing Signified" (Leeds: Richard Jackson, 1s.), in which the true Anglican doctrine of the Presence of our Lord in the Holy Communion is clearly and convincingly stated. We have scarcely ever seen the Church position more ably, forcibly, and clearly put. It is at once true to Scripture, to the Anglican tradition, and to the statements of the Prayer-Book and Articles, and it would be of great service to truth and peace if the position there maintained were studied and accepted by all Churchmen.

Among all the voices that have been finding utterance during the last month it has not been difficult to discern a striking agreement, amid many otherwise discordant notes, in the conclusion that the problem of the Church lies very largely in the hands of the Bishops. The Report itself, as we have already seen, speaks in significantly strong terms of episcopal inactivity in some cases, of episcopal ignorance in others, and, yet again, of marked differences of episcopal action in regard to illegal practices. And the evidence only confirms this astonishing variety of attitude on the part of the Episcopate. The *Times* has at length broken its silence on the subject of the Report, and in its first article refers to this question of episcopal action in the following closing words:

"People look to the present Bench for success where their predecessors failed. Nearly all the recommendations of the Royal Commission are concerned with the efficiency of the Episcopate, who have to-day no opponent of the calibre of Lord Shaftesbury to make their action more difficult. The evidence, indeed, throws a flood of light on the probability or improbability that the present Bishops will succeed; but that must be left to be dealt with on a future occasion."

We shall wait with interest the further consideration promised, but meanwhile it is impossible to avoid being impressed with the force of the argument, now being so freely used, that it is scarcely possible to entrust the Bishops with further powers until they have shown themselves capable of dealing with

offences against the law as it now stands. Further powers are only justifiable if it can be shown that they are needed for the due enforcement of the present law, and this, it would seem from Recommendation I., is not the case, for the Bishops are advised that the breaches of law there referred to should "be *promptly* made to cease." Of one thing we may be pretty certain: the question of the exercise of episcopal authority lies at the very root of our present difficulties, and we are glad that attention is being concentrated on it. It is, indeed, the key of the situation.

Among the many points of great importance raised (and, as we hold, settled) by the Royal Commission is that known by the name of the *jus liturgicum*, of which so much has been heard in recent years. It is well known that claims are often made that a power is inherent in the Bishop to control services, to authorize alterations, and generally to regulate usage to a considerable extent. What, then, does the Royal Commission say on this important and vital point?

"There cannot, in our opinion, be any doubt that the Acts of Uniformity bind Bishops as well as other clergymen; and that the law does not recognise any right in a Bishop to override the provisions as to services, rites, and ceremonies contained in those Acts. Though Bishops have from time to time used a certain liberty of action with a view to relax the stringency of the Acts of Uniformity, it does not appear to us that there is any legal ground for assuming that, apart from statutory provision, the Bishop of a diocese has an inherent right to dispense the clergy from observing the provisions of those Acts. Such an assumption would, in our opinion, be inconsistent with the constitutional relations of Church and State in England."

This ought to be plain and convincing enough for anybody, and will, we doubt not, be accepted as final by all except those who insist on a view of the Church and the Episcopate which has never been recognised in any of the legal formularies of the Church of England as by law established. It is a great point gained to be told plainly, and by an authority including an Archbishop and two Bishops, that the law does not recognise

“any right in a Bishop to override” the Act of Uniformity and the Shortened Services Act, or “any inherent right to dispense the clergy from observing the provisions of those Acts.” And it is especially noteworthy that this position is based on “the constitutional relations of Church and State in England.” It is clear that the legal action of Church and State from 1552 to 1662 and onwards is at the basis of our present position, and rules all these questions. Insistence upon this can alone bring peace.

The
Education
Question.

The debate on the Education Bill in the House of Lords has been almost entirely overshadowed by the decision of the Court of Appeal on the West Riding case. Once again we have a clear difference between the actual wording of an Act and the evident intentions of its framers. It is perfectly certain, as Lord Justice Moulton said, that the Government of 1902 intended the cost of religious education in denominational schools to be borne by the rates; and yet, according to the recent decision, this is just the thing that the Act did not do. Into the possible consequences of this decision we need not now enter, beyond expressing the hope that the Judgment may somehow lead to a settlement of the controversy. It is worth while, however, to notice the differing and even discordant voices in the Church that have found renewed expression in consequence of the decision. Sir William Anson favours one policy, Lord Hugh Cecil an opposite one, and the Bishop of Birmingham yet another. It is no wonder that people are asking to be told plainly what the Church of England really wants, for there does not appear at present any policy on which Churchmen seem agreed. We are glad, however, to realize the increasing spirit of moderation in most of the recent utterances of Churchmen, and in particular, we would single out certain speeches on the second reading of the Education Bill in the House of Lords. If anyone will read carefully the truly statesmanlike and representative speeches of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Hereford, the Duke of Devonshire, and the Lord Chancellor, he will not find

it difficult to come to the conclusion that some way out of the *impasse* can and will be found.

There is scarcely anything more necessary and valuable in ministerial and general Christian life than first-hand study of the Bible as distinct from the study of it through commentaries. For this reason we welcome with all possible heartiness the wise and suggestive words of the Bishop of Ely at the recent Extension meeting at Cambridge. Dr. Chase spoke of independent study as "the golden rule, or, at any rate, the golden ambition."

Independent
Bible Study.

"Let them be independent students, and that in two directions. First, let them take a section of the book and try to make a commentary of it of their own, using nothing but the Revised Version, with references, and a concordance, gathering the parallels, working out for themselves the conclusions, noting the sequence of the argument, and considering what the passage said. Then trace out in the book, or group of books, the treatment of some great subject like the Fatherhood of God, the Lord's Early Life, the Redemption, Judgment, and Resurrection, and so on; then go one step further and compare the teaching of one New Testament writer with another New Testament writer, and they would find a large substratum of common thought and doctrine, though often the same fundamental conception was clothed in characteristic varied version. So they would work out for themselves a group of studies in the thought of the Apostolic age, observe its growth, and be themselves in contact with it."

If these wise words were heeded by all clergy, senior and junior, and by all Christian workers, both men and women, the results to the individual life and the Church work would be simply marvellous. For spiritual experience, doctrinal knowledge, ripening character, and effective service, there is nothing to compare with independent study of Holy Scripture.

We are glad to notice that the amalgamation of the National Protestant Church Union and the Church of England League is now an accomplished fact, the scheme having been adopted by overwhelming majorities of members on both sides. The new organization, under the admirable title of the National Church League, will commence work in the autumn under very favour-

The National
Church
League.

able auspices, and we wish for it a life of constantly increasing progress and influence. For some time past the two organizations have been doing much the same kind of work, and their union will be altogether for the strength and progress of the cause represented by them. The new League includes in its membership a very large number of those "central" Churchmen who desire and are determined to maintain our Church as at once "Catholic, Apostolic, Reformed, Protestant," to use Archbishop Benson's now historic phrase, and we hope the new League will rally to itself a still larger number of Churchmen whose one aim is to maintain and hand on unimpaired the heritage enshrined for us in our Prayer-Book and Articles. The Report of the Royal Commission plainly indicates the need and the nature of the work that lies before Churchmen, and we have no doubt that the National Church League will play a worthy and important part in helping to solve the problems now facing us. We warmly commend the work and objects of the new society to the sympathy and co-operation of our readers. It is intended to be, and we believe it will soon prove itself to be, a rallying-point for "all sober, peaceable, and truly conscientious sons of the Church of England."

**Clerical
Stipends.**

How are we to account for the general apathy of Churchmen to the Queen Victoria Clergy Fund? The Council report a serious diminution of income, especially in annual subscriptions and donations; and yet the question of clerical stipends is of the very first importance. There are in England and Wales 14,536 parochial benefices, of which, the Council of the Queen Victoria Clergy Fund say, "some 5,344 appear still to have an income of under £200, and of these no less than 1,139 an income of under £100 a year, whilst many of these small benefices are known to have large populations." It is nothing short of deplorable that the first question often asked by a patron about a man for a particular benefice is whether he has private means, since without this no one could take the living. We are afraid that the [apathy of

Churchmen to the Queen Victoria Clergy Fund will continue until the problem is resolutely faced as a whole, and an attempt made to bring about a more equitable distribution of present endowments. We may say what we will and deplore it as we like, but we fear the large body of Churchmen will continue their present indifference as long as they can see that the total of the episcopal incomes is between £150,000 and £200,000 a year, and the value of many of the higher dignities, short of the Episcopate, is out of all proportion to personal needs, effective service, or due reward. One thing is perfectly certain, the question of Church finance would have to be almost the very first matter to be dealt with if the Church were disestablished. Why, then, should we not deal with it now, when, so far as many of the parochial clergy are concerned, the need is as pressing and urgent as it well can be?

The
 Doctrine of
 Sin.

At the Conference of Mission Clergy, held at Westminster in July, the Bishop of Birmingham opened a discussion on "How we may reassert the Doctrine of Sin and Judgment." Dr. Gore pointed out with his accustomed clearness and force that there is much in modern thought that tends to minimize our Lord's attitude to sin. Christ is not merely an example; He is the Saviour, and He taught that man had a disease in him, and stood in need of recovery rather than of development only. Dr. Gore forcibly repudiated the view that sin is a survival which is gradually to be outgrown, and he urged that we must not speak of the Fall as "necessary and upwards." This is a line of teaching which is particularly welcome at the present moment, and we are grateful to the Bishop for insisting on it. The doctrine of the Fall is essential and fundamental on two grounds: (1) It alone explains and accounts for the awful fact of moral evil in man as seen universally to-day, the organic tendency to wrong both in the individual and in the race; (2) it alone justifies the still greater fact of Calvary, for it is impossible that any slight and superficial thing could have brought the Son of God to

death. We can never realize what atonement means if our view of sin is inadequate and wrong. All the serious heresies of ancient and modern days have somehow or other been associated with false or defective views of sin, and, as a consequence, with false or defective views of the Divine Person and redemptive work of our Lord.



An English Churchman in France.

BY THE RIGHT REV. BISHOP THORNTON.

WE all go abroad nowadays, and it may be doubted whether train connection by tunnel with our next neighbour on the Continent (which seems an assured sequel, ere long, of the *entente cordiale*) can largely augment the stream of English-speaking folks already pouring constantly into France and back again!

What impressions does an occasional visit to that country—out of the tourist season—leave on an English Churchman, as such—that is, not as regards the attractiveness of French manners, dress, and menage—about which there can be no question—but as regards the healthiness of its moral, and religious, and ecclesiastical phenomena?

Superficial his impressions will have to be called, of course; but they need not on that account be misleading, if he checks them by studying French literature of the time as he goes about, keeps his eyes and ears wide open, and attends the churches freely.

I am bound regretfully to say that my own have hardly been favourable. They have been derived from observation in a variety of directions, and of some things too small to bear specification, though none the less significant. But I will mention a detail or two.

I wonder how many I picked over of the bookstalls in prominent thoroughfares in Paris and French towns! It seems