

THE CHURCHMAN.

OCTOBER, 1906.

The Month.

The New
Bishop of
Truro.

THE appointment of Dr. Stubbs, Dean of Ely, to succeed the late Bishop Gott of Truro is of particular interest, because it is the first Episcopal appointment of the present Government; and though it is, of course, impossible to argue from one instance as to any general line of policy affecting the Church, it is natural that, after so many years of Unionist appointments, the present one should be observed with special attention. Dr. Stubbs is a Liberal in politics, and while we should deplore any appointments which would tend to identify the Episcopate with any particular party, it is impossible not to welcome one who is likely to bring into the Episcopal counsels a political outlook which is not too strongly represented there. The appointment is also interesting because Dr. Stubbs, while generally approving of the Education Bill, has not hesitated to propose amendments in the direction of making it more acceptable to Churchmen. Yet again, his advent is to be welcomed as giving to the Episcopal bench another exponent of scholarly and spiritual Broad Churchmanship a type which certainly needs and deserves fuller recognition in the Episcopate. Time alone can show what effect the appointment will have on the extreme Anglican atmosphere of the diocese of Truro. In any case, it is a welcome change from what has hitherto been regarded as the Truro tradition.

**The Episco-
pate and
Ritualism.** No feature of the evidence given before the Royal Commission has had greater attention paid to it than the evidence of the Bishops. Very many will be prepared to agree with the *Times* in saying that "in most cases there is a fair certainty of disillusionment for those who expect to find signs of anything like efficient, or even sufficient, oversight on the part of the Bishops." More than one of the Bishops had to endure some searching questions, and were put entirely on the defensive. Nor is it possible to say that they came quite scatheless out of the ordeal. With every possible allowance for multiplicity of engagements and huge dioceses, it will certainly be said that scarcely anything should prevent the Bishops from becoming acquainted with the way in which their clergy conduct public worship. Added to this there is the still more important and serious fact that in taking action, the Bishops for several years past have been by no means unanimous themselves as to what the law is, what obedience should be rendered, or what is to be done in the case of disobedience. So long as there are these differences among those whose duty it is to administer the law it is hardly surprising to find such confusion and "lawlessness" among the clergy. It is just at this point that dissatisfaction will be felt with the Report of the Royal Commission, for this lack of unanimity among the Bishops as to the law is not really dealt with as one of the real factors of the situation. We trust, however, that in the course of the next few months it may be possible for the Episcopate to arrive at some general line of agreement in accordance with the recommendations addressed to it by the Royal Commission.

**The Bishop of
Birmingham.** The question of Episcopal policy has been rendered acute during the last month by a noteworthy pronouncement of the Bishop of Birmingham. When preaching at St. Aidan's, Small Heath, he is reported to have spoken as follows :

"I am prepared, as Bishop, to vindicate to the utmost, and without any shadow of doubt, the kind of ceremonial which is practised in this church. In general, I have not the least doubt that it is both our right and our

privilege, as part of the Catholic Church, to use this sort of ceremonial; and what, perhaps, I care for more is that it may be entirely spiritual, as to me it seems the only sort of way of expressing the great spiritual facts and realities which the service embodies and enshrines."

This is one of the churches which was reported to the Royal Commission, and the evidence given is admitted by the incumbent to be, in the main, correct. Yet here we have the Bishop of the diocese stating that he is prepared to vindicate to the utmost the kind of ceremonial practised there. It is scarcely possible to exaggerate the far-reaching importance of the question thus raised, for the Bishop's words go right in the teeth of some of the recommendations of the Royal Commission. On the one hand, the Commission speaks of practices that are to be "promptly made to cease"; on the other hand, the Bishop is prepared to vindicate "this sort of ceremonial." The situation is certainly a very serious one. It should also never be forgotten that if the ceremonial referred to by Bishop Gore is legal, then it is the only ceremonial that comes under this category, for the Ornaments Rubric on any showing is imperative and not merely permissive, and does not prescribe a maximum and a minimum. It therefore comes to this: if Bishop Gore is right, all the churches who do not observe that type of ritual are wrong and breaking the law. Surely this is an impossible position, and yet it is the simple logical outcome of the Bishop's contention. We hope that the question thus definitely raised will not be allowed to subside until it is finally settled one way or another. The present confusion is intolerable and fatal to the best interests of the Church of England. That one of the Bishops should take up a position which can be shown to be diametrically opposed to that laid down by the Royal Commission is on any showing a *σκάνδαλον*, and Church people ought to know in which direction the truth is to be found.

The "New Light." For many years past we have been told that the Ridsdale Judgment could not possibly stand if the case were tried to-day because of the "new light" that has arisen from new facts discovered since the time of that

decision. This contention has been so pressed, emphasized, and repeated that many Evangelical and Moderate Churchmen have come to believe in its truth, or at least to have a lurking fear that the Ornaments Rubric, after all, bears out the contention of the extreme Anglican party. The Royal Commission gave a welcome opportunity for the production of this new evidence which was supposed to shed the "new light," and this evidence is now before us for everyone to read. It is not too much to say that the "new light" theory is a myth, as those who knew best felt perfectly certain for all these years. In the evidence given by the Rev. W. H. Frere, of the Community of the Resurrection, who is known as the editor of "Proctor on the Prayer-Book" (though in the editing he has practically transformed Proctor's book), we find ample references to the question of the "new light." He first of all states that the "new light" refers only to what is found in the book by Mr. James Parker, which followed very closely upon the Ridsdale Judgment, now no less than twenty-seven years ago. Mr. Frere admits that beyond that book there is exceedingly little "new light," and yet, as the result of his close examination by Sir Lewis Dibdin, we have the following significant statement ("Minutes of Evidence," vol. i., p. 161):

2438. "So that we really have got to this: that the Privy Council substantially had the case before them as it is before you and before us to-day?"—"To a very large extent they had, no doubt."

It is too much to hope that after this very frank admission we shall hear no more of the "new light," for the contention, based on Parker's book, has been so frequently repeated that it will be very difficult for many people to realize that there is nothing in it. And yet this is the simple fact. In this connection we would urge a very careful study of the whole of Mr. Frere's evidence. Anything more damaging to his position can hardly be imagined. Verily we have a great deal of "new light" as the result of these cross-examinations, "new light" as to the entire want of support for the main position of the advocates of the extreme Anglican party. It is not "light," but an eclipse.

Perhaps no part of the evidence before the Royal Commission will be studied with greater and more general interest than that of Dr. Sanday. His great scholarship, his general aloofness from Church parties, and his wide sympathies combine to give him an authority in the Church which is universally acknowledged. As one of the Commissioners rightly said to him, "Any words of yours carry great weight outside." When we turn to his evidence we see at once the well-known characteristics of his scholarship, Churchmanship, and temperament. Several parts of his evidence call for particular attention. Thus, he said in his original statement that "on broad historical grounds the Catholic party has a fairly tenable position in the Church of England"; but when Sir Edward Clarke suggested that this statement is "either a truism or conveys a wrong impression," Dr. Sanday modified it and said that "on broad historical grounds the Catholic party, when you have subtracted what is specifically Roman, has a thoroughly tenable position." Now, the real question is, What is "Catholic" and what is "specifically Roman?" And as to this it must be confessed that Dr. Sanday gives practically no help or guidance. When definitely faced with one practice, that of a statue of the Virgin with candles burning before it, which he admitted to be "distinctively Roman," and when asked whether he thought it ought to be let alone, or whether anything ought to be done with regard to it, he replied: "I am not in the habit of going into these questions of detail in my own mind; I leave them entirely to others." This can hardly be regarded as satisfactory. Again, in his original statement Dr. Sanday expressed the opinion that for the first ten years of her reign, Queen Elizabeth was not conscious of having made any substantial changes in religion. When, however, it was pointed out to him that the promulgation of the new Prayer-Book, the removal of the roods, the vestments, the shrines, and the images were all within these ten years, again his answer was by no means clear or conclusive. These are not the only points as to which many who have a profound regard for Dr. Sanday and

Catholic and
Roman.

his great scholarship will seek in vain for guidance. We venture to think that it is impossible for a scholar of such wide influence to remain indifferent to these and other "questions of detail," as he himself terms them, but which the Royal Commission declares to be practices "specifically Roman," and therefore to be "promptly made to cease." Having thrown the weight of his great authority into the scale in favour of toleration, we sincerely trust that Dr. Sanday will now help the Church to come to a definite conclusion as to what is Roman and what is Catholic.

What we fail to see in Dr. Sanday's evidence is any recognition of even the possibility that the Tractarian Movement introduced a new state of affairs into the Church of England. Thus, he describes the Elizabethan Church in the following terms: It was

True Anglo-Catholicism. "an attempt to amalgamate a large amount of what I call simple Catholicism on the one hand with an amount of energetic and somewhat extreme Protestantism on the other. It seemed for a time—we may say, for a long time—as though the attempt had met with success. It produced a new type, the type which most of us associate with the Church of England, from Hooker and Andrewes onwards."

We suppose that the strongest Protestant in the Church of England would admit the truth of this statement, and we are not far wrong in believing that it would be accepted and welcomed by the overwhelming mass of Evangelical and Moderate Churchmen as expressive of the true position of our Church. But can it in any sense be said to be true of the present condition and attitude of the extreme Anglican party in the Church of England? Is theirs a "simple Catholicism"? And is there any real Protestantism in their attitude, except it be in relation to Papal infallibility and government? The Dean of Canterbury has conclusively shown that the present extreme Anglicans are in no sense the lineal descendants of the Caroline High Churchmen represented by Bishop Cosin. We may take any of the Caroline divines, and find in their writings a very definite Protestantism, doctrinal as well as ecclesiastical, which is almost

entirely absent from the Anglo-Catholicism of to-day. When Lord Halifax, in his evidence, can say that the Church of England to-day is "the same Church, not merely by a legal continuity, but in all essentials of doctrine and practice, as the Church of St. Gregory and St. Augustine," we are surely face to face with a contention that is absolutely foreign to anything found in the Church of England before the Tractarian Movement arose. It is this wide distinction between the present day and the period of Hooker and Andrewes that constitutes one of the chief reasons why the Royal Commission was found to be necessary. We may fearlessly challenge anyone to find the practices referred to in the first recommendation of the Royal Commission in any representative Church writings before Tractarian times. We go farther, and do not hesitate to say that there are no practices observed generally by the Caroline divines, of which any Evangelical would say what the Royal Commission says about these Roman practices—that they "should receive no toleration." This is the one simple way of testing true Anglo-Catholicism.



The Ascension as Fact.¹

BY THE RIGHT REV: THE LORD BISHOP OF DURHAM.

THERE is a strong tendency at present to detach spiritual truth from its embodiment in historical fact, and to present to thought and faith an "essence" of Christianity supposed to be equally valuable whether or no such and such alleged events ever occurred. The Scripture story of our Lord's Ascension, in such a system, will be taken to be the transitory envelope of permanent ideas. It grew as poetic halo around the idea of His transcendent supremacy and victory, after death,

¹ A lecture delivered at Durham, July 26, 1906, before the members of the "Summer Term for Biblical Study."