

THE CHURCHMAN.

DECEMBER, 1906.

The Month.

Letters of
Business.

THE action of the Canterbury Convocation follows naturally from the issue of Letters of Business, and we shall all wait with interest for the report of the Committee appointed. While not unmindful of the extraordinary difficulties connected with the task, we are, nevertheless, glad that an attempt will be made to frame a policy in the direction of peace and progress in the Church. Whether the attempt will be successful is quite another matter, and one on which many Church people will be reasonably sceptical. But it would have been a deplorable confession of weakness to have done nothing in the face of the recommendations of the Royal Commission, and such a policy of inactivity would not only have been far from "masterly," but it could have had but one ending. The crux of the situation, as the Archbishop said, is the question of Parliamentary sanction, and we shall all probably agree that "no responsible people in public life want that the rubrical details of the Book of Common Prayer shall be discussed in Parliament." At the same time the fact of supremacy of Parliament in all causes ecclesiastical is not to be overlooked, and Churchmen will be very rudely undeceived if they think that Parliament will allow any change of rubrics, especially if it should involve the permissive use of Vestments, to become law without the fullest discussion. In an article in the *Edinburgh Review* for October the writer expresses his opinion that if there

was a general agreement within the Church as to the precise character of the reforms desired, Parliament would give sympathetic hearing, having regard, of course, to what is right and fitting to the general interests of the entire people. But it is pointed out that the real difficulty in making any reforms is the divergent principles held by its various sections, and the question is asked whether, if the Church of England were disestablished, it would be possible to create any authority to which all its sections would defer. The writer's conclusion is, "We greatly doubt it." He is not alone in this doubt. However, we shall soon see whether anything like an agreement is possible when the Report of the Committee of Convocation appears.

Meanwhile, many Church people are asking whether the view of the Royal Commission that all its recommendations are of a piece and should be considered together, is any reason for not taking action on Recommendation I., with reference to Roman practices. The now well-known words, "promptly made to cease," seem to imply immediate action, and yet so far nothing seems to have been done. It is, of course, arguable that a change of rubric will make the cessation of these disorders and illegalities easier for the offenders, and yet it is difficult to believe that this is the only reason for not taking immediate steps to put an end to the practices. The following words of the *Edinburgh Review* seem to us to sum up the situation very definitely and conclusively :

"The public will watch with interest the response of the Bishops to this appeal. The Episcopal leaders of the Church of England are themselves on their trial. There is 'a line of deep cleavage' of opinion . . . and it cannot be concealed under pious aspirations for comprehension. . . . The attitude of the Bishops has so far been one of opportunism. But that attitude cannot any longer be maintained if respect is to be paid to the principles of the Reformation. It is impossible to be at the same time on the Romeward and on the Protestant side of this 'line of deep cleavage.' We are not speaking of this, or that, or the other 'practice,' but of the principles and doctrines which these practices indicate. It is certain that the Church of England will not long remain constitutionally, or in any sense the National Church, if its leaders show themselves indifferent to those great principles for which in the sixteenth century our Reformers success-

fully struggled. . . . The nation probably cares little for the precise amount of 'vesture' or 'ornament' to be authorized by the new rubrics, but it wishes to feel assured that in the deep cleavage dividing the Reformed Churches from Rome the Church of England fearlessly maintains the principles of the Reformation. It will be a serious matter for the Church if the clergy and laity should tend in different directions. Of the leaning of the vast majority of Evangelical laymen on these controversial subjects, no well-informed person can have a doubt."

**The
English
Hymnal.**

The action of the Bishop of Bristol in prohibiting this book has been followed by that of several other Bishops, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishops of Winchester, Durham, Exeter, Oxford, and Liverpool; and though not going so far as prohibition, they have expressed, in unequivocal terms, their objection to the introduction of the book. This is all very satisfactory, though we confess that we are puzzled over the Archbishop of Canterbury's reply to the editors of the Hymnal. After expressing his disapprobation of the book on doctrinal grounds, his letter seems almost to withdraw from that position by declining to charge the editors with "heresy." Yet, as the Archbishop speaks of the book as teaching "doctrines contrary to the express teaching of the Church," the book is either "heretical" or it is not. In the letters of the Bishops of Oxford and Liverpool one point of very great importance is made, which has a far wider application than that to the Hymnal now in question. Both Dr. Paget and Dr. Chavasse refer to the argument sometimes employed, that as long as the objectionable hymns are not used in public worship no harm is done. They point out, however, that as the book must necessarily be in some sense a companion to the Book of Common Prayer, it will be used in homes, and thus help to create an atmosphere. We venture to hope that these words will be heeded by those who are inclined to introduce any popular and widely-used hymnal simply because of its popularity and wide use, regardless of the erroneous teaching of some of its hymns. Even though such hymns are never used in church, the adoption of a book must necessarily have an effect upon young lives and homes. It is scarcely too much to say that the

use of a hymn-book is one of the most important factors in the formation of character and of tone and habits of devotion.

The Education Bill. As the House of Lords is still discussing the Bill at the moment of writing these lines it is impossible to foresee the ultimate result of their deliberations, but sufficient has been done to show that the changes made by the Lords are no mere amendments, but a practical reconstruction of the Bill. It is perfectly obvious to all that such drastic alterations will not be accepted by the House of Commons; and unless it was the intention of the House of Lords in making these amendments to have something to bargain with, it is difficult to see what good can have been done by making them, for most of the changes are certain to be rejected by the Commons. It cannot be for the good of the Church or for education that controversy should be thus intensified, for it has been bitter enough for months past. Nor can it be to the interests of the Church to appear to be on the side of those who are in any case opposing the declared will of the people as represented by the present House of Commons. In any conflict which may be impending between the Lords and Commons it will be disastrous if the Church should seem to take sides against the people. The Education Question is thus at the mercy of extremists, and the one thing most likely to suffer is religion in the schools. We believe that if the Lords had been content to affirm the necessity, subject to a conscience clause, of religious education being provided in all schools, instead of being left to the mercy of a local education authority, they would have rallied almost the whole country to their side. As it is, the alterations made have provoked a conflict which, in our judgment, can only end in disaster for the Church and for the cause of religion in our schools. Is it too late to hope that wiser counsels will even now prevail? The man who will initiate a movement for compromise will merit and gain the gratitude of the entire nation, which is certainly growing both weary and annoyed with all this strife over religion.

Canon C. H. Robinson, of the S.P.G., read a paper at the Barrow Church Congress, which was as bold as it was able. He pointed out that our Church is only doing a comparatively small part of the work of evangelizing India. He spoke of its work as "altogether insignificant," and said that of the Native Christians "less than one-ninth are connected with our Church, or any Church in communion with us." Our contemporary, the *Layman*, has taken the matter up, and has elicited from Sir Charles Elliott, Bishop Hodges, Mr. Eugene Stock, and others some valuable contributions. There does not seem to be any attempt to deny Canon Robinson's statement, though certain modifying considerations are brought forward by some of the writers. As Bishop Hodges rightly said, it is impossible not to sympathize with the expression of regret and shame that our national Church should not be in the vanguard of Indian Missions, but, on the other hand, Nonconformists claim to represent a large part of the British Christianity, and they have their duties no less than Churchmen. In a fine spirit Bishop Hodges says, that to those who regard Episcopal government of the *bene esse* rather than of the *esse* of the Church, the question does not present so serious an aspect, for Churchmen and Nonconformists are working side by side in the face of heathendom in spite of all their ecclesiastical differences. We should remember, too, that there are no Nonconformists in America, and although the large part of the Missions in India are non-episcopal in form, they represent some of the finest and best missionary work in any of the fields.

At a recent meeting in Liverpool Bishop Chavasse gave an address on the Holy Communion, in which he described that ordinance as "at once a supper, a sacrifice, and a sacrament." On each of these points the Bishop gave some clear and suggestive teaching. The sacrificial aspect was shown to consist of the presentation of ourselves, our souls, and bodies. The sacramental character was

"Supper,
Sacrifice, and
Sacrament."

discussed by showing the differences between the Roman, Lutheran, and Anglican views. These are the Bishop's words on this point :

"We, following the teaching of our Church as set forth by Richard Hooker, one of the greatest exponents of her doctrine, hold that grace is not in the bread and the wine, as it is not in the water of baptism, but received directly into the heart of the faithful communicant from Christ Himself our Host."

In speaking of the Holy Communion as a supper, the Bishop said that "from boyhood he himself had been accustomed to attend evening Communion, and saw no reason for discontinuing it." All this is "wholesome doctrine and necessary for these times," and we are grateful for the Bishop's clear, positive statement of the true doctrine on this subject. If these views on the Holy Communion were universally taught in our Church there would soon be an end to all controversy.

New Testament Criticism. Dr. Sanday's recent lectures in Oxford, and Canon Knowling's paper at the Church Congress, have helped to familiarize very many with the fact, now becoming more and more evident, that the very principles of criticism which have long been applied to the Old Testament are being directed to the New with exactly similar results. For instance, Wellhausen, whose name is so familiar in connection with Old Testament Criticism, has turned his attention to the Gospels, and, as a result of the so-called scientific treatment of the life of Jesus, we are being robbed not only of the supernatural birth, but also of the supernatural resurrection. Canon Knowling's words are worth quoting in this connection. Speaking of a recent book, he says :

"Professor Schmidt is examining the evidence for the Resurrection. In the opening verses of 1 Cor. xv. we have the earliest account of the appearances of the risen Jesus. What treatment shall we afford to this record? It is not unlikely that we have in it a later insertion! Thus, then, if we wish to get rid of the greatest Christological passages in the New Testament—if we wish to get rid of the definite statements as to our Lord's Virgin Birth or His Resurrection from the dead on the third day—we have

only to maintain, upon grounds which we may well hesitate to describe as scientific, that this is an insertion or that is an interpolation, and the thing is done. Men are never tired of bidding us treat the Bible like any other book. I ask you, What other book would be treated as these critics presume to treat the Bible?"

This question may well be asked. If any other book were treated in this way it would call down the scorn and contempt of the best literary critics. As the late Bishop Stubbs said in one of his charges :

"It is the fact that the Bible is like no other book that has led critics to apply to it methods of arbitrary, wanton, and conjectural criticism which, applied to Greek, or Roman, or Anglo-Saxon literature, would be laughed out of court."

Yet already we seem to observe signs of a reaction. Men are crying out for a Christ that will satisfy the heart, a religion that will give peace to the conscience and victory over sin. This is utterly impossible in a merely human Christ. The supernatural is an absolute necessity for human life.

It is evident from recent letters in the papers that the extreme party is becoming alarmed by the effects of the Royal Commission on public opinion. In particular it is thought that an attack is being made on a belief in the real objective presence of our Lord in the Holy Communion "under the forms of bread and wine." Those who are expressing these fears are undoubtedly right in seeing that this doctrine is at the very heart of the controversy, for if it is not true the edifice of sacramentarianism, as it is held to-day, crumbles to pieces at once. And it is just the truth of this view that we venture to challenge by saying that the Church of England knows nothing whatever of a real objective presence in the forms of bread and wine by virtue of the prayer of consecration. Vogan's answer to Pusey has never yet been faced by the extreme Anglican party, and coming to the present day we have the following words of the Principal of the Leeds Clergy School in the admirable pamphlet, "The Thing Signified," to which we referred on a former occasion :

"The Real
Objective
Presence."

"The formularies are conspicuously silent on the subject of a real presence in the elements themselves, and I should argue that, at least prior to the Tractarian movement, this silence has, in spite of varieties of expression, been maintained by representative theologians. To reopen the question is, in my judgment, to swerve from the Anglican method—to depart from the Anglican spirit—and this, unless we are convinced of their essential unsoundness, it does not seem to me that we are warranted in doing."

We believe that these words exactly express the truth on this subject, and a reference on Mr. Dimock's well-known works, as well as to the letters of the Bishop of Edinburgh, which appeared in the *Guardian* a few years ago, will clearly prove it. There is no fact so historically certain as that from 1552 onwards, the doctrine of a real objective presence in the elements has never formed part of the teaching of the English Church.

The Bishop of Oxford's Charge. The Bishop of Oxford's Visitation Charge has now been published, and is worthy of careful attention. Coming from Dr. Paget, it is not too much to speak of it as a document of great significance, and its importance may be the more readily appreciated in the light of a pamphlet by an Oxford layman that appeared just before the delivery of the charge, in which the Bishop was somewhat severely dealt with, and a plea made for nothing more or less than undisguised Roman Catholicism in the English Church. When a writer like this Oxford layman, who was quoted by Lord Halifax at the Church Congress, can speak of the principles of the Reformation as to be repented of with tears and ashes, we can the more readily understand the importance of the Bishop of Oxford's measured treatment of the question arising out of the Royal Commission. Some have criticised the Bishop for not pronouncing more definitely against the men who have been guilty of illegalities; but perhaps Dr. Paget's words are all the more significant by reason of the absence of this expression of disapproval. The Bishop goes to foundation principles, and looks at facts from this standpoint. His words on Reservation and Invocation of the Virgin Mary, and his

plea for obedience to the law, are admirable in substance and spirit, and we may perhaps be permitted to say that those who are not moved by them will not be moved by anything. These are not the words of a "Protestant demagogue," but of one of the ablest of the High Church Bishops. We do not pretend to endorse all his positions, more particularly with regard to prayers for the dead, but we do not hesitate to say that the whole charge is deserving of minute study by all Churchmen as a weighty contribution to the solution of the problems now harassing the English Church.

**Orthodoxy
and
Heterodoxy.** The Bishop of Ripon, in his sermon at the Church Congress, suggestively said that "the vice of orthodoxy is to separate the truth from God," and that truth only has life as it is brought into relationship with God. This danger of divorcing truth from God constantly presses upon us, and, as the Bishop rightly added, "dogmas have little or no meaning for the soul if they fail to vivify the bond of relationship between it and God." All this is as true as it is timely, but if it is the vice of orthodoxy to separate truth from God, is it not also the vice of heterodoxy to separate God from truth? We are often told that it matters not what a man believes so long as his life is right, and yet how is it possible for a man's life to be right unless his creed is right? Truth must neither be separated from God nor God from truth. The former issues in a dry, lifeless orthodoxy, the latter in an ever-shifting standard of life without certitude or power. Truth in God and God in truth must be our constant and persistent aim.

