

# THE CHURCHMAN.

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JANUARY, 1907.

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## The Month.

**The Education Question.** THE history of the Education Bill during December makes curious reading. The drastic alterations introduced by the House of Lords amounted to a reconstruction of the Bill, and it was a foregone conclusion that they would not be accepted by the Commons. The impossibility of the Lords' position is evident from the simple fact that the Bill as amended was in several particulars actually more favourable to the Church of England than the Bill of 1902. Two things we fail to see in the attitude of the House of Lords : there is no recognition of the fact that the 1902 Act was a revolution which entirely changed the position of Church schools; and, in the next place, there is no appreciation of the real grievances of Nonconformists under that Act. It is futility of the highest kind to think that Church schools can be put on to the rates and yet continued as Church schools with the curriculum and teaching prescribed when the Church contributed a large part of the cost. The action of the House of Lords is all the more remarkable by contrast with its attitude to the Trades' Dispute Bill, which, after a wealth of invective and denunciation on the part of the Opposition leaders, was actually passed without serious alteration. The lack of statesmanship in the treatment of the Education Bill by the House of Lords is chiefly shown by the impossibility of discovering what is meant by the amendment to Clause 1, providing for some religious

## THE MONTH

instruction in all schools. Did this mean religious instruction under the Cowper-Temple clause? If so, it was voted for by one or two Bishops who are strongly opposed to the clause in question. Did it mean religious instruction by means of all-round facilities? Then it is the advocacy of the impossible, as even the House of Lords showed in the course of the debate. The only two policies are (1) simple Bible teaching, (2) denominational instruction. It is manifestly wrong to argue that there is no other policy than either concurrent endowment of all denominations, or else banishment of all religious teaching. There remains the definite policy of simple Bible teaching in the schools. The secular system has been repudiated by the House of Commons, and in our judgment the policy of concurrent endowment of all denominations is absolutely impracticable. We still continue to believe that on the basis of Bible instruction Churchpeople would obtain all that they could fairly expect while their schools are on the rates, and, moreover, that which would be ample for all practical purposes. At the moment of writing it is impossible to foretell the result of the debates before the prorogation of Parliament, but we cannot help calling renewed attention to the gravity of the issues at stake. The country is weary and almost angry with the continued strife among Christian people over religious education, and it would not be surprising if a short and summary end were soon made to the conflict. We do not often find ourselves in agreement with Mr. Masterman, M.P., but we gladly make our own his words when speaking the other day in the House of Commons. He said that "He did not dread a secular system, but he did dread the secularization of the nation."

"It would be that the people of this country would thrust altogether outside the schools religions that were tearing each other in a struggle which in their calm moments they all recognised as an ignoble and indecent one. The final result would be, not secular education or some such compromise as this, but the establishment among the industrial population, now for the most part favourable to the ancient historic faith, of something of that spirit which made the French Minister for Labour exclaim the other day, 'We have torn the lights from the sky, and they will never be rekindled

again.' It was with a profound sense of the serious nature of the issue now involved to the future of the religious life of this country that he ventured to appeal to all those who had any claim to represent the religion of the people to consider whether, even at this hour, there might not be averted so disastrous a result."

The Bishop of Carlisle, in his most valuable presidential address at the Barrow Church Congress, expressed the opinion that the hour is coming for reckoning up the losses of the Oxford Movement not less carefully than its gains. It so happens that a brief and interesting history of the Oxford Movement has just been issued by Sir Samuel Hall (reviewed in our December number), in which the results of the Movement are summed up. As a contribution to the discussion suggested by the Bishop, the book is well worth attention on several grounds. Bishop Diggle remarked that "One of the most pressing questions which the Oxford Movement has left for our solution is, What meanest thou by this word 'Church'?" and, as he went on to say, "the answer given by the Oxford Movement can no longer be considered either final or decisive." Everyone knows that the Oxford Movement arose in connection with the danger of infidelity, and Pusey's first work was a treatise on German rationalism. The first idea of Tractarianism was the assertion of the historical witness of the Church, and if that had been adhered to and properly stated, apart from the Roman aspects of apostolic succession and purely ecclesiastical continuity, nothing but good would have accrued. But the Movement developed on wrong lines, for Newman identified the Church of Christ with the Church of Rome, and saw in the latter the only safeguard against rationalism. One consequence, as Sir Samuel Hall says, is that there has been a direct connection between the Oxford Movement and much of the present-day agnosticism. To us one of the greatest losses of the Oxford Movement is seen in the narrow, cramping, and deadening idea of the Church as contrasted with the magnificent Pauline idea in the Epistle to the Ephesians. We hope that someone who is capable of discussing this whole question will apply him-

self seriously to the consideration of the losses of the Oxford Movement. No subject could be much more profitable at the present time.

**Reform of Convocation,** It was a great opportunity lost when the Canterbury Convocation refused to accept the Dean of Canterbury's amendment with reference to the reform of Convocation as a condition precedent to the consideration of the matters connected with the Letters of Business. One effect must necessarily be largely to nullify any decision Convocation may arrive at as proceeding from an unrepresentative body, while another result may easily be to suggest to the country that the Church of England really does not welcome reform, but is content to go on in the old moribund way. On the other hand, if Convocation could be reformed and made thoroughly representative, its decisions on such momentous subjects as those arising out of the Letters of Business would come with immense force. At present Convocation neither possesses the confidence of Churchmen nor engages the attention of the country. Its proceedings are almost entirely academic and remote from the great stream of Church life, and it is in no sense the voice of the clergy of our Church. We have all admired the courage of the Archbishop of Canterbury in determining, if necessary, to create a precedent connected with the proposals for a new rubric, but it may perhaps be permitted us to say that if, inspired by the Lower House, His Grace's influence could have been directed towards attaining a reform of Convocation, the effect would have been profound and far-reaching, and would have inaugurated a policy fraught with hopes of blessing to our Church. As it is, the outcome of the deliberations of Convocation will be discounted from the outset by the fact that that body is almost as unrepresentative as it can possibly be. A policy of "muddling through" is as injurious to the welfare of the Church as it has ever been to the nation, for the simple reason that it really involves only "muddling," and never really getting "through."

A  
Scholar on  
Scholars.

In the December *Expositor* Professor Sir William Ramsay had a remarkable article on Harnack's new work on St. Luke, which our readers will remember was the subject of an article in our November number. Into the precise subject of Sir William Ramsay's article we do not now enter; our purpose is to call attention to some weighty and significant statements made by him on the general question of New Testament criticism:

"The method of dissection had failed. When a real piece of living literature has to be examined, it is false method to treat it as a corpse and cut it in pieces; only a mess can result. The work is alive, and must be handled as such."

"The question, 'Shall we hear evidence or not?' presents itself at the threshold of every investigation into the New Testament. Modern criticism for a time entered on its task with a decided negative. Its mind was made, and it would not listen to evidence on a matter that was already decided. But the results of recent exploration made this attitude untenable."

"These so-called 'critics' do not read a book whose method and results they disapprove. The method of studying facts is not to their taste, when they see that it leads to a conclusion which they have definitely decided against beforehand."

"If we read his book we shall find many examples of the fashionable critical method of *a priori* rules and prepossessions as to what must be or must not be permitted. 'Multa tamen suberunt priscae vestigia fraudis.' These are almost all of the one kind. Wherever anything occurs that savours of the marvellous in the estimation of the polished and courteous scholar, sitting in his well-ordered library and contemplating the world through its windows, it must be forthwith set aside as unworthy of attention and as mere delusion. That method of studying the first century was the method of the later nineteenth century. I venture to think that it will not be the method of the twentieth century."

Could anything be more damaging to the reputation of what passes for modern scholarship? If some upholder of traditional views had said anything of the kind it would have at once been put down to *odium theologicum*, obscurantism, lack of scholarship, and the like; but here is a scholar of the first rank saying all this against brother-scholars. Surely old-fashioned people, who still believe in the trustworthiness of the Bible as we have it, may take heart of grace. Their attitude is proved up to the hilt by this and other similar statements of Sir William's article.

There is, however, another point worthy of consideration. These remarks apply almost exactly to the question of Old Testament criticism. Professor Ramsay's strictures could be amply justified by quotations from recent books on the Old Testament. "The method of dissection has failed," and it is equally true that the question whether we shall hear evidence or not "presents itself at the threshold of every investigation into the Old Testament." Modern Old Testament criticism has long made up its mind by speaking of that very nebulous quantity "assured results," and it will not "listen to evidence on a matter that was already decided." But this position is no longer tenable. The results of recent exploration and scholarship are too powerful to be withstood. Let Professor Ramsay's words be read in the light of recent books by Orr, Sayce, Hommel, and even Winckler, and the literal truth of every contention will be seen. There are few things so viciously *a priori* in attitude as much that passes for Biblical criticism to-day; but *magna est veritas et prævalebit*.

In a recent review in the *Guardian* of a pamphlet severely criticising the Royal Commission, the reviewer makes the following interesting statement about the present progress of extreme Anglicanism:

"Exclusive familiarity with one school of teaching and with the usages in one class of churches tends, we must think, to make 'An Oxford Layman' and his friends unaware of how great an amount of headway they have yet to make. The personal influence of remarkable men has here and there rendered their ideals acceptable, and largely secured them toleration—personal influence counts always for very much in religious matters in this country. But they have not as yet sunk really deep."

This is as frank as it is significant, and even though it accords with our own desires and sympathies, we believe that it is a true statement of the case. The great mass of the people are practically untouched by the so-called Catholic movement. The country is thoroughly Protestant at heart, and is perfectly conscious of the great gulf between the Roman Catholic position and that represented by the Prayer-Book and Articles. All the

efforts of the Tractarians and their successors have been unavailing to span that gulf, and now the Royal Commission with its clear distinction between Roman and Anglican practices goes to crown the proof that between the two positions there is an incompatibility deep, abysmal, and permanent. The service rendered by the Commission in this respect is incalculable, and it is for us to press home these truths and show on every hand the essential and eternal differences between the Roman and Anglican positions. The recent attempt of a speaker at the E.C.U. meeting to make light of the pronouncements under Recommendation 1 has only gone to show more clearly the truth of the contention of the Report and also the untenableness of the position of the extreme Anglicans in our Church.

In his primary charge which has just been published the Bishop of Manchester said some plain words on the subject of changes in the form of worship made by the individual clergyman :

Changes  
in Services.

“ Nothing could be more utterly subversive of Church order than that the individual parish priest should on his own authority make changes in the form of worship to which his congregation had been accustomed. He knew that he would be at once reminded of the past and of the controversies which raged round the black gown and the surpliced choir and other changes which had no doctrinal significance. He was bold enough to ask whether they were clear now that all these changes were improvements ; whether it was quite certain that they gained by the introduction of the surplice into the pulpit as much as they lost ? He doubted whether the surpliced choir was either Catholic or beautiful or really helpful to devotion.”

This is very interesting and refreshing teaching. It is not long ago that we had an equally welcome word from the Bishop of Stepney on the tyranny of musical services and of the note G in particular. And now the Bishop of Manchester actually questions the beauty and helpfulness of surpliced choirs. We are such slaves to custom that surpliced choirs now seem essential to well-ordered services. When shall we learn the truth that parochial circumstances differ, and that fitness to edify, not a desire to be like our neighbours, is the predominant principle ?

The Bishop had also a word to say on the way in which these changes are made.

“But for the manner in which the customs were introduced, for the reckless disregard which was shown in many cases, for the scruples of deeply-attached members, he had no defence to offer. The laity had rights in the matter of Church worship which had shamefully been set aside, and the alienation between clergy and laity was due in part, not wholly, to the high-handed action of which many of the clergy were guilty. He recognised fully that these clergy believed often that they were doing their duty, and were but claiming for the Church her lawful heritage. We cannot undo the past, but we may learn a lesson for the future. Changes in rites and ceremonies are not the province of an individual clergyman, nor of any one congregation, nor even of any one parish. They concern the whole Church, and only by proper Church authority should they be introduced.”

What strife would have been saved and what blessing vouchsafed in many a parish if the spirit of these words had been observed by new incumbents!

Among the suggestions made by the Bishop of Birmingham in his Church Congress sermon for rendering our Church more thoroughly the Church of the people was the following :

**The Church  
and Poor  
Relief.**

“The Church must set itself deliberately and of set purpose, as far as possible, to get rid of the administration of poor relief. We must deliberately set ourselves to dissociate the administration of relief from the ministry of the Word and Sacraments, and to associate it with the State, the municipality, and voluntary organizations of citizens on a purely secular basis.”

“The Church can do its utmost to relieve the poor in any way love can suggest, if it be itself poor and of the poor; but where the charity of the Church is understood to mean the patronage of the rich, it can do nothing without disaster. I am quite sure that our first and most necessary step towards regaining our rightful place in the regard of labour is to take the administration of relief-money almost altogether out of the hands of our clergy and Church-workers, and to let it be so administered, and by such hands, as that none may think they can either merit it or lose it by attendance or failure to attend at the services of the Church. It is not possible to exaggerate how alienating an effect upon exactly that type of independent labour on which our Lord most relied is exercised by our present system of administering alms. Here, then, is one of the first and most necessary steps of our redemption, and till this is taken all else will be in vain; I mean, till it has ceased to be a plausible taunt that a man or woman goes to church for what can be got.”



We believe these words touch the root of one of our greatest troubles, and that if the Bishop's advice were taken it would be in every way to the advantage of Christianity in our land. Let no one say that it would dry up the springs of Christian charity and beneficence and prevent the Church from doing what the Apostolic Church did in helping the poor saints. It would do nothing of the kind, for there would still be ample opportunities for that individual beneficence (as distinct from corporate and official charity) which is the very essence of Christian love and self-sacrifice. "Not what we give, but what we share, for the gift without the giver is bare." We should rejoice to see some old parish with its long list of charities handing over the administration to a body entirely unconnected with the Church. It would be a step fraught with profound and far-reaching results.

**The  
Evangelical  
Alliance.** Arrangements are being made for the Eleventh International Conference of Christians of all Countries to be held in London from July 3 to 8. A special Conference Committee has been formed consisting of representatives of all sections of the Christian Church. A letter of invitation has been issued and plans are now being matured which we doubt not will result in a very fruitful gathering. The Evangelical Alliance has been in existence for sixty years, and has done much for the cause of Christian freedom, unity, and progress. By means of the Universal Week of Prayer the Alliance has rendered untold service to the spread of the Gospel at home and abroad. The Conference will be held at the King's Hall, Holborn, and will include the consideration of themes bearing on the Word of God and the essential truths of Evangelical belief. There will also be important discussions on practical topics, the progress of Missionary work, and the relation of Evangelical truth to the Evangelization of the world. Copies of the letter of invitation can be obtained from the Secretary of the Alliance, 7, Adam Street, London, W.C., and we heartily commend this project to the prayerful sympathy and practical co-operation of our readers. Everything that tends to emphasize

the essential unity of all Evangelical Christians is to be welcomed as of the very first importance.

With this number we commence the second year of the present enlarged series of the CHURCHMAN. **About Ourselves.** We must first of all express our grateful thanks to those of our readers who have written words of encouragement during the past year. We are also indebted to the religious and secular press for their appreciative notices of the magazine month by month ; nor are we unmindful of the efforts made by many of our readers to increase the circulation, efforts which have not been without success. In the year that is coming it will be our earnest endeavour to maintain and set forward the position of the CHURCHMAN on the old and tried lines. We desire to include in its pages every topic that will be of interest to Churchmen. Our programme, which is enclosed in the present number, will show that we are arranging for the consideration of a wide variety of topics, and we desire to appeal to that great central body of Churchmen who honour and desire to maintain the integrity and trustworthiness of the Word of God, and at the same time to stand by the principles of our Reformed Church. We shall continue to value the co-operation of our readers in making the CHURCHMAN known, and further copies of the programme of the year can be obtained of the publisher, who will also send specimen copies of the magazine to any addresses that may be sent to him. We wish our readers a very blessed and fruitful New Year, and would earnestly appeal to them to continue in prayer that 1907 may be fraught with spiritual blessing to our beloved Church and land.

