

THE CHURCHMAN

July, 1909.

The Month.

THE commemoration of the four hundredth anniversary of the birth of John Calvin, from July 2 to 10, calls special attention to one of the most remarkable figures in Church history. As Dr. Orr, in the current number of *Evangelical Christendom*, rightly says, the popular idea of Calvin is widely astray from the reality. He is thought of as a narrow bigot, and the author of an intolerable system which puts a yoke upon the mind and conscience of everyone who accepts it; but in fact the truth is just the other way. Like everyone else, John Calvin had his limitations, but those who know most of him are well aware that he is one of the greatest men of the Christian centuries. Lord Morley is quoted by Dr. Orr to the effect that, compared with Calvin in power of giving formal shape to the world, "Hobbs and Cromwell are hardly more than names written in water." And Lord Morley quotes Mark Pattison's opinion that "Calvinism saved Europe." The article in our present number by the Dean of Canterbury bears a welcome witness to Calvin from a representative English Churchman, and those who are acquainted with the history of the sixteenth century know that while Calvin had very little personal influence upon our Prayer-Book and Articles, all our Reformers were what we should call Augustinians, and accepted a position which is equivalent to that of moderate Calvinism. In his fine book "Missions in State and Church"

Dr. Forsyth has the following suggestive thought about the power of Calvinism :

“It is often asked how Calvinism, with its limited area of atonement, should have been so wide and urgent with its gospel. It is because the width of the gospel really springs from its depth, and its pity from its greatness. Everything that enhances the native purity of man, that extenuates his sin, that diminishes his guilt, and sets over him but a kind father, really belittles his greatness.”

If only we could have to-day a little more of Calvin's firm grasp on essential truth in relation to Divine grace, it would affect with vivifying power all our Christian life.

In the Ramsden Sermon preached at Oxford on
Plain
Speaking. Whit Sunday by the Bishop of Gibraltar dealing with Church extension over the Colonies and Dependencies of our Empire, the following striking confession was made with reference to the English Church :

“Think of the little that we have done in India until recently as compared not with any ideal standard, but with what has been done by other bodies, who have nothing like the same responsibilities towards that land. Think of our thirty or forty workers amongst the millions of Burma, as compared with the two hundred and more sent there by foreign Roman Catholics, and the one hundred and seventy odd sent there by the American Baptists. Think of our tardy missionary work in South Africa as compared with the much larger work done by the Wesleyan and other Methodists, the Moravians, and many more. Think, again, of our failures to do work which we have definitely undertaken to do. Such a compact as that made by Bishop George Augustus Selwyn, by which the islands of the South Pacific were divided amongst various religious bodies for purposes of missionary work, may or may not have been wise in itself ; but what are we to say of “the appalling fact” (as it has been justly called by Dr. Neligan, the present Bishop of Auckland) that the Church of England is the only religious body of those concerned which has not yet done its appointed work ?”

In addition to this, the Bishop pointed out our failure to provide adequately for the spiritual needs of our own people in our Colonies and Dependencies. During the eighteenth century the Anglican Communion was the largest religious body in most of the Colonies, and yet what are the facts to-day ? Here are the Bishop's words :

“I only know of two Colonies—Tasmania and the little island of Barbados—in which we are an absolute majority of the population ; there are not many in which we are the largest religious body ; in many we are greatly

outnumbered. In Canada not only Roman Catholics—as is not unnatural, in view of the large French element—but Presbyterians and Methodists alike outnumber us. In South Africa we are largely outnumbered by the Dutch Reformed Church, and I believe by others too. In the West Indies, whilst we are the most numerous single body, our advantage in numbers is nothing like what it once was. In Australia and New Zealand we are still the largest denomination, but in neither case are we nearly half of the population, and here, again, the proportion of Church-people to others is not what it once was. Conditions are, of course, different in the United States of America, but there the Church of our Communion ranks as fifth in number only out of the whole country. If, therefore, there has been a marvellous increase in our Communion as a whole, it has hardly kept pace with that of the people of our own race. Relatively speaking, there has been a decline, and the fact does not leave us room for self-gratulation.”

While these facts are more than enough to fill the heart of every true Churchman with shame, yet we cannot but be grateful to Dr. Watson for bringing them before us, and especially for letting them be known to so representative a body as the University of Oxford. Nothing but good should result from so faithful a revelation, for it ought to lead to a searching examination into the causes of the failure, and to a firm determination to set our house in order.

The Bishop has naturally faced the problem for himself, and he enabled his audience to do the same. Are we to believe, he asked, that the Church is not fitted to meet conditions such as obtain in the foreign field and in our Colonies? Are we to believe those who say that the Church of England is suited to the well-to-do, and not to the poor man or to the Colonial? The answer is, We know by experience that our Church can meet the needs of the poor, and that whenever it has full opportunity in the Colonies there is no question as to its value and power. The Bishop suggests the explanation in the following words :

“ Is it, then, we who are lacking in adaptability? Is it we who are too mechanical, and who show our incapacity to adapt ourselves to new conditions, and to fit ourselves for new methods of work? Is it that we are sometimes so much tied by the traditions of the past that we are in danger of missing our share in the traditions of the future? Can it be because, as Archbishop Benson once said, the Church of England is so stodgy? In truth we of all Churches have least excuse for such lack of flexibility, for it is

our pride to stand for liberty and order. What is our liberty worth if it does not leave us freer than other men to face a new situation? Does not our order stand self-condemned—or, rather, do not we stand self-condemned—if we have only become slaves of routine instead of trained men, exercised and disciplined to be ready for every emergency?"

These are words of truth and wisdom, and it is significant that the Bishop went on to say that all progress in the Anglican Communion of recent years in our Colonies has been associated with the opportunity of freedom to work out their own local and national problems untrammelled by home precedents or other drawbacks and hindrances. "Since the Churches have had their fortunes in their own hands there has been growth, I believe, all along the line." For those who are able to read the true meaning of this statement, the message to the Church at home is as obvious as it can be.

It has been thought by a great many Church people that the Pageant of last month provided some very striking and salutary object-lessons in Church history for the general public. We are not quite sure that pageants, as a rule, are safe guides to history; and, so far as we have been able to judge, the English Church Pageant has been no exception. Thus, as the *Morning Post* rightly points out, the "Alleluia Victory" scene, to which much prominence was given, was pure legend, and was only intended to introduce the Celtic Church, of which we know scarcely anything at all. The references in the handbook to the Pageant to the chantries of the thirteenth century show the very decided bias in favour of medievalism which is known to characterize its author, and, to quote the *Morning Post* again, "it is nonsense to talk, as the handbook does," about the Prayer-Book of Queen Elizabeth as "a third Prayer-Book." Everyone knows that the Prayer-Book of 1559 was "the acceptance by England of Protestantism," by the acceptance of the second Prayer-Book of Edward VI. in all its essential doctrinal features. We cannot help agreeing with the same writer when he says that "it would have been better to have commemorated Hooker, Herbert,

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History.

Walton, Falkland, and Hales than the ill-starred Laud, who, if he died a martyr, died for the 'thorough' as well as for the Church. Whig historians have blackened him too much, but he is not a fortunate hero who harmed the cause for which he gave up his life." While we thoroughly agree with the *Record* that English Protestantism is not likely to be materially harmed by the one-sided pictures given in the Pageant, yet it is impossible to regret that those who were in authority did not endeavour to hold the balance truer to the history as a whole, and to its essential facts and salient features. As the *Daily Graphic* rightly remarked, there was too much medievalism and too little of the Church of the period after the Reformation. This latter period may doubtless be lacking in the picturesque, and may not lend itself so easily to pageantry, but everything that is best and purest in English religious life to-day has come to us through the Reformation.

Continuity. It was inevitable that the question of the continuity of the English Church should arise in connection with the Pageant, and we have been provided with some very curious readings of history. Thus a well-known Oxford scholar regards the Pageant as "an object-lesson in continuity," the continuity consisting in three points: "the following of the Apostles, the Holy Communion, the ordered devotions; and all these unbroken in our land depend upon the witness of the Bible and the commission of Christ Himself." It is curious that the fallacy underlying these words is not plain to the writer. What practical "following of the Apostles" was there in the unreformed medieval Church? What about the vast and essential differences in the doctrine and practice of "the Holy Communion" before and after the Reformation? And what even of the vital differences in "the ordered devotions" when we compare medieval service-books with our own Prayer-Book? We all recognize that as to organization there was no breach of continuity, but in regard to doctrine and ritual there was a very decided breach in several ways. As we remarked

in these columns some months ago, no one doubts the fact, stated in a paper at the Manchester Congress, that until the Reformation the Church of England was an integral part of the Roman Church. Nor can anyone question the truth stated in Maitland's "Canon Law in the Church of England," that "no tie of an ecclesiastical or spiritual kind bound the Bishop of Chichester to the Bishop of Carlisle, except that which bound them both to French and Spanish Bishops." It is altogether fallacious to regard protests against the Papacy in things temporal before the Reformation, as identical with denial of the Papacy in things spiritual. Such an idea warrants Maitland's well-known sarcasm, that the Church of England was Protestant before the Reformation, but Catholic afterwards. Insistence on absolute continuity is not surprising from those who think with Lord Halifax, because their effort is to minimize the Reformation and to repudiate the break made in the sixteenth century; but those who are concerned with historical facts, and not with visionary theories, will know that the breach in the sixteenth century was at least as great as the continuity that remained, and without full recognition of both facts, the continuity of organization and the break in doctrine and ritual, we shall never arrive at the truth on this subject.

During the last month, as the *Record* points out, we have had a very striking illustration of the differences that exist in the Church of England. Two Bishops have given expression to two very different views of what Anglicanism means. The Bishop of Carlisle in our columns last month described his view of the Church, and the Bishop of London, preaching at All Saints', Margaret Street, gave his ideal. The former advocated everything that was essentially Protestant; the latter advocated several things which are very definitely associated with medievalism, and which find no place whatever in our Prayer-Book and Articles to-day. Now, it is perfectly evident that one or other of these ideals must be inaccurate and wrong. To advocate both would mean that the

Church of England does not know its own mind, for the ideals are not complementary ; they are antagonistic. The Bishop of London's sanction and approval of incense, coming so soon after the pronouncement of Archbishops Benson and Maclagan in the opposite direction, is a very serious matter, and we are not surprised that the Dean of Canterbury should speak of it in the following terms :

“The Bishop of London, preaching the other day at All Saints', Margaret Street, took a course which it was impossible to regard without the deepest regret and disapproval in refusing openly to obey the command respecting the use of incense which has been laid down by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York at the Lambeth Conference. When the Bishop of London publicly and openly gave leave to the clergy and congregation of All Saints' to use incense, he was setting an example to the clergy and laity of direct disobedience to legal authority. He [the speaker] did not know how the Bishop could expect his clergy to obey him when he openly disobeyed the Archbishops.”

Such different and differing views make all our talk about continuity sound very hollow and unreal, and taken together with Lord Halifax's fresh repudiation of the Reformation the other day, and his insistence upon everything which he calls Catholic as rightly included in the English Church, it can be easily seen that our Church is speaking with no certain voice at the present time. Not only “the man in the street,” but even the man in the study, must be perplexed as he reads what the Bishop of London, the Bishop of Carlisle, and Lord Halifax respectively tell him of the English Church, its doctrine and ritual. The one redeeming feature of such a curious situation can only be that, as the Bishop of Carlisle said in his article last month, the Church of England is sure in time to get rid of these alien elements “either by rupture or decay”; for “it is impossible for a Church whose great charter is the Bible to tolerate for ever either teachings or usages of which the contriver is the priest.” The only trouble is that the process takes so long.

The
Education
Question.

We are very glad to see that the Archbishop of Canterbury at the Annual Meeting of the National Society maintained his conviction as to the un-

wisdom of the Church opposition which made compromise impossible last December.

He had seen no reason whatever to change his personal opinion as to what might have been done last year if they could have obtained anything like general co-operation on the part of Churchmen. He still believed that if they could have gone forward with general concurrence upon the sort of lines suggested, the result, after the metal had emerged from the crucible and had had time to cool down, would have been far better than most people who criticized the plan imagined. He believed that they could have secured in a wholesome and workable form, if not all they desired, yet the main results for which the Church had rightly striven.

We have already expressed our conviction, which we do not hesitate to repeat, that time will show how true was the line taken by the Archbishop, and our opinion is confirmed by the speech of Lord Hugh Cecil at the same meeting. In view of his earlier strong opposition to compromise the following words are certainly significant :

A great many people thought that their position was a negative one, and that they were quite satisfied that the settlement of 1902 should go on indefinitely. That certainly was not his view. He thought that they ought to look for a settlement of the Education Question. So long as the great body of Nonconformist opinion was dissatisfied there was an Education Question, and the matter could not be left as it stood. Apart even from the dissatisfaction of Nonconformists, Churchmen could never be happy while at least half of the children of the country were shut off from definite denominational education. They must earnestly seek a final solution of the difficulty which might result in educational peace and in an educational situation which had at any rate the acquiescence of moderate religious opinion, whether Church or Nonconformist.

We have said again and again—and we are glad to find that Lord Hugh Cecil recognizes this fact—that the matter will never be settled so long as the great body of Nonconformist opinion is dissatisfied. It was the fatal mistake of the Act of 1902 that it did not consult the interests of this great body, and until this false step is retraced there cannot possibly be a settlement. The final solution, as Lord Hugh Cecil rightly says, must have the acquiescence of the moderate religious opinion of both sides.

