

THE CHURCHMAN

August, 1909.

The Month.

The THE Canterbury Lower House of Convocation
Athanasian came to the following conclusion during its session
Creed. last month :

“ That the *Quicumque Vult* should be retained in the Prayer-Book without the existing rubric, and that provision be made for the liturgical use of a form of the *Quicumque Vult* without the warning clauses, and that it be referred to the Committee to say how this may best be done.”

We are profoundly thankful for this decision, and we sincerely hope that the York Convocation will adopt the same attitude. There is no doubt that a large number of earnest Churchmen feel the unsuitability of this document for popular use as a Creed. Perhaps the most significant proof of this contention is the way in which leading men, who formerly took a different view, have come round to it. In particular, the Archbishop of Armagh and the late Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, Dr. Salmon, confessed to an entire change of view on the subject ; while only last month the Bishop of Oxford, in his Charge, gave his own personal reasons for altering his opinion, and for coming to the conclusion that the present use of the Athanasian Creed should be altered. With the *Guardian*, we should have much preferred the more logical way of simply omitting the existing Rubric, following in this respect the Irish solution, which in our judgment is in every way the best. But, with our characteristic Anglican spirit of compromise, the proposal to discover some means of using the Creed liturgically,

without the minatory clauses, will doubtless meet the needs of those who strongly desire to retain the Creed as a part of our liturgy. We note with especial pleasure that Canon Johnston, of Cuddesdon, frankly allowed that times had changed since the years of struggle in the seventies, when Pusey and Liddon vehemently fought against any sort of alteration. He does not regard those as the real followers of Pusey and Liddon who still fight against any alteration, unless they are also convinced that the reason for which it was fought for then is the reason for which it should be defended now. The debate in Convocation afforded ample proof of Canon Johnston's conviction that "hundreds of educated men and a great number of clergy find it the most painful thing they have to do to use on the appointed days words which, in their *primâ facie* meaning, and in the minds of many who hear them, go beyond what the Church has authority for saying." We heartily endorse these words of the *Guardian*, and trust

"that there will now be an end to the regrettable suggestions so often made—oftener without than within Convocation—that those who desire that this formula should cease to be said publicly are 'weak in the faith.' That, or something very much like it, is the phrase that has been used. That is not the spirit in which so grave a subject as this ought to be discussed, and to those who are tempted to use such expressions we would commend a careful reading of the speech in which the Bishop of Southampton traced the steps by which he had come to desire that the public recitation of this Creed should cease. Unquestionably its present liturgical use places a serious stumbling-block in the way of great numbers of thoughtful and intelligent men, both clergy and laity."

We believe that a very large, influential, loyal, and truly representative body of Churchmen would thankfully welcome the passing into law of such a resolution as the one now proposed by the Canterbury Convocation.

Candidates
for
Ordination.

The decisions of the Upper House of the Canterbury Convocation on this subject are as welcome as they are important. After January, 1917, candidates for Holy Orders are to be required to possess a Degree at some recognized University, and also to have

had at least one year's training at a theological college. This decision is not very heroic, it is true, for it means waiting eight years for that which is absolutely necessary at once. We should have thought that a period of four, or at most five, years would have satisfied all the conditions of the case. But it is something to have obtained this decision, which, as the question rests with the Bishops, is not likely to be seriously modified. It is astounding that the present state of affairs has been allowed to exist as long as it has, for the standard of attainment in the ministry of our Church is far below that of the Presbyterian and Nonconformist Churches of our country and America. While Presbyterians and Congregationalists require their men to stay three years at a theological college after taking their Degrees, our Church has been content with one year, and in very many cases has not been able to insist upon even this. That men should be allowed to sit for the Bishop's examination on obtaining their Degree, together with certain Divinity certificates, is nothing short of (in the technical sense) "scandalous," especially when it is remembered that all this often means little or no direct preparation for the sacred ministry. But it is some thing to have made a start, and the bare announcement of what is to take place eight years hence will, we hope, lead at once to the reorganization and thorough preparation which will be involved in the changes.

**Evangelicals
and
Education.** In the *Record* for July 9 there was a striking paper on "The Supply and Training of Candidates for Holy Orders," by the Rev. J. E. Watts-Ditchfield, in which it was pointed out that out of thirty-two theological colleges, besides Bishops' hostels, Evangelical Churchmen have only three on which they can depend as their own. Great surprise has been expressed in several quarters at these facts, which, however, have the sad virtue of being true. Evangelicals, with characteristic lack of foresight and statesmanship, have allowed the work of Secondary Education and the provision of theological colleges to go out of their hands into those of other and often

opposite camps. Those who support Mirfield and Kelham are deserving of every possible credit for the persistent work and liberal giving which have made these institutions what they now are. All mere denunciation of them by Evangelicals will go for little or nothing unless it is at once combined with definite efforts to supply counteracting influences. If in the course of fifteen years we find the Church of England flooded with men of the Mirfield and Kelham type, it will be due in large measure to the apathy of Evangelicals. There are, as Mr. Watts-Ditchfield points out, Evangelical millionaires and other rich men who by large gifts could do much to set matters right; but as long as they do not seem to heed the difference between giving *out of* and *according to* their abundance, the cause of Evangelical truth will suffer, and, we are compelled to add, so far as they are concerned, will deserve to suffer. All the facts available go to show that there is no scarcity of men. If the funds were forthcoming, the men would soon be ready for training. There is scarcely any more important and urgent work for Evangelical men of wealth to-day than to make it possible to strengthen and extend the work of the existing Evangelical colleges, and to provide several more in connection with our various modern Universities. What Evangelicals need is statesmanship and self-sacrifice, and if these are not forthcoming, no one will be surprised to find Evangelical Churchmanship becoming still weaker than it is to-day.

Marriage with
a Deceased
Wife's Sister.

The Representative Church Council passed a very definite resolution at its recent session, protesting against the use of the Prayer-Book Service in connection with marriages which are within the prohibited degrees of affinity. The resolution stated that such marriages, though allowed by the law of the land, are wrong, as being contrary to the moral rule of the Church, and the principles implied in Scripture as interpreted by it. Although the resolution was passed by an overwhelming majority of 10 to 1, it is not at all likely to settle the question, for it raises the **fundamental issue whether marriage with a deceased wife's sister is**

scriptural. It is evident from the debate that considerable hesitation was felt on this point, and several speakers, while opposed to such marriages, shrank from calling them unscriptural. Yet if, in the Bishop of Birmingham's words, they are contrary to the principles implied in Scripture, this is surely the same thing as calling them unscriptural. These marriages are either wrong in the sight of God, or they are not wrong; and if they are wrong they are always wrong, while if they are ever allowable they are always allowable. Bishop Thornton was perfectly right in considering that the resolution was tantamount to branding the minority as those who were in favour of doing something which is contrary to God's will, a position absolutely incapable of proof. The Bishop of Southwark struck the right note in objecting to the statement about Holy Scripture on grounds of reverence and consideration for others. We fully recognize the confusion which exists, and must exist, in having these marriages prohibited in the Table of Kindred and Affinity, and yet allowed by the State with which our Church is so closely connected. But the root of the matter is the question of scriptural sanction, and not until this is resolutely faced can a settlement ever be made. In the debates and correspondence which immediately preceded the passing of the Act two years ago, the argument from Scripture was almost entirely unnoticed. Whatever may be urged on grounds of expediency, we are convinced that the argument from Scripture does not exist. These marriages are legal in other branches of the Anglican Communion, and from time to time they have been allowed without difficulty in the Church of Rome. To brand so many fellow-Christians as either allowing or doing that which is unscriptural is an impossible position, and one that cannot be maintained with truth and consistency.

Old Testament Criticism. It is always valuable to obtain the opinion of able scholars who can view a question of importance from a standpoint outside that of specialism. For this reason we are particularly interested in a recent speech made by Dr. James, Head Master of Rugby. After expressing

very truly and worthily his appreciation of the debt we owe to Biblical criticism in enabling us to understand the Bible better, Dr. James added these significant words :

“ At the same time, I am bound to say that my own study of it has convinced me that a great deal of this criticism is absolutely indefensible—that the temptation to show ingenuity has been too much for a great many of those who pose as critics of the Bible text. I do not believe that the claims made nowadays to cut up the various books into four or five different parts, and to allocate one particular passage to one writer and another passage to another, one writer being of one date or class, and another of another—I do not believe that these claims (at any rate, to the extent in which they are put forward) can be substantiated or can be paralleled in the case of any other ancient literature with which I am acquainted. I do not think that conclusions ought to be regarded as certain in the case of the Bible where they would not be so regarded in the case of other books; and I believe we shall see, probably before many years, a very considerable modification in such critical claims.”

This anticipation of considerable modification is already being realized. Dr. Eerdmans of Leiden, writing in the *July Expositor*, expresses his opinion as follows :

“ Personally, I am convinced that critics are on the wrong track, and that we shall never be able to explain the composite character of the Hexateuch, if we do not do away with the Jahvistic, Elohist, and Priestly writers, which are indicated by J²⁻³, E²⁻³, P²⁻³,” etc.

This is a bold thing for one who is himself a very definite Higher Critic to say, and it thoroughly justifies those who, in spite of not a little obloquy and scorn for being narrow and obscurantist, have felt compelled from conviction to refuse assent to the critical dissection of the Pentateuch. It is abundantly evident that, as Professor George Adam Smith said more than two years ago, questions which were supposed to be quite settled are found to be still matters of debate and difference of opinion.

Evolution
and the Old
Testament.

Dr. Eerdmans, in the article above referred to, goes on to say that—

“ Evidently the argument of the critical analysis is not merely analytical. A good deal of belief in ‘ Evolution ’ is involved in it.”

This is undoubtedly true ; and as Dr. Orr has urged, and has been blamed for urging, the fundamental question is not

literary, but religious. Dr. Eerdmans also contributes an article to the current *Hibbert Journal*, entitled "A New Development in Old Testament Criticism," in which he confesses that while he once thought that the main lines of Old Testament Criticism might be traced with practical certainty, he no longer holds that opinion. He points out that the dominating school of criticism arose prior to many archæological discoveries, and did not understand so clearly as we now do the essential differences between the Oriental and the Western conceptions of life. Then he adds that

"The Pentateuchal criticism was in every respect a product of Western thought, Western logic, and Western combinations, which too often forgot that the history of religions and the living Orient were contradictory to the principles of the critical theories."

We observe that the *Guardian*, referring to this article, says that it "will gladden the hearts of the few traditionalists left among us if they do not read it," because Dr. Eerdmans holds other views which are by no means orthodox and traditional. But this contention is hardly convincing. We do not need to hold everything that Dr. Eerdmans accepts to be able to call him as a witness to the need of a new development in Old Testament Criticism. We are quite ready to argue with him on points at issue. It is enough to endorse his words that "present Old Testament Criticism has to reform itself." We do not wonder that the dominant school thinks lightly of all such opinions, for not only would it mean the destruction of a great deal which has become second nature to those who have adopted it, but it would render obsolete a large number of modern books, including a great part of some recent Bible dictionaries. But that the entire question is being reopened is as certain as anything can be, and Dr. Eerdmans' articles are a striking and significant testimony in this direction.

Confirmation
and
Communion. A Congregationalist lady who had married a Churchman, and had been to Communion at her parish church for twelve years, recently found herself prevented from continuing through the action of a new Vicar.

The pain of the refusal was intensified by some sad circumstances connected with the death of one of her children, with whom she had been in the habit of regularly attending church. On the lady writing her experiences to the *Spectator*, the editor appended a characteristic comment deploring such narrowness as contrary to the true spirit of the Church of England. This gave rise to an interesting correspondence, in which both sides were well represented. It seems pretty obvious that, when considered historically, the Rubric requiring Confirmation before Communion has an inclusive reference to those of our own communion, and was drawn up to prevent our young people coming to the Lord's Supper insufficiently prepared. It does not seem possible to interpret it fairly of Nonconformity, for when it was drawn up Nonconformity did not exist. The *Spectator* pertinently asked how it is that members of the Royal Family who come into it by marriage from other and non-episcopal communions are not required to be confirmed. The *Guardian* does not seem to us to face this question satisfactorily by saying that we do not really know whether or not Confirmation is required, but that we do know that everything which has been done in their case "has the sanction of our lawful Church authorities." Surely this does not meet the issue, for if the Rubric is so stringent as certain sections of Churchmen make out, then "our lawful Church authorities," whoever they are, cannot possibly set it aside. A correspondent in the *Spectator* asked the important question, What is meant by Confirmation? Wherein lies its essence? In the Greek Church, as is well known, the priest can confirm; in the Lutheran Church the ordinary parochial clergyman; while in the Roman and Anglican Churches Bishops alone confirm. What, then, is the precise virtue or grace of Confirmation? and how, through whom, does it come? The fact is that those who insist on the narrow view of Episcopal Confirmation hold a theory of the identity of our Confirmation with the action of the Apostles in Acts viii., which neither Scripture, nor history, nor experience warrants. Such a view is only tenable if we believe that our Bishops are identical in office,

authority, and prerogative with the Apostles ; and even this would not solve the problem of Greek Confirmation by a priest. Bishop Creighton's large-hearted advice to Continental chaplains, as recorded in his *Life*, expresses the true spirit, not merely of Anglicanism, but of Christianity, for those who desire to come to the Lord's Supper. It is not the Church of England Table ; it is the Table of the Lord.

The Bishop of Connecticut has just given an interesting and significant account of an incident in the Lambeth Conference. It will be remembered that in the resolution and report on reunion the Presbyterian Churches were specially mentioned. The Bishop desired to have a similar reference to other non-Episcopal Churches, and this is what he did :

A Footnote
to the
Lambeth
Conference.

“When its report, however, was brought into the Conference, I moved that there be inserted, after the sentence above quoted, an asterisk with the following footnote : ‘A like assurance is expressed to such members of other non-Episcopal Churches as, while loyally holding the faith, may also be looking to the historic Episcopate as the bond of visible unity.’ It had been decided that the reports of committees should, if adopted, be received without any change. My hope was that an exception might be made in regard to this proposed footnote. But I was not surprised when the Archbishop, with entire courtesy, declined to entertain my motion. I had done what I could.”

He has recently followed this up by holding a meeting of leading American Congregationalists to discuss the problems connected with Christian Reunion. All this is most interesting and encouraging, and we believe that it will contribute to that end for which we all pray, “That they all may be one.”

NOTE.—The article in this number on “Foreign Missions and Christianity” is by the Secretary of the American Presbyterian Board of Missions, and one of the best known and most honoured of workers among students. His influence by speech and pen in America is scarcely second to that of Mr. Mott. We are particularly glad to introduce him to our readers. Our September number will contain an article on “Home Reunion,” by the Rev. Professor Stalker, D.D., of Aberdeen.