

THE CHURCHMAN

February, 1910.

The Month.

Islington
Clerical
Meeting.

A RECORD attendance of 1,500 at Islington last month may perhaps be regarded as an answer to some recent criticisms of Evangelical Churchmanship as being in a moribund condition. Certainly there was no sign of this either in the speakers or in the audience. From the fine keynote struck by the Bishop of Durham in the paper reproduced in our present issue, right through the day to the last paper, the beautiful yet searching utterance of Prebendary Burroughs on the Spiritual Life, the papers were almost uniformly able, strong and statesmanlike. It is difficult to particularize amidst so much that was good, but it is impossible to overlook the exceptional papers of Prebendary Eardley-Wilmot, the Dean of Canterbury, Mr. Lisle Carr, and Canon Denton Thompson, in addition to the two already named. Each in its way was noteworthy. We hope many of our readers have already possessed themselves of the pamphlet issued by the *Record*, containing a verbatim report of the addresses. They will well repay careful attention.

Under this title of Divorcons "An Evangelical Layman" has an article in the current number of the *Hibbert Journal* on the present condition of Evangelical Churchmen. There must surely be something worth notice in Evangelical Churchmanship to obtain all the attention that it has had during the last few weeks. "Evangelical Layman" affirms that two widely different religions are at present in

action within the limits of the Establishment ; that believers in the one are being unfairly treated by believers in the other, and that the position is unbearable. He also believes that Evangelicals have been defeated, that their efforts to uphold the Reformed Catholic religion have failed, that the crisis in the Church is over, that there does not seem to be anything more to be done in the interests of peace, since concessions to ritualistic clergy have only the effect of furnishing them with a basis for extorting further concessions. What, then, does "Evangelical Layman" advise? He urges that Evangelicals should on their part at once advocate Disestablishment, and appeal to Nonconformists on their part to surrender their demand for Disendowment. He believes that thus we should be enabled at once to part company with the Romanizers in a body, and also to continue as a Reformed Church of England. Now we find ourselves in the position of accepting very largely the premises of "Evangelical Laymen" while utterly rejecting his conclusions. It is perfectly true, and many have seen it for a long while, that "it is impossible to work the religion of Newcastle and the religion of Birmingham satisfactorily from the same centre." No doubt we are coming as fast as we can to the parting of the ways. But it would be folly and madness for Evangelicals to do anything that would leave the extreme party in possession of the majority of our parish churches. Besides, it is perfectly futile to think that Nonconformists will ever give up their demand for Disendowment. The two questions of Disestablishment and Disendowment were inseparable in Ireland, and they are inseparable to-day, and whenever the problem comes up these two elements will be taken together. Evangelicals should remain where they are, but meanwhile work and fight in every legitimate way for the maintenance of law and order, and for obedience to the plainly expressed teaching and law of the Church. They should insist upon obtaining a Reformed Convocation and a truly representative House of Laymen, and demand that the voice of the Church should be properly and adequately expressed. Then if they find it

impossible to obtain these things, it will be time enough to think of "Evangelical Layman's" proposals. What is needed above everything is a definite policy and a strong leadership. If Evangelicals could obtain these their future and the future of the Church of England would not be uncertain.

**Church
and State.** In view of the importance of this subject, especially in relation to Wales, we propose to give our readers some material on which to form a judgment by means of a brief symposium of articles. It is essential for Churchmen to face the facts, to look at the subject all round, and to be fully persuaded in their own mind as to what is best for the Church. Establishment must now be defended on the basis of fundamental principles, for arguments based merely on expediency or prestige will no longer stand the test of acceptance. Next month, therefore, we propose to insert the Dean of Canterbury's strong and able paper which he read at Islington, and this will be followed by other papers, taking various sides, and calling attention to important considerations. It is imperative that Churchmen should be informed on this subject, for whichever political party is in power, it is certain to be in the forefront during the next few years. The question of the Deceased Wife's Sister Act has given an impetus to the discussion of the relations between Church and State which will not subside for some time, and the Education question is in reality another aspect of the same topic. It is probably true to say that round the question of Church and State will turn some of the most vital issues for the Church in the immediate future.

Under the title of "The Collapse of Liberal
**"Liberal
Christianity."** Christianity," Dr. Anderson, a well-known Congregational minister, writes a striking article in the *Hibbert Journal*. He says that for some decades now liberal theology (by which he means rationalistic theology) has been endeavouring to discover the historical Jesus by removing from the picture in the New Testament everything that can be

called supernatural. But "the conviction is slowly being forced upon all candid inquirers that very little can be known of Him," and rationalistic theology is naturally unwilling to admit this conclusion because it takes away the basis on which it rests. With refreshing frankness Dr. Anderson admits the force of Professor Denney's recent great work, "Jesus and the Gospel," and its insistence on the fact that the New Testament knows nothing of any other Jesus than that of the Christian Church. Dr. Anderson believes that there is no logical escape from this conclusion if we limit our study to the New Testament.

"Nowhere in the New Testament does the Jesus of liberal theology show Himself. What always appears is a Christ believed in and worshipped by a community or Church. . . . Miracle and supernatural dogma are an organic part of the New Testament presentation. Go as far back as you like in your investigation, what you have at last is a supernatural Christ. Even the Sermon on the Mount, on which liberal theology has planted itself as on a rock, is full of Christological elements. Nowhere do we get back to a historic Jesus."

So Dr. Anderson thinks liberal theology—that is, modern rationalism—"has run itself into an intellectual *cul-de-sac*. It needs a historical Jesus as the Founder of Christianity, as it conceives it, and cannot find one." Now, although the writer refuses to face the orthodox alternative, and endeavours to discover another hypothesis still more impossible and rationalistic, his article is a significant confession of the utter powerlessness of modern criticism to provide a historical Jesus who shall be only a good man, and not "God manifest in the flesh." Once again, therefore, we rejoice in the consciousness that the citadel of the faith is the Person of Christ. The more attention that rationalism gives to Jesus Christ the better for the truth concerning Him. In whatever way men proceed, and to whatever conclusions they come, sooner or later it will inevitably be seen that Christianity is Christ.

Historical
Facts. About three months ago Professor Gwatkin published his great work on "Early Church History" (Macmillan, 2 vols., 17s. net), which we hope to notice at length next month. The work was reviewed in the *Times* of December 30. Occasion was taken to note "the pained surprise" with which Professor

Gwatkin's work has been received by the High Church school. Here are the reviewer's words :

"Whether the High Church construction of the first century is right or not, it remains a fact of to-day that the historians are preponderantly on the other side. We may discount the mass of German Protestant learning in this matter as suffering from the defect which its breach with Catholic Christianity has entailed; we may discount the learning of English Nonconformists as tainted possibly with sectarian prejudice; but in the Anglican Church itself, if we were asked what names stood first for erudition in the field of Christian origins, it can hardly be but we should think before others (not to name any living scholars) of Hatch, of Lightfoot, and of Hort. . . . It might seem well to acknowledge frankly that the results of the historical method are stated by its most eminent exponents, within and without the English Church, to be, taken by themselves, not favourable to the High Church theory. The pained surprise with which Professor Gwatkin's book has been received in certain quarters is only consistent with a refusal to see the personalities and facts of to-day as, whether fortunately or unfortunately, they are; and it can hardly inspire confidence in anyone's ability to read the first century aright if we find him taking an obstinately conventional view of the twentieth."

There is much more to the same effect in this review, to which we may refer another time. But for the moment we wish to emphasize the significant but far-reaching fact that not only is the best scholarship in this and other countries against the High-Church contention about the origin of the Church and ministry, but, what is even more important, not a single discovery in connection with the early Church during the last half century has gone to support a single contention of the High Church school. On the contrary, such "finds" as the *Didachè* tend in quite the opposite direction. Bishop Lightfoot once said that the reading of Church history was a cordial for drooping courage. On this subject of the Church and its ministry it certainly is a thorough cordial for those who have been led to accept the position adopted by such scholars as Lightfoot, Hort and Gwatkin. It is another illustration of the familiar word that "Facts are stubborn things!"

In the recent appeal connected with the
 A *Far-reaching* deceased wife's sister case of *Bannister v. Thomp-*
Principle. son, Lord Justice Fletcher-Moulton gave expres-
 sion to an opinion on the nature of a proviso which has a direct
 bearing on one important matter of controversy in regard to the

Ornaments Rubric. It will be remembered that the third section of the Act of Uniformity of 1559 directly enacted the Ornaments Rubric of 1552, but in a subsequent proviso the Act modified this section by limiting the provisional retention of the ornaments of 1549 until further order was taken. The contention of the extreme party in regard to the vestments is largely based on this proviso, but Lord Justice Moulton called attention to the relation of a proviso to the principal matter with which it is connected, and the fallacy of interpreting a proviso as though it were something independent. Such a view

“sins against the fundamental rule of construction that a proviso must be considered with relation to the principal matter to which it stands as a proviso. It treats it as if it were an independent enacting clause instead of being dependent on the main enactment. The Courts frequently pointed out this fallacy, and have refused to be led astray by arguments such as those which have been addressed to us, which depend solely on taking words absolutely in their strict literal sense, disregarding the fundamental consideration that they appear in a proviso.”

It is therefore impossible for any proviso to be treated as if it were a separate and independent clause instead of being dependent upon the main enactment. We see at once how exactly this applies to the Act of Uniformity of 1559. The proviso which temporarily retained the ornaments of 1549 until other order should be taken, could not possibly repeal the third section or even supplant it. This has been all along the contention so ably insisted upon by Mr. Tomlinson, and the new confirmation of the position by Lord Justice Moulton will be exceedingly useful in connection with the Ornaments Rubric when the proposed legislation of the Mass vestments comes up for consideration. Fact and law are overwhelmingly on the side of those who hold that the use of the vestments is illegal.

The Layman The New York *Churchman* recently gave ex-
in the Church. pression to a point of vital importance :

“According to the conception of primitive times, it was the whole Body of Christ which was under the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The Christian organism was not a ministerial one. There was one organic community of which the ministers were a part. The message they carried to the world was the message inherent in the whole order of Christians. The

development of a professional ecclesiasticalism means that the collective energy of Christ's fellowship is paralyzed. The spontaneous vigour of the Church is concentrated and forced into a single narrow channel where the influence of the Gospel becomes artificial and unfruitful."

This is the only view of the Church that will stand the test of examination, whether in the light of the New Testament or in view of the genius of Christianity and of our liberty in Christ. We must insist again and again on the supreme fact and importance of the whole Body of Christ compared with any officials, however important. When this is done, then, and only then, will the life and work of the Church be what God intended it to be.

The We offer our hearty congratulations to the "Guardian." *Guardian* on the reduction of its price to one penny. By this action it will undoubtedly appeal to a much wider constituency than heretofore, while doubtless retaining all those who have been its supporters. As the representative organ of High Churchmanship, we read it with interest and frequent profit week by week, even though we often find ourselves disagreeing with its politics and its views of Church affairs. Although we are unable to accept its valuation of itself in a recent advertisement as "the official organ of the Church," we gladly recognize its great ability and influence in Church matters all through these years. It has long been one of the ablest of our religious newspapers, and in particular its reviews and correspondence columns have been of the greatest value to all thoughtful students. Nor must we fail to acknowledge with gratitude its regular notice of the CHURCHMAN and its frequent appreciation of our articles. It is in this way of courteous frankness that Churchmen of all schools will best be enabled to understand one another's position, and either to arrive at agreement on essential points or else "agree to differ."

