

THE CHURCHMAN

January, 1911.

The Month.

Greeting. OUR first words in the first issue of the New Year are a message of hearty greeting to the many friends and supporters of the CHURCHMAN. We hope that to them, both individually and collectively, the year 1911 will bring peace and happiness. We hope that they will find increasing pleasure and profit in the magazine they have so loyally upheld; and we hope that their numbers will be greatly augmented as the year goes on. We have given on a separate sheet our programme for the coming year, and we have indicated there the principles on which the magazine will be conducted. About the distinction and ability of the writers who have promised to help us, we need say nothing here. Our profession of principle will commend itself, we venture to think, to all sober and loyal Churchmen. The year 1911 promises to be a momentous one for us all, both as Churchmen and as citizens. We may well take on our lips the prayer of one who was pre-eminent as a citizen and a patriot: "Remember us, O our God, for good."

We have received the programme for the forthcoming Islington clerical meeting. We shall hope to touch on some of the subjects to be discussed next month, but we are glad now to express our satisfaction that the programme includes questions concerning which there will be difference of opinion amongst us on matters of detail. Evangelicalism is not a school of shibboleths. We are united on great fundamental principles; but the right of private judgment is duly honoured. It is good, therefore, that such questions as

Biblical criticism and reunion should be frankly and fully discussed amongst us; that this will be done at Islington in the spirit of frankness and of charity we are confident. The Evangelical school must be loyal to principle, but it must set no narrow bounds to its comprehensiveness. Things that do not matter must not be allowed to divide.

Prayer-Book Revision, We expressed last month our profound satisfaction that the debate in the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury ended in a decisive victory for Prayer-Book reform. We are not unaware that difficulties lie ahead, but we face them in a spirit of optimism. As the question will probably be before us for some time to come, our present issue may be a seasonable opportunity for giving an account, in brief and general terms, of our point of view. In connection with this, we may refer to the admirable series of pamphlets on Prayer-Book Revision, edited by Canon Beeching, and written by scholars of distinguished eminence and ability. These pamphlets have already been reviewed in our columns, but in view, alike of their authorship and their contents, they may well claim further notice. As we indicate the points on which we agree with Canon Beeching's series, and the points on which we differ, our own attitude on the questions under discussion will clearly emerge.

Points of Agreement. We hasten, then, to say that with a very large part of what is said in these pamphlets we are in entire agreement. If the Lectionary be revised, we should support, in general, the principles laid down by Professor Emery Barnes. We agree heartily with the Bishop of Winchester's careful and guarded proposals for the revision of the Prayer-Book Psalter. We needed no conversion to become upholders of the able and learned plea, by the Dean of Christ Church, for modification in the present usage of the Athanasian Creed. What, then, remains? Simply the vexed question of the Ornaments Rubric. It seems, at first glance, a pity, where there is so much agreement, to lay stress on the solitary point

of difference. It is, however, because we feel this solitary point to be so fundamental that we are compelled to emphasize it, and to justify, if possible, our attitude. It may serve to clear the ground if, in the case of this particular point also, we speak of agreement before we define the points of difference.

Further Agreement. In the first place, we must express our sincere appreciation, not only of the judicial fairness with which the case for permissive use of the Vestments is here stated, but of the large-hearted toleration and the genuine Christian charity which pervades the whole statement. The tone and temper of the whole is entirely admirable. Further, we are convinced that Canon Beeching and those who think with him are as wishful as we are to be loyal to the Reformation. Speaking of the two parties in the Church, he says :

“In both cases there must be a limit to comprehensiveness, and the limit is set by loyalty. In the Church of England the limit set to comprehensiveness must be the definition of the Church as both Catholic and Reformed, a limit expressed in such Articles of Religion as the Sixth which lays it down that the rule of faith is to be found in Holy Scripture.”

He holds that within the limits of proper comprehensiveness, so defined, a permissive use of the Eucharistic Vestments may find a place.

On what grounds does Canon Beeching hold that this permissive use is desirable within a Church that is not only Catholic, but Reformed? He holds, in the first place, that our best Liturgical scholars have shown that the Vestments are not in themselves significant of doctrine. He points to the fact that they were permitted in the Prayer-Books of 1549 and 1559—admitting, of course, that in each case they were subsequently disallowed. He reminds us that other Reformed Churches, such as those of Scandinavia, do still continue to use these Vestments. He recognizes, indeed, the decision of the Privy Council for the present as binding, and to be so regarded by law-abiding citizens. In fact, he has very grave words to say about the present condition of lawlessness. But he still prays that in the interests of charity, of the peace of the Church, of

liberal thought, of toleration, the permissive use of these Vestments may be sanctioned.

The Point of Difference. On what grounds do we justify our inability to support a plea urged with such kindness and moderation? It is not, let us hasten to say, on the ground of the Privy Council judgment. We believe that judgment to be a right one, and we agree heartily with Canon Beeching's view that the decisions of this Court, as long as the Court remains, "are legal and binding, and must be so regarded by law-abiding citizens." But we do not rest our case upon this. We believe that to sanction the use of the Eucharistic Vestments will be a step, and a long step, towards destroying that Reformed character of our Church which Canon Beeching wishes to maintain. We must respectfully differ from him on the point of the doctrinal significance of the Vestments. In spite of the finding of the five Bishops, we believe that the use of Vestments is desired, not on sentimental grounds of historic continuity, but because they are deemed by those who use them to express a particular view of the Holy Communion, and that view is the pre-Reformation one. We believe there is a minority of men in the Church of England—an able and powerful minority—whose ideal is reunion with Rome. They are persistent, far-seeing men, with a definite goal in view. To sanction authoritatively the use of Vestments which are those used by the Roman Church, to familiarize the rising generation with these as an authorized part of the worship of our Church, will be to take a longer step than has ever yet been taken towards destroying entirely the most excellent results of the Reformation.

The Reason. We are at one with Canon Beeching in wishing to maintain the Reformed character of our Church. It is on the question of means that we differ. A step which he thinks would be innocuous we feel would be fraught with disaster. Lest he should think we are unduly alarmist, may we ask him to refer to the *Church Times* for November 4? In replying to a

comment of the CHURCHMAN, the following words were used : " Our contemporary evidently does not realize that the Church of England is not at variance with Rome on the Sacrament of the Altar, but on the papal claims and all that they involve." This is perfectly frank, and reveals the whole situation. The Vestments are wanted by men who hold that "*the Church of England is not at variance with Rome on the Sacrament of the Altar,*" and who find in the use of them a most potent instrument for promulgating that view. Believing this to be the case, we cannot support the plea for a permissive use. In saying so, we are neither scheming for a party triumph, nor relying with Erastian confidence on a Privy Council judgment. We are taking what seems to us the only course of action that is consistent with the maintenance of our Reformation heritage.

We make no apology for returning to this much-discussed subject. The evidence of Dr. Sanday and Dr. Inge exactly takes the line for which we contended last month. The highest scholarship of the land has practically told us that St. Matthew must not be sacrificed. That sacrifice is essential to the campaign which would abolish the existing divorce law. Practical men have regarded that campaign as futile. Now scholarship has robbed it of its intellectual basis. According to the summary of his evidence Professor Denney made a statement which seems to lie at the back of the exception recorded in St. Matthew ; he spoke of cases in which the Divine ideal had evidently been frustrated. Obviously that is so in the cases in which, according to St. Matthew, our Lord did not regard marriage as indissoluble. Does it not seem likely that the frustration of the Divine ideal, in such cases, led our Lord, at least on one occasion, to exempt them from the general law which we are all anxious to maintain ?

Edinburgh. The Reports of the Commissions of the World's Missionary Conference have found their way on to the book-shelves of many of us. They form a small library of nine most important volumes, volumes which it is

impossible to submit to ordinary review. They will provide us for years with subjects for study, and food for thought. They will influence all the missionary effort of the future. After Edinburgh, the world of missionary enterprise can never be the same again. The Reports must not be unread and unstudied as so many reports are. We of the CHURCHMAN desire to help in this matter, and those pages which, under the careful and effective guidance of the Rev. A. J. Santer, have directed our attention to missionary topics will take a somewhat new form from this month onwards. They will be written by an Edinburgh delegate of exceptionally wide experience, and they will aim at making permanent the Edinburgh spirit, the Edinburgh ideals, and the Edinburgh lessons. We sincerely hope that this new feature of the magazine will quicken the missionary interest and arouse the missionary activities of us all.

The Question
of Greek
at Oxford.

On November 22 of last year the Statute abolishing Greek as a compulsory subject in Responsions was promulgated in Convocation. When a vote was taken on the preamble to the Statute, the proposition was defeated by 188 votes to 152. We are the more delighted at this result as we had hardly ventured to hope for so large a majority. The size of the hostile majority was due to the sweeping nature of the proposition, which would have made Greek optional for all. There are many who would be prepared to grant a measure of relief to distressful scientists and mathematicians, but who still uphold Greek as a necessary element in all courses that are concerned with languages, literature, and history. These "moderate" men were compelled to join forces with the out-and-out supporters of Greek, if the language was to be saved at all. The speeches of Professor Murray and Professor Mackail made it clear that they had no wish to take up an attitude of blank negation. Provided that Greek be regarded as essential for all who were going on to study in any faculty of humane letters, they are quite willing to consider proposals for the exemption of other students.

A Suggested
Compromise.

Professor Sonnenschein, of Birmingham—whose devotion to the cause of classical learning none would question—has pointed out in a letter to the *Times* that the case can be largely met by differentiating the Matriculation Examination—by demanding a knowledge of Greek from all who intend to read the older school of “*Literæ Humaniores*” (whether Pass or Honour); from all who take Medieval and Modern Languages and Literature; from all who take Modern History; but from no other students than these. It may be that by some such method as this we shall let go the shadow and save the substance. But, for ourselves, we view the whole process with misgiving. An attack on Latin will certainly follow the attack on Greek. The whole fabric of classical education will be jeopardized. As we said two months ago, the newer Universities may have the fullest scope to experiment in newer theories of education. Oxford can well afford to maintain the older ideal which has been hers for centuries, and which will be hard to recover if once it is lightly discarded.

Tolstoi.

Count Tolstoi is dead! A writer of novels, a preacher of sermons, a leader of democracy, and withal a mystic idealist, always far removed from the commonplace, and often from the practical. He was one of the world’s unique figures: a simple, plain-spoken man, conscientious almost to morbidity; he defied the Church, the Government, and society at large, yet he won for himself an affectionate place in the hearts of the Russian peasantry—a place which he will not speedily lose. He was the Apostle of Love to a world which seemed to him at least to have put all its confidence in force. It was a strange life and a strange death. Futile and chimerical much of his work has seemed to the world; but it will be long before we shall be able to fully realize how much he has really done. On the literary side, “*Anna Karenina*” and “*War and Peace*” probably touched the world most, and will last longest; and, even if he had done nothing else, either would have given him a title to fame.