

THE CHURCHMAN

May, 1911.

The Month.

The
Permissive
Use of the
Vestments.

THE first of our newly-started "Discussions"—that on "The Permissive Use of the Vestments"—is terminated this month by the reply from Canon Beeching, the writer of the original article. We have every reason to be grateful both to him and to his critics, not only for what they have said, but for the way in which they have said it. We do not intend here either to retrace the ground or to attempt any summary of the conflicting arguments. They now stand printed in our pages; they are accessible for reference, and to abbreviate them might do less than justice to their worth. We only wish to say that Canon Beeching's article made more impression on us than anything that has yet been said in favour of toleration. And yet even his persuasive and eloquent words leave our fundamental convictions on the point unshaken. We still feel that the plea that the Eucharistic Vestments are non-significant of doctrine—with however much erudition that plea may be urged—is, at the present day and under the present circumstances, quite beside the point. They are, in the present crisis, charged with significance. It is for what they signify that their legalization is sought. It is because of their intended significance that they are at present illegally used by a considerable body of anarchical clergy in the Church of England.

The unalterable conviction that Vestments are being sought and being used as intensely significant leads us to a further one as to the practical ends which they will, if legalized, be made to subserve. We readily grant that Canon Beeching and those who think with him would preserve them as links of historic continuity, with full loyalty to the Reformed and Protestant faith. But those who already do use them illegally, and who, if the Vestments are sanctioned, will point exultingly to the triumph of their own illegality, will use them in no such way. They will become the potent instruments of the Counter-Reformation. The first great Counter-Reformation movement arose within the Church of Rome. It is our lot in the present day to witness a second one, smaller perhaps in scale, but no less clear and determined in aim, within the Church of England. The coming issue is a clear one. It is between those who hold that the Church of England is at one with the Church of Rome as to the "Sacrifice of the Altar," and those who hold that at the Reformation the Church of England not only abjured Papal control, but discarded the medieval doctrine of the Mass. Those who wish to re-establish the doctrine of the Mass within the Church of England will have gone far towards their end when the Vestments which the Roman Church uses in the service of the Altar are permitted by law within the Church of England. As we repudiate the doctrine, we must oppose the Vestments with which it is vitally associated.

The Provincial Synod of the Episcopal Church in Scotland meets this month to consider, among other matters, the recommendations of the Consultation Council on the revision of the Prayer-Book. The Council has prescribed a long list of suggestions. All the changes are to be permissive, and none of them are doctrinal. Some few could be objected to, some few seem unnecessary, and often we could wish the revision had gone further. If the Synod accepts them, the Scottish Church will

**The Scottish
Church and
Prayer-Book
Revision.**

have done much to make her Prayer-Book fit the needs of twentieth-century worship. We refer to the matter here because there is a widespread fear in England lest Prayer-Book revision should lead to a change of the doctrinal balance and to revolutionary alterations. Evangelicals are a negligible quantity in the Church of Scotland, and yet the changes are such that no Evangelical, *qua* Evangelical, can take objection to them. If such a happy solution be possible in Scotland—and we hope it may be—why should it not be equally possible in England, where Evangelical Churchmanship can make itself felt? We feel convinced that, as Evangelicals, we can welcome and take our part in securing a moderate and well-considered revision of our Book of Common Prayer.

As the Churches draw closer together questions of importance demand discussion. Amongst them is the question as to the meaning of the rubric which demands Confirmation as a *sine qua non* for sons and daughters of the Church of England before admission to Holy Communion. By many that rubric is regarded as rigidly exclusive, and they are glad that it is so; many fear that it is exclusive, and wish it were not so. In the *Spectator* for April 1, Canon Hensley Henson examines the history of the rubric, and shows that it had nothing to do with Nonconformity. He quotes Bishop Creighton, who wrote that the rubric “was framed for normal cases, and did not contemplate the case of Nonconformists.” He tells us that Archbishop Benson held the same view, and quotes Archbishop Tait’s reply to a memorial signed by a large number of clergy in 1870, expressing “their grief and astonishment at the admission, in Westminster Abbey, to the Blessed Sacrament of teachers of various sects, openly separate from our Communion.” The Archbishop wrote as follows:

“Some of the memorialists are indignant at the admission of any Dissenters, however orthodox, to the Holy Communion in our Church. I confess that I have no sympathy with such objections. I consider that the interpretation which these memorialists put upon the rubric to which they appeal, at the end of the Confirmation service, is quite untenable. As at

present advised, I believe this rubric to apply solely to our own people, and not to those members of foreign or dissenting bodies who occasionally conform. All who have studied the history of our Church, and especially of the reign of Queen Anne, when this question was earnestly debated, must know how it has been contended that the Church of England places no bar against occasional conformity" ("Life of A. C. Tait," by Davidson and Benham, third edition, vol. ii., p. 71).

The true position seems to be this: For our own children, and for those who wish to join our communion, the Church's rule is Confirmation. Of those who are occasionally our guests we need make no such demand. Canon Hensley Henson has done good service in again calling attention to the facts—facts the due observance of which will help the cause of Christian charity, and, sooner or later, of Ecclesiastical unity.

Party Politics
and
Social Reform.

The Shop Hours Bill has been passing through Parliament. Those who are inclined to despair of Parliament because of the rigour of our party system can take heart on occasions like this. Parliament was at its best. As in the case of the Children Act and the Coal Mines Bill, the Shops Bill was welcomed from all sides. Party spirit was absent and party ties forgotten. We know no politics in these pages; we dare to try and take each political question on its merits. But we welcome social reform; we are glad of such legislation as makes for the better and happier lives of our fellow-subjects; we are grateful, too, when a partisan newspaper like the *Daily News* can write as follows:

"The reception of the Bill has been really remarkable. There is undoubtedly on the Tory benches a spirit of co-operation with such social reforms which makes greatly for progress all round, and which could not have been more generously manifested than on the present most interesting occasion."

The Tory spirit of co-operation and the Radical recognition of it will alike make even greater progress possible.

Street Trading
by Children.

We pointed out last month that Evangelical Churchmen, if they are true to their traditions, must take an active share in the attempt to grapple with the complexities of the social problem. We may go on

now to the further remark that the solution of any particular detail of this problem will require not only fervent good-will but a considerable quantity of very hard thinking. When we proceed to remedy one evil, there is always the risk of inflicting another and a greater one. This was made very apparent in the recent debate in the House of Lords on Lord Shaftesbury's Bill to amend the Employment of Children Act of 1903. With the general aim of the Bill there was the warmest sympathy on both sides of the House. But with regard to the clause forbidding boys under seventeen and girls under eighteen to trade in the streets, there was a disposition to plead for reconsideration. It was felt that the jump from the age of eleven to that of seventeen was a large one. It was pointed out by Lord Salisbury and others that to thousands of poor families living near the starvation margin the withdrawal of the 3s. or 4s. a week brought in by newspaper-selling would mean appalling disaster. It was hardly fair to forbid street trading to their children without the provision of some other more suitable employment. We sincerely trust that this Bill will be the basis of future legislation which will be not only prohibitory but remedial in character.

Anglo-American Arbitration. We feel that we should be guilty of deep ingratitude if we did not take the earliest opportunity of expressing our heartfelt appreciation of the noble attempt now being made by President Taft and Sir Edward Grey to bring about a state of permanent peace between England and the United States. We cherish no illusory hopes of a corresponding alteration in the European situation. The recent speech of the German Chancellor is destructive of any such golden dreams. Nor do we wish to hurry matters by pleading for a defensive alliance. But that England and America should join hands firmly in a general arbitration treaty, in a pledge that, being brothers, however much they may differ, they will not fight, is a thing to be welcomed, to be worked for, and most earnestly prayed for. We can only trust

that the two statesmen who have taken the lead in this matter may be enabled to feel, by convincing and overwhelming manifestations, that they have behind them the whole force of the best public opinion in their respective countries. We can conceive of no grander memorial of the Coronation Year, no event more rich in augury for the happier welfare of the whole world, than that the two great nations, with their common heritage of religion, of birth, of literature and speech, should commit themselves in perpetuity to a league of friendship and good-will.

**Welsh Dis-
establishment.** A Bill for the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Church in Wales is promised by the Government for next year. English Churchmen, therefore, should not only inform themselves about the history and progress of the Church in Wales, but should do their best to spread the information to their fellow-electors. This is a question for English Churchmen as well as for those in Wales. The Archbishop of Canterbury struck the proper note of urgency in his letter to the Central Church Defence and Instruction Committee :

“ We must unhesitatingly support our Welsh brethren in the impending struggle, because we believe that the retention of the solemn trust and special responsibility which is theirs is a bounden duty, and because we also believe that the principles for which we contend are righteous, and are of incalculable and enduring benefit to the whole people of the land.”

**The Swansea
School Case.** Contention is in itself an unpleasant thing. But when, as in the case of our opposition to Welsh Disestablishment and Disendowment, we believe that “ the principles for which we contend are righteous,” we have no right to shirk the conflict. And we are not so pessimistic as to suppose that causes championed by the Church of England are of necessity foredoomed to failure. The recent decision of the House of Lords in the Swansea School Case is sufficient to dissipate any such gloomy apprehensions. Because the local education authority of that city could not agree on various points with the managers of the Oxford Street School,

they hit on the paltry device of punishing these stubborn managers through the teachers. The unfortunate teachers were to be paid less than those of the same standing in undenominational schools, and, further, were to be deprived of the regular increase of salary enjoyed by other teachers. The Board of Education was appealed to, but would give no help. The managers, undaunted, stuck to their guns. The case was taken to a Divisional Court, to the Court of Appeal, and, finally, to the House of Lords. At every stage the judicial decision has been in favour of the managers, and the highest Court in the land has decided that the Board of Education must be impartial, and that no unfair discrimination must be made between the two classes of schools. This verdict is a trumpet-call to Churchmen. It bids them fight with confidence, for there is still the reasonable hope that right may win.

Our readers will probably, for the most part, be Bishop Ridley
and
Bishop Stuart. familiar with the main outlines of the lives of the two missionary heroes who have recently passed to their rest—Bishop Stuart and Bishop Ridley. Their lives did not bulk largely in the eyes of Englishmen, for they were chiefly spent in strenuous, unobtrusive work abroad. Whether we think of Bishop Ridley's twenty-five years among the Indians in the wilds of New Caledonia or of Bishop Stuart's gallant entrance on new work in Persia, forty-four years after his ordination, we are constrained to wonder at the tireless energy, the dauntless determination, and, above all, the sublime faith in which these gallant heroes pursued their appointed task. Their example is an inspiration, and—may we say it?—something of a reproach to younger men on whom the mantle of these veterans must fall. We often hear to-day that the England of our generation is lacking in the sense of discipline, the power of sacrifice, the capacity for strenuous service, which enabled our forefathers to rear the fabric of the Empire. The lives of Bishop Stuart and Bishop Ridley are a call to us—a call to emulation in loyal and passionate devotion to our common Lord.