

THE CHURCHMAN

June, 1911.

The Month.

**Higher
Criticism.** WE are venturing to return to a subject which we have noticed once or twice since the Islington Meeting, because we feel that there are certain misunderstandings which need to be cleared up. In an Editorial paragraph in our March number (pp. 165, 166), we ventured to express our own attitude towards those who hold "Higher Critical" views. Similarly, in the April number we ventured to say that we believed that men who are loyal to the principles and traditions of the Evangelical School of Thought have a right to their place and school despite their critical views. By all that we have said we stand. But we want to say two things more.

Firstly, we for our part, in the exercise of our own judgment, do most definitely dissociate ourselves from the extremes of Dutch and German criticism, which, based on assumptions that we cannot grant, are frankly materialistic and destructive. We are told, for instance, that Abraham is a mythical hero, that Joseph was eponymous, a tribe and not a man, and many such-like things. We respectfully ask for proof, and we get none. Indeed, as the days go by, criticism of that kind finds it difficult to maintain its existence. For proof of this last statement we venture to compare the place which has been won by Hastings' "Dictionary of the Bible" with that secured by

the "Encyclopædia Biblica." Criticism of this type must be met by the spade and by the pen. It is being so met, and the fearsome ghost is almost laid. But all this does not alter our general point of view. We may be conservative, frankly we are; we differ, and differ seriously, from many of our Evangelical Higher Critics, who hold views much less extreme than those to which we have referred, but we are entirely at one with Dr. Eugene Stock, who declines to condemn a brother because he believes that the Higher Critics have established some of their positions. Once again, we repeat, we want unity and we want liberty. We shall never gain the former if we heedlessly limit the latter.

The other point is this: We believe the extreme conservative is equally entitled to his place in our School of Thought. Complaint has been made, and made with justice, that the Higher Critics are often treated with grievous unfairness. We are equally clear that no such complaint must be allowed to become true in the case of those who oppose them. To us the attitude of the superior person is an attitude to be deprecated. We shall try to carry out our convictions in our work in this magazine. We have no space for articles that are uncharitable or unbrotherly. We have no space for imputation of motives or for cheap sneers at opponents. We shall gladly welcome articles from either side that are written in the spirit of charity and moderation. We believe that it is good for us and good for our readers that both sides should be heard, and so with the greatest possible pleasure we welcome to our pages this month the interesting article of the Rev. W. F. Kimm on the "Reformation under Josiah."

One of the outstanding events of the present month—an event of gravest concern to all readers of the CHURCHMAN—is the publication of the Annual Report of the Church Missionary Society with its announcement of a deficit of £48,000, and the subsequent resolution of the Society to make sundry and drastic retrench-

The Position
of the C.M.S.

ments. It is as well to realize clearly the significance of this state of things. It does not mean that the actual contribution to the funds of the Society is falling off. The income of the past financial year shows a considerable advance on that of ten or twenty years ago. But it does mean that the devotion and energy of the home Church has utterly failed to keep pace with the expansion of the work abroad, and the opening of innumerable doors for further Christian work. The supply of effort on our part has not been equal to the demand made by our God-given opportunities. It means, too, that the responsibility lies at the doors of us who live and work at home in England. The crisis is not brought about by lack of volunteers to go abroad on foreign missionary service. It is through lack of means to support them. They are prepared to leave home, to live, and, if necessary, to die, in the service of Christ abroad. We have foiled their aspiration and checked their heroic purpose by withholding the necessary means for carrying them into effect.

It seems at first sight paradoxical that in view of this failure to provide supplies, the Committee should decide to make no special appeal for a clearing of the deficit. In this, however, they have shown a full grasp of the true inwardness of the situation. The inadequate provision of money is only an external symptom. What is needed on our own part is a clearer vision of God and a fuller consecration to His service. If only these things be vouchsafed to us, many details of method and organization will fall into their proper places. The crisis—if we take it rightly—should force on us both as a Church and as individuals many painful ponderings. Have we, after all, been gravitating, perhaps all unconsciously, to a wrong point of view? Have we been more occupied with the idea of what we can do for God than of what He can do through us? Have we been so obsessed by Conferences, schemes, plans, methods, as to become immersed in them, absorbed in them, so interested in the details of our machinery, that we tend to be forgetful of

Our Present
State.

Him from Whom all power and impulse comes? It may be that we have been drifting into the position of her who "was cumbered about much serving," and that the Father has chosen this way of recalling us to "that good part" chosen by her who "sat at Jesus' feet, and heard His Word."

Our greatest need at the present time is that of
Our Present the vision of God and faith in God. The sacred
Need. record of revelation seems to show that God's readiness to do great things for us, is conditioned by our faith in Him. We read that, when Christ was met by a spirit of sceptical criticism, "He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief." And when His disciples were perplexed by a manifestation of Divine power that transcended their conception of the wonted routine of affairs, His answer was: "Have faith in God." He then went on, as in terms of Eastern imagery, to declare that there are no limits to what God will do for those who see Him clearly and trust Him fully. It may be that such vision and such faith will only come to us after much prayer, much self-discipline, and much search. But these will be well expended if they bring us to His feet and make us the more willing and docile instruments of His will. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." It is as true to-day as when Christ miraculously cured the impotent man at Bethesda that: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

It would be very helpful at this time and in view
Wendland on of these events if a recent German book, "Der
Miracles. Wunderglaube im Christentum," by Professor Wendland could be translated into English and so made available for a larger circle of readers. A good account of it is given by Professor Mackintosh in the *Expository Times* for May. This, however, will only reach a limited circle and the usefulness of the book might well be extended to a wider area. Many of the

older, time-honoured and now somewhat hoary arguments against the possibility of the miraculous are disposed of in clear and convincing fashion. The view that miracles are contrary to the laws of Nature, the conception of Nature as a closed mechanical system, even the view that miracles would be a contradiction of God's own unchangeable order of the world—all receive full discussion and adequate criticism. Science may rightly reduce her observations of external phenomena' to "natural laws," but then "natural laws" are no exhaustive description of reality. As for an "unchangeable" world order, do we not speak hastily in using any such term? If God be not only immanent but transcendent, He who has done great things in the past may have in store greater and undreamed of possibilities for the future.

**His Message
for Us.** The book, however, is not merely a refutation of well-worn objections. The positive side of its teaching is strong and peculiarly appropriate to our present needs. Faith in miracle, says Professor Wendland, is simply faith in *the living God*. From this point of view he defines miracles as "acts of God producing a condition of things not already latent in the existing texture of the world." A further consequence follows. If God lives and works, and if the "uniformity of Nature" as an ultimate metaphysical postulate is purely mythical, then it is impossible to limit the era of miracles to a distant past. The present and the future may reveal to us the intervention of God in His creation in ways more striking than any records of the past can show. Again, a further consequence is the marvellous illumination cast upon the possibilities of prayer. It may be that the faithful prayer of the children is the necessary condition which the Father awaits in order to display in ways unheard of yet, the wealth of His power of love. Professor Wendland's book is a message to us that as Theists and as Christians, we have every right to look for God's miraculous power to-day, if only we on our part not only "believe

that He is" but also that "He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."

Missions to the Jews. We have received, from the London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews, a small booklet explaining the Edinburgh findings with regard to Jewish missions. Great stress was laid on the fact of the enormous influence which the Jew is wielding throughout Christendom. It is entirely true that missions to the Jews are too often looked upon as merely a side issue, or even as the hobby of the few. The brotherly love which should characterize our Christianity has never quite extended itself to the Jew, whilst so-called liberal thought has tended to leave them alone as possessing a pure morality and an almost sufficient revelation. We are not pleading. We do not plead here for money, but we venture to suggest that as in the months to come the missionary problem is put from our pulpits, a proper place should be given to the Jewish factor in the whole situation.

The Opium Agreement. It is a matter for devout thankfulness that we may hope soon to see the total disappearance of the opium traffic between India and Chinese ports. The existence of this traffic has been a dark blot on the British control of India, and all who have a worthy conception of our Imperial responsibilities will rejoice at its extinction. We must not, however, in our philanthropy, forget the claims of justice. We must be prepared to bear the burden of our own good deeds. The impending stoppage of revenue from the export of opium will have a serious effect on the Indian budget. Some of the Native States, which have been largely devoted to the cultivation of the poppy, will be brought to the verge of bankruptcy. The rulers of these States will have but a poor idea of British justice, if they are left to grapple unaided with the difficulties into which this Opium Agreement, signed on May 8, will plunge them. When we freed the West Indian slaves, we faced the consequences and paid the cost. In this case, too, we must not

“offer burnt offerings unto the Lord our God of that which doth cost us nothing.” If the doing of this great act of righteousness means sacrifice, we must see to it that the sacrifice is ours and not that of those who may be impoverished by our policy.

If a scheme can be evolved which will mitigate
State
Insurance. in the lives of thousands of our fellow-countrymen the effects of sickness and involuntary unemployment, it ought to meet with a welcome from every Christian man. None know better than the working clergy what it means when the bread-winner is sick or out of work. Politics apart, entire agreement perhaps apart, we are grateful to the Government for the evolution of their scheme, and thankful that it has met with a cordial reception from all political parties. It will require the most careful consideration ; many changes and modifications will have to be made, but it is aimed to meet a need of extraordinary magnitude, and we must all conspire to carry it through in its most effective form. The criticism of the *Spectator* suggests that it will cost double the money that is estimated, and asks where will that money come from. It will be costly, doubtless. We shall all have to contribute ; the taxpayer will pay part ; the consumer will pay a larger part, and the man with a fixed income, both through tax and cost of living, will feel his contribution most. But there is a patriotism and there is a Christianity which can gladly pay a large contribution to the common welfare, if it be justly exacted, and if it bring a real boon to those most in need. We hope that the voice of the Church of England will be heard only on the side of that patriotism and that Christianity.

In the April number of the *Interpreter* there is
A New Theory
of the
Third Gospel. an interesting article by a layman, Mr. George MacKinlay. He has a new theory of St. Luke. He notices that sometimes St. Luke records the same event three times over—*e.g.*, the conversion of St. Paul and more doubtfully the vision of Peter and his visit to Cornelius.

He then proceeds to argue, that the main body of St. Luke's Gospel, from chapter iv. onwards until the story of the Passion is reached, is a threefold account of the last journey to Jerusalem. The first account is contained in the section, iv. 31 to x. 42. Then he harks back to the same point and tells the story of the same journey again until xiv. 24. Then he begins again for the last time and completes the triple account at xx. 18. We are interested, but we are not convinced, nor are we sure that Mr. MacKinlay's theory warrants the deductions that he draws from it. He imagines that it settles the difficulty as between St. John and the Synoptists. We rather incline to think that it complicates that difficulty. St. John seems to speak of several visits to Jerusalem. If Mr. MacKinlay be right, we are inclined to ask why St. Luke confines himself to one. We can understand the Synoptist mainly dealing with the Galilean ministry and St. John with the Judean, and we believe that there are indications in each of the ministry dealt with in the other, but we cannot help but feel that Mr. MacKinlay's theory renders an already complex problem more complex still. At the same time we are glad to notice his article as a piece of careful study and an effort at a new solution.

A tragic interest is attached to the fifth article W. Heneage Legge. in our present issue—that by Mr. Heneage Legge on “The Archbishops of Canterbury as Lay Lords.” A proof of this article was sent, in the usual way, to Mr. Legge a few weeks ago. It was returned to the Editor by his son, with the news that Mr. Legge had just passed away. The article is therefore printed without any revision on the part of the author. Mr. Legge's writings have appeared before now in the pages of the CHURCHMAN. We record here with sorrow his loss, and offer our respectful sympathy to his relatives on whom the shadow of bereavement has fallen.

