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THE CHURCHMAN

September, 1911.

The Month.

Retrospect. THE present number of the CHURCHMAN completes the first year of its issue under the joint control of the present Editors. This fact, coupled with the general quiescence that rightly broods over the holiday month of August, makes it not unfitting that we should devote a little space to the interesting topic of ourselves, our contributors, and our readers. For ourselves, we have only to express our grateful appreciation for help ungrudgingly afforded from many sides. Our publisher, our printer, our reviewers, our regular contributors, have done all in their power to assist us and to lighten the task of editorial responsibility. The comments of contemporary magazines and newspapers have been all that we could wish, and we are especially obliged to the two papers with which we are more closely allied—the *Record* and the *Church Gazette*—for the loyal support contained in their pages. Space forbids a further enumeration in detail, but we gladly say of all that the treatment meted out to us—as well by those who disagree as by those who agree with us—that it has been uniformly fair and invariably courteous. For this we extend our cordial thanks to all concerned.

Our Critics. It must not be inferred from the foregoing words that we have given universal satisfaction. We have not. During the past twelve months we have received various private letters, expressing candid views sometimes about ourselves, sometimes about our contributors. To some—not all—

of these we have replied with appropriate explanations. In sundry cases the point of the criticism has been that the articles accepted and printed were inconsistent with the past history and principles of the CHURCHMAN. It may, therefore, perhaps remove any misapprehension on this point if we take the present opportunity of saying that we do not conceive it our duty to admit articles of only one point of view concerning the various problems of life and thought that clamour for attention. We are faced to-day by questions of philosophic thought, of critical scholarship, of historical research, and of ecclesiastical government, on which Christian men in general, and Churchmen in particular, hold divergent views. Within limits—of which limits, we must ourselves, so long as we are entrusted with editorial control, claim to be the sole arbiters—we gladly welcome discussion from all points of view, of these controverted topics. The expression of our own views, and of the principles for which we wish the CHURCHMAN to stand, will be found in the opening monthly notes of each successive issue.

This general statement as to principle may be of

Our
Contributors. interest to those who have felt called on to criticize our methods. We have now a word to say to those who kindly help us by their contributions. It is this: that we have to think of the wishes of our readers as well as of the special objects of particular writers. It is not a wholly imaginary supposition that some scholar may write a careful article on a topic profoundly interesting to himself; a friend of similar enthusiasm, but opposing views, must take the lists at once against him; the attacked one, in the fair interests of truth and in the vindication of all right reason, claims the right of swift and copious retort. Now, an interchange of this kind may be of the highest interest to the writers concerned. But to the general body of our readers it is not so; and we, editorially, have been told that it is not. With all respect, therefore, and gratitude to those who are willing to honour our pages with the fruits of critical research and of exact thinking

on particular topics, we must, in such cases as those portrayed above, call a halt, in the interests of our general readers. We wish to reach the highest standard of excellence in the matter that our pages contain, but they are hardly suitable for prolonged discussions such as are more fittingly enshrined in the "Transactions" of a learned society.

In this connection a word may be said about the **Discussions.** "Discussions" inaugurated by us some months ago. We hoped in this way to provide ample means for the discussion of controverted topics by those keenly interested, without the necessity of encroaching on the space devoted to articles of general interest. We felt, however, and still feel, that these discussions should not become interminable. We laid it down, therefore, that any comments must come in the number *immediately* following that in which the original article appeared, and that after the writer criticized had had his opportunity for reply in the again succeeding number, the matter, so far as the CHURCHMAN is concerned, must, for the time being, drop. We think this rule is fair, and we have tried to maintain it, with the result that we have had to send back certain comments—some because they arrived too late, some because they were meant to carry on the topic after the original writer had had his reply. We must again call attention to our rule, and respectfully ask our contributors to support us in upholding it. Comments on matter contained in any one month—say, August—*must* reach us not later than the 15th of that month, in order to secure publication in the September number. Arriving later than that, they are useless for publication in the "Discussions" section of the magazine.

In connection with the subject of Eucharistic
 "A
 Sidesman's"
 Contribution, Vestments, we are glad to call the attention of our readers to something that may be of real service.

Many who have had no opportunity of making a special study of the topic are somewhat puzzled by the references

to the various judgments of the Privy Council, and are hazy about the precise relation which the findings of that Council have to the conduct of ecclesiastical affairs. In the August number of the *Church Gazette* there is an article on "The Illegality of the Vestments," under the signature of "A Sidesman." A prefatory note explains that the writer, owing to the attempted introduction of the vestments in the Church at which he attended, drew up a statement of the matters at issue for the information of the People's Warden. We cordially commend it to those of our readers who may be glad of such help. It is a clear, convincing, and thoroughly fair presentment of the present condition of affairs. It declares the law, and emphasizes the obligations that lie on all loyal members of the Church of England so long as the existing law remains unchanged. The writer has done good service in publishing a statement so clear in expression and so sound in principle.

Two considerations occur to the mind in connection with the recent thirty-sixth Keswick Convention, both of them linking it on with modern tendencies and movements :

Keswick
Convention.

I. In the Church at large, using the term widely, there is a tendency to a broader Catholicity—a sense that more is to be gained by union than by separation, a readiness to recognize as members of "the Holy Catholic Church" a wider circle than of yore. "Keswick" is in line with this tendency. There Churchman rubs shoulders with Baptist, Presbyterian with Friend; and together they seek God. If the truth were told, each betrays a lurking feeling for teachers whom his orthodoxy normally bars him from hearing. Men to whom "steeple-houses" should be an abomination flock to hear Anglican dignitaries; others to whom Westminster Chapel is taboo, gladly sit at the feet of Dr. Campbell Morgan, revelling in his penetrating Bible studies. It is true that the movement is less frankly inter-denominational than Edinburgh, Baslow, or Swanwick—that is to say, men do not speak out their characteristic

tenets with such openness as at those conferences. There is an unwritten rule that men keep to what all those on the platform hold in common, avoiding the specific points on which they differ. There may be loss in this; but there is great gain in the brotherly spirit which enables a multitude of four or five thousand Christians, called by many names, to meet together to meet God as "all one in Christ Jesus."

2. And what is the aim of these gatherings?

"Practical
Mysticism."

Let us borrow a phrase from Rev. E. S. Woods' "Modern Discipleship," recommended in these notes last month for holiday reading: "St. Paul," we read on p. 79, "was one of the greatest of the mystics. But he was" [why that "but"? Why not "and he was"?], "if I may use the paradoxical expression, a very *practical mystic*." Well, the first Keswick Convention, in 1875, was summoned "for the promotion of *practical holiness*." The whole movement was really the nineteenth-century outburst of the "mystical element of religion," which is always present in the Church, but which tends at times to come to the fore with a kind of corporate "subliminal uprush," such as the psychologists describe in individual lives. The Dean of St. Paul's, reviewing Miss Evelyn Underhill's "Mysticism" in the columns of the *Record*, has urged that Evangelical Churchmen ought, by virtue of their interest in spiritual religion, to study the mystics. Surely we ought! In the great classical days of mysticism—in the third, the fourteenth, and the seventeenth centuries—mysticism had its natural home where religion was then for the most part centred, in convents, cloisters, and hermits' cells. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when religion tends to manifest and nourish itself in corporate gatherings—congresses, conferences, and the like—it is not to be wondered at that the mystical union with God through Christ should be sought, and in multitudes of cases found, in conventions, such as that which we are considering. Whether for social work at home, or for missionary work abroad, a deeper spiritual life is called for. At

Keswick many have learnt secrets of "practical mysticism," which they are working out all over the world. Whether there or elsewhere, ought we not to be seeking till we find, not a blessing, but Him who blesses?

One or two clergymen, whose names are other-
The Bishop
of Hereford, wise unknown to us, are reported to have celebrated "Masses of Reparation" in connection with the recent action of the Bishop of Hereford. It is difficult to find suitable terms in which to characterize their action. To us it seems a definite prostitution of the Sacrament which our Lord ordained. Whatever those concerned may have thought of the Bishop's action, it is surely no remedy to use the same Sacrament for purposes of reply. It is difficult to dissociate it from partisan retaliation. But further, this later action raises in a more acute form than ever the question with which the Bishop's service compelled all thinking Churchmen to deal—the real relations of the Church and Nonconformity. The chief factor in that question must ultimately be that which deals with the ministry. The other three members of the Lambeth Quadrilateral, though they present difficulties of considerable gravity, are gradually coming into the category of agreed things, and will, we are optimists enough to believe, ultimately commend themselves to the great body of pious Free Churchmen. With the ministry it is entirely different, and an almost ultimate problem seems to be facing us.

The Ministry. The Christian Church exists, amongst other things, for the purpose of overcoming the difficulties that face it. If we believe that it would be a good thing for the Church and the world that the whole body of Christ's disciples in this land should live in corporate unity, it is our business to be deterred by no difficulty from working and praying to that end. But we can neither work nor pray intelligently unless we have carefully studied the facts. In brief notes like these it is impossible, and it would be unwise to attempt any

such study, but perhaps one or two things can be wisely said. It seems to be perfectly clear that we need to study again, in the light of modern needs and of modern scholarship, the origins of the ministry. Lightfoot and Hatch and others have done that in the past, and there are living scholars who are doing it to-day; but the task is by no means complete, and the majority of us have neither had the time nor the opportunity to familiarize ourselves with the assured results. And, further, we have most certainly not yet arrived at the position when we can with any confidence talk of assured results at all. Much work has to be done and much careful inquiry made before we can wisely dogmatize.

Our distinguished namesake, the New York *The First Step. Churchman*, of July 29, contained an article criticizing not very favourably the general teaching of Canon Hensley Henson, and the article was headed: "Theories of the Ministry neither make nor mar Reunion." The last clause of that article put the point which we regard of the utmost importance, and seems somewhat at variance with the title. We quote it in full:

"Theories of the ministry cannot produce the convictions that are leading to the establishment of better relations between a divided Christendom. What is involved, and what is needed at present, is not so much the construction of new theories or the introduction of old doctrines of the ministry, as the bringing of all doctrines and theories into subordination to Christ's words and commands. His work must be done as He directed it should be done, under the terms of such devoted personal loyalty and faith that the idiosyncrasies of historic communions can be forgotten and forgiven in an overmastering enthusiasm to carry out to-day Christ's mission to mankind, and to realize the brotherhood of Christians as the supreme law of all His followers."

Precisely so. Christ's words and commands must control. We must look to His teaching and to that of the primitive Church for guidance in the matter of Church organization. Then, and not until then, we may formulate our theories. Could anything be more unprimitive, more uncatholic, more

contrary to the spirit of the Master, than a "Mass of Reparation"? Doubtless those who proposed these "Masses" believed that they were doing God service, but we do venture to ask them to test their action by the standard which the above quotation suggests.

We are much struck by the phrase "the *Idiosyncrasies*, idiosyncrasies of historic communions." It is a bold one for a paper which so good a Churchman as Mr. Silas McBee edits. We have too often taken for granted the notion that only Nonconformity has idiosyncrasies. Is it possible that some things which in the course of centuries we have come to look upon as principles and cherished convictions are, after all, in the light of New Testament teaching, only idiosyncrasies? If so, however dear to us, they must go, in the greater interest of the corporate life of the whole company of Christian people spread throughout the world.

We have referred to Canon Henson's views, *Canon Hensley Henson*, and without necessarily committing ourselves to all that he writes, we believe that he is entirely wise when he warns us that the exclusiveness of the Church of England may rob her of her opportunity. If to be exclusive and to be distinctive is our duty, we must be content, whatever the consequences. But we must see to it that we do not allow mere idiosyncrasy to masquerade as duty, and prejudice to hinder the possibilities of real progress. We have a glorious heritage, a grip on the land that no other community can approach to, a pastoral ministry which, with all the faults of the working of the parochial system, is still the most used ministry amongst us, and an opportunity in lands beyond the sea unsurpassed by any Church or nation. We must not fail of our opportunity. We have somewhat laboured the subject because we believe it is entirely worth while. We have not dogmatized, we have only tried to set our readers thinking. The result of the thinking will not come to-morrow or the day

after, but it will come if we only think boldly and strongly enough. We leave the question by allowing Canon Henson to put it in his own form in words which we quote from the *Church Family Newspaper*, words which we venture to heartily commend to the thought of our readers :

“Thus the Church of England, as the mother Church, as national, as liturgical, as zealous for Christian education, as pastoral, has much to bring into the common stock of Christian life. Will she debar herself from using her historic endowment to the common advantage in order to claim an exclusive authority, which neither her circumstances nor her principles really admit, and which the vast majority of English-speaking Christians must necessarily deny? That, at the present moment, is the preliminary question which English Churchmen have to answer before they can advance to the practical matters included in the project of reunion.”

As these lines are being written, the whole
Industrial
Unrest. country is passing through a period of industrial
 unrest such as few of us can remember. We trust that ere they are read the worst of the crisis may have passed. What is the lesson which we should learn from the times in which we live? First and foremost it is this : We cannot shut our eyes to the fact, even in this Christian land, the teaching of our Lord does not control our economic life. The struggle of life is still selfish, still too much concerned with the welfare of self and too little with the welfare of others. We must not, of course, enter into the merits of the various disputes ; there is almost certainly right and wrong on both sides. We must only attempt to state principles. Philanthropy has failed ; Acts of Parliament have failed, and failed badly ; the teaching of altruistic philosophy has failed—everything has failed but the Gospel, and that has never had a real chance. It has been partly our fault. It must be our fault no longer. We must study and we must teach, and we must, above all, practise “applied Christianity.” The men have grievances, the masters have difficulties, and the community in practice ignores both until its own comfort or its own food-supply is in jeopardy. The Gospel makes its appeal first to the individual, and through

him to the multitude. No Christian can rest content with his own living wage until other men enjoy a living wage as well. The economic problem may take long to solve, but the principle is clear, and the selfish point of view must go, and we must be the first to forsake it ere we decry it to others. As it goes in ourselves, men will be more ready to listen to our Gospel because they will see that it "works" in us, and there will be an opportunity of telling men of the redeeming power of the Death of Christ, with acceptance when they see that redemption means for us more than a religion—it means a life. The best advertisement of our faith lies in the lives of its adherents, and we must confess that social and individual selfishness has advertised it badly. The study of the social problem is a good thing, and we must give ourselves to it. The practice of individual and social righteousness is a far better thing, and to that we must devote ourselves as never before, that the secret of society may be solved in the Gospel of Christ.

