

THE CHURCHMAN

October, 1911.

The Month.

**Church
Defence.** WHATEVER our politics—and it is much to be desired that the Church should be tied to no one political party—no Churchman can look upon the present trend of events without serious misgivings, or, at any rate, without serious concern. The convinced Conservative may feel that with the Parliament Bill the fate of Church and schools is sealed. The ardent Radical may believe that if only the Church can be disestablished, and the schools either secularized or rid of denominational influence, true religion would at last have free course. We believe that both are conscientious, but that both are wrong. We stand for religious education; we believe that in a perfectly just system of education there should be room for denominational teaching; we insist that it is good for a nation that it should recognize in its corporate capacity the worship and service of God, and we know of no better method of securing such public recognition than the method of Establishment. So far we are against the Radical; but we are with him in his desire to redress grievances and to secure liberty and justice for all. We think that Churchmen have sometimes failed to see the Nonconformist point of view, just as they have frequently failed to see ours.

The Parliament Act has created a new situation, but we are not inclined to believe that it will lead to hasty and ill-considered legislation. As regards the Church, no sweeping measures of

educational or ecclesiastical disendowment are likely to become law until they have been for some two or three years before the people of the country. We have no sympathy with the Cassandra type of prophet as regards the future of the Church. The British public moves slowly, and it possesses common sense. If, after three years of discussion, a Bill goes through, after all the people must have their way ; and if the Bill be unjust, it will be largely the fault of the Church.

The Church is on its trial ; it has two things to do. First, it must educate and agitate. But education and agitation are not the larger nor the more important part of Church defence. Democracy is utilitarian, and has little respect for old institutions as such. Only so far as their effectiveness commands respect will it retain them. The Church has had fifty years of warning, and its future depends on the hold it has gained on the affections of the people. The best Church defence is concerned with the strengthening of that hold. We must show the people what the Church has done, we must show them what it is doing, and we must rectify our mistakes.

The current number of the *Edinburgh Review* gives the premier place to an article on "The English Church of To-Day." The article has many points of interest. It seems to be written from an external standpoint. It is not merely fair to the Evangelical school, but is warmly appreciative of its excellences. In the condition of the Church at large many weaknesses are pointed out, and some warnings are proffered which we may well take to heart. In the closing paragraph are these words :

"They speak more truly than they know who tell us that for the English Church the time in which we live is critical ; that she has come to the parting of the ways. The call of Empire is in her ears ; she may hear it, and follow ; she may be deaf to it, and refrain. In other words, she may resign herself to the distinctive position of Anglicanism, or she may rise to her higher calling, and take her stand for English Christianity as a whole. In the former case, 'Abide ye here with the ass' will be her programme. It is a poor one. She will rest on her past ; she will appeal to the stationary elements of Society—the uneducated, the unintelligent, those who for one

reason or another stand outside the main stream. She will continue to influence the imagination and sentiment of a section of the nation ; she will probably approximate more and more to mediæval doctrine and ceremonial ; by her claim, disputable as it is, to be (in the sectarian sense of the word) Catholic, she may retain a handful of enthusiasts whose natural gravitation is towards Rome. But this road leads nowhere. A Church which takes it may be long in dying, but is on the road to die. On the other, a great—a very great, destiny awaits her—the furtherance of the religious life of the English people at home and beyond the seas. . . . The ‘least reformed’ of the Reformed Churches, and inheriting the political genius of the nation to which she owes her distinctive features, she may unite for her own people the best elements of the old order and of the new. Should it be so, it is not England only that will be the gainer ; the *vasti luminis oræ* will receive increase. Her past has been great, her future may be greater.”

**Significant
Episodes.**

A few weeks ago, in the city of Brussels, some quarter of a million people gathered in a great demonstration against the Church. The one watch-cry was “À bas la culotte !” (Down with the clergy !). The next step will be disestablishment or revolution. Yes ; but that is in Belgium, a priest-ridden country, feeling the exactions and tyranny of Rome. True ; but, again, at the recent Trade Union Congress a resolution in favour of secular education was passed by an overwhelming majority of those who represent the better type of our artisan population. For several years has this same resolution been passed. What does it mean ? It is fatuous to ignore the fact that somehow organized religion has got out of touch with great masses of our people. We believe that it is as largely true of Nonconformity as of the Church of England. There must be reasons for the fact, and we do not believe for one moment that the main reason is to be found in the growth of godlessness. Suspicion that organized religion is indifferent to the social claims of the struggling masses, belief that the Churches are mainly concerned with questions of their own advantage, and disgust at the divisions of Christendom and the inconsistency of Christians—all these things contribute to the position. Here is the Church’s opportunity. Let us show the warmest and most practical interest in the social problems of the day ; let us claim nothing more than justice for ourselves,

and let us grant, not grudgingly, but gladly, even-handed justice to others; and let us, above all, not only in preaching, but in practice, not only corporately, but individually, maintain the spiritual standard of our Master, and very speedily the underlying antagonism—or, to say the least, indifference—will vanish. The Church is unjust, the Church is unspiritual, so men think, and so they are alienated from her.

The year 1911 promises to become a very distinctive one in the annals of English history. It has witnessed already the Coronation of King George V., a drastic alteration in the constitutional status of the House of Lords, and a labour outbreak of a new and alarming kind. We use the latter terms advisedly, because it is quite a misnomer to call the outbreak a "strike" in the hitherto accepted sense of that term. Formerly a strike meant that a certain body of workmen in some particular trade, finding the remuneration inadequate or the conditions in other ways intolerable, declined to do any more work till their grievances should be remedied. It was a case of collective action on the part of the workmen as against their employers, while the general public took, of necessity, a neutral attitude. The recent outbreak has not been merely against the employers. It has been against the general fabric of society. It has been a desperate attempt on the part of certain bodies of workers, inspired and directed by expert agitators, to deal a blow at the whole social fabric and effectively to paralyze its working. Apart from the general loss and misery it has inflicted, especially on the poorer classes of the country, its most ill-omened feature has been the tyranny and roughness displayed in the so-called "peaceful picketing" by which emissaries of the unions sought to prevent non-union men from rendering any service.

There is no doubt that public opinion has received a shock. We have had a striking object-lesson, showing us what disaster some of the forces already active may produce if allowed to go unchecked. It will

The Labour
Trouble.

The Right
to Work.

be the task not only of statesmen and politicians, but of Society as a whole, to take precautions that such a blow, aimed at the national life, shall not again be possible. With regard to the organized persecution of non-union men, we venture to adopt and endorse most heartily the weighty words of a leader-writer in the *Daily Mail* :

“ We believe no less firmly than any disturber of Society that every labourer should receive in fair measure the fruit of his labour, and that it should be his endeavour to get it. Towards this desirable consummation Society will assist him, as it has assisted him in recent years, both by individual effort and by general sympathy. We believe that nothing better insures the stability of Society than a full recognition of the dignity of labour, and the co-operation of the whole public in fairly distributing its rewards. What we do not believe is that one man should insist on another adopting a particular method of bettering himself. To force a man to strike who does not wish to strike, to bring pressure upon any man to leave work when he desires to work, is tyranny and the negation of liberty. Against those who are convicted of this interference with liberty as stern laws should be enforced as against those who steal or do bodily injury to another. Those who set up a bulwark against a general strike are fighting for freedom as thoroughly as any of their predecessors, who have made England the home of freedom in the eyes of the whole civilized world.”

When sufficient time has elapsed to give the **Our Own Responsibility.** proper historical perspective, future thinkers will be better able rightly to gauge the whole situation. But even at this early stage, certain practical considerations are forced upon us. Perhaps the most obvious is this : How far does the recent outbreak involve grave reflections on English Christianity and its representatives throughout the land ? How far might the darker features of the struggle have been impossible if we, for many years past, had been truer to our vocation and to our Master ? It has been said that much of the violence, during the recent troubles, has been due, not to the strikers, but to a wilder, more lawless section of the populace, who gladly welcomed the opportunity afforded by the disturbed conditions. Are the Churches sufficiently alive to the call that comes from these people and to the need for missionary work at home ? We are greatly occupied with the need of re-union, and we are busy—rightly so—with world-wide schemes of foreign

missionary enterprise. But what of the Lazarus at our own gates? True religious solicitude, like charity, begins at home. Let us beware of incurring the Divine reproach: "These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

It is not an unusual thing to spend some moments of our holiday musings in making plans for the oncoming winter season, and when we are thus virtuously employed, we even go so far as to sketch in outline some settled scheme of reading. To those who prefer to study a particular topic, we suggest one, the true apprehension of which means so much for the future welfare of the Church of England—the question of the origins of the Christian ministry. The suggestion may be put in a more practical form if we mention the names of a few books which are likely to be most helpful. Some of them are old friends to many of us, and some of them are quite recent contributions to the subject. The following is the list, to which we afterwards add a word or two of explanatory comment:

A Course
of Reading.

- "Essay on the Christian Ministry," Bishop Lightfoot.
- "The Christian Ecclesia," Dr. Hort.
- "The Ministry of Grace," Bishop Wordsworth.
- "The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries," Professor Lindsay.
- "Studies in Apostolic Christianity," the Rev. A. W. F. Blunt.
- "Early Church History to A.D. 313," Professor Gwatkin.
- "The Origins of Christianity," Professor Bigg.
- "The Church and the Ministry," Bishop Gore.
- "Apostolical Succession," the Rev. Dr. Browne.

Of this list it may be said, in the first place, that it is not quite so formidable as it looks. Two of the books mentioned are not long ones, and in the case of several of the others it is not a matter of reading the whole book, but of excerpting, by means of the index, the relevant portions. Lightfoot's essay is a classic, and should form the basis of all subsequent study. Printed in the first instance as an appendix to his edition of "Philippians," it is

Lightfoot,
Hort, and
Wordsworth.

now published in cheap form as a separate book. The significance of Hort's "Christian Ecclesia" may be estimated when we recall Bishop Gore's outburst contained in Note E at the end of his "Epistle to the Ephesians" (1898): "Not even Dr. Hort's reputation for soundness of judgment could stand against many posthumous publications such as the 'Christian Ecclesia.'" (Those who care to do so can see this proposition discussed by Dean Armitage Robinson in the *Guardian* for March 9, 1898.) In Bishop Wordsworth's "Ministry of Grace," the relevant matter will be found in the first two chapters, amounting to some seventy pages in the larger edition. Professor Lindsay's book is interesting, not merely for its intrinsic excellence, but as indicating the point of view of Presbyterian scholarship.

Mr. Blunt's book, though smaller than the others, is of first-rate importance. It is written with the objective, historical spirit—the rigid determination to let the facts speak for themselves—which is so characteristic of Hort's "Christian Ecclesia." It does not carry the investigation beyond the limits of the New Testament. Especially valuable is an appendix giving the New Testament passages that bear upon the controverted points. Gwatkin's work may either be read consecutively—which is the better way—or consulted by the index. The same may be said of Bigg's "Origins of Christianity," but in this case the index is not very helpful. The strictly relevant passages are pp. 64-68, 81-82, 107-109, 192, 263-264, 363-365. In this matter, as in all others, the counsel *audi alteram partem* is to be followed. Hence we close our list with two books giving the extremer standpoints on the subject. Bishop Gore's "The Church and the Ministry," should be read as the clearest, fullest exposition of the neo-Catholic point of view. On the other hand, Dr. Browne's Congregational Union Lectures for 1897 enable us to see how the dogma of Apostolical succession appears to a scholarly divine of the Congregational Churches.

We have lost two great Bishops, both of them scholars, both of them High Churchmen, but both of them broad-minded and large-hearted men, Dr. Paget of Oxford and Dr. John Wordsworth of Salisbury. Dr. Paget was successively Dean and Bishop of the University See, and he was worthy of so distinguished a post. Dr. Wordsworth was a scholar of world-wide fame, and his studies in the fields of re-union and of the Christian ministry will bear fruit in days to come. The Bench is poorer, much poorer, for their loss. Dr. Gore's translation to Oxford is natural and appropriate. He returns to the University Diocese after the practical experience of a great city. We may differ from him, as we often do, but we cannot deny him our admiration and respect. One of our greatest social reformers, in the person of Dr. Russell Wakefield, succeeds him at Birmingham, and the appointment may help to bring about that better understanding between the Church and the masses to which we have referred. And now, after many years of splendid service, Dr. Boyd Carpenter is vacating the See of Ripon, and the Prime Minister has the onerous responsibility of sending another Bishop to that great Northern See. We wonder whether Church-people as a whole realize the difficulties which must beset the Prime Minister in matters of this kind, and we wonder how many take the trouble to pray that the right man may be found for each vacant post. It is easy to complain when an appointment is made which does not please us. It is better and much more useful to pray before the appointment is made.

