

THE CHURCHMAN

March, 1912.

The Month.

**The Dean of
St. Paul's.** WHATEVER Dean Inge writes or says gives men furiously to think, indeed seems to cause some men to think and write furiously. For our part, we should not care to indorse everything that he says; sometimes, indeed, the picture that he presents to us seems exaggerated. But it often happens in these days that only exaggerated pictures attract attention, and certainly Dr. Inge, since he has come to St. Paul's, has managed to compel men to face, and to face without possibility of evasion, many of the real problems of to-day. In our last number we printed a paper of his, read before the Clergy Home Mission Union of London, upon Evangelicalism and Liberal Churchmanship. Since then there have come into our hands in book form the four addresses, extracts from which in the daily Press won for him the title of the Gloomy Dean. Dean Inge is fearless and plain-spoken; he expects criticism and does not fear it; he says things that we do not like, but he compels us to think, and we venture to believe that behind all the excrescences of his style and method, he has messages for to-day to which we do well to pay heed.

**Christianity
and
Pessimism.** In the preface to his addresses he gives short shrift to the charge of gloom, and pours mild scorn on the unthinking optimism which dreams of a socialistic Utopia about 1950. He tells us that no Christian

can be a pessimist, claiming that Christianity is a system of radical optimism, asserting that all will be well some day and somehow. But the Dean warns us that we must not expect speed in the working of God, and that the millennium will come in answer neither to the call of the State nor even to the call of social activities, but only at the bidding of spiritual forces and in answer to a spiritual revival. We do not wish to incur the Dean's wrath by misinterpreting him, for he has been misinterpreted enough; but we venture to think that the Dean is entirely justified in throwing cold water upon the all too common and the all too enthusiastic heresy that the State and the Democracy are going to put the world right in their own evergrowing strength. The Church is right in using her influence to amend the social environment. The pig does make the sty, but, after all, the influences which tend to change the character of a pig operate best, or are helped to operate, when we have made the sty as clean and as respectable as we can. The power of the Gospel alone can change character, but it is unquestionable that the social evils of to-day hinder the effect of that power. The stone must be rolled away from the tomb of Lazarus before Christ can say "Come forth." It is the business of the Church to remove that stone, but it is not true to say that when that stone is removed the millennium will come.

Liberal
Churchman-
shp.

In an article in our own pages last month—an article read as a paper before the London Home Mission Union—the Dean discussed the relation of Liberal and Evangelical Churchmanship. The article was by way of an eirenicon, and we are bound to consider an olive branch; but *timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*. Liberalism is a very fluid thing: it is so in thought, it is so in politics. Sometimes the Radical and Socialistic tail wags the Liberal dog both in thought and politics. Liberalism implies freedom, and Protestantism stands for freedom and the right of private judgment. But there are limits both to our freedom

and to our right of judgment. Those limits are clearly stated in Article Six. Sometimes the Liberalism of to-day exceeds them. We gave an instance in our reference to a certain sermon last month. We are not afraid of honest criticism, but criticism in the Church of England that ignores Article Six is not honest. We believe that Liberalism is a good thing and we should be sorry to lose it either in politics or in thought. That does not mean that we always approve of Liberal measures or of Liberal thought. We are infinitely glad to note that Liberal Churchmen are joining us in our fight for spiritual religion, and in our protest against what Dr. Inge calls "the strangely external and mechanical theory of Catholicity which prevails in High Anglican circles." But we can be no party to that Liberalism which rationalizes Scripture or explains away entirely the objective aspect of the Atonement. We believe that the spiritually-minded Liberal Churchman does not wish to do either, but his language sometimes suggests it, and we can only hope that the growing contact between us and them will ultimately bring us to unity, a unity based upon the fundamental principles of Evangelicalism. No other sort of unity is worth the having.

In a leading article a week or two ago, our contemporary, the *English Churchman*, compares the Dean's article in our pages with one in the pages of the *Church Times* on the Evangelical School. The leading article is entitled, "Evangelicals and their Wooers," and the following extract presents its general view :

"Were we inclined for amusement we might easily find it in comparing this paper with the article in the *Church Times* to which we have already referred. Both agree in flattering the Evangelicals and pointing out the hope that lies before them when they have got clear of their 'old traditions.' The *Church Times*, however, appears to think that it may find in them an ally against 'shallow Liberalism'; while the Dean reminds them that they and the 'Liberals' both 'believe that what is called Sacerdotalism is as near to being purely false as any theory held by good and intelligent men can be.' Look kindly on me, says the priestly party, for you and I are in holy compact against destructive Liberalism. Open your heart to me, says the Liberal party, for you and I, have a common antipathy to Sacer-

dotalism. Well indeed would it be for the Evangelicals if these rival claims for their affection should show them the folly of entertaining either, and the necessity of rejecting both!"

The *English Churchman* blamed us for printing the Dean's article, always seeing our vices more clearly than our virtues—if, indeed, we possess any of the latter. We are not concerned to defend our action, but if Dean Inge's article was a love letter to woo us to rationalism, we are sorry that we did not realize it. May we venture to say that we are already engaged, nay, wedded, to our own fundamental position? Neither pseudo-Catholicism nor pseudo-Liberalism has any charms for us. But as we exist to propagate our principles as a school of thought, we are infinitely glad when those principles are being adopted by others, even if for a time they are maintained alongside another set of convictions, believing that in the long run the possession of Evangelical principles will make men Evangelicals. We exist to influence, we believe we are doing it, and one of the things upon which we do differ from Dr. Inge is the extent of this influence. He is a kindly but a candid critic. It is good sometimes to under-estimate the extent of one's influence and power, and we venture to believe that the Dean has done so in dealing with us. We are content to go on with our work, and we shall be delightedly content when the *Church Times* comes over to Evangelicalism, and the Rationalists enter our fold. But it will not be through sacrifice, on our part, of fundamental positions.

Most of our readers will probably, before the publication of our present issue, have made themselves familiar with the wise and weighty words of the Archbishop of Canterbury's recent Charge. It need hardly be said that, from more than one point of view, it is a pronouncement of the greatest importance, deserving of the most careful study. The point in it that we wish to recall here, with most grateful thanks, is the significant treatment of Biblical investigation in its relation to ecclesiastical authority.

The Arch-
bishop of
Canterbury's
Charge.

The Archbishop is for "the unfettered study of Holy Scripture." He rightly claims that in that study Church tradition and the effect in personal experience must have their due place. If they *do* have their due place, the student will feel that he is standing on holy ground. The Archbishop then proceeds :

"We stand for the principle that loyalty to truth, whatsoever it be, is the first and primary duty, and that no thought, at the outset or in the course of this investigation, as to the consequence of searching this or that conclusion, ought to divert the genuine truth-seeker from this path. In that way his study of Holy Scripture, as indeed of everything else, ought to be unfettered, and I respect the man who genuinely follows it to its ultimate conclusion, provided always that he has honestly utilized all the evidence before him, including the history and the effect of the belief itself, and that he is not starting with a presupposition which he regards as scientific, but which may vitiate his whole course of thought. The honest man, then, is to search, be it Scripture or anything else, unfettered."

The Archbishop then points out that "those upon whom rests the solemn responsibility of deciding whether or not to accredit him as a teacher" have also serious obligations. It is only, he declares, within the lines laid down by the formularies of the Church of England that a man can be so accredited within the Anglican Communion. If the individual student's pursuit of truth has carried him to a point lying unmistakably beyond the limits of those formularies, he can hardly take it ill if the responsible authorities, who are undoubtedly within their rights in giving or withholding the commission to teach and preach, should feel unable to continue that commission to him as an official exponent of the doctrine of the Church of England.

One of the most perplexing of the problems that
 The Problem
 of Race
 Distinction. confront both the statesman and the missionary is that of race distinction. For the former, it has its social, political, and educational aspects ; for the latter there is the question of combined worship and communion. The difficulty has recently been made prominent by a decision of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of South Africa. A European with a coloured wife, who is, however, the daughter

of an English father, claimed that his children should be permitted to attend an undenominational school, intended for children "of European parentage and extraction." The claim was contested, and ultimately reached the highest Court, which eventually upheld the exclusion. The decision of the Court was that, if one of a person's "nearer ancestors" on either side is of black or yellow race, that person must be regarded as of other than European descent. This, as the *Times* points out, brings up the question how far back an inquiry into the purity of blood should be carried. Whatever the statesmen may decide, the Church has clear obligations—attended, in practice, no doubt, by many possible complications—not only to her coloured members, but to those of mixed descent. Strenuous efforts have recently been made for the proper education of Eurasian children in India. Those in Africa who are the offspring of mixed parentage have an equal claim on her regard.

The discovery near Ipswich of a human skeleton in the "pre-boulder" clay cannot fail to be of greatest interest to Bible students, especially to those of the more conservative school. Till quite recent times the available evidence seemed to show that the Neanderthal man—a person of somewhat simian characteristics—was the earliest extant specimen—in Europe, at any rate—of the human race. But, if the geologists are right, the skeleton discovered near Ipswich is of far earlier date than the Neanderthal man. And further, it has conspicuous affinities in height, shape and formation with the modern man of to-day. The discovery, therefore, lends important confirmation to the view already held by some eminent anthropologists, that the modern type of man came into being at an extremely early date, and that long *after* this date an inferior type existed in Europe. In other words, the "modern" type of man is apparently the more ancient, and certainly existed long before the glacial period. The Biblical scholar, while profoundly grateful for this new side-light from

geology, will be wise not to press it for more than it is worth. But it may well serve to remind us that Science has not yet shed her last ray of illumination upon Holy Scripture. It may also warn us not too readily to forsake our Old Testament records for some attractive and sweeping generalization which fuller knowledge may prove to have been founded on insufficient and inadequate evidence.

**The Policy
of the
Vatican.**

It is difficult for Anglican observers in Protestant England to form an estimate of the true inwardness of the policy pursued by the Vatican. It is fairly obvious, however, that that policy must be very distressing to many faithful members of the Roman communion. The recent placing on the Index of Mgr. Duchesne's "L'Histoire Ancienne de l'Église" cannot fail to have put a strain on the fidelity of many a Catholic scholar. At the time of its publication the book—which is admittedly a solid and brilliant contribution to the study of Church history—was received with a chorus of approval, including the warm personal approbation of the Pope. It is true that there were some discordant voices, and since the translation of the book into Italian, these voices have gathered strength and have finally prevailed. The problem seems to resolve itself into this shape: How long are the scholars and teachers of a world-wide Communion to submit to the domination of a body of Italian ecclesiastics? Rome, we know—to be Rome—must be stable and immovable. But there is more here than immobility. If actions of this kind proceed much further it will be difficult to resist the impression that Rome is actively engaged in the construction of her own coffin.

**Sunday Rifle
Practice.**

It is a matter for very grave regret that the Army Council has seen fit to give its sanction to rifle-shooting on Sunday. It is true that certain safeguards are specified. The attendance at the practices must be purely voluntary, and there must be no interference with the amenities of any particular locality. It may be doubted, how-

ever, whether these safeguards will be very effective in reality. It is not improbable that those who decline to attend the Sunday practices will be marked men, and that their chances of promotion will be proportionately lessened. We do not say this in any spirit of hostility to the idea of universal national training. On the contrary, we think that the general spirit of discipline and self-sacrifice, which such a training would beget cannot fail to be profoundly beneficial to a generation that is somewhat lacking in these characteristics. We are not unaware, too, of the possible argument that many of these young fellows, if they were not at the practice-ground, would certainly not be at Church, and that if they are neglectful of the claims of the soul, it is at any rate something to promote the health and vigour of the body. But, in spite of all this, we regret deeply what seems to be another invasion of the sanctity of Sunday, with its necessary consequence in an increasing secularization of life.

Many speeches have been made and many articles have been written during the past month on the life and work of Charles Dickens. There has been a mingling flood of criticism and of praise. He has been discussed as creator, as stylist, as social reformer. It would be apart from our general purpose in these pages either to summarize these varied contributions or to attempt an independent survey. There is, however, one point of excellence in the work of Charles Dickens which has always seemed to us to be of peculiar worth. And at no time has it shone forth so pre-eminently as it does at the present day, when some of the prevailing tendencies in fiction are of an entirely different character. The point of excellence is that Dickens is always so thoroughly pure and clean. An appreciation of this was expressed in such emphatic terms by the *Times* leader of February 7 that we venture to quote the whole passage with warmest and most thankful appreciation :

“ The day that he penned his first book he made his country happier ; he made it younger, he made it better. And whenever people turn, as they

always in the end do after satiety with complex things and strange fare, to what is simple and fundamental, their admiration goes out to him who has brought mirth and sunshine into many lives. No one ever held a pen that moved more of his fellows to honest laughter; laughter which no one dreads but fools and rogues and pedants; laughter which blew to the winds a thousand cobwebs which the brooms of the past had respected. We say 'honest laughter' because every page was clean, no sentence dependent for its effect upon some nasty innuendo; no selling of the artist's conscience to buy the applause of the foul-minded. He could be strong and be pure. Like all healthy natures, he was not over-squeamish. He was not afraid to go into places and speak of things which it was deemed generally decorous to pass by. He did not talk about art for art's sake in the sense of filth for filth's sake. He handled and wrote of the evil things and temptations as do strong men. It was not in him to scrape together with prurient industry all that was foul, leprous, and malodorous, and to call this sort of business solving a moral problem or studying it scientifically. He is not always handling the mud-rake."

At this period of the year, parochial reports are beginning to make their appearance. To the casual reader they look uninteresting enough, but to him who looks beneath the surface they represent an enormous effort and an enormous influence. Statistics and statements of accounts, utterly uninspiring in themselves, tell the story of lives changed, homes brightened, and hearts cheered the whole land through. One such report has come to us from South-East London, and Canon Lewis calls it "A despatch from the Church militant in Bermondsey." Accounts and figures are kept for another place, and the story is told, in simple fashion, of a little of the work and a few of its results in a parish of over 20,000 souls. We venture to commend this despatch to the despondent pessimist and the kind-hearted millionaire if either reads our paper. The reading of it will rid the pessimist of his despondency and provide the millionaire with an outlet for his money. Those of us who are neither can read it, and many others like it, from every corner of the land; and, reading, thank God and take courage.

