

THE CHURCHMAN

April, 1912.

The Month.

The Coal Strike.

THE coal strike is laying, as we write these paragraphs, a cold and devastating hand on the whole of England. We can only hope and pray that before our words appear in print a settlement will have been reached on lines that are fair and equitable to all. Into the rights and wrongs of the question at issue we cannot enter here. We neither have the requisite data at our disposal, nor have we the training and experience which would enable us to estimate the data rightly. We acknowledge, as all fair-minded men must, that the work of a miner is so arduous and so dangerous that it should meet with very adequate remuneration. On the other hand, it may fairly be questioned whether it should be possible for one group of workers to paralyze—if they choose to do so—the whole life of the country. In France, Germany, America, even in our own Colonies, no such thing would be permitted. The machinery exists for preventing it in States that are republican as well as under less popular forms of government. In a sense trades unionism is on its trial. So far as it exists to maintain the rights of the worker and to better his lot it performs a useful work. If it essays the more ambitious rôle of controlling the destinies of the country by the exercise of autocratic power, then society will have no option but to check the power of the unions and confine them within more reasonable limits.

Our contemporary, the *British Weekly*, contained an article in its issue of March 17, in which the miners' strike gives occasion to a general discussion of the view and aims of modern democracy. The writer regards the extension of the franchise in 1884 as the means whereby "Democracy marched bravely forward to its seat, the unquestioned and irresistible master of the Empire." At the bottom of the present unrest lies the determination of the people "to have a fuller, a better, an easier, a happier life." Many things have combined to stimulate the determination—the spread of education, the decay of deference, the ostentatious luxury of the rich, the general emancipation of the mind from merely traditional views of things. Its accomplishment has been hindered by lack of unity. Now the unity is coming about. The railway strike and the miners' strike, particularly the latter, are significant illustrations. Then the article proceeds to comfort the disquieted by showing that there are limits to the power of labour, and the people cannot fight for ever against economic facts, and closes by indicating the duty and the privilege of the Christian Church. "The only hope for Demos is that Demos should be Christian." There is something of politics in the article, but in the main it is helpful, and we have ventured to refer to it because of that helpfulness, and because we would add something to it.

The great need is to remember that Demos means the whole people, or ought to. *Senatus populusque Romanus* is a better way of speaking of a nation than to talk of plebeians or patricians, much better than to divide into "the idle rich" and "the wastrel poor." There are idle rich and there are wastrel poor; but we are optimists enough to believe that the majority in the one case are not idle and in the other not wastrel. There is too great a tendency to speak of the classes as if they were separate entities, sometimes to set class against class, and to inflame the passions of the one by exaggerating the faults of the other. We cannot altogether acquit some of our great politicians in this matter. It will do harm, it must do harm,

and we must set ourselves by word and by example to prove that the interests of one class are the interests of the other, the interests of each the interests of the whole.

We presume the *British Weekly* means something more than the decay of old-fashioned courtesy—a decay in some ways to be greatly deplored. It is, however, but one symptom of the general decay. Authority, it matters not of what kind, stands for little with some folk. The suffragette smashing windows, the passive resister refusing his rates, the motorist heedlessly rushing through villages at forty miles an hour, the ritualist treating rubrics, laws, and vows with lofty disdain, the trades union repudiating a bargain, are all instances of this tendency to sit loose to the claims of authority, whatever the authority be. “The powers that be are ordained of God” is old-fashioned and early Victorian, but it is Pauline and Scriptural. To ignore it is to desert the Christian standpoint; and if we are going to bring the democracy to that Christian standpoint, the Church and the Churches must put their own house in order. Is it not time to appeal for a general review of the position from the plainly Christian point of view? The Church must carry its message to Demos with clean hands, and few hands are quite clean just now.

Here is another and a significant illustration of **Sunday.** the decay of deference. We are faced by the fact that the very Government of the land, in the person of the War Minister, finds itself compelled to make an apology for the desecration of Sunday in the interests of efficiency in war. The *Times*, of March 4, contains an official paragraph making public what was evidently said to the Bishops and representatives of the Free Churches, who interviewed the War Office. The Army Council do not wish us to encourage lack of deference to Sunday. The paragraph runs:

“The Army Council have no wish to do anything to increase a tendency to regard Sunday as other than a day of rest, or to interfere with the general

desire in any district to preserve the quiet and peacefulness of the Sabbath Careful instructions are being given on this subject."

They add that they are giving orders that those attending for musketry on that day shall be able, if they desire it, to be present at a Church parade or other religious service. But we do not feel quite happy about it. If our social conditions do not admit of proper facilities for military training on other days than Sunday, our social conditions need overhauling. Religion is being crushed out by the exigencies of secular things, but the real moral welfare of the people will go with it. We venture to believe that the religious life of the nation is as valuable as its military efficiency. Britain will become a decadent power only if she be untrue to God. Accurate marksmanship is a good thing; but true religion is a better. In some minds the "big battalions" theory seems to loom large. Woe to Britain if either nation or Government adopt it!

The Archbishop of Canterbury never allows him-

Convent
Schools. self to be suspected of being a scaremonger. His words are always sane, considered, and unexaggerated. In his recent charge he took occasion to speak a timely warning against the use of convent schools by members of the Church of England. These schools are always cheap, the education is generally excellent, and—the danger considerable. The Archbishop writes, and his words are entirely worthy of reproduction :

"What is not very comprehensible and by no means admirable is the unwisdom, to use no stronger word, of the English parent who, either from mere indifference—or more probably in reliance on the promise given, and doubtless kept, that his daughter will in the school receive no direct religious instruction from those good sisters—places a little girl, at the most susceptible age, under influences and amid surroundings which must a few years later bear the fruit which is to be expected from what she has unconsciously imbibed from companions as well as teachers in schooldays spent under those conditions. If that parental apathy or thoughtlessness seems to us not very comprehensible, may one explanation perhaps be that our own Church has not given the attention it requires to the duty of making adequate provision for this particular need on terms which are within the reach of such parents? I commend the matter earnestly to the consideration of all who

care (and who is there that does not care?) that our Church should take its proper part in thus shaping the mind and character of those who will in a few years' time hold a large place in the young motherhood of England."

New Testament Revision. The fact that an influential deputation has approached the Archbishop of Canterbury in connection with a proposed further revision of the New Testament is to be welcomed as an indication, not only of great zeal for and interest in God's Word, but also of the desire that Englishmen should possess it in the most faultless form possible in their mother tongue. When we come to the question of the best way to effect this, the Archbishop's wise cautions may well serve to check over-hasty action. There is this much to be said for revision. The researches and discoveries of the last thirty years have undoubtedly thrown a flood of light on the vernacular Greek in which the New Testament books are for the most part, written; and any translation that might be made now ought naturally to profit by that additional information. But it is, perhaps, early to attempt a further revision, and attempts made by separate scholars may be welcomed as preliminaries to work on a larger scale. If anyone wishes to see the Epistle to the Romans rendered by a scholar who not only entered into the mind of St. Paul, but had a most sympathetic appreciation of St. Paul's use of language, let him read the translation of the Epistle by the late Head Master of Westminster, W. G. Rutherford. He will find that familiar passages glow with new life and added meaning.

Divinity Degrees at Cambridge. We have heard with the greatest delight of the memorial addressed by the Cambridge Professor of Divinity to the Vice-Chancellor of the University. It is a petition that the condition restricting Divinity degrees to "clerks in Holy Orders in the Church of England" may be removed. The Bishop of Durham, when placing a veto on a similar proposal advocated by the Senate of the University of Durham, said: "I did not feel justified in taking a line which would have allowed Durham to lead the way where it is fitter,

as I think, that the older Universities should first show their mind and take action." A request that is backed by Professors Swete, Bethune-Baker, Burkett, Emery Barnes, and Stanton, cannot lightly be disregarded, and it is gratifying to know that the Council of the Senate has lost no time in giving a favourable and sympathetic answer. The proposal may have many obstacles to encounter before it can be carried into effect, but it is a matter of the greatest significance that it should have been made at all, and made under such powerful auspices. For ourselves, we hold that whatever may be said for "unhappy divisions" in things ecclesiastical, they should not be allowed to persist in academic circles. Co-operation in religious study may prove to be a long step towards the wished-for reunion of separated Churches.

Divinity
Degrees at
Oxford.

Oxford, too, is not to lag behindhand in this movement for reform. What is taking place there may be best ascertained from a passage in the *Oxford Magazine* of March 7, which we transcribe as it stands :

"For some little time there have been whispers that important reforms were contemplated in the Theological Faculty. But as the secret (in the first instance an Oxford secret) has been divulged at Cambridge to the Press, we may confirm the truth of the rumours. Reforms of an interesting and far-reaching kind are likely to be introduced soon, prompted and outlined by the professors and the other members of the Faculty. The principles of the changes are two, viz.—(1) That the University can no longer undertake to act on behalf of the Church of England in the character of its official representative; and (2) that as there are at present a number of its students who are not members of the Church of England, but who can nevertheless justly claim access to its highest degrees, such restrictions as exist should be removed, and it should be clearly understood that the examinations and degrees are only tests of knowledge, and are entirely independent of membership in any particular religious body. It is unnecessary to trace in detail here the specific applications of these principles. In themselves they appear to us to be justly and reasonably conceived. The measures which will be proposed are sure, we think, of a good welcome from the University, for there is little doubt but that they will greatly strengthen the position of theological learning in Oxford and in England."

Those who are resident in Oxford and engaged in tutorial work there will doubtless welcome such a change. It is not so

certain, however, that they will be received with equal warmth by Oxford clerical graduates scattered throughout the country. We can only trust that in this case counsels of wisdom and justice will prevail, and that there may be no organized opposition to this most necessary reform.

The forecast of the *Oxford Magazine* is confirmed and amplified by Professor Lock's article in the *Guardian* of March 8. We learn from it that events at Cambridge are exactly paralleled by events at Oxford. Here, too, every one of the Divinity Professors has joined in the petition to the Hebdomadal Council that the existing restrictions on Divinity degrees may be removed. Professor Lock has not only signed the petition, but goes on to support it by a most able and convincing *apologia*. Coming from him—one of the last men to be suspected of disloyalty either to the Church of England or the University of Oxford—the *apologia* can hardly fail to carry very great weight. He speaks of three positive gains that may be expected to flow from the change: (1) The University will have taken the initiative in "the recognition of a just claim"; (2) the possibility will be secured for raising the standard required for degrees in Divinity; (3) inasmuch as the University is no longer qualified to act as the representative of the Church and confer degrees in her name, legislation might be passed in the University which would seriously compromise the Church. By the present separation any such compromising action would be made impossible. We hope Professor Lock's able plea will receive all the attention it so well merits.

One of the convincing signs that the Church of England is determined to set its house in order is the prominence being given in both the Southern and the Northern Houses of Convocation to the subject of training candidates for Holy Orders. Few people would deny that the proper training—when it can be secured—consists in

graduation at a University, followed by more specific training in theology and preparation for pastoral work. This, in an ordinary way, would mean a five years', or at the least a four years', course. The Bishops on the whole are clear that this is the ideal; the practical problem is: Can it be realized? Many who have had long experience in these matters gravely doubt it. And if each Bishop reserves to himself the right to make exceptions in exceptional cases, there is every probability that these will prove to be very numerous. A practical way of advancing towards the ideal is either to plant hostels for Churchmen in cities where Universities are already established, or to enter into connection, as many of the theological colleges have done, with the University of Durham in such a way that the student receives his special training for the ministry at his own college, and graduates in Arts after a year's further residence at Durham. This system is, perhaps, not ideal, but it contains the germ of still better possibilities.

