

THE CHURCHMAN

November, 1915.

The Month.

**An Amazing
Attack.** THERE continues to be a great deal of discussion about the relation of the Church to the War, but we do not get much more forward in the way of practical effort. Yet everybody seems to be agreed that the Church, great in many ways as its work has been in the past twelve months, has not risen adequately to its responsibility or availed itself sufficiently of its opportunity. We are not pretending to say where the blame lies, we are content to record the fact. This much, however, we will say—that some Churchmen seem more devoted to destructive criticism than they are to constructive reform. It is amazing, for example, that at a time like this one of the greatest of the Church newspapers should devote its energies to attempting to make the position of the Chaplain-General impossible. It is true, no doubt, that the administration of the Chaplain-General's department is not perfect—what Government office is?—but it does not follow that it is the Chaplain-General's fault. If any deficiencies exist—which, however, has yet to be proved, and anonymous letters and anonymous articles in the newspapers are no proof at all—they are much more likely to be due to the stringent rules of the War Office than to any slackness on the part of Bishop Taylor Smith. The War has placed upon him a tremendous burden of responsibility; and, *pace* the *Church Times*, the almost universal testimony has been that he has discharged it with a capacity, an energy, and a devotion, which have

known no bounds. He has not spared himself in the least, and he has had to face difficulties the greatness of which few people outside his own department have any conception. His freedom has been limited and restricted by rules and conditions, rendered necessary, no doubt, by military considerations, but within these limitations and restrictions he has done a work for which the whole Church should thank him. It is encouraging to note that prelates, like the Bishops of Oxford and St. Asaph, have borne ungrudging testimony to the greatness and value of his service; and it is indeed melancholy to reflect that party prejudice can make possible such an attack upon the Chaplain-General as that to which we have referred. The Chaplain-General has every claim upon our gratitude, our sympathy, and our support, and we believe that these will be given him without stint by all loyal Churchmen.

The Call to Prayer and Service. The Chaplain-General was precluded, of course, from answering the attack made upon him; but a letter from his pen appeared in the newspapers soon after, which, we hope, caused his critics to experience at least some little sense of shame. It was an appeal for prayer and for service on behalf of our troops. The Bishop recalled the wide response made fifteen months ago to the first call to prayer at noon. "The universal midday prayer-meeting," he said, "has not only been a source of strength and comfort to our fighting men at the front, of which I have ample evidence, but it has proved a bond of union between all Christian folk throughout the Empire." He therefore again invokes the aid of the Press on behalf of the troops who have still to go forth, as well as for those who shall return. "I tremble for the Church," he added, "that does not set aside at this time all that does not matter, and give herself to this unique opportunity to evangelize and help spiritually the men whose hearts and minds are awakened or awakening towards the things which are unseen, and consequently eternal." He reminded us, too, of the reflex blessing of such prayer and service: "It has been my prayer and hope for

some years now," he wrote, "that the Army might become the greatest missionary society the world has ever known. A nation with such a consecrated body of men in the Services to-day and in civil life to-morrow would prove an irresistible force against all the powers of evil." The Bishop therefore pleaded for more prayer on behalf of our soldiers, sailors, and airmen. There will be a widespread response to the Bishop's appeal for prayer—at least, we trust so. The fact ought not, however, to be lost sight of that according to the testimony of many clergy of experience there is not quite the same sense of the urgency of the call to prayer as that which seemed to take possession of Christian people fifteen months ago. Is it that we have grown weary? Is it that a new inspiration is needed? Whatever may be the cause, it is time that we endeavoured to get back to the former conditions, and gave ourselves more devotedly to prayer for our soldiers, sailors, and airmen. It is not without significance that the Chaplain-General suggests no set form of intercession. He is content simply to ask for prayer, for that prayer framed by the lips to express the aspirations and longing of every human heart.

But what of service? It is here that we are *Where we are Lacking.* lacking. The Bishop speaks of the Church setting aside at this time all that does not matter and giving itself to this unique opportunity to evangelize and help spiritually the troops. We look in vain for any such renunciation. Churchmen are still keeping alive, and even in some cases fanning into fresh flame, old controversies which only serve to increase discussion and bitterness. We do not say that these things are unimportant—some of them are of supreme moment if the purity of the Church is to be maintained—but they could have been usefully and profitably laid aside for a time, if only a real truce had been called for by authority. But a truce, to be effective, must be observed all round. This, unfortunately, has not been the case, and controversy still holds the field. Can nothing be done? We see little hope until some leader arise

to call the Church as a body to a higher and a nobler sense of spiritual service on behalf of the troops, both those at the front and those still in training at home. It is a "unique opportunity"—everyone is agreed as to that—and it is being missed. The duty is plain enough: may grace be given to the Church to fulfil it!

In our list of the Publications of the Month The Secret of Power. (p. 875) will be found a reference to a very remarkable book, "Retreats" (Robert Scott: 2s. 6d. net), which should be carefully studied by all who are concerned for the spiritual welfare of the Church. We mention it specially here in order to call attention to some very striking passages in the Bishop of Chelmsford's Introduction. He declares that the Church, with its varying forms of ritual and worship, is in need of power, and that to the lack of power is due "her failure to discharge fully the sacred duty entrusted to her by her Lord Himself." The power the Church needs can only come through prayer, and the Bishop takes us back to the earliest days to show us that the whole Church met together for the First Retreat, and the Holy Spirit was outpoured in rich blessing on the Church: "From the Retreat in the Upper Room the Church went forth, inspired and strengthened, to take up its Divine mission, to conquer the world and win it for her Lord." And, again, when at "the most wonderful Prayer Meeting in the history of the Church"—held with closed doors, and of which we know nothing save that St. Matthias was chosen—the Holy Ghost fell upon the Apostles and they were endued with power, "these men soon opened the door which separated them from the world and streamed forth into that world of sin and shame, with the message of the Christ, of the Cross, as the one Hope of men. This is the world's need to-day." There is only one means of acquiring power: "This is the old Apostolic method of resorting to the Upper Room"; and the Bishop says that he would "rejoice if the *whole* Church, using the term in the broadest sense, could

throw aside that which disunites and, for a period, leaving controversy on one side, betake herself to united prayer." It is a great proposal, great in its simplicity, great in its purpose, and great it would assuredly be in its results. It is not an impossible suggestion, nor can we believe it to be hopeless. The minds of many men are being led in that direction, and if it be kept well to the front, talked about, and prayed about, who can say but that in time it may come to be a blessed reality?

The Bishop of Chelmsford asks in this connection whether the Church will be ready for the task—no easy one—which will await it after the War? We are all wondering what England will be like when the conflict is over—God in His mercy hasten the day!—but one thing seems to be certain, that democracy will look, to use the Bishop's words, for "a larger 'place in the sun,'" and it will have to choose between the safety and welfare of the body or the safety and welfare of the soul. "If England," he tells us, "is not to be destroyed from within, the Church must speak 'with authority'; but to have authority, she must have the 'power.'"

"The present prosperity will not last, work will become less, receipts from 'billeting' will cease, deaths of men in the field become more numerous, homes will be broken up, the wounded and the maimed for life will be in our streets, and the widow and the orphan will be found on every side. Taxation will be overwhelming, trade will be dislocated. The old problems of Home Rule and of Women's Suffrage will still be with us and striving to rend the Nation from top to bottom. In the midst of all this men will clamour, and rightly so, for a new England, free from the blights of the Social wrongs of bygone days. The Church, founded on the Rock, full of the Holy Ghost, and with the Message of life to deliver, will then be called upon to do her work. Will she be ready? The answer depends upon the use she now makes of her opportunities of obtaining Power."

These are wise words, weighty words, and we would that they could be proclaimed before every Christian congregation in the land. The solemn significance of the last sentence quoted can hardly be mistaken. It will be a truly awful thing if when that time comes the Church is found wanting. Is it not already being weighed in the balances?

As the CHURCHMAN has been among the periodicals which have commented upon the official silence of the Church Missionary Society in regard to the Archbishop's statement on Kikuyu, we think it only right that we should reprint from the October issue of the *C.M. Review*—the Society's principal official organ—the following Editorial Notes explaining the Society's position :

“The movement towards federation had its origin many years ago in conversations between Bishop Tucker and Dr. Scott (of the Church of Scotland Mission), regarding the standards for the baptism and instruction of converts, and customs of worship and Church order in the different Missions, and the problem of raising these standards all round. At a conference of missionaries at Nairobi in 1909 proposals for federation, practically identical with the later Kikuyu scheme, were adopted and sent to the different societies at home for consideration. They contained nothing novel, but represented the best standards then in practice in the Missions concerned. In November, 1910, after full consideration, the C.M.S. Committee expressed their approval of their missionaries joining such a federation, subject to the concurrence of their Bishops, and on the clear understanding that their independent management of their own Missions was retained. The Church of Scotland and other societies concerned passed similar resolutions. Encouraged by these, a second conference was held at Kikuyu in 1913, at which the proposals were again agreed upon, with some slight alterations.

“Before these modified resolutions were considered by the C.M.S. Committee, the Bishop of Zanzibar had launched his charge of heresy against his brother Bishops. The Committee nevertheless patiently considered the Kikuyu proposals, and on June 30, 1914, definitely approved of their local governing bodies entering into a federation with the governing bodies of other Missions, on the lines of an amended form of the Kikuyu scheme. This approval was again made subject to the concurrence of the Bishops of Mombasa and Uganda, and was adopted “without prejudice to any ecclesiastical issues which may hereafter be raised.” The proposed amendments were chiefly verbal, but it is interesting to note that they had eliminated the phrase giving vague powers to the suggested Representative Council, to which the Archbishop took exception afterwards in his statement. This resolution was duly communicated to the Bishops of Mombasa and Uganda, but their reply has not yet been received, and was not expected until they had received and had had time to consider the statement, the early publication of which the Archbishop had then already announced.

“The Archbishop's statement is not, of course, addressed to the C.M.S. Committee. Such advice as it contains is addressed to the Bishops, to whom he stands in the relation of Metropolitan. There is no doubt that the Bishops of Mombasa and Uganda will give prayerful and earnest consideration to this advice, and will strive to follow it both in letter and in spirit.

Whether they will then express their immediate concurrence in the C.M.S. resolutions, or what steps they will take, yet remains to be seen. Their action in the past has been wisely deliberate, and will doubtless be so in the future. The many prayers offered for God's guidance to them will not remain unanswered. The fear that any misunderstanding is likely to arise between the two Bishops and the C.M.S. Committee is entirely devoid of foundation, and the relations between them have been most cordial throughout.

“The Archbishop's statement is more strongly in favour of co-operation than many recognize. It shows much insight into the conditions of the mission-field, and deep sympathy with those who have to work under them; his positive pronouncement as to the admission of devout Christian men to the Holy Communion is definite and unhesitating, and his limitations are worded with extreme caution. It is evident enough that any movement towards reunion will be stronger and more permanent the greater the weight of opinion it can carry in its favour. If the Archbishop's advice to the Bishops under his jurisdiction should result in the aims of Kikuyu being accomplished in such a way as to carry with it the great body of moderate opinion in the Church of England, the Archbishop will not only have earned the gratitude of our Society, but will have rendered an inestimable service to the Universal Church of Christ.”

Upon this we only desire to add that we have never suspected the C.M.S. of any want of loyalty to the principles for which Kikuyu stands, and we are glad to have so definite a statement of the extent to which the Society is committed to the Scheme of Federation. But we still think that some clear and distinct pronouncement by the C.M.S. Committee in support of the statement is needed, and the remark applies with still greater force to Evangelical Bishops, among whom there seems to be a “conspiracy of silence.” It is passing strange that, while some other Bishops have taken occasion openly to disown it so far as their own dioceses are concerned, no voice is heard from the Evangelical side in vindication of its principles.

The Bishops
and
Reservation.

It is in no spirit of controversy that we refer to the Bishop of Oxford's article on “Reservation of the Blessed Sacrament,” for, much as we dissent from it in many particulars, we are conscious of its manly straightforwardness, and we seem to recognize in it a genuine attempt after peace. The concluding passages of the article,

however, are of such permanent importance that they need to be placed on record. The Bishop quotes the full text of the proposed new rubric agreed to by Convocation, which, roughly stated, allows reservation for the sick, but not "for any other purpose whatsoever"; and then adds:

"That means quite certainly that the Bishops of our province, though they utter no theological or other condemnation of the practice, do not intend to allow the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament as an object and centre of devotion. About this Western development of the use of the Blessed Sacrament I have spoken, from a theological point of view, in my book called 'The Body of Christ.' I do not now intend to say anything about it. And as far as my own feelings go, I recognize its attractiveness to the full. But it must be acknowledged that this later Western use of the reserved Sacrament as a permanent centre of devotion has not behind it either catholic or ancient authority. The Eastern Church does not know it, and the ancient Church did not know it. It has not the sanction of our own part of the Church, the Church of England. The present Episcopate exhibit no change in this respect. If there were proper authority for it, I should, of course, be wholly willing to allow it. But it is plainly not the intention of the Bishops as a body to allow it. And individual Bishops who have assented to the proposed new rubric, as I have, are in my judgment bound in honour not to sanction the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament in the open church, which confessedly is desired not solely in order for the Communion of the sick, which can be provided for by reservation in a secluded chapel, but also in order that the faithful may direct their devotions to our Lord in the Holy Sacrament. Perhaps there is no line to be drawn between directing devotions to our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament reserved in the tabernacle and the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Perhaps Exposition and also Benediction would follow upon reservation in the open church. But I am not discussing this or reflecting upon it. I am only saying as explicitly as possible why I feel sure that a Bishop of the Church of England to-day may sanction reservation for the sick and dying under the conditions contemplated in the proposed new rubric, without outrunning his legitimate discretion, but is bound, if he has assented to that rubric, not to go beyond it. And I would add that I feel convinced that if a current practice among us, even within a restricted circle, be found to have outrun the provisions of the proposed rubric in the interval before its enactment, we shall infallibly lose what I think would be the immense gain of a restoration of reservation in the Church of England to-day by synodical authority."

It is imperative, of course, that, if this proposed new rubric should ultimately be authorized, the Bishops must see that their clergy do not go one step beyond it. This will then mean that some very drastic changes will have to be made in one or two

dioceses, where reservation is tolerated under conditions which allow of adoration and devotion. It must not be supposed, however, that the Bishops have any legal power to grant even the concession the Bishop of Oxford hints at. Their jurisdiction has its limitations, though these, unfortunately, are not sufficiently realized. The Report of the Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline referred to the matter thus :

“ There cannot, in our opinion, be any doubt that the Acts of Uniformity bind Bishops as well as other clergymen, and that the law does not recognize any right in a Bishop to override the provisions as to services, rites, and ceremonies, contained in those Acts. The question whether the law ought not to be modified so as to confer on the Bishops wider powers of authorization and also control of public services than any they at present possess is an important one, to which we shall return at a later stage of our Report. At the present stage it is enough to say that, though Bishops have from time to time used a certain liberty of action with a view to relax the stringency of the Acts of Uniformity, it does not appear to us that there is any legal ground for assuming that, apart from statutory provision, the Bishop of a diocese has an inherent right to dispense the clergy from observing the provisions of those Acts. Such an assumption would, in our opinion, be inconsistent with the constitutional relations of Church and State in England; and it seems reasonable also to hold that, on the principles of ecclesiastical order, the collective action of the Bishops assembled in the Convocations of both provinces, when in 1662 they appointed the use of the Prayer-Book, has precluded the claim of any individual Bishop to set aside or alter what is therein prescribed. The test of legality or illegality in the conduct of Divine Service must be applied without reference to any such claim.”

The law has not been altered, and until it is changed in a perfectly constitutional manner, the Bishops ought to respect it.

