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THE CHURCHMAN

April, 1923

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

**Evangelicals
and Revision.** EVANGELICAL opinion on Prayer Book Revision is gradually consolidating, and there seems every reason to hope that by June next, when the matter will come up in the National Assembly for serious discussion—perhaps even for decision—Evangelical leaders will be able to state the Evangelical position with the knowledge that they have behind them a solid, compact and united body, ready to consider favourably every change that is calculated to increase the efficiency of the Church of England or to enrich its worship, but resolutely determined to resist every proposal that can be regarded as altering, or seeming to alter, its doctrinal balance. We put the point in this alternative form because we note that Lord Hugh Cecil, M.P., who was one of the most active members of the Revision Committee, definitely stated in the address he gave on March 13 at St. Paul's, Covent Garden, that "there had not been the slightest intention of modifying in any way the doctrine of the Church." He went on to say what had been done. "It was true that changes had been made to make the service more acceptable to those holding the High Church doctrine, but that had been done by setting up an area within which truth could be found rather than by attempting to express a precise definition" (*Times*, March 14). We are a little puzzled to know the precise meaning of this somewhat enigmatic sentence, but the one definite point in it seems to be that changes have been made to ease the position of High Churchmen. We cannot be expected to take serious note of what was or was not "intended" by the Committee. It is enough that the proposals be judged by themselves, and although in this connection Lord Hugh Cecil attempted to justify the three changes which have excited

controversy ("unreasonably" as he thinks, but let that pass), the fact remains that by a very large body of instructed Church-people these changes are viewed with the greatest apprehension because they regard them as "modifying" in a fundamental way "the doctrine of the Church."

We propose to show the very serious character
 Reintroduction of the Mass, of the proposed "modifications" and for this purpose we avail ourselves of the special contribution from a valued correspondent, who writes as follows:—

"It is the Mass that matters." This has been the conviction of English Churchmen since the Reformers "called the laity into the Chancel." The Mass denotes sacerdotalism—for by the words of the officiating Minister the Bread and Wine undergo a change that makes present, in, with or under them, the Body and Blood of Christ. The Mass denotes a sacrifice that re-presents to God the Sacrifice made once and for all on Calvary for the sins of the whole world. The Mass by reason of the localized Presence of the Redeemer in, with, or under the consecrated Elements, makes logical and inevitable Adoration of the Reserved Sacrament. Exposition and Benediction, which are legitimate developments in the Roman system, date from the doctrine of the localized Presence taught by Roman theology. We are children of the twentieth century. We cannot cut ourselves adrift from the ages that have passed. Symbols remain symbols by reason of their associations, and we cannot free ourselves from their meaning. The Revision proposals in the Report of the Committee of the National Assembly authorize the use of the chasuble by the consecrating Minister at Holy Communion. The chasuble is the vestment with which the Roman priest on his ordination is vested ceremonially, when he receives authority to offer the sacrifice of the Mass. It is the badge of his priesthood. It symbolizes his sacerdotalism. Those who have introduced the chasuble into the Church of England plead that they are priests of the same character as those of Rome and wish to display the continuity of the priesthood by the vestment they wear. We cannot remove the accepted meaning of the chasuble by asserting that it means nothing!

By virtue of his office as priest the consecrating Minister at the Lord's Table is able, according to the teaching of Rome and

Anglo-Catholicism, to bring the Presence of our Lord to the Elements. When this is done our Lord is presented sacrificially to God. In our Communion Office, Communion immediately follows the Consecration. We communicate in the atmosphere of the Upper Room. When the communion ends we ask God to accept our Sacrifice of Prayer and Thanksgiving. It is said that this is a direct reference to the Sacrifice of the Mass offered by the Minister. In our present Office the structure of the service and the history behind it, as well as the use of the phrase elsewhere in the Prayer Book, show that no such meaning is intended. In the Revision proposal the phrase "our Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving" occurs after Consecration of the Elements and before Communion. Sacerdotal writers have contended that this must be done in order that the doctrine of the Sacrifice in the Communion Office be plainly taught, and it is to satisfy this contention that the alteration of the position of the Prayer has been made.

Reservation is proposed to be permitted only for the Communion of the Sick, but if the Elements have with them the localized Presence of the Redeemer, it is impossible to compel those who hold this belief to abstain from worshipping the Sacramental Presence in the Elements, from passing to such services as Benediction in which the Sacramental Presence blesses the faithful and from adopting the modern developments that are associated with the permanent localized Presence in the Sacrament. It is noteworthy that the Prayer Book forbids the removal of the consecrated Elements that are unconsumed in the course of the service from the church, and Reservation is condemned in the Articles of Religion.

The Effect of the Three Changes: Taking these three changes together (our correspondent concludes) it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the Revision proposals transform the doctrine of our Communion Office into the doctrine of the Roman Mass, which we repudiate not because it is Roman, but on account of its opposition to the teaching of Holy Scripture, the doctrine of the Primitive Church and the plain and manifest meaning of the formularies of our own Church. If we in any way are a party to sanctioning officially this teaching within our Church, we destroy the doctrinal basis of our Prayer Book and open the door wide for the introduction of a service indistinguishable from the

Roman Mass in English. By so doing we draw apart from Non-Episcopal Christendom, depart from our historical standards and undo the work of the Reformation which restored Scriptural teaching to the Church and made us one in our participation of the Lord's Supper with the Apostolic Church. The National Church League is prepared to oppose in every legitimate manner the proposed changes in the Communion Office and appeals to all loyal and peaceable sons of the Church to stand by it in its determination to prevent the re-introduction of the Mass, in any shape or form, into the authorized Service Book of the National Church.

Lord Hugh Cecil urged upon his hearers that they should face revision "in the spirit of charity towards their fellow-Churchmen," and as his address was given in a church associated with the High Church movement, we may express the hope that they who are seeking to press upon the Church these three proposals will, in "the spirit of charity," refrain from insisting upon changes to which the great body of Evangelical Churchmen conscientiously object. It should require no great effort on their part, seeing that there has not been the slightest intention of doctrinal modification. But it may be that Lord Hugh Cecil had in mind the objectors to these changes when he made his appeal. In this case he followed Bishop Welldon who, speaking at the Durham Diocesan Conference, counselled the Evangelical Party to accept the present scheme of revision "in the interests of Christian charity." We do not know on what ground Bishop Welldon feels himself entitled to make such an appeal. Evangelicals have never shown themselves to be wanting in Christian charity whenever questions of this kind have come up for decision. Indeed it is almost a commonplace to observe that, actuated by a charitable spirit towards those who differ from them, they have often been too ready in the past to adjust serious differences by compromise. But in the matter under discussion compromise is impossible: matters of vital principle are concerned, and Evangelicals cannot and will not surrender their heritage. They are sons of the Church of England—Catholic, Apostolic, Reformed, Protestant—and they do not forget their ancestry nor at what tremendous cost freedom was won for them in the sixteenth century. What would Bishop Welldon have us do? Does he desire that we should stifle our

consciences and accept "as a condition of peace" proposals which are fraught, as we believe, with the greatest possible danger to the Church of England? The issues at stake are far too grave for that. They are not concerned with secondary but with primary matters—matters which affect fundamentally the position of every Evangelical member of the Church of England. "Charity" is a most excellent virtue and we trust that its gentle spirit will ever characterize our discussions, especially in the difficult months before us, but it can only be exercised aright in so far as it is balanced by an unmistakable loyalty to Truth.

**Words of
Warning.**

We venture to suggest that in this matter the Bishop of Durham is a safer guide than the Dean of Durham. It is impossible to mistake the gravity of the warning uttered by the Bishop when, at his Diocesan Conference, he spoke on Prayer-Book Revision. He showed clearly enough that he, at any rate, appreciates the full meaning of the present crisis:—

It seemed to him (he said) that the fundamental issue at stake was the character of the Church of England. They inherited a tolerant tradition, but tolerance that went to the length of self-contradiction was all one with apostasy. They had to keep in mind the whole English Church, for the Prayer Book was, to use the language of the last Lambeth Conference, "the Anglican standard of doctrine and practice." They prided themselves as English Churchmen on being members of a tolerant Church, that was, a Church which included many types of Christian discipleship, and was patient with many vagaries of religious opinion. But they were English Churchmen—not Roman Catholics, or Greek Orthodox, or Lutherans, or Congregationalists—and that character indicated that even Anglican tolerance had its limits. A Church which spoke with two voices on matters of fundamental belief; which attached no real authority to its own standards of doctrine; and exacted no effective obedience to its own discipline; which presented one version of itself to Constantinople, another to Edinburgh, and yet a third to Rome, was in no genuine or serviceable sense a Church at all. It could not be properly identified with the Church of England which, for nearly four centuries, had delivered to the English people in the Prayer Book its own version of the Catholic Faith. He was not very hopeful about the future. There was a spirit of arrogant unreason in some quarters which might justify the gravest apprehension, but there were also reasons for thinking that the general body of English Churchmen, both lay and clerical, were beginning to perceive the real gravity of the issues at stake. He pledged himself to work for such revision of the Book of Common Prayer as should be (in the words of the Preface to the existing Book) "well accepted and

approved by all sober, peaceable, and truly conscientious sons of the Church of England," (*Times*, March 12).

Here we have a statement, as forcible as it is lucid, of the real issues with which the Church is confronted, and in the light of its warnings Evangelical Churchmen would be false to themselves, false to their traditions and false to the love they bear towards the Church of England, if they did not oppose, by every legitimate means open to them, any and every proposal which is calculated, however unintentionally, to alter "the Anglican standard of doctrine and practice."

In view of the misunderstanding which exists in ^{The Assembly} and Revision, several quarters concerning the position of Prayer-Book Revision in the National Assembly it will be convenient to state the facts. At the Spring Session (Jan. 29-Feb. 2) the Archbishop of Canterbury stated from the Chair that the House of Bishops had introduced the Measure containing the proposals of the Committee, and that it would be sent to the Chairman of each of the three Houses with a request that it should be considered by those Houses on the stage of general approval. Thus it would come before each of the three Houses and would then come back and be submitted to the Assembly for adoption or rejection. If the motion for general approval were rejected by any one of the three Houses that would bring the matter to an end for a year. The only one of the three Houses that has yet voted "general approval" of the Measure is the House of Clergy, which held a separate sitting of very short duration during Assembly week. Before the motion was put the Dean of Canterbury and others asked to what it would commit them, as some of them very distinctly "disapproved" of several of the proposals. The Dean of York (Vice-Chairman) replied that it was merely a formal matter equivalent to the reception of the Measure, and on this understanding the motion was agreed to. But Lord Hugh Cecil, a past-master in all matters of procedure, says such a motion means what it says, and is the equivalent of a motion for the Second Reading of a Bill in Parliament, although it does not preclude anyone who voted for it from afterwards moving to omit or amend any sections of the Measure to which objection is taken. The House of Bishops will meet on April 16 to discuss the Measure on the general approval

stage, and is contemplating the possibility of a two-days' sitting. The House of Laity will meet for the same purpose on April 25 and is also proposing a two-days' sitting if need be. The notice calling the meeting of the House of Laity is accompanied by a Memorandum signed by Lord Parmoor (Chairman) and Lord Daryngton (Vice-Chairman) urging every member to attend, and saying that "the Meeting affords an opportunity for all the Members of the House to give evidence of their deep sense of the responsibility which attaches to the House as a constituent part of the National Assembly of the Church. The occasion is of great importance. The attitude of the House of Laity may, through God's grace, afford a notable witness to the motion of the new spirit inspired by the institution of the National Assembly of the Church." With the House of Laity so fully recognizing the importance of the matter, and the House of Bishops ready to devote two days to its consideration, it is difficult to believe that the House of Clergy will be content with the resolution it passed "formally" in January last. It may be hoped it will be called together for a full consideration of the proposals before the next meeting of the National Assembly.

The National Church League has shown that it is **N.C.L. Action.** thoroughly alive to the dangers of the situation, and by courses of educative lectures, the dissemination of sound literature, and in many other ways, is seeking to arouse Church-people to the gravity of the position. The series of six lectures on "Prayer-Book Doctrine and Prayer-Book Revision" is most helpful, and a full outline of each lecture is published by the League, and clergy will do well to obtain copies that they may instruct their people on these lines. The titles of the Lectures are as follows: (1) The Prayer Book: Its History and Teaching; (2) The Prayer Book and Holy Scripture; (3) Prayer Book Teaching on the Atonement and the Sacrament of Remembrance; (4) The Prayer Book and the Mediatorship of Christ; (5) Repentance and Pardon; and (6) The Resurrection and the Christian Life. The "Brief Summary of the Main Proposals on Revision" has been referred to previously in these columns, and it may again be commended to clergy who desire to put into the hands of their people a clear and succinct statement of the scheme of revision. Another excellent pamphlet (8 pp.) is "Prayer Book Revision from an Evangelical

Point of View," by the Rev. T. W. Gilbert, who points out the grounds of objection to the three features of the scheme explained above, and adding a fourth—the various suggested Prayers for the Dead—to which Evangelicals take exception. The closing passages of the pamphlet convey a grave warning :

Evangelicals and the Church at large should realize that the ideal of the "Anglo-Catholics" is not comprehension, but the ultimate acceptance of their position. Evangelicals glory in the comprehensive character of the Church of England, they do not look for a meticulous uniformity of ritual or of opinion. The very essence of their position is freedom, and recent happenings within their own ranks are clear evidence that Evangelicals will never be found all of one pattern. And because of this, they not merely tolerate but welcome within the borders of the Church of England those who are regarded as Broad Churchmen and High Churchmen. The only limit which Evangelicals have sought is the limit of a frank and honest acceptance of the Prayer Book and Articles of the Church of England. But it should be clearly understood that comprehension is not the ideal of Anglo-Catholicism. This is stated without any ambiguity in *The Church Times* of October 20, 1922. The leading article of that date was opposing the idea of the Anglo-Catholic Congresses seeking the patronage of Bishops, and goes on "For after all, their (*i.e.*, the Bishops) ideal is different from ours. It is no secret. They are quite frank about it. This ideal is comprehension, not Catholicism. Anglo-Catholics are merely one party in the Church, and as such are to be tolerated like other extreme parties. *This is something entirely opposed to the belief of Catholics who claim that they only are loyal.*" The same point of view is given even more vigorously in a leading article in the same paper on June 16, 1922. It is there stated "that toleration is extended to us on the supposition that we will extend the same toleration to Protestants and Modernists. Things may be different when it is found that Catholics have not lost their missionary zeal, that they believe that they alone are loyal members of the Church of England, and that *they are not willing to lie down with Protestants and Modernists in the same bed.*"—These quotations could be paralleled with others and they leave us in no uncertainty about the present issue.

These and other publications dealing with the question may be obtained at the Church Book Room, 6 Grosvenor Mansions, 82 Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.1.

It is significant of the growing sense of importance of the Prayer-Book Revision question that the Cheltenham Conference will, this year, be held on May 23, 24 and 25 in order to discuss it in good time before the Summer

Cheltenham
Conference.

Session, in the hope that its findings may not be without their weight of influence upon the discussion in the Assembly. The Conference will consider the subject under the following headings: "Alternative Uses and Home Reunion"; "The Holy Communion: (a) The Doctrinal Basis of our Present Service, (b) The Doctrinal Basis of N.A. 60, and (c) Consequences of the Adoption of N.A. 60"; "The Revision that is Needed: (a) Illustrated by N.A. 60, (b) Not Provided by N.A. 60"; "Changes in Morning and Evening Prayer, Litany, etc"; and "The Occasioned Offices." The list of speakers is by no means complete, but those who have already promised to speak on Revision are the Rev. Canon Oakley, the Rev. J. J. R. Armitage, the Rev. G. W. Briggs, and the Rev. T. W. Gilbert. The Rector of Cheltenham (Canon H. A. Wilson) will preside, and the Rev. the Hon. W. Talbot Rice will give the Devotional Address on "Spiritual Revival." We hope to print all the principal papers in the next issue of *THE CHURCHMAN*.

THE LAYMAN'S HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND. By G. R. Balleine. London: *Longmans Green & Co.* 2s. 6d.

We welcome the Third Impression of Mr. Balleine's excellent, vivid and most readable work on the History of the Church of England. The book has been valued wherever it has been read, and we are not surprised that a famous public school has placed it among its text-books, for it gives the story of the Church as illustrated by the history of a parish, and the changes caused by the vicissitudes of religious life in the kingdom. Mr. Balleine has the rare gift of combining accuracy with brightness, lucidity with charm. He tells us just what we need to know, and we follow, step by step, the fortunes of the Christian community in Durford, and Monksland, its daughter Kentish parish. What is the secret of the appeal of this volume? It lies in its genuinely human interest and its power of making us feel that the Church is a real home for the faithful, and that men and women throughout the centuries possessed the same fundamental hopes and fears, shared the joys and sorrows that we know to-day, and considered the worship of God to be the chief duty incumbent upon them. Religion not ecclesiasticism is the motive of the book, and the beautiful illustrations are a triumph of selection as well as an introduction to the many-sided activities of the Church. No one who knows this book can refrain from recommending it to friends, and the friends who read it will be grateful for the introduction to its stirring pages. It is a triumph of straightforward historical writing.