

# THE CHURCHMAN

January, 1926

## NOTES AND COMMENTS.

### *Queen Alexandra.*

THE death of Queen Alexandra caused a great wave of sorrow to pass over the nation. Sympathy with the King and the Royal Family was widespread. For many her death meant the breaking of one of the last links with a great epoch in the history of our country. Although she took no part in political affairs, she had a place of her own in the Victorian age. She represented Queen Victoria on many important social occasions. During the brief reign of Edward VII she adorned the position of Queen by the charm and graciousness of her personality. From the day of her arrival in England at the age of eighteen in the year 1863, she occupied a warm place in the affections of the people. As the years passed that affection grew, and the love of the nation became stronger, till in the years of her widowhood she was held by many in special reverence. Her practical sympathy with suffering, and her special interest in the wounded during the war, revealed the goodness of her nature. It was her genuine goodness that won for her the love of the people. She well merited the many tributes which have been paid to her life and work, and her memory will be treasured as one of the finest examples of queenly character associated with the royal line of England.

### *The Bishops and Prayer Book Revision.*

The Bishops have commenced their consideration of the final form of the revised Prayer Book, and will probably be engaged in their deliberation until the session of the House of Bishops which meets in the summer. There is considerable disappointment among Evangelical Churchpeople that they did not accept the Bishop of Norwich's proposal that the Communion Service should be reserved for later consideration. There are a number of changes in the Prayer Book of a non-controversial character. Churchmen of all schools would gladly have seen these adopted, and would have welcomed the provision for elasticity and adaptation to the needs of the day which would have been thus provided. It would have shown the large measure of agreement that exists regarding changes where doctrine is not concerned. It is difficult to under-

stand the attitude assumed by some of the Bishops, that the division of the measure would indicate a lack of courage on their part in dealing with the difficulties of the situation. Indeed much of the discussion was irrelevant, as the Bishop of Norwich pointed out at its close. The courage of the Bishops could be shown when the time came to deal with the proposed changes in our Communion Service, which aim at admitting into it those features which gave Bishop Gardiner and others the opportunity in the sixteenth century of asserting doctrines which have been repudiated by the great divines of the last three centuries.

### **The Tendency to Centralization.**

It is not too much to say that the old system of the Church of England is being rapidly revolutionized by the work of the Church Assembly. The whole tendency of its measures is towards centralization. The measures passed seem in the main to concentrate power in the hands of the diocesan authorities, and through them to transmit it to the central powers of the Church, as represented by the Bishops and those associated with them in the ordering of affairs in the Church Assembly and its numerous Committees. There are no doubt many advantages to be gained from this central control. We may hope that it will produce economy of working and greater efficiency in the direction of the resources of the Church in men and money. But it has many disadvantages, and these will have to be faced by those who are in a position to suffer. The tendency to bureaucracy is a constant danger in centralization. The officials who have gained a little power always desire more. They have a natural wish to magnify their office, and to secure positions of greater influence for themselves. The control of finances is the sure road to such power. We may therefore look for a continuous effort to increase the amount of the Central Fund, and to influence the method of expending it. It is obvious that this will strike hard at the old system of working through Societies. At no distant period we expect to see proposals on the part of the Church Assembly to take over the work of our Missionary Societies, both home and foreign.

### **Church Patronage.**

This tendency to centralization is observable in another direction. The English system, or want of system, in the patronage of benefices has grown up during the centuries, and it naturally presents instances of anomaly. It has, we venture to say, on the whole worked well, but it may be admitted that there is room for reform in several directions. The Church Assembly has taken the whole question in hand, and at the moment the patronage of the Church seems to be in the melting pot. It is a thorny subject, for it concerns large vested interests. The Church cannot afford to show an example of anything approaching spoliation or pillage. Whatever it may be able to do by methods of persuasion, it will be guilty of an egregious blunder if it attempts to deprive individuals of rights

which have been recognized hitherto. Patrons are not an unreasonable class in the community—not even the much abused Trustee patrons—and they are anxious to secure the best and most suitable men for the parishes in their gift. They are not prepared to hand over their privileges to others at the dictation of any central body of the Church. The Crown, and kindred sources of patronage, have, we believe, made it quite clear that they are not going to allow themselves to be restricted by any Boards that may be set up. As the Archbishop of Canterbury hinted to the Church Assembly, it will be well for them to act cautiously in whatever steps they are taking that may interfere with the position of the private patron.

#### **The Voice of the Laity in Patronage.**

At the same time there is a legitimate wish to give parishioners an opportunity of expressing their views as to the type of clergyman most likely to serve the parish best. The difficulties are, how this can best be done, and to what extent is it advisable that they should be given a voice in the matter. None of the suggestions so far made seem to be satisfactory. The proposal to set up Diocesan Patronage Boards, on which two representatives from the Parochial Church Council of a vacant parish will sit, does not do much to give the parishioners any adequate influence in the choice of their clergyman, while the power of veto which it is proposed that these Boards should exercise over a Patron's power of appointment will prove a source of considerable dissatisfaction. Even the right of appeal to the Archbishop will not allay the feelings of resentment that may be aroused by what will inevitably be regarded as undue interference. In the discussion in the Church Assembly it was seen that a number of knotty problems arose in connection with other proposals, such as the transference of advowsons from Deans and Chapters, and from the incumbents of large parishes. The desire to give Diocesan Bishops a larger share in the patronage of their dioceses, and especially to place in their hands the appointment to the most important and largest of the town parishes, is one that recent experiences of Evangelicals will lead them to oppose rigorously. The plea used against Trustee patrons, that their appointments "stereotype" parishes, is simply an excuse rather than a reason for condemning "Party Trusts." The point would not be raised if it helped to stereotype Anglo-Catholic parishes.

#### **Clergy Pensions.**

A revised scheme for clergy pensions was presented to the Church Assembly at its last session. It is impossible to give the details of the scheme here, but it is an improvement on the previous one in so far as it provides for the return of the contributions in cases where necessity might arise. At the same time the scheme proposed is open to criticism on several points. The amount of the contributions involves a severe additional tax on the already overburdened clergy. The expenditure involved in the recent Dilapidations Scheme is not yet known and may prove a heavy

burden in many cases. The proposed legislation in regard to tithes may also place many of the clergy in a position of difficulty. The fixing of the retiring age at seventy raises a number of questions which we hope will receive serious consideration. Is it not possible for the benefits of the Scheme to be available at the age of sixty-five? Contributors to the Clergy Pensions Institution Scheme seem to be in a position to lose some of the privileges which they have been led to expect, through the new proposals. They were eligible for a pension at sixty-five. This was made up of an annuity bought by their annual contributions, an additional amount given by the Ecclesiastical Insurance Office, and a grant from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. The total amounted to something like £127 a year. This is now to be swept away, and a small additional sum of £20 or £25 is to be given to them at the age of seventy. The Clergy Pensions Institution has, we are sure, every desire to safeguard the rights and expectations of its beneficiaries, but the Church Assembly has a somewhat drastic method of dealing with vested interests, which does not increase confidence in its working.

#### **The Misrepresentation of the Reformation.**

With the growth of the Counter-Reformation in the Church of England there has been an increase in the character and extent of the misrepresentation of the Reformation movement in this country in the sixteenth century. Roman Catholics have of course for a long time represented the Church of England as originating in the desire of Henry VIII to secure a divorce from Catherine of Aragon. This contention ignores the movements in the English Church during the previous two centuries, and the constant effort to limit the interference of the Popes. It also fails to take into account those movements of thought usually summed up under the term, the Renaissance. The invention of printing had produced a revolution in the outlook of the people. Professor Pollard dealt with these matters in the two able lectures which he recently delivered under the auspices of the Reformation Study Brotherhood in Dean Wace House. One of them we have the pleasure of printing in this number of *THE CHURCHMAN*, and the second will appear later. The causes of the English Reformation are to be sought in the awakening of a fresh consciousness in the people. The success of Wycliffe and of the Lollard Movement, in spite of the drastic measures adopted to extirpate their supporters, is evidence that a desire was astir for something more than the ecclesiastical system of the mediæval age, with its penitential system, binding the thoughts and consciences of men, and the merely objective presentation of the sacrifice of the Mass could satisfy. These elements must be taken into account if an adequate estimate of the significance of the Reformation is to be obtained.

#### **The Doctrinal Significance of the Reformation.**

The Anglo-Catholics are, however, even more obscurantist than the Roman Catholics in their treatment of the Reformation. They

endeavour to minimize its significance. They admit that it secured the removal of the papal supremacy from the Church of England, and they make strenuous endeavours to convince themselves that this was its sole result. They can only succeed in their efforts by an extensive falsification of history. The records show that there were doctrinal changes of far-reaching significance. These changes involved a complete revolution in the conception of God and of man's relationship to Him. Luther's proclamation of "Justification by Faith" was the dawning of a new and brighter day than the Church had known for many centuries. It is customary to misrepresent this doctrine by saying that it is purely subjective, that it has no philosophical basis, and that it fails to account for the full significance of the Incarnation and the Sacramental principle with the objective values which they represent. Some recent Anglo-Catholic books show a strange disregard for the facts in their treatment of the whole subject. Faith may be subjective but it has no value unless it is directed to a definite object. Luther's faith was founded on the objective fact of the death of Christ. The assurance of forgiveness was not an end itself, as has been stated. It was the beginning of a personal relationship to God that cleared away the necessity for the Romish mediatorial system, with the Priest providing pardon in the Sacrament of Penance, and offering the Sacrifice of the Mass not only for the living but also for the holy souls enduring the pains of Purgatory.

#### **Anglicanism.**

The question which Churchpeople have to face at the present time is not whether certain doctrines and practices are allowable in the Church of England, but the much larger question whether the whole ecclesiastical system embraced under the comprehensive title of Anglicanism is to continue to exist, or whether it is to give place to a system described as "Catholic" but in reality represented by the Roman Church in all essentials of doctrine, and even more in that atmosphere which marks the difference between the Reformed and the Unreformed Communion. The Call to Action was a challenge to make this difference clear, and to maintain the distinctive character of the Church of England since the days of the Reformation. Anyone who comes in contact with the effects of Anglo-Catholicism in our Church to-day is aware that the atmosphere of the movement is absolutely different from that of the Church of England of the past and even of the Tractarian movement. The imitation of the Roman Church as the representative of Western Catholicism is destroying the old ethos of Anglicanism. The new spirit is alien in every way to the past traditions of our Church, even as represented by the highest of the older high Churchmen. Laud and his followers were as strongly opposed to Romanism as any latter-day Protestant. The earlier Reformers, who were brought up as Romanists, understood its true character, and in drawing up our forms of worship and the fundamental teachings of the Church were careful to exclude the old system, and to give every opportunity

for the development of a Church which would rejoice in its adherence to the teaching and practice of the New Testament and the Primitive Church. Churchmen to-day are faced by the question, Is this all to be reversed by this generation ?

#### Dr. Headlam and his Critics.

Bishop Headlam's Preface to the second edition of his *The Church of England*, recently issued, deals drastically with some of his critics. It contains a strong reply to Bishop Gore's criticism of that work. He says that Dr. Gore's attitude indicates certain peculiar habits of thought with which he is somewhat obsessed, which . . . as far as they prevail are disastrous to the Christian religion. These views concern the Apostolic Succession—among other matters. They were examined with great care by the Lambeth Conference Committee on Christian Unity, but were found unconvincing. "Bishop Gore and his friends," he says, "must prove their position, or must give up trying to impose on the world by pontifical utterances." When Bishop Gore says that "the Church's Canon of valid ordinations is as authoritative as its Creed" he is saying what nine out of ten members of the Church of England would think was untrue, what many would think almost blasphemous, for it would seem to imply that this doctrine of orders rested on as strong a foundation as the Incarnation. Turning to the intellectual life of the Universities he says, "It has often been a criticism of Dr. Gore's work that he wishes to follow his intellect so far and no farther, that he writes as if criticism could be accepted up to a point and then neglected." The Universities have a far more bracing atmosphere than the theological colleges, some of which "send out clergy who alienate many by talking a religious language which people do not understand. A theological college has undoubted advantages for those who wish to teach what they cannot prove." Dr. Gore's "patronizingly contemptuous" attitude towards "moderate" men is rebuked. They, at any rate, have no fear of "the very bad times ahead" which Dr. Gore predicts. Altogether Dr. Headlam regards the criticism as "extraordinarily wrong-headed."

#### Lord Halifax at Louvain.

The Belgian Roman Catholic paper *Le XX<sup>e</sup> Siècle* has published under the heading *La Réunion des Eglises* a eulogistic account of Lord Halifax, and of a speech delivered by him at Louvain. From the report we gather that the Roman Catholics who heard him will have obtained a very erroneous conception of the English Church. He made some interesting admissions with which we can all agree, as, for example: "Ce n'est pas la répudiation de Catherine d'Aragon par Henri VIII qui est au fond de la séparation de l'Angleterre avec Rome, mais la nécessité de certaines réformes." He goes on to say that under Edward VI some modifications in the breviary were introduced, when it would be more correct to say that the old form of the breviary was practically abolished. Again he made the

astonishing statement to this Roman Catholic gathering: " Sur l'enseignement sacramentaire, il y a identité entre notre Catéchisme et le vôtre." We wonder what the compiler of the portion of our Catechism dealing with the Sacraments would have said to such a statement.

Lord Halifax is, of course, entitled to his opinion that the Oxford Movement restored its purity to the faith of the Anglican Church, but when he says, " J'ai pu sans protestation d'aucune sorte, publier une brochure et prononcer une conférence devant un vaste auditoire à Londres, sur le droit divin de la primauté du Pape dans ' l'administration ' de l'Eglise," he must know that his opinion would be repudiated not only by the great majority of English Churchpeople, but also by a number of those who call themselves Anglo-Catholics. Lord Halifax is now following the logical course of the assumptions upon which his opinions have been based during his long lifetime. They lead to submission to the Pope and his claims.

#### Editorial Note.

We have the pleasure of presenting to our readers in this number the first of Prof. Pollard's interesting and valuable lectures on the Reformation period. It will be seen that he is thoroughly at home in every aspect of that age. Bishop Knox deals with several important aspects of St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians. That Epistle was described by Coleridge as " one of the divinest compositions of man," and Bishop Knox recalls some of its most important characteristics. Mr. Albert Mitchell has made a special study of Prayer Book history and kindred subjects. Evangelical Churchpeople owe him much for his work in the Church Assembly, and they will read with interest his contribution on the position of the Minister. The Rev. T. A. Gurney is known as a writer on the Early Church. His treatment of St. Augustine shows the fundamentals of his teaching, and their application to the problems of our own day. The well-known author John Knipe contributes the first part of a study of the life and time of " one of the great souls of the Reformation "—Anne Askew. It is important at the present time to recall the faith of those martyrs who gave their lives for the cause of truth in the reign of Queen Mary. The number of books issued by the publishers this autumn has been very large. We have endeavoured to deal with as many as possible of those in which our readers would be likely to be interested. Although we have given more space than usual to them, we regret that we have been obliged to hold over many pages of reviews and notices. We hope that those which we have been able to insert will be a guide to our readers to form an estimate of the contents and characters of the various volumes with which our reviewers have dealt. Our Notes and Comments treat of events and principles of special interest at the present time.

