

THE CHURCHMAN

April, 1918.

The Month.

**The Most
Urgent Need.**

WE desire to associate ourselves with those who, at this most solemn crisis in our nation's history, are urging that the most urgent need is that of prayer. The nation has not that hold upon God it once had; there is too great a readiness to rely exclusively upon material means for winning the War and to forget that God is the only Giver of Victory. We should indeed be sorry to find any of our public men taking the Name of God upon their lips with the blasphemous familiarity of the Kaiser, but we do want to see on the part of our rulers a sincere, reverent, and humble acknowledgment of the Supreme Majesty of God in the affairs of nations and of men. The appointment by His Majesty the King of a Day of National Prayer and Thanksgiving was gratefully responded to by millions of people and the Royal Proclamation struck a fine note. But amid much that was encouraging in the observance of the Day it was a cause for deep regret that there was no special State service. The omission may have been accidental or due to the circumstances of the time, but whatever its cause, it was in a way significant of what seems to be the attitude of the Government and of Parliament towards things spiritual. Of the religious sincerity of individual members of the Government and of individual Members of Parliament there can, of course, be no doubt; but the Government and Parliament are in a special sense representative of the corporate life of the nation, and we believe that it would have an immense effect upon the nation, upon our Allies, and, perhaps, upon the enemy if unmistakable evidence were forthcoming that these representatives of the nation were prosecuting this great War, which is indeed a Holy War, a war for righteous purposes, in humble dependence upon the guidance and help of the Most High. If it be said that that is an impossible ideal, we reply that ideal it cer-

tainly is, but it is one that ought not to be impossible in a professedly Christian country. We trust that before long another Day of National Prayer and Thanksgiving may be proclaimed and that it will be marked by a State service. In the meantime individual Christians must be more continuous in their prayers for the nation and for the nation's cause. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," and if Christians everywhere made it a rule either privately, or in prayer circles, or at intercession services in church to pray definitely every day for the Victory of our cause the results would be great beyond measure. In this connexion we commend to the most earnest attention of our readers the following brief and expressive Prayer which the Chaplain-General has written for use at the midday hour:—

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, we come to Thee, along with our Christian brethren scattered throughout the world at this time. We pray on behalf of our Soldiers, Sailors, and Airmen that Thou wilt have them in Thy Holy keeping. Grant them the peace and the assurance of sins forgiven. Give them the joy of faithful service, and bestow upon them the power of Thy Holy Spirit that they may be true in heart and strong in duty. Meet each and every need, both theirs and ours, and make us fit for the blessing of peace in Thine own good time, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

We hope this Prayer may become widely known and widely used. It is by such means that those at home can best uphold and strengthen our splendid fighting men, and improve the *moral* of the nation.

The Prime Minister and the Churches. The remarkable speech made by Mr. Lloyd George to the annual assembly at the City Temple of the National Free Church Council on Wednesday, March 13, contained several passages which may well be referred to in these pages. He defined the duty of the Churches in this hour of grave national emergency. We do not in the least quarrel with him for saying that "there is a sense in which every Church is a National Church," that as such it owes a duty to the nation, and that "nobly have the Free Churches discharged that national obligation in this crisis." Indeed we wish that the Free Churches would at all times realize their "national obligation" as deeply as many of them seem to do their party obligation, but that is by the way. It needs to be recognized that the Free Churches have done splendidly not only in supplying, long before the days of the Military Service Acts, men for the fighting line, but also in the care

they have shown for the moral, social and spiritual well-being of the troops on active service and those at home. Mr. Lloyd George had a special message for his hearers. As a Free Churchman he spoke, perhaps naturally, of "the special task of the Free Churches in the war," but we do not imagine he intended to exclude the Church of England from the scope of his remarks; we prefer to give them the widest possible interpretation. And what did he say? One task before the Churches "is to help to preserve the nation from everything that is unworthy of the sacredness of this great cause." This, we undertake to say, the Churches have been doing, and, on the whole, been doing well, indeed so well that we could wish the Church of England—we cannot speak for the Free Churches—had done even better. We should have liked to see a truce on all questions of religious controversy—even if, in the observance of it, Convocation itself had had to close down—that the Church might have given its whole attention to building up the moral life of the nation in this great cause. "The Churches," said the Prime Minister, "have not merely a right, it is their special task, to see that the moral and physical fibre of the nation is not undermined by drink and vice." The counsel is as wise as it is timely, and it is a matter for question whether the Churches have done all they ought to have done in this direction. One question only need be asked: Was the King's Pledge taken up by the Churches as heartily and as unreservedly as it should have been?

**The Churches
and the
Government.** Mr. Lloyd George drew a distinction between the Government and the Churches: "Governments have to deal with practical difficulties, but that does not absolve the Churches." That is to a large extent true, but the Churches, while giving due effect to "practical difficulties," have the right to urge that the Government of a Christian nation is bound to regulate its action on Christian principles and not merely on national efficiency. The Prime Minister added that "not only have Governments no right to resent pressure from the Churches; they have a right to expect it and they ought to welcome it. They do welcome it." These words deserve to be noted and remembered. They come as a revelation to many, and it would be interesting to know what relation they bear to the facts of recent experience. It certainly took an inordinately long time for the "pressure"

of the Churches to have effect in the matter of the appointment of a Day of National Prayer. Perhaps they did not go the right way to work; they may not have spoken with united voice; but in their future action they will do well to recall to the attention of the Cabinet Mr. Lloyd George's own words. The Prime Minister's declaration throws a heavy responsibility upon the Free Churches. Never again will they be able to excuse their inaction by the plea that it is the duty of the Church of England to move first. We agree that it is the duty of the Church of England to take the initiative in all matters of social and religious movement, but if it fail in that duty the Free Churches are bound to take action. That, at least, is the way we interpret the Prime Minister's words. They open to the Churches a door of opportunity, of which it may be hoped full advantage will be taken, not to embarrass, but to help the Government in all that makes for righteousness. The Churches, however, will expect the Government to respond, and any real failure to do so must be visited by the strongest criticism. In regard to one grave moral issue there has lately been most extraordinary hesitation on the part of the Government, viz., in regard to placing a certain type of house in France out of bounds, but we rejoice to learn, as we go to press, that directions have been issued which will satisfy the Christian conscience of the nation. We all owe the Dean of Lincoln a debt for his spirited action in the matter.

There is one other aspect of Mr. Lloyd George's **God and the War.** speech to which we wish to refer. He spoke more particularly than has hitherto been his wont of the place of God in this war. He urged the Churches to keep the war till the end, "whenever God wills that it shall come to an end," a holy war. Again, when referring to our war aims, he said that to falter before all this be achieved would be "to doubt the justice of the Ruler of the world." Again, when asking the Churches not to be always saying "When will the dawn come?" he counselled them to "Trust in God and the light will shine on us again." Once more, when speaking of his responsibilities, he asked for their help, for their sympathy and—"he said it with all reverence—for their prayers." And finally, when saying that if any man could show him any way by which we could make peace short of betraying

the sacred cause, he would listen gladly, gratefully "thanking God for the light He has given me." It may be said that these references to the Almighty do not carry us very far, and we agree that they are not as explicit as we should like to see, but taken as a whole they represent an advance in this respect upon the utterances of some of our public men, and we note them with satisfaction and thankfulness. We are perfectly certain, as we have pointed out in our first note, that the nation needs to recognize the Hand of God in this war, and that it is the bounden duty of our leaders to give the nation a lead in this matter. We trust, therefore, that Mr. Lloyd George in his speeches in Parliament will put into them something of the spirit which marked his speech at the assembly of the Free Churches.

The new Education Bill has been exceedingly well received. Its main provisions are thus summarized by *The Times* :—

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE.—All children must attend school till the age of 14 years, which may be extended to 15. All children under the age of 18 years must attend continuation schools in the daytime for 320 hours in the year unless they have received full-time education till the age of 16 years.

EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN.—No child under 12 years of age may be employed at all. No child over 12 years of age may be employed on school days except after school hours and before 8 p.m., and on other days except between 6 a.m. and 8 p.m.

SCHOOL FEES.—No fees may be charged in public elementary schools or in continuation schools.

PHYSICAL WELFARE.—Provision is made for nursery schools, holiday and school camps, playing fields, physical training, and the medical inspection of places of higher education.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS.—Local education authorities are made responsible for the provision of all kinds of education in their areas. The limit on the spending powers of authorities for higher education is abolished. Authorities are charged with the administration of the law relating to the employment of children, and are enabled to enforce the law with regard to cruelty to children. The principle of a minimum grant of half an authority's expenditure is introduced.

Dr. Fisher's expositions of the Bill in the House of Commons have been quite admirable, and it is well that a measure of this importance should be considered by a Committee of the whole House rather than be referred to a Grand Committee. We are sincerely glad that the Church is lending its cordial support to the most necessary restrictions imposed upon child-labour. Our one regret is that the question of religious education is not dealt with. Dr. Fisher proposes to retain the denominational balance until the time is

ripe for a real settlement of the issues at stake. When that time will be depends upon the measure of agreement that can be reached among the various interests concerned. We believe that Christian people are drawing more closely together on this question, and we trust that the time is not far distant when complete unanimity may be arrived at.

**The Com-
munion
Service.**

In a Note last month, it was mentioned in reference to Prayer Book Revision that the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury, by 13 votes to 7, had accepted the resolution of the Lower House on the rearrangement of the Service of Holy Communion. That resolution was as follows:—

“ That the Prayer of Humble Access be removed from its present position and be placed immediately before the Communion of Priest and People ; that the Amen at the end of the present Prayer of Consecration be omitted, and that the Prayer of Oblation follow at once (prefaced by the word ‘ Wherefore ’) and then the Lord’s Prayer.”

It is a great pity that the proposal of the Bishop of Ely, strongly supported by the Primate and the Bishop of Winchester, that a Conference should be held of members of the different schools in the Church of England with a view of arriving at an agreed settlement, was not accepted. It is difficult to see why it was not put to the House before the main question, but the ways of Convocation are difficult to understand. After the resolution of the Lower House had been carried the following addendum was passed by 19 to 1:—

“ Permission shall be given for the rearrangement of the Canon as follows: ‘ The Prayer of Humble Access to be removed from its present position and placed immediately before the Communion of Priest and People ; the Amen at the end of the present Prayer of Consecration to be omitted, and the Prayer of Oblation to follow at once, prefaced by these words— Wherefore, O Lord and Heavenly Father, according to the institution of Thy dearly-beloved Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, we Thy humble servants do celebrate and make here before Thy Divine Majesty, with these Thy holy gifts, the memorial which Thy Son hath willed us to make, having in remembrance His blessed Passion, mighty Resurrection, and glorious Ascension, rendering unto Thee most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same, entirely desiring Thy fatherly goodness, etc. ; and then the Lord’s Prayer.’ ”

Obviously the Bishop of Ely had no alternative but to withdraw his proposal. But it is a pity. As things now stand Convocation has once more succeeded in stirring up discord in the Church when the great need is for unity.

This adoption by the Bishops of the proposed **Offending the Evangelicals.** change has deeply offended the Evangelicals, and the distressing fact is that the Bishops took the course they did well knowing that such would be the case. When the question was before them in April, 1915, and the proposal of the Lower House was rejected by 15 to 5, the Bishop of London was among the majority, and he stated his conviction that "nothing was more hotly opposed by the Evangelical party in his diocese," and that as a practical man "he was not going to have them all against him and not satisfy the rest of the diocese." What has happened in the last three years to make the Bishop of London change his mind—for at the group of sessions in February last he supported the proposal—we do not know, but we are perfectly certain that the Evangelicals have not changed their minds—they are as "hotly opposed" to it as ever. It is permissible to infer that the policy of "squeezing the Bishops" so dear to the hearts of the Ritualists has proved too much for the Bishop of London and that he has weakly succumbed to the process. Such a feeble surrender to pressure never really pays in the long run, as the Bishop of London may possibly soon discover, and if he find the "peace" of his diocese somewhat seriously disturbed it may be hoped that he will not forget his own responsibility for the conflict. Evangelicals cannot be expected quietly to submit to this latest attack upon their principles, and the call to resolute opposition has been most clearly sounded by the National Church League. At a meeting of the Executive Committee on Tuesday, February 26, the following resolution was adopted:—

That this Committee hears with profound regret that the Bishops of the Southern Province, who in April, 1915, decided by the emphatic majority of 15 to 5 that in the revision of the Prayer Book the Service of Holy Communion should remain unaltered, have now by a smaller majority reversed that decision. The Committee desires at once to record its determination to meet the proposals now made for the alteration of the Communion Service with a resolute and unflinching resistance. A perseverance in these proposals will, in the opinion of this Committee, not only render it impossible to carry through any revision of the Prayer Book, but will destroy all hope of any useful results of the Report of the Archbishops' Committee on Church and State.

The Dean of Canterbury has pointed out that there can be no question that Evangelical Churchmen will resist to the last any revision of the Prayer Book at all if it involve such concessions

to Romish doctrine and practice as a combination of Vestments, Reservation and the restoration of the Canon of Consecration of Edward VI; and Sir Edward Clarke, K.C., has taken prompt measures to awaken members of the National Church League and the Laymen's Committee to the gravity of the situation. The consequences of the action of the Bishops are likely to be far-reaching. Not only does the revival of this controversy strike a blow at the cause of Prayer Book Revision; it also, as Sir Edward Clarke shows, puts a stumbling-block in the way of all the efforts now being made to promote the union of our Nonconforming brethren with the Church of England, and is a menace to any practical good that might otherwise result from the Report of the Archbishops' Committee on Church and State. On this point Sir Edward Clarke's words of warning are of special significance. "It is idle to imagine," he says, "that any English Parliament will give fresh powers to a Church whose rulers are trying to undo the work of the Reformation, and to change the Protestant Communion Service into the Roman Mass. Nor is it conceivable that such a Parliament as will soon assemble will long allow the privileges of Establishment and the enjoyment of great endowments to be possessed by a Church which cannot agree even on its forms of worship, and advertises its disunion by having two discordant Prayer Books."

Advertising
Disunion.

It is this advertising of disunion which is one of the worst features of the present position. Men everywhere are asking, Has the Church of England any message to the English nation? If so, what is it? And there is no one able to make authoritative answer. The position was bad enough before, but now that the Bishops have solemnly agreed that the proposed changes shall be optional, it is infinitely worse, for in some churches we shall have the Mass in everything but name—though even that is not wanting in some cases—and in others the service of Holy Communion administered according to the rites and principles of the Church of England. And all this at a time when the Church of Rome is proclaiming its own unity, and its ability to solve, as no other religious body can do, the problems of our time. There is no mistaking the position and message of the Church of Rome; and the position and message of Nonconformity are also equally clear. But the Church of England pro-

claims its divisions from the house-top, with the result that it is more and more getting out of touch with the English people. And it might be so very different. The Reformation Settlement did not leave things in doubt; the Prayer Book speaks with no uncertain sound upon the questions which divide the Church of England from the Church of Rome; and the Bishops have ample material within their reach for justifying the Church of England to the English people. But for a long number of years back they have temporized with the Romeward drift; they have yielded point after point to the extremists until now the question is forced upon the attention of all thinking people, What *does* the Church of England stand for? The Evangelicals give one answer, based upon the Prayer Book as it is, and confirmed by appeal to the sure words of Holy Scripture; the self-styled "Catholic" party give another which can only be justified by ignoring the great events of the sixteenth century. And the Bishops say—what? We wish we could answer the question.

A Noble
Reply. The Scandinavian prelates (the Archbishop of Upsala, the Bishop of Christiania and the Bishop of Zealand in Denmark) must either have a very imperfect idea of the outrage inflicted upon the unoffending peoples of Great Britain and her Allies, or else must be desirous of playing into the hands of Germany. On no other hypothesis is it possible to explain their extraordinary proposal that there should be in September next an International Christian Congress attended by representative Christian leaders from neutral and belligerent countries. We sincerely hope that no responsible representative of English Christianity will be so misguided as to accept the invitation. Our Protestant brethren in France, most wisely, have met the proposal with a very decided refusal. The Reply of the Council of Federation, acting in the name of all the Protestant Churches in France, is a fine piece of writing, breathing a noble patriotism, and instinct with the spirit of true Christianity. We quote the following passages which are forwarded by the Paris Correspondent of *The Times* :—

Touched as we are by your appeal, and anxious to reply in a worthy manner to your fraternal proposal, our first duty is to remain more than ever in communion with our people, the victims of unjust aggression, and with our soldiers, struggling, labouring, dying for the liberation of our country and the complete restoration of right.

At a time when we are defended by our heroic soldiers we cannot bear the idea of entering, behind the protection of their bodies, into conversation, even in a roundabout way, with other men whose soldiers are killing our sons and brothers and are still occupying portions of the sacred soil of our country. This act would appear to many of our fellow-citizens and to ourselves to deserve a name we do not wish to write in a letter addressed by Christians to other Christians. You cannot look at things as we do, and we will not allow ourselves to reproach you, but we beg you as between men of conscience to understand our invincible scruples. . . .

The spiritual communion, unless it be a mere sham, must eliminate grievances, fix responsibilities, and repudiate the injustice committed. The guilty, whoever they be, must be declared guilty. Shameful silence on these points would be nothing but a lie. Christianity can only become healthy and strong again loyally seeking and proclaiming the truth. It is not enough for the honour of God and Christ that peace be made one day, that hostilities cease and men go back to their daily task. We shall then demand, in the name itself of the honour of God and Christ, that complete light be thrown on the causes of the war and the manner in which it was declared and begun. We shall summon humanity to call good good and evil evil. We shall summon it to condemn solemnly all violation for State reasons of the plighted word and international engagements. We shall summon it to proclaim that might is never stronger than right, that the oppression of right, as long as men suffer by it, knows no justification, and that all violations of it must be repaired. If these elementary principles were not binding on the Christian conscience it would be inferior to that of the commonest honest man, and we will not accept this humiliation for Him Whom we call the Holy and the Just.

There seem at last to be signs that Nonconformists
A Better Understanding. are coming to take a more enlightened view of the Reunion question. The discussion at the Free Church Council on March 13 showed a welcome advance upon that at the Methodist Conference last autumn. Two speeches of outstanding importance were made.

Dr. A. E. GARVIE, who pleaded for a better understanding with the Church of England, urged that there need now be no difficulty in the way of inter-communion and exchange of pulpits between the Evangelical Churchmen and Nonconformists; but, the demand made by a section of the Anglicans that none should be admitted to the Lord's Table unless previously confirmed laid a yoke on Nonconformity that they were not prepared to accept.

The Rev. J. H. SHAKESPEARE thought there was an attitude among the Bishops more favourable and sympathetic to this movement than in the past, and it would be helped by one of the finest appointments to the Episcopal Bench ever made by Mr. Lloyd George "off his own bat"—that of Dr. Hensley Henson.

Dr. Garvie's speech seems to show that the "Findings" of the Cheltenham Conference are beginning to tell. It remains now for Evangelical Churchmen so to press the matter home that "inter-communion and exchange of pulpits" may become a reality.