

# THE CHURCHMAN

November, 1920.

## THE MONTH.

Reunion  
within.

THE Bishop of Chelmsford's proposal in his Presidential Address at the Southend Church Congress on October 19 is attracting much attention, and will probably form a topic for acute discussion for many months to come. Properly to understand it, there must be a full recognition of the Bishop's own personal point of view. He is a convinced, sincere and attached Evangelical Churchman. As he himself said in his Address, he speaks as "a pronounced Evangelical, and one who is not ashamed of its full significance;" and to him "the quiet simplicity of the Communion Office approaches more closely the dignity of the Upper Room than does the full ceremonial of St. Peter's of Rome." But he sees in "our Lord's breadth and tolerance" the spirit which must be that of His Church to-day. It is this spirit which is dominating the desire for Reunion with our "separated" brethren, but that, the Bishop thinks, will be retarded "if our own unhappy divisions continue." The Anglo-Catholic Congress, which revealed "a cleavage so great between the Episcopate and a great body of Church opinion" that "no message of recognition and goodwill" was sent to it by the "Episcopate," has brought matters to a head, and the Bishop, with characteristic courage, faces the question: "What is to be our course of action with regard to what are known as Anglo-Catholics?" He thinks there are four policies before us. The first is that of *repression*, which he thinks can be dismissed from consideration. The second is *toleration*, but that rests on no settled principle, and "has led to one of drift with disastrous consequences." The third is *expulsion*, and this the Bishop explains more at length:—

This implies that the whole of the Anglo-Catholic party should be asked to leave the main body and form a "group" by themselves in the reunited Church, and thus their relation to the central body would be exactly on the same lines as that of the Wesleyan or Presbyterian group. Much might be said for this, and if no other way out of our troubles can be found, it may ultimately be the solution, but personally I should deplore it. At a time when all other bodies are coming nearer to us, for the clergy who were ordained by our side, and by whose side we made our first Communion as priests in the Church of God, to part from us would be nothing less than a calamity, and one which I pray God may never take place.

This third line of policy deserves more consideration than the Bishop gave it. As defined in his Address it presents a wholly new thought. "Expulsion" has generally been understood to mean expulsion from the Church of England. The "group" theory is novel—at least to us—and we should have liked the Bishop to discuss it more fully, but he refrained from doing so, apparently because he has another remedy for the present distress. What is it?

It is revealed in his fourth policy, which he calls "Whole-hearted Inclusion," the policy of whole-hearted inclusion." We must quote his proposal in full:—

This is a policy by which the gulf which exists should be bridged, and that the members of this great party should cease to be tolerated but recognized as loyal members of the Church. Here is a group of men, many of whose opinions are absolutely at variance with my own, but whose loyalty to their Lord cannot be questioned. A friend of mine, a strong Evangelical of a conservative type, after attending the Anglo-Catholic Congress told me that at times he thought he was at Keswick. Could any finer Evangelical message be delivered than that which Father Stanton gave at St. Albans? Said this Anglo-Catholic: "Be an Anglican, Roman or Nonconformist, be what you like as long as you are Christ's and Christ is yours for ever and ever. That is the point, that is the kernel, that is the Eternal Salvation." It is no exaggeration to say that hundreds, if not thousands to-day are living in touch with their Lord through his ministry, but that ministry practically never received any recognition from the Church which had ordained him priest. The Church produced John Wesley and Charles Pusey, and both were priests within her fold. She persecuted and hindered both in their ministry. How long is this policy to continue? The question is this, Is there room in the Church of Christ for the Anglo-Catholic Congress and for the Islington Conference? If there is, is there room in the *Church of England* for both? If there is not let us say so and let one depart, but if both are to exist side by side make it possible for both to be happy in their spiritual home."

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this proposal. It is one of the most sensational pronouncements ever made from

the Presidential chair of the Church Congress. We were fully persuaded that the Bishop of Chelmsford would not be content with an Address on conventional or traditional lines, full of meaningless platitudes, but we were not prepared for anything quite so startling as this.

The Bishop is not the man to propound a scheme  
 But how? until he has thought it out thoroughly; and in this case he has worked out his plan in detail. "How is this to be accomplished?" he asks, and he begs that his plan be considered not in sections, but as a whole. He says, in the first place, that there must be a revision of the oath of Canonical obedience, and of the "Declaration of Assent," for "both are ambiguous." Then, secondly, "the position of the Bishop must be more clearly defined." He favours the restoration of Diocesan Synods in every diocese, with an appeal to a fully constituted Provincial Synod. In the third place he claims that Canon Law must be restored to a position of respect. "It should be possible to draw up a new and authoritative set of canons, based partly upon the heritage and precedent of the body of Canon Law and partly upon the primitive Catholic principles of the New Testament." Finally, there must be reform of Ecclesiastical Courts, for Courts, when set up, "should be of such a character as to secure general acceptance for their decisions." This, in brief outline, is the Bishop's scheme. It is sufficiently comprehensive and, without in the least degree committing ourselves to its acceptance in whole or in part, it may safely be said that it deserves, alike for the personality of its author and for the reason which has prompted him to make it—the restoration of unity and peace within the Church—the fullest and most careful consideration, and that, we are persuaded, it will receive from Churchmen of all schools of thought and not least from those who, like ourselves, rejoice in the name, with all that it implies, of Protestant and Evangelical Churchmen.

The general subject of the Church Congress was  
 "The Person of Christ." "The Living Christ and Problems of To-day," and  
 it was fitting that the first session should be devoted to a consideration of "The Person of Christ." Those, however, who expected that the papers would be of a devotional character,

giving a spiritual uplift to this great assembly of Churchpeople gathered from many different parts of the country, must have been woefully disappointed. Canon Mason's paper, which led the way, dealt with "the Person of Christ in relation to God," but it was almost wholly directed to a criticism of the Dean of Carlisle's recently published Bampton Lectures on the Atonement. He declined to accept the Dean's theological position, and set out his reasons for disagreement. The subject does not lend itself to brief treatment in a note, but Canon Mason had no difficulty in showing that belief in the unity of the two Persons makes room for a deeper view of what the Atonement means than the lecturer was willing to admit. "Words," Canon Mason went on, "like ransom, sacrifice, propitiation—words like bearing our sins, the chastisement of our peace, are all figurative, but I cannot think that there is no reality to which they correspond. It is not by believing even the most correct, the most spiritual interpretation of them, that we are saved, but by the death, the willing death itself, crowning such a life and leading on to such a victory." The next paper was read by the Dean of Carlisle, who suggested that "even till quite recent times the Church at large has not fully grasped and appreciated the doctrine which it formally professes as to the real humanity of Christ, and that in most popular religious teaching it is not appreciated yet." The final paper was read by Dr. R. J. Campbell on "The Temporal Setting and Eternal Significance of the Teaching of Christ," and he followed his own characteristic lines. We cannot but regret that no definitely Evangelical speaker was associated with this subject. How different would have been the treatment of it by such a leader as the late Bishop of Durham.

So little is known in this country of the constitution of the Church in Australia that we are bound to make room for the following most interesting letter from Archdeacon Davies, of Sydney:—

I am writing to draw attention to a serious mistake on p. 380 of the July issue of the "CHURCHMAN." I refer to this statement: "The Church in Australia cannot move except with the concurrence of the Church in England."

The constitution of the Church in Australia has been for some years under investigation by a Committee of the General Synod. I am breaking no confidence as a member of that Committee when I say that the statement I have quoted is simply not true of the Church in Queensland, New South

Wales, West Australia and Tasmania, and probably also of the Church in Victoria and South Australia.

The circumstances differ in detail in each State, but, generally speaking, it is true that the Church in each State has voluntarily bound itself to conform to the Book of Common Prayer as the standard of worship and the Thirty-nine Articles as the standard of doctrine. The Bible is definitely mentioned as the sole rule (i.e. supreme authority) of faith.

If the Church in Australia desires to draw up and authorize a new form of worship, all that is really necessary is to have an Act of the State Parliament passed in each State to safeguard Church property. But, in fact, the first step is to give more real authority to the General Synod, as at present each Diocese is free to accept or reject any determination of General Synod, and such determinations become binding only when accepted by all the dioceses. A change in England does NOT become *ipso facto* automatic in Australia, though the natural custom is to follow English precedents. But in a wide range of action the Church in Australia has already complete freedom and has exercised it in matters of organization, finance and general management of affairs. The Church in Australia enjoys a measure of self-government that is far in advance of what the Church of England enjoys under the Enabling Act.

I think I have said enough to show that the statement I have criticized is open to the criticism that I have made. I may add one point more. In 1912 the Diocesan Synod of the diocese of Sydney passed an ordinance authorizing the various abridgments and modifications allowed under the English Act of Uniformity Amendment Act of 1872. This is only one instance of many that could be given of independent action by the Church in Australia and that go to show that it is not true to say that "the Church in Australia cannot move except with the concurrence of the Church in England." The Church in Australia could do what it likes at any time it wishes merely by getting Acts of Parliament passed in the respective States without asking anyone's leave or taking account of anything done in England.

DAVID J. DAVIES.

**First Fruits in Southern Sudan.** It was announced in the Monthly Statement presented to the General Committee of the Church Missionary Society on October 13 that particulars have been received of the first Confirmation held at Malek, in the Hongalla Province of the Southern Sudan, nearly 1,000 miles south of Khartoum. Work was commenced among the pagans of the Southern Sudan in 1905 at the invitation of Lord Cromer, and the missionaries have had a long uphill struggle, experiencing many discomforts and discouragements. Bishop Gwynne reached Malek about mid-April and on the Third Sunday after Easter confirmed two Dinkas and two Acholi teachers. The Church was filled with more than one hundred and forty Dinkas who followed the service with great interest. The Bishop writes: "It was a striking scene and a red-letter day for the Dinkas. After fifteen years of uphill work amongst a people as difficult as any to reach, in a

climate which would try the strongest, here were the first-fruits. . . . The heart was lifted up in gratitude to God, that through the persistent and enduring courage of His servant—in spite of the strongly fortified positions of ignorance and savagery, in the stifling atmosphere of heathenism—a stage at last has been reached and a strategical point gained from which the missionaries of Christ may go forward to greater victories in the extension of the Kingdom of God.” Bishop Gwynne also held a Confirmation at Yambio, about twenty miles from the Belgian Congo frontier. The Government has conceded about 500 acres to the Mission, which has nearly all been cleared. The central block of buildings, made entirely of native materials, are most beautifully decorated with Azandi matting of black and white. The Holy Table, the choir-stalls, and all the wood-work are made of mahogany, and the whole building will accommodate 400 people. There are two houses for foreign missionaries, a school, a workshop, and an office. On each side of a broad way, between avenues of palms, mango and flowering trees, are the plots of the students of the school, or of the natives employed by or attached to the Mission. There are in all about 140 pupils, men, women, and children. Bananas, pawpaw, mango, and pineapples are grown so easily that these people support themselves entirely and are no expense to the Society. They attend prayers every morning after roll-call, the adults proceed to their work while the younger men and boys have compulsory school, opportunity being given to the adult men and women to attend during their rest-hour at mid-day, and of this they avail themselves with real eagerness. There is also a flourishing school for girls and women, five of whom are catechumens.

