

THE CHURCHMAN

April, 1926

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The World Call to the Church.

THE recent Conference summoned by the Missionary Council of the Church Assembly marks a new departure in regard to the work of our Church overseas. The three thousand delegates from all parts of the country, with representatives from Ireland and Australia, and also from the Missionary Societies of the Free Churches, met to consider the contents of four volumes—*The Call from Africa, The Call from India, The Call from the Moslem World, The Call from the Far East*. These were prepared under the direction of the Missionary Council by writers familiar with the conditions in the different spheres. They presented an appeal of overwhelming force to the Anglican Communion to realize the facts of the situation and to make use of the unique opportunities offered at the present time throughout the heathen and Moslem worlds for the spread of the Gospel. The Conference was roused to enthusiasm, and the question now is: What will the response be in workers and means? The Bishop of Salisbury, as Chairman of the Conference, says: "The demands we make are exorbitant, unprecedented, and the home difficulties are immense. What will the Church do in response? Will the offering of life be adequate? Will an adequate offering of wealth follow the offering of life?" On the answer to these questions depends much of the future of Christianity and its character throughout the world.

To Make the Appeal Effective.

It may seem ungracious in the face of the need and of the power of the appeal to offer any criticisms, but there are some points to which attention should be drawn in order to make the appeal as effective as it should be. Nowhere is the weakness caused by the divisions of Christendom more evident than in portions of the Mission field. The Conference represented the united action of the Church at home in co-operation with the representatives of the Free Churches. It is of the utmost importance that no unnecessary barriers should be set up to divide native Christians from one another in the Churches growing up abroad. Some of the stories told of the exclusion of devoted Christians of one portion

of the Church from Communion by other sections of the Church are painful. There must be unity among all portions of the Reformed Church throughout the Mission field on such essential matters as this if the Divine blessing is to rest upon the appeal. There is one omission in the call to which attention should be directed. The Call to the Home Church from our own people in the overseas dominions and in the isolated communities in many lands is omitted. Their needs should not be ignored. They may be the chief source of the strength of our Communion in a few generations. Special attention ought also to be given to work among the Jews. They may also constitute one of the chief factors in the development of Christian influence in the near future.

An Apologist for "Catholicism."

The defence of the Anglo-Catholic extremists by the Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford has already been so convincingly dealt with by Dean Inge and others that it may seem unnecessary to take any further notice of it. Its statements have been a source of astonishment to many. It is difficult to understand how anyone holding the position of Head of the Divinity School in Oxford University could issue a document containing so much that is open to direct contradiction. A great thinker has said that "Wisdom consists in the ready and accurate perception of analogies." Some of the Professor's analogies are open to obvious question. Almost every page contains statements which provoke retort. When we are told that St. Paul's sacramental teaching is the same as that of the Anglo-Catholics, we can only say with a recent writer that the sacerdotal theory of the Ministry and Sacraments "contradicts the whole genius and tenor of the New Testament," and that if such a theory had been intended by our Lord and His Apostles "the New Testament—in its affirmations and its omissions—would have been a book altogether unlike the book it is." If any impartial writer were to compare the place of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion in St. Paul's teaching and in that of Anglo-Catholicism to-day, we venture to think that the divergences rather than the resemblances would be the more striking, and that is putting the fact very moderately.

"A Declaration of War."

The Regius Professor repeats the statement so frequently made that the Anglo-Catholics do not desire to interfere with other sections of the Church, and that they are only seeking liberty for themselves. Some time ago a declaration on their part asserted that they would no longer be content with any mere "toleration" of their views. They are claiming that they represent the true teaching of the Church, and they have declared that "When the Catholic influence prevails in the Church, there will be no toleration for Modernists, and the extreme Evangelical will be far happier with his Free Church brethren." The recent action of the Bishop of St. Albans in regard to the Watford Conference shows the sort

of treatment which Evangelical ideas and aspirations will be likely to receive wherever the Anglo-Catholics are in authority. Recently the organ of the extremists has repeated its threat, and has emphasized what Sir Thomas Inskip described as "a declaration of war." It says: "It was an anticipation of what will happen when Catholicism prevails throughout the Church. It must be perfectly obvious that when that happens Modernism and extreme Protestantism will be impossible in the Church of England as they are impossible to-day in the Roman and Orthodox Churches." As such pseudo-Catholicism is of necessity intolerant and tyrannous we believe that the people of England will take care that it never has the opportunity of making its desires effective.

The Reservation of the Sacrament.

The constant repetition of the statement that our present Prayer Book does not forbid Reservation, and that Reservation is required by the Canon Law of the Church, is an instance of the method employed to secure the acceptance of a practice for which there is absolutely no defence. Common sense in the interpretation of the rubric requiring the consumption of all that remains of the consecrated bread and wine at the close of the service is sufficient for most of us, and the interpretation of Canon Law has been condemned by the highest legal and ecclesiastical authorities. All this counts for nothing in the eyes of those who have convinced themselves that Reservation is a Catholic practice which they are determined to follow. The statement drawn up by the Committee of the National Church League gives clearly the teaching and practice of the Church of England. Commencing with the decision against Reservation by the Archbishops (Dr. Temple and Dr. Maclagan) in 1900, it points out the real significance of the demand for the practice. It is not mainly for the sick but for purposes of adoration. The fundamental fact is that Reservation is based on "the unscriptural view of a presence of Christ in the consecrated elements." The words of Bishop Westcott are appropriately quoted: "It seems to me to be vital to guard against the thought of the Presence of the Lord 'in or under the forms of bread and wine.' From this the greatest practical errors follow." (*Life* ii. 351.)

The Bishop of Birmingham and his Critics.

The controversy raised by a small body of extremists in Birmingham against Bishop Barnes has subsided as a result of a clergyman being found to accept the living of St. Mark's, Washwood Heath, on the terms laid down by the Bishop. These were of a very modest character, and did not go as far as they might, and some may say as far as they ought, in maintaining the requirements of the Prayer Book. The Bishop had the possible changes in the revised Prayer Book in his mind, for he says "I merely seek to ensure obedience to the lawful order which we may expect to find in the revised Prayer Book. When the new Prayer Book

has received the sanction of the National Assembly and Parliament, Bishops and Clergy alike must be loyal to it. As Bishop, I could not forbid any practices or forms of service which it allows, nor ought an incumbent to adopt any which it does not authorize." We hope that the Bishop's anticipations of obedience will be realized. From the requirements enjoined by him he seems to suggest that the new Prayer Book will insist on Morning and Evening Prayer substantially according to the Prayer Book at convenient times on Sunday, and that there will be no reservation of the consecrated elements with free access on the part of members of the congregation, nor any so-called extra-liturgical services connected with the elements.

The Bishop of St. Albans and the Watford Conference.

Whatever question there may be as to the wisdom and expediency of the Bishop of St. Albans' action in advising the abandonment of the Conference on "Faith and Order" at Watford between members of the Church of England and Free Churchmen, and in refusing to allow the Communion Service at which Free Churchmen might be present to be held, there can be no question that he was wrong in the reason which he gave for his refusal. He said: "It is quite contrary to the principles of the Church of England to administer the Sacrament to those who have not been confirmed." The point has often been considered, and even the Bishops at the last Lambeth Conference were not prepared to go so far as to say that unconfirmed Christians were to be repelled from Holy Communion. The most convincing argument on the subject is given in a pamphlet by Professor Gwatkin, an acknowledged authority on historical matters, and especially on those relating to our own Church. In this, "The Confirmation Rubric; Whom does it bind?" written at the time of the Kikuyu Controversy, he shows that the Rubric can only refer to members of the Church of England, and cannot possibly be used to exclude other Christians. Non-conformists have not, except in exceptional instances and in unusual circumstances, any desire to be habitual communicants in our churches, and on such a special occasion as at Watford it would have been a gracious act, and it would have shown a more generous Christian spirit to refrain from such a prohibition. In any case the advice to abandon the Conference was regrettable.

The Recent Sessions of the Church Assembly.

The subjects considered at the last session of the Church Assembly were in the main those which had been considered at the previous sittings, viz., Patronage and Clergy Pensions. We dealt with these at some length in our last number, and need not repeat our remarks on the proposals. Some important improvements have been suggested in the Patronage Scheme, but it is still open to the objection that it threatens to interfere seriously with the rights of the Patrons without giving the laity any adequate voice in the choice of the incumbent. In fact, it appears to add unduly to the powers of

the Bishops. There is still considerable dissatisfaction among the clergy with the Pensions scheme. We hope the details will be carefully considered before the final decision is reached. The good will of the clergy, for whose benefit the arrangements are being made, should be secured. The defeat of the proposal that the expenses of the Bishops should be met in any legal action taken by them in regard to discipline in matters of ritual and doctrine is ominous in view of the demands which we gather are to be made by them for a strict adherence to the requirements of the revised Prayer Book when it is issued. By their votes the Bishops themselves seemed to be sharply divided on the question. This does not bode well for the exercise of discipline.

The Church and the Future.

The Cheltenham Conference Committee has chosen as the subject for this year's discussion "The Church and the Future." The Conference will be held in the last week of June, and we hope as usual to publish most of the papers in the next number of **THE CHURCHMAN**. The subject is one of special importance and will attract considerable attention. A number of representative and influential speakers have already signified their intention of being present, and the Conference ought to be one of unusual value and interest. The Programme states that the purpose of the Conference will be: "To consider the teaching and character of Christianity as it will appeal to the coming generation, especially bearing in mind the problems facing clergy who are commencing their Ministry." The greatest need of Christianity to-day in face of its world-wide mission is twofold. There is need for unity, and that presupposes a far larger measure of agreement as to the fundamentals of our Faith. The Conference will, we believe, do much to make clear the essentials of Christianity, and the best means of securing their emphasis in the organization of the Church of the future. The subject appeals specially to the younger clergy, and we hope that they will be well represented at the gathering. Full details of the Programme can be obtained from the Secretary of the Conference at Dean Wace House.

The Position of the Convocations.

At the last meeting of the Canterbury Convocation the future position of the Houses of Convocation was under discussion. The Archbishop of Canterbury assured some of the members who were under an impression that the rights of Convocation were being endangered that as far as he was concerned nothing was farther from his thoughts than that the due privileges and rights of Convocation should be imperilled in any way whatever. But he went on to point out that many of the conditions of the work of Convocation had inevitably changed owing to the establishment of the Church Assembly. There is no doubt that the importance of the Convocations has greatly diminished since the setting up of the Church Assembly. The attendance at the last session was

small, and the proceedings were dull. The work done by the larger Meeting must inevitably render the discussion at the purely Clerical gathering less useful, and in some cases redundant. In the multiplicity of Conferences and Congresses some must suffer. The Convocations have to contend with a process which is difficult to resist. Practical utility will be the deciding factor when the question of survival arises. The discussion of Prayer Book matters has brought the question to the front. No doubt the Convocations have the right to discuss the whole subject again when the report of the Bishops is issued, and perhaps to draw up a report of their own. Whatever value such a report may have as an expression of opinion, there is no body to whom it can be presented, and in that sense it will have little practical utility.

Editorial Note.

We have the pleasure of printing in this number Professor Pollard's second lecture. His treatment of Henry VIII in connection with the Reformation will be read with interest and profit. The other articles which we are able to present are of varied and, we hope, general interest. The Rev. George F. Irwin states some useful points regarding the Evangelical Interpretation of Anglicanism, of which there has been considerable discussion recently. Mr. John Knipe continues the account of the life of Anne Askew, "The Fair Gospeller." It gives an insight into the mentality of important personages in the time of the Tudors. Dr. Harold Smith contributes one of his valuable historical Studies. The results of his researches into ordinations during the Commonwealth throw a useful sidelight on the conditions of the time. The Rev. Norman Clarke deals with one aspect of the important subject of Authority. The Rev. F. Bate writes on a subject with which he is well qualified to deal. His paper on "The Church in North and Central Europe" contains a number of interesting facts regarding the past and present work of English Chaplains on the Continent. In lighter vein are the anecdotes of Dean Swift which an Ulster writer contributes.

Our Notes on Current Events and on the teaching of our Church, as well as the reviews and notes on books, will, we hope, be found helpful to our readers. We thank them for many kind expressions of appreciation and for their continued support of our efforts.

The Record is the oldest Church of England newspaper. It was founded in the year 1828, and will be celebrating its centenary in two years. With the beginning of the present year a number of important alterations and improvements were made in it, in order to render it more generally useful to the great body of Evangelical Churchpeople for whom it specially caters. We hope that in its new form it will receive the increased support which it merits. Its articles are written by experienced and competent writers, and embrace a wide variety of subjects of theological and general interest. It is indispensable for all desiring to keep in touch with Church affairs.