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THE CHURCHMAN

A Monthly Magazine

*CONDUCTED BY CLERGYMEN AND LAYMEN
OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND*

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THE MONTH.

THE Session has closed, and we are now virtually without a Parliament. "Good fortune has still attended the Government," says the *Record*. "If they have not accomplished all they wish, they have the satisfaction of feeling that they have done a great deal more than even their best friends expected of them. The passing of the Irish Land Purchase Bill through Committee, and of the measure for the Housing of the Poor through the stage of the second reading on one and the same evening is a feat of legislation unequalled in present times."

Mr. Gladstone has made a yachting trip along the coasts of Norway, in the *Sunbeam*, the yacht which made the voyage celebrated in Lady Brassey's book.

Lord Randolph Churchill, in introducing the Indian Budget, made a vigorous attack upon Lord Ripon's lack of policy in regard to Russian advance. The Secretary's able speech (says the *Guardian*) "suggests the hope that the responsibilities of power may in time convert the reckless demagogue into a serious statesman."

The discussions in Parliament on the Criminal Law Amendment Bill have not lessened the regret felt by many earnest advocates of such a measure at some of the modes adopted for obtaining a knowledge of certain facts or at the indiscriminate diffusion of such knowledge. On the provisions of this important Act, and the general subject, an article in these pages is unavoidably postponed.

Mr. Chamberlain's electioneering programme includes free education, the creation of a peasant proprietary, graduated taxation, and so forth. The question is how far the great Liberal party will agree with him.

Sir M. Hicks-Beach, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and leader of the House of Commons, has somewhat tardily acknowledged that Lord Spencer, the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland under the late Government, is entitled to the hearty thanks of the country.

Colonel Stanley, Secretary for the Colonies, has given "the fullest meed of approval" for the admirable way in which Sir Charles Warren carried out the primary object of his expedition in Bechuanaland. Sir H. Robinson's great services were also acknowledged; and a definite police in Bechuanaland, Basutoland, and Zululand may happily now be looked for.

At the Wesleyan Conference Dr. Osborn made some remarks upon political partizanship. He suggested that Methodist ministers should not interfere in political matters. Dr. Rigg criticized the policy of giving up villages for the sake of towns; unless they kept their villages they would be beaten.

The Bishop of Worcester has given two sums of £1,000 each to form the nucleus of a Clergy Pension and Insurance Fund for the archdeaconries of Coventry and Worcester.

The reports of the spread of cholera in Spain have been of the most painful description.

A testimonial subscribed for by persons of all ranks and classes in the county was presented at Exeter to Bishop Temple.

The Bishop of Carlisle, preaching in his cathedral, spoke of England entering upon a new chapter in her history; and he wished to see the whole truth as to the Church put before the country.

The Pluralities Bill has at length become law. Some of its provisions are excellent.

Discussions on the functions of the Provincial House of Laymen can hardly fail to do good service.

The Rev. John Wordsworth, son of the late Bishop of Lincoln, has been appointed Bishop of Salisbury. The *Times* says:

Mr. Wordsworth belongs to the moderate High Church school. He has gained so entirely the esteem and respect and regard of those who have known him at the University that the news of his appointment to the See of Salisbury will be received there with general satisfaction, and with a full conviction that no unworthy choice has been made. We welcome his appointment to this new sphere of work, for we are confident that he will not fail in any way to maintain the high reputation and high character which he has hitherto borne.

A letter from the Bishop of Rochester on the Church and State question contains the following paragraphs:

For the permanent and complete protection of the vast interests at stake, I want you to think out clearly, and to weigh carefully, even solemnly, what your duty must be in defending for your children as well as for yourselves the material forces which the Church now holds on trust for her responsible and ever-augmenting duty. For the widow and fatherless, who have no helper; the children who never needed more than now the incessant care of a vigilant and resident clergy; the religious bodies outside us, which sometimes recognise with generosity the value of a National Church, with its activities, scholarship, and devotion; the artisan, who welcomes a clergyman in his home, though he may seldom follow him into his church; the peasant, who would soon regret the friends he had lost, when missing the refined and kindly inmates of the parsonage—the great question is now at stake—is it, or is it not, for the welfare of the people at large that the National Church should be maintained?

Roughly analyzed, the advocates of what is called Disestablishment may be ranged under three classes. The secularists, bitterly disliking

revealed religion of any kind, clearly perceive that to deprive the great English Church of material resources for exercising her functions would be to strike a blow at the Christian religion throughout the world. Certainly the destructives would be the gainers. The political class, enamoured of a specious theory of religious equality, and resenting the obstacles which the Church in former times is alleged to have continually opposed to salutary and indispensable reforms, would punish her for the past by crippling her for the future. Some religious Nonconformists (perhaps the most formidable of all) honestly believe that alliance with the State means subservience to it, resent that the Anglican discipline and formularies should be recognised as the national ideal of the truth and rule of God, and seem able to persuade themselves that were we sent into the wilderness of a wholesome poverty we should, after an interval no doubt, emerge into a higher level of goodness and a loftier idea of duty than the world has seen since Constantine. I say "some," for there is a strong minority the other way. It is true that few thoughtful persons would care to deny that a Free Church has advantages and opportunities. But do they preponderate over those of a National Church, and what would happen until the tribulation was over?

These are resolute adversaries, neither to be softened by pathetic appeals, nor deterred by brotherly persuasion, nor intimidated by the consequences of success. Since they attack us, of course we must defend ourselves. But we need not lose our heads, nor set an example of petulant scolding, nor waste time and breath in dissuading them from an appeal to Parliament. We must use better weapons than adjectives; we must have at our disposal arguments which will bear constantly repeating, and facts which we can invite all men to sift. Ours, too, is the faculty of speech, and we shall use it when we think proper. As yet we are by no means alone. But of these two things we ask our fellow-countrymen to be well assured. What is being forced on us with a fierce eagerness means a religious war, which will penetrate every home, set class against class, and neighbour against neighbour, in a kind of strife which, as history tells us, is wont to be far more bitter than a mere civil dispute, and perhaps much more protracted. The responsibility is not ours but theirs. Also, we have a word for the neutrals, that large body of undecided bystanders who will look on in a cynical indifference at what, though pastime to them, is almost death to others. The Church, if she falls, will not fall alone. A good deal else is sure to come sooner or later out of her destruction, which those who let her fall may not particularly care for. When the dust and smoke of the battle clear away, there may be found other ruins than hers.

Some things will assuredly come to pass. In many of the rural districts the Church organization, from want of material support, must disappear; and, as our Nonconformist neighbours are in no instances asking for a share of the alienated endowments, it is hard to see how, even if they wished to do so, they could take up our dropped labours. In country towns the effect might be less severe, but in the great centres of labour, such as Liverpool, or Leeds, or Leicester, or Bristol, the Church's framework would be utterly submerged; and just at the moment when she was beginning to overtake the neglect of a past generation, and was earning the gratitude of all good Christian souls by her sacrifices and devotion, she would be struck down with paralysis.

The Bishop also refers to Education, and proceeds as follows:

Very quickly, indeed, all our Church schools would go; and there would be free, perhaps secular Board schools everywhere in their place. The Church, indeed, would live and work on as best she could—tested

and purified by trouble. Bishops and clergy would not be the least likely to forget their duty to their native land, nor their faith and duty to their Divine Head, nor their care for the poor, nor the great privilege of still being the ministers of an Historical Church, which has, with all her faults and shortcomings, done good service to England for more than 1,200 years. But they would be working with lessened numbers, and straitened revenue, and (being men) with a very sore heart. It is to be doubted if she could remain as wide and deep and Catholic as she is now. Her tendency would be to Sectarianism. She would be in danger of imperfect sympathies with the intellectual movements of the time, and of isolation from the outside national life. . . . Space does not remain for me to indicate, as the occasion requires, all the methods by which this attack can best be repelled. The duty of circulating by tens of thousands short, readable papers on the actual facts of the case, and of controverting by clear and full statements the preposterous fictions that are being continually propagated by those who ought to know much better, as to the incomes of the clergy, and their mode of payment, and the origin of tithes, and the meaning of a National Church, cannot need pressing on you. The Church Defence Institution has already done admirable work, prudently as well as boldly, by public meetings, where circumstances called for them. . . . Let it never be said of us, that we did not think it worth while to master the facts of our case, or to be at the pains of explaining them to others, or of stoutly contending for our magnificent inheritance. . . . On no political party, on no clever intrigues, on no favour of man will we for one moment stake our victory. Only in God above us will we trust, and in the justice of our cause; in the purity of the truth we declare, in the consistency of the lives that we live among our fellows.

Mr. Osborne Morgan, Q.C., M.P., who held the office of Judge-Advocate-General in the late Government, addressing a meeting of his constituents at Rhos Ruabon, referred to the question of Disestablishment. He said there was no doubt that Disestablishment was in the air, and no one but its most sanguine opponents could believe that it could be kept out of the range of practical politics (loud cheers). There were forces at work, both without and within the Church, which were steadily pushing into the front the growing independence of religious thought, the levelling spirit of the age, and the disposition to judge all institutions on their own merits.



THE CHURCH AND THE MASSES.

AT the recent meeting of the Central Council of Diocesan Conferences, a paper was read by Mr. W. Egerton Hubbard, supporting a resolution "that the distinct interests of the masses in the preservation of the National Church is a subject worthy of special attention by Diocesan Conferences at the present time." Mr. Hubbard said:

The first difficulty of writing a paper in support of this resolution is, that it admits of so little argument. The object aimed at is so self-obvious