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seem to be a paradox how anyone who can command millions by the stroke of his pen could possibly suffer from lowness of spirits in the pursuit of further gain. It certainly does present a strange enigma, which can only be accounted for by that retributive reaction which almost always waits upon the abnormal development of human nature along the line of covetousness. One fact at least appears to be a fixed one, as regards the weariness of mind and the worry from which very rich men occasionally suffer. They seem to lose sight of the common-sense view of human existence, as stated by Him Who alone was entitled to pronounce so positively upon the point. If it be true that "a man's life consisteth not in the *abundance* of the things that he possesseth," it is to be feared that some very rich men have but faintly realized the importance of those words. To be very rich, and at the same time to be the victim of mental uneasiness as to how to become richer, is one of those problems belonging to the perverted ingenuity of man that defies solution. That such is the case it is impossible to deny, because it is in evidence on the authority of rich men themselves. It almost tends to reconcile poor men to the humble fare of "the dry crust," and "the dinner of herbs," without carefulness, when they see that over-success in life does not always enable the man who has succeeded to live free from carking care, and in co-operative harmony with himself, his fellow-creatures, and his God.

G. W. WELDON.

ART. VI.—ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS.

"Then said the guide, Look to your feet, for we shall presently be among the snares."—PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.

IF "threatened men live long," as the proverb tells us they do, it is because they take more care of themselves than men whose lives are not in danger. The Church of England received a very startling warning just before the recent elections; and though the result of those elections may be to give her a respite, it does not encourage the idea that the eventual danger is less than before. It is generally felt that if, like a threatened man, she would live long, she must, like him, take due precautions, and live circumspectly. This is the meaning of the sudden kindling of a zeal for Church Reform. Zeal in a good cause is good; but never was there more imperative need that it should be largely tempered with discretion, for never were the ecclesiastical projectors more numerous. Amateur constitution-monger-

ing in all departments is quite a fashionable craze, and the appetite of its professors is only whetted by such morsels as a transfer of the basis of power in England and the prospect of revolution in Ireland. A Church, too, whose best friends acknowledge her need of remedial treatment, almost invites every ecclesiastical quack to urge the application of his particular nostrum. Those who desire to direct public opinion in the Church should see that they keep a clear head amid the Babel of suggestions, remembering that a reform is not an end in itself, but a means to an end. That end is the greater efficiency of the Church in doing her Master's work among His people.

Church Reform is naturally comprised under two heads. There are abuses and anomalies to be swept away, and there is an organization to be improved and perfected. The two are as separable in fact as they are in idea. It is not necessary to have, nor desirable to wait for, a perfect organization before we begin to rid ourselves of some of those evils which hinder the Church from her work; and men would gladly co-operate to achieve the one object who would shrink from the risks inseparable from an endeavour to obtain the other. There exists already an admirable scheme, which might be carried through the first friendly Parliament, for putting an end to the abuses of the traffic in livings and next presentations. The present Prime Minister has almost promised a measure to relieve the clergy from the burden of glebe lands. Another heavy clog upon the Church would be removed by any equitable arrangement for the extinction of tithe, or an abolition of the invidious arrangement by which the tenant pays for the landlord. I admit the risk of consolidating Church property into what I may call the "portable" form, most ready to the spoliating hand of a needy Minister; but this is more than outweighed by the evils of a system against which deliberate misrepresentation is effectively employed by opponents to fan the discontent which ignorance and self-interest have kindled. For my own part, I should also think it a great help to the Church in the rural districts if the clergy were never magistrates. The two functions are not a little incompatible, however well they may sometimes work together. On the one hand, the paternal side of the country justices is rapidly giving way to the merely official; and on the other, it is more and more become necessary for the clergyman to move about among the poorest and most degraded of his people, to win their confidence and be consulted in all their troubles. He will uphold the law better by being excused from administering it. All these reforms could be effected without any change in Church organization; and to them might be added some scheme, receiving the general approval of Churchmen, for readjusting the incomes of Church

benefices. I do not say that, as a matter of fact, we shall get these things without some change by which the voice of the Church may be made more powerful and more articulate than at present; but if Churchmen are in earnest, they are quite feasible without that preliminary; and there is, therefore, no need to prejudice the discussion of organic change by the assertion that nothing can be done without it.

On the other hand, there are Reforms which are certainly desirable, but of such a kind that the Church can hardly expect Parliament to undertake them, or, indeed, to do anything more than receive them at the hands of some representative body, and give them the force of law. Almost all schemes of Reform hitherto brought forward involve putting an end to the farce called *congé d'élire*, not by simply vesting the appointment of Bishops in the Crown, without the show of deference to the Dean and Chapter; but by allowing even a larger constituency than the Cathedral body to have a voice in the election. So, too, the Cambridge Memorial, briefly noticed in the last CHURCHMAN, and that of Mr. Main Walrond, as well as the Programme of the Layman's League, for which the Rev. B. Fryer is sponsor, propose to give parishioners a veto on the appointment of objectionable incumbents, and to define more clearly the powers of the Bishop in refusing to institute. These are rightful objects to be aimed at, but not in a "*ruat cœlum*" spirit. Both are "tangled with the thunder at one end." A real *congé d'élire* will hardly be given without the exclusion of the Bishops from the House of Lords, and that in its turn is very closely connected with Disestablishment. So, again, the veto of the parishioners on nominations to benefices, unless strictly limited, slides rapidly into the power of appointment—and of all varieties of patronage popular election is the worst—and this would be as pure confiscation as any scheme of disendowment that was ever promulgated. Reforms in either of these directions, unless controlled and conducted from within the Church, will certainly be seized upon by the enemy as occasions for mischief; and before taking them up, the Church must first show a hand strong enough to grasp them. The providing for the retirement of aged and incapacitated clergy, and the legalisation of a greater variety of services, are also Reforms which should be carried out entirely by the Church within herself. To urge that so much liberty for the Church involves Disestablishment is to speak in the face of facts. The Presbyterian Church of Scotland has insisted on, and has obtained, greater freedom than this, and still is Established.

These considerations bring us to the other branch of Reform—the necessity for improving—we might almost say constructing—the machinery by means of which the Church may ascertain,

express, and carry out her wishes. Here again almost all the published proposals are at one. The genius of the age suggests a representative body—a thing well known from the first in the early democratic constitution of the Church, though overborne in later times by preponderant states or usurping hierarchies. Convocation clearly will not answer our purpose. It is essentially a clerical body, representing the clergy very inadequately, and the laity not at all. The key-note of the situation is the necessity for associating the laity in the life and work of the Church. The idea that the Church is a merely clerical institution—a notion which has firmly established itself in many minds, and has even infected our everyday language—must be promptly scouted, not in deference to modern views, but because the strength of the Church as a visible institution must always be in the laity, and because their co-operation is essential to the proper performance of a good deal of necessary Church work. Unquestionably some modification of the ancient Synod, in which the laity as well as both orders of the clergy might be fully represented, would add greatly to the power of the Church, and would be a fairly manageable body, capable of doing much good work. If its functions were purely administrative and practical, and not extending to questions of faith and doctrine, the formation of such a body would not meet with much opposition from any party in the Church. Nevertheless this, too, is beset by special difficulties and dangers, which need not, indeed, deter us from the enterprise, but for which it is as well to be prepared. Already there are clear signs that the first steps taken towards organizing a truly representative Church body will be the signal for a determined attempt at what will be plausibly called "nationalizing" the Church. Already a document—on which the names of Dr. Abbot and Canon Fremantle stand conspicuous among a rather motley multitude—is sent round for signature, setting forth the desirability of so "widening the basis of the Church as to include, as far as possible, the entire Christian thought and life of the nation." Could this process be carried out, all such distinctive teaching as, *e.g.*, Infant Baptism and Confirmation would have to be surrendered, together with Episcopacy and Holy Orders; and in the end we might perhaps preserve an Establishment, but should certainly have no Catholic Church. If the scheme means anything else than this, it means concurrent endowment of all Christian bodies on the basis of a "redistribution" of Church property. We might dismiss the monstrous proposal with a smile, but for one fact. If we are to have a representative Church body to settle Church legislation, we must fix our franchise. It will be argued with some force that the State must decide what it will recognise as the voice of the Church, and it will be added that so long as the Church claims

to be a "national" institution, her constituency can be nothing short of the nation at large. This palpable sophism will be eagerly adopted by some, and will impose upon many. In resisting it Churchmen will need to show a very determined front, and must insist upon a franchise similar to that of the Established Church of Scotland. The Scottish precedent is one for which English Churchmen ought to be grateful, as it disposes of the whole argument. If we are to have an administrative Church body, in which the laity shall be represented, let us not fail to use with vigour the powerful weapon which the General Assembly of the Established Church of Scotland affords us.

Another proposal for change which meets with a considerable share of approval is that for the establishment of "Parochial Councils." In Mr. Main Walrond's Memorial this proposal is fenced about with many explanations to show that it is made only vaguely and tentatively; and it is to be hoped that the subject will be approached with much caution. That it is desirable to associate laymen in the work and management of a parish will be admitted as a general principle by almost everybody. If the truth must be told, most of the clergy have to complain not that the laity are without power or influence in the parish, but that they are devoid of interest in it. They will hardly even stir out of their homes to elect a churchwarden. But while most clergy would welcome a co-operating laity with open arms, few things could be more mischievous than a crude measure compelling every parish to form a council. Considerable experience is necessary before coming to a conclusion on the matter, but, meanwhile, any believer in the system may try it to-morrow. If we bear in mind what we said as to all reforms being a means to an end, it will be easily understood that in different localities and circumstances there must be great variety in the ways in which the best results for the Church may be obtained from the combined action of minister and people. The object should be to make any council representative of workers. There is nothing to be gained by multiplying chatterers, and there is a great danger of engendering strife. I personally know of one Parochial Council, at the present moment, which works very well. It consists of all the working departments—clergy, churchwardens, and organist, with representatives of the choir, the sidesmen, the teachers, the district visitors, etc. These all meet for mutual consultation and help, and keep the books of their departments; and their knowledge of the work is such that if the parish were to change hands to-morrow the Council could tell the incoming parson more about it in a week than he would find out for himself in six months. That method suits very well a London parish of some two to

five thousand souls. Other plans might be better in other localities, and in some the benevolent despotism of the vicar would be preferable to any council. But a wise clergyman will always take his people more or less into council, and, after all, without a wise and understanding clergy there is no hope for the Church from the best forms of government that wit can devise. A parish governed by a foolish, irritable, or weak minister is bad enough; but to add a parochial council to such a man would be to create feuds and discords from which the cause of true religion might suffer for a generation to come. The sum of the whole matter is that we should enter on the work of Reform with a good courage, indeed, but circumspectly, seeing that every step has its own dangers. We must be prepared, too, for less improvement than we would wish to see, for the most perfect plans will not give perfect success so long as they are carried out by imperfect instruments. But we must neither recoil nor hesitate. Our opportunity is now or never.

GILBERT VENABLES.

ART. VII.—THE LESSONS OF THE LATE ATTACK UPON THE CHURCH.

IT is possible at length to estimate with some degree of accuracy the position in which the Church has been left by the recent General Election.

Never before was the Church question so prominently raised in the constituencies, or so warmly debated in the press. And from this fact certain very erroneous deductions have been drawn. It has been held that the Church was the main issue before the electors, that Churchmen put out their full strength to defeat the attacks made upon her, and that the result has been very detrimental to the cause which they championed. This is a deduction much in favour with Liberationists and their various organs, and doubtless gives great satisfaction to all who can accept and adopt it. It is, however, founded on false premises, and will not bear analysis.

It is true that at one time it appeared likely that the Elections would turn wholly upon the question of Establishment or Disestablishment. The Liberationists had secured pledges of some kind or other from as many as 500 Liberal candidates, and it really seemed as though the Liberal party, with a few distinguished exceptions, might on good ground be claimed as favouring the policy of the Liberation Society.