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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.

We have it on the unimpeachable authority of the *Liberator*, the Society's organ in the press, that in the new House of Commons there will be rather more than 230 members "who, in one form or another, are favourable to the policy of Disestablishment." Of course the *Liberator* professes to be highly pleased even with this result, but remembering the confident hopes of twelve months ago as to what the new electors would do with the Church as soon as they had the opportunity, remembering the strenuous efforts made to force the Society's programme both on candidates and constituencies, it is obvious that the result must be, from the Liberationist point of view, a dismal disappointment and failure.

To take our arguments in chronological order. It is not the fact that the Church question was, as once promised to be the case, the main issue before the electors. Mr. Chamberlain, at Glasgow on September 15 and at Bradford on October 1, did his utmost to make it so, and at that time all the Liberationist faction applauded and cheered him on. Moreover, Mr. Gladstone in his manifesto to the Midlothian electors on September 18, though he talked vaguely about "the dim and distant courses of the future," appeared to hold that Disestablishment was, if remote, inevitable, and again Liberationists were encouraged and stimulated. Churchmen were, however, by this time sufficiently roused, and putting together these utterances of Liberal statesmen with the fact of the 500 candidates more or less pledged to Disestablishment whom the *Record* had exposed, seemed to think the time had come to make their voices heard. The chorus of indignation swelled rapidly. There had been a strange ignorance of the nature of Liberationist designs, but the opportune appearance of the *Radical Programme*, to which a preface by Mr. Chamberlain drew general attention, gave Churchmen an occasion for studying the proposals of our friend the enemy. "If I want to convert an apathetic Churchman into an ardent Church defender," said a friend of mine, "I give him the *Radical Programme* to read. If it does not make his blood boil and send him to work forthwith, it is indeed surprising." That section of the *Radical Programme* which deals with the Church is, I may say, substantially identical with the "Practical Suggestions of the Liberation Society." He therefore who supports the *Radical Programme*, like Mr. Chamberlain, and he who repudiates it with scorn, as Mr. Gladstone did at Edinburgh, supports or repudiates the Liberation Society. This is a fact the significance of which the most casual reader will appreciate.

Liberal statesmen—even the most extreme men—were quick to discern the danger of the rising storm. Those who had

been silent hitherto, spoke out boldly against Disestablishment, as though they had long been wishing to unburden their full hearts; while those who had committed themselves on the unpopular side proceeded, with a haste which was not dignified nor even decent, to modify, explain away, or contradict their utterances of a few weeks before. It became a commonplace of politics to say the Disestablishment cry was a Tory move; but as I ventured to point out in the *Times* of November 12, unless Liberationists were Tories in disguise—which, seeing that they were very bad Liberals, was possibly a fair explanation—it was hard to understand how the Tories could be credited with raising a cry which they had been slow enough to realize had been raised by anybody at all. However, Liberal politicians of all gradations, Mr. John Morley equally with Mr. Gladstone, deprecated the question being in any way put before the constituencies; pleaded for the unity of the Liberal party, which to press forward Disestablishment would assuredly rend in twain; and as a party question the matter was thenceforward dead. Liberal Churchmen had made it abundantly clear that they would not support their party if it took up so illiberal a cry, and the rank and file of the candidates proceeded to scuttle out of their false position "like rats from a sinking ship." The manifesto of Liberal peers and others, to which such men as Lord Selborne, the Dukes of Westminster and Bedford, Lord Enfield, Mr. Tom Hughes, Lord Normanby and Sir Thomas Brassey put their names, gave the final touch; and when Mr. Gladstone got to Edinburgh on November 10, it was clear that he simply would not have a word to say to Disestablishment. Good service to the Church cause was likewise rendered by Lord Selborne in a letter advising Liberals generally to refuse to vote for Liberationists; and by Lord Hartington, who declared at Accrington on October 30, that Disestablishment would bring the nation nearer to civil war than anything he could conceive of. The result of the Election is, so far as the Church is concerned, as we have above stated, accepting for the nonce the probably sanguine estimate of the *Liberator* as to the strength of the Liberationist contingent.

Roughly speaking, therefore, the Liberationists think they can depend upon a third of the present House of Commons, while ranged amongst Church Defenders, for this Parliament at any rate, must be placed all the leaders of the Liberal party. This being so, I may be allowed to have shown that while the Church question was practically withdrawn from among the issues to be debated before the constituencies, the result of the election to the Church has not been unfavourable, but distinctly the reverse.

The mistake which our opponents make is in affirming that

the Church did her utmost and failed. She did not fail, we say—much less did she put out her utmost strength. This last may be shown very briefly.

The attack found Churchmen generally little prepared for it, and taken by surprise. It ought not to have been so, but it cannot be denied that it was, though surely through no fault of the Church Defence Institution. Urged by that body, Archbishop Tait had in 1881 drawn public attention to the drastic proposals of the Liberation Society; but in four years all seems to have been forgotten, and nine Churchmen out of ten then first came to realize what the meaningless word "Disestablishment" practically involved. When the truth began to dawn, there was plenty of indignation, enthusiasm, zeal, but there was very insufficient organization.

Meetings were held in all the large towns, and left nothing to be desired either in tone or numbers; but it was impossible in so short a time, and with a limited staff, to take the villages in anything like completeness or system, and it was in the rural districts, remote from the great centres of intelligence, that the Liberationist triumphs were won. This defect of organization is being already made good, and another election will, I am confident, tell another tale. The arts, moreover, by which the labourer was induced to go against the Church will assuredly entail a speedy Nemesis, and induce an angry reaction against those by whom he has been deceived. He has now served the agitator's turn, and will not be long in discovering that that personage has very little more to do for him or even to promise him. And upon that discovery the agitator's influence will be happily and hopelessly destroyed. In fact, unless I am grievously mistaken, the Liberation Society has now done its worst. It has appealed to the lowest stratum of the electorate, having previously appealed in vain to the better informed, and its success is far from commensurate with its hopes; for practical purposes it is absolutely futile.

Churchmen are very much stronger than many of their number, not all, were aware of; they are the strongest party in the country. If 85 Irish members are a perplexity to the two great political parties, what would 400 Churchmen be? It will be the wisdom of Liberal leaders not to force Churchmen thus to separate themselves; but it will be for Churchmen to make it understood that their interests and wishes must be treated with respect and consideration by the imperial legislature, and that coquetting with the Liberationist faction must not even be suspected. As to Church Reform, there is doubtless room for it, and the present time may be convenient for promoting it. Let Churchmen, however, beware of com-

mitting themselves to any wild scheme that may be thrust upon them, under the belief that something must be done and speedily, and that better have it ill done than not at all. The contrary is the fact. We have defects and anomalies in our system, which it will be well to correct and remove, deliberately and thoughtfully; but do not let us be in a hurry to go to Parliament, as at present constituted, and ask that heterogeneous body to show us the way. Let us decide among ourselves what we want, and then demand legal sanction for the changes we desire. But even should Reform be delayed, we may rest assured that this is preferable to endangering the continuance of that union between the Church and the civil power, under which the State of England has been and is so richly blessed.

H. GRANVILLE DICKSON.

Reviews.

The Life of William Carey, D.D., Shoemaker and Missionary, Professor of Sanskrit, Bengali, and Marathi in the College of Fort William, Calcutta. By GEORGE SMITH, LL.D., C.I.E. With portrait and illustrations. Pp. 450. John Murray.

DR. SMITH'S present work will meet with a hearty welcome. We have now three admirable Biographies by Dr. Smith—Duff of Calcutta, Wilson of Bombay, and Carey of Serampore. These works, covering a period of nearly a century and a quarter, from 1761 to 1878, are a treasury of material for that history of the Church of India which, as he says, one of its native sons must some day attempt; but they were written also as contributions to the "annals of the Evangelical Revival, which may well be called the Second Reformation," and to the history of English-speaking peoples, rulers and civilizers, in connection with Foreign Missions.

When Dr. Smith first went to Serampore, in 1854, Carey had not been twenty years dead. "During my long residence there as Editor of the *Friend of India*," he says, "I came to know, in most of its details, the nature of the work done by Carey for India and for Christendom, in the first third of the century. I began to collect such materials for the Biography as were to be found in the office, the press, and the college, and among the Native Christians and Brahman pundits whom he had influenced. In addition to such materials and experience I have been favoured with the use of many unpublished letters written by Carey or referring to him." The work before us, therefore—marked by great ability—is the result of diligent inquiry and careful preparation under the most favourable circumstances, and has a singular interest and value. It is a full and sympathetic Memoir of a most remarkable Missionary; but—as we have said—it is more than this, and as a contribution to the history of Christian devotedness and influence, especially in relation to enterprise in heathen lands, its worth in many ways is great.