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# THE CHURCHMAN.

APRIL, 1908.

## The Month.

**The Education Bill.** DURING the month which has elapsed since the introduction of this Bill there has been a repetition of the experience of 1906 : uncompromising hostility from many Churchmen and Roman Catholics, a plea for moderation from other Churchmen, and a general readiness to accept the Bill as a basis of settlement on the part of leading Nonconformists. Out of this great diversity of opinion it is somewhat difficult to see the way towards a satisfactory settlement, and yet it is perfectly certain that no settlement will be arrived at unless the problem is faced by all parties with due regard to all the facts of the case. The extreme language indulged in by certain public men and by some prominent Churchmen is in every way to be deprecated as prejudicial to the best interests of the Church, and also on account of the entire forgetfulness thereby shown of some of the essential and real features of the situation. Churchmen ought never to forget that the Act of 1902 is the cause of this controversy, for the trouble of the last few years is entirely due to that unfortunate measure. The alacrity with which Churchmen in general accepted it was not the least ominous feature of the situation. Reaction was bound to come, for an Act so one-sided and unjust to Nonconformity could not possibly remain unaltered on the Statute Book. When a political party on either side legislates on a great national issue, and ignores nearly half of the people of the land, the action is certain

to cause trouble; and this we know was the history of the Act of 1902 from the very first. We were among the minority of Churchmen who deplored the defeat of the Bill of 1906, and we are equally opposed to the attitude of uncompromising hostility with which this Bill is being met in certain quarters. To speak of it as "unjust" and "reactionary," to talk of "confiscation," and to use even opprobrious terms, will not further the settlement at all, but will only tend to put out of court those who adopt this attitude, as lacking in the true Christian statesmanship needed to cope with the difficult and complex situation. As the Dean of Manchester, in his admirable letter to the *Times*, truly says: "They who decline all compromise are not the friends of peace or of religion." It is for Churchmen to face these facts, unwelcome though they may be, for to ignore them is the height of unwisdom.

The  
Present  
Position.

It has been truly said that the Government have arrived at their present scheme by a process of exhaustion. The election of 1906 afforded a decisive proof that the Act of 1902 was to be altered so far as it conflicted with the principles of public control and freedom from tests for teachers in schools maintained by rates and taxes. Not only so, but on the admission of Churchmen themselves, Nonconformists suffered, and still suffer, a grievance in being compelled to send their children to Church schools in single-school areas. This being the problem, there were practically only two solutions of it, the one offered in 1906, and the one proposed by the present Bill. Now it is well known that the Archbishop of Canterbury has more than once endorsed the policy of public control of all rate-aided schools and the absence of denominational tests for teachers, and in view of this significant and far-reaching admission it is simply impossible for Churchmen to think that they can retain all their former privileges as though rate-aid had never been introduced into the question. The problem is how to preserve Church schools in the face of the great change in the situation which has resulted

from the Act of 1902. Surely it behoves all Churchmen to give the present Bill very careful and earnest consideration, in order to see whether a settlement cannot be arrived at along the lines of a fair compromise. The Dean of Lincoln, in a letter to the *Times*, calls attention to the following valuable features of the Bill :

1. It recognizes the essential difference between the problem in the single-school area and in the area where there is an effective choice of schools. If this is allowed, a great step is made towards an adjustment. It is in the single-school area that the most substantial grievance exists.

2. It recognizes (for the first time in the attempts at legislation) that "Cowper-Temple" teaching needs defining positively. We must know what it allows as well as what it excludes.

3. It recognizes that what Churchmen have cared for most, and have a right to ask for, is that if they hand over their schools they should have some security, beyond that of the good-will of the local education authority at the moment, that Christian teaching shall continue to be provided in them.

Dr. Wickham very rightly adds that it will be a thousand pities if a Bill, which on such important points shows insight and generosity, should be shipwrecked by want of equitable consideration in some of its details. We continue to believe that the controversy is capable of settlement at the hands of moderate men, whether Churchmen or Nonconformists.

**Material for Compromise.** Bishop Welldon, in his letter to the *Times*, refers to the four main points of controversy in the Bill :

1. The amount of the grant made to voluntary schools.
2. The conditions of the transfer of voluntary schools to the local education authority.
3. The right of giving denominational teaching in school hours.
4. The permission or refusal to the teachers of the right of giving such denominational teaching.

He considers that Churchmen should concede Nos. 2 and 3 in return for concessions from the other side with regard to Nos. 1 and 4. That is to say, the present Bill might be accepted if the grant made to voluntary schools were increased from 47s. to some larger sum, and if the regular school-teachers

were allowed to give denominational teaching in single-school areas out of school hours. This, and some other points mentioned by the Dean of Lincoln, certainly call for the fullest possible consideration on both sides, and we cannot think that it is beyond the common sense of practical men to arrive at a conclusion that will be honourable and fair all round.

One of the points which has aroused a great deal of opposition, both from Church and purely educational circles, is the proposal for the denomination to withdraw its school from rate aid, and conduct it as it chooses, provided that it is educationally efficient. We are quite prepared to admit that, on educational grounds, this breach in the public system is open to grave objections. But, on the other hand, how else are Churchmen to keep that control of their schools which they demand? In 1906 the Opposition did its utmost to introduce the principle of contracting out into Mr. Birrell's Bill. Mr. Balfour in the House of Commons voted and spoke in favour of it, and so did the Archbishop of Canterbury in the House of Lords, and now that the Government has introduced the proposal, and accompanied it with increased State aid, in order to remove the "intolerable strain" and secure educational efficiency, it is not for those Churchmen who favoured the proposal in 1906 to meet it with a strenuous opposition. The precise details of the proposal are, of course, capable of amendment in the direction of a still further increase of grant, but if Churchmen, in any large number, oppose contracting out it will be for them to show a more excellent way of solving the problem.

The main objection raised by many Churchmen against the present Bill is that it transfers the grievance now felt by Nonconformists in one-school areas to Church-people, and on this account it cannot be regarded as a solution of the problem. If this contention is correct the Bill will not be allowed to pass in its present form, and certainly,

as Dean Wickham suggests, "the appearance of confiscation must be removed," and the "facilities offered as part of the bargain must be real." What we fail to see in the discussions of the past month is any suggestion from Churchmen that will meet the present actual and admitted grievance of Nonconformists. It is perfectly true that two wrongs cannot make a right, but it is also true that there is nothing sadder in the history of this unhappy controversy than the way in which the Church allowed the Bill of 1902 to pass without any attempt to recognize, to say nothing of removing, the grievance of Nonconformists in one-school areas. If Churchmen had been in the Nonconformist position in these places they would never have tolerated the present state of affairs. In saying all this we know that we are taking a side which is not popular with Churchmen ; but we are anxious that all the facts of the case should be considered, and especially those facts which our own interests as Churchmen easily tend to make us ignore.

What  
Then? We have almost entirely dealt with the general features of the situation, leaving details to be considered when the Bill once more comes before the House of Commons. Meanwhile, we wish to record again our strong conviction that they are the truest friends of the Church, and indeed of religion itself, who endeavour to bring about a settlement on the lines of honourable compromise. Nothing could have been more statesmanlike than the attitude of Mr. Butcher, M.P. for Cambridge, when the Bill came before the House of Commons, and this spirit was well expressed in an article in the *Spectator*, as well as the letters to the *Times* already referred to. The letter of the Archbishop of Canterbury strikes the right keynote, even though his Grace regards the Bill as impracticable in its present form. We are profoundly thankful for the strong way in which the Government have set themselves against the secular solution, and we believe they have the overwhelming majority of thoughtful people in the country with them in this policy. With his accustomed acuteness, *Punch*

summed up the situation in a recent cartoon, in which John Bull is appealing to all the Churches to help him in the proper care of the children, but they are so engrossed in fighting among themselves that they are compelled to reply that they have not time to attend to the children until they have composed their own quarrels. One thing is perfectly certain, that if this Bill is wrecked, and the secular system is introduced into our country, we shall owe it to those extremists in our Church who will have nothing because they cannot get all.

The  
Licensing  
Bill.

The introduction of this Bill has rejoiced the hearts of temperance workers, as well as of all others who are zealous for the highest interests of our country. Whatever may be said about particular proposals of the Bill, no one can deny that it is a courageous and statesmanlike attempt to deal with one of the most gigantic evils of our land. That it has aroused fierce opposition on the part of the Trade is not surprising, for the evil is entrenched very deeply in our national life, and involves a large number of personal and social interests. And yet we confess that we have been surprised to find how largely the opposition to the Bill has ignored the evils connected with the drink traffic. Mr. Asquith, in introducing the measure, said that he should not enlarge on these evils, for they were universally known and might be taken for granted. But it is precisely these evils that the opponents of the Bill are ignoring. They do not remind us of the overwhelming testimony of magistrates, judges, and doctors, that drink is the cause of most of the crime and disease of the country. They do not tell us of the increasing power of the drink traffic, until it threatens to control our Legislature, and to hinder every attempt at social improvement. Nor is it pointed out that the best elements of our national life, as represented by the Churches, philanthropists, and other social workers, to say nothing of organized working-class interests, are all utterly opposed to the traffic, and are determined to do all that is possible to check and control it. These are some of the reasons why a reform in our

licensing laws is imperative, and why we welcome the introduction of the Bill with all possible heartiness.

Is it  
Confiscatory? Judging from the opposition of the brewing and public-house trade and their organs in the press, it might be supposed that the Government proposals cut at the root of the fundamental principle of morality, as represented by the eighth commandment. And yet a little quiet consideration will show that the Bill is only intended to regain for the nation that perfect freedom to deal with licences which the Act of 1904 took away from it. That Act sacrificed the rights of the nation to the liquor trade, changed an annual tenure into a freehold, and presented it as a gift to the brewers. Until then the drink monopoly was the property of the State, and the Trade recognized the insecurity of their tenure by insurance, and by the formation of brewery companies. Everyone who is acquainted with the recent financial history of the brewing trade knows how precarious the situation has been. A recent article in the *Financial Supplement of the Times* shows the true state of affairs in the brewing world :

“The Licensing Bill, whatever it may threaten, has not killed the brewery market; the market was dead before, and dead as the result of the speculation by brewers in tied houses which culminated ten years ago and has been collapsing year by year ever since. In the first place, it may be noted that the acquisition of licences by the brewery companies was itself criticized, when the movement first assumed important proportions, both as a questionable excursion into business which was outside their province and as unlikely to promote the benefit of the consumer. Before the tied-house movement began a licence was regarded as a personal asset of the licensed victualler who held it, an asset which remained good so long as the holder conducted his premises properly; the brewery companies, when they set out to buy public-houses, treated the licence as a sort of freehold appended to the house, a very different matter.”

In the face of these facts it is surely impossible for shareholders of brewery companies to maintain that their misfortunes are due to the Government Bill. Nor is it in accordance with fact to say that the Government proposes to close all public-houses. The notices that are now being put up in public-houses are simply untrue, and show the extent to which opposition to all



licensing reform can go. At the end of fourteen years there will still be well over 60,000 public-houses in existence, and not one of these will be closed unless the magistrates and local authorities have good reason for their action. It is essential, therefore, that the facts of the case should be known by all who love truth and hate unreasoning clamour.

The Time Limit. There is scarcely any doubt that the proposal that the monopoly of the drink traffic should revert to the State at the end of fourteen years is the main objection to the Bill on the part of its opponents. It will be remembered that the minority Report of the Royal Commission recommended seven years as the time limit, and the Archbishop of Canterbury proposed fourteen years as an amendment to the Bill of 1904. The one thing above all others to be insisted upon is the absolute necessity that the State should recover its control of licences, and for this purpose the licences must be regarded as a permit to sell drink for the public convenience, and not as a freehold to be utilized for private profit. The method of the time limit as proposed by the Government for getting back to the right theory of the licences is a perfectly equitable one, and while there may be objection to the precise period of fourteen years, the overwhelming majority of temperance reformers will agree with the *Morning Post* (which is not unduly biased in favour of the present Government) when it says that criticism should be directed, "not against the principle, but against the precise number of years chosen." We are well aware, and our own pages this month show it, that there are earnest, true-hearted temperance workers who do not consider the time limit equitable; but in view of all the facts of the case, we believe the principle to be essentially just, and cannot think a proper time limit will cause any greater loss than would be the case in other investments. We would call special attention to a valuable article in the *Commonwealth* for March on "The Time Limit," in which the facts of the case are clearly and forcibly stated.

The Principal of the Leeds Clergy School **An Appeal.** recently received an appeal from the Church Day Schools Association to "sink his politics and join in opposition to the Education Bill." In a letter to the *Yorkshire Post* Mr. Simpson said that he was prepared to do this; but, on the other hand, he appealed to his fellow-Churchmen in return to sink their politics and unite with him in support of the Licensing Bill.

"I can conceive," he says, "no course of action more calculated to win respect for the Church conscience in the matter of religious education than the unequivocal exercise of a social conscience at this critical moment in the history of temperance reform."

This is the spirit which ought to actuate us all. The temperance question is quite above all party politics and sectional interests, and we rejoice to know that it is being so considered by a large number of Unionists in the House of Commons. The way in which all temperance organizations have rallied to the support of the Bill shows how important the crisis is felt to be. The bold and statesmanlike attitude of the C.E.T.S. is a great encouragement to Churchmen, and will be an immense strength to the cause of truth and soberness. The general principles of the Bill ought to have the enthusiastic support of all public-spirited people, and above all the measure should be welcomed in every possible way by those who know by personal experience of the waste and ruin of human life through intemperance, and who are determined to do their utmost to bring about a better state of affairs.

The visit of M. Paul Sabatier and the excommunication of Père Loisy have once more made the question of Modernism one of special interest during the past month. To those who are outside the Roman Church the problem is at once significant and fascinating. On the one hand, it shows how far Biblical criticism has penetrated into the Roman communion, for Loisy's position is not essentially removed from that with which German criticism of the New

Testament has made us familiar. On the other hand, the controversy shows the utter absurdity of attempting to deal with criticism by ecclesiastical authority and excommunication. It is impossible to doubt that in opposing Loisy the Roman authorities are taking the right step if the essential truths of Apostolic Christianity are to be preserved in the Roman Church. Loisy stands for a rationalism which sets at nought the essential features of the New Testament, and in a sense is not far removed from Unitarianism. And yet, while this is so, it is equally clear that the Roman *method* of opposing Modernism is not only wrong, but essentially futile and really fatal. Rome should meet Loisy and Tyrrell in the open, and either disprove or accept their contentions. Scholarship must be met by scholarship, criticism by criticism. Excommunication is a weapon which will hurt its wielders most of all. The end of the controversy is not yet in sight, and we shall watch with the keenest interest the further developments that must arise. We believe that Loisy's theological and critical position is utterly impossible to those who believe in the historical Christianity of the New Testament. He represents aspects of that critical movement which, having attempted to destroy the Old Testament, is now turning its attention to the New Testament with equally drastic results. And yet, as we have said, it is certain that the Papal mode of dealing with the problem is absolutely intolerable. We have no fear of the ultimate results of rationalistic criticism. They will spend themselves, and compel mankind with all its deep needs to turn once again from the barrenness of rationalism to the deep springs of Christianity which take their rise in the Divine Person and Atoning Work of our blessed Lord.

