
A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

THE CHURCHMAN

October, 1913.

The Month.

The Winter's Work.

WITH October the pressure of the winter's work begins. The value of the work will depend, at least to some extent, upon the spirit in which it is taken up and carried through. If we work like beaten men, we court defeat. Setting our hands to the plough as if we were sure of the harvest, we have done something towards making the harvest sure. To realize the splendour of our opportunity is to take the first step towards its fruition. The winter's work in the ordinary parish—the visiting, the organizing, the preaching, the teaching, and all else that it involves—is a magnificent opportunity for bringing near to the people of our land that kingdom of God which shall, in the long run, mean the redemption of the world and the restitution of all things. The parochial system may, in part at least, have given place to the congregational, the old methods may have lost something of their novelty, the ordinary routine may seem to have become humdrum, the difficulties and disappointment of years of service may have weakened the grip and enfeebled the spring of some of us; but the fact still remains that highest amongst the factors that make for our national righteousness still stands the simple ordinary work of our parochial life. We whose task in life only allows us but a very small share in that aggressive work for God, venture to write this word of encouragement and appreciation to our brothers who are bearing the burden—nay, the

phrase is hardly the right one, hardly the one our brothers would wish to use—enjoying the responsibility and privilege of it.

The Outlook.

There is little need, however, to face the coming winter in pessimistic mood. There are difficulties and trials ahead for the Church at large. But history seems to suggest that critical times are best for the real life of a Church, and at any rate we can dare to believe that to-day's perplexities will become God's opportunities. The Welsh Church agitation, whatever its outcome, has at least drawn Churchmen together and braced us to new and vigorous effort. If the Bill goes through next year, and that is by no means certain, we must accept the situation in the right spirit, and we must see to it that the Church in Wales, impoverished and handicapped though it be, shall gain in spiritual effectiveness and in evangelistic zeal. For England the passage of the Bishoprics Act, for which we are profoundly grateful, ought to mean, and we believe it will mean, a fuller and more effective service in three great regions of the land. The vigorous action of the Bishop of St. Albans in the matter of the *soi-disant* Catholic League brings new hope to those who wish to see the Church cleansed from medieval and superstitious hindrances to real religion, and should by its very loyalty and courage inspire others in high places to stem the tide of Romish aggression. The passing of new temperance legislation for Scotland inspires the hope that England will not be much longer overlooked in this matter. The Mental Deficiency Act is another step in the right direction. Finally, in the imperial politics of the Church, the Swanwick Conference has not only brought its £100,000 to the coffers of the Church Missionary Society, but it has given us a new vision of things as they are and as under God they may be, if we will be but loyal to the spirit of the Master, who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life. As we look round upon the happenings and the possibilities of to-day we may well go back to our work determined that for ourselves and for the whole Church it shall be fuller, wider, higher, more fully consecrated than it has ever been before.

Social Questions.

The mention of the Scottish Temperance Act and the Act dealing with the mentally deficient leads us to say a word about the attitude of the Church, and especially of Evangelicals, to social questions. It has never been true that the Evangelicals have been deaf to the pleadings of the social conscience. The mere mention of the Clapham Sect, of such men as the great Earl Shaftesbury, and of the support that Evangelicals have given to such societies as Dr. Barnardo's Homes and the Ragged School Union, is testimony to the contrary. But in one particular direction a special opportunity is open to us just now. The Report of the Poor Law Commission has almost become a forgotten document. It is true that it has inspired most of the social legislation of the last few years, but that social legislation has rather more largely concerned itself with creating new organizations to deal with particular departments of Poor Law administration, than with making the old really effective. In the main, the workhouse and outdoor relief stand where they did. In both there is much to be done. But people know very little about these somewhat intricate subjects. They therefore care very little; they allow Guardians' elections to be determined by a small minority of those entitled to vote, and often upon issues which are not only subsidiary to the main question, but in themselves utterly trivial; and when elections are over they allow the administration to proceed just as the Guardians, generally inadequately representative and often practically incapable, may happen to wish. May we venture to suggest to our Evangelical brethren of the laity that they discover for themselves the state of the case in their own neighbourhood and then proceed to such active interference as they may deem necessary. The care of the poor lay near to the heart of the great Apostle of the Gospel of the Atonement. It should lie near to the heart of Evangelicals. We believe that it does, only that they do not always show it. They do not show it because they do not know what their local workhouse is like, nor how the poor widow in her own home and among her children is being cared for. It is our business to know, to care, and to act.

Holiday Observations.

To those who spend their few weeks of vacation at one or other of our British watering-places, not the least interesting of the various forms of occupation is the general outlook on one's fellow holiday-makers. In their pursuits and recreations it is possible to read something of the tendencies of the age and the signs of the times. What has chiefly impressed the present writer is the change wrought in English middle-class life by the advent of the motor-car and the cycle-car. In former days, father, mother, children, came to a place and, with the exception of local excursions, stayed there. Now it is largely movement—constant coming and going. It was significant to hear from an accountant who had intimate acquaintance with the motor-car industry, that middle-class families are largely wont to cut down their establishments in order to keep a car. Fewer servants are kept, smaller houses occupied, families in many cases are limited, in others non-existent, in order that money and time may be set free for motor travel—for a life of constant movement and perpetual change.

Home Life and Church Life.

Whatever may be the positive advantages of all this, it can hardly be questioned that it is bound to strike a blow at home life, and especially at home life on its religious side. The opportunity for change and wider knowledge of one's own country, doubtless, is good in a measure. But the loss of that peace and repose which the word "home" has hitherto stood for is a heavy price to pay. The constant "week-end" motor holiday is bound to tell a tale not only on the statistics of church attendance, but on the inner religious life of those concerned. Week-end motoring holidays are presumably not church-going holidays; and even where church-going finds a place, the constant change and novelty are a poor substitute for the peace and quiet of worship at home. The present state of things has been not inaptly named a "motor-car and telephone civilization." It is an age of wonderful mechanical invention—in the air, on the land, beneath the sea. With no

wish to be unduly pessimistic, we cannot help feeling that many features of this mechanical age are of serious import both to church life and to home life, and we think clergy and teachers will do well to warn their people of the risks they, perhaps quite unwittingly, are running.

The Woman Movement.

At the forthcoming Church Congress we are glad to notice that the relations of man and woman in these perplexing days is to be considered. By the appointed speakers, and, we hope, by the whole Congress, it will be seriously considered. We have no intention here of involving ourselves in the vexed question of suffrage, but we do feel that there is serious danger of something in the nature of a sex war, a serious sex antagonism, arising among us. Wrong and wicked things are being said on both sides. Not only are men and women equally necessary for the maintenance of the race: they are equally responsible, in virtue of functions and capacities which they possess, for the real welfare of the social fabric. It will be a grievous pity if the suffrage controversy brings about the growing up of a generation which forgets the duty and opportunity of each sex in relation to the other. Therefore, in the interests not only of the social organism, but of real religion, we are glad to see the subject included in the Congress programme, and we hope that this ventilation of it upon a Church platform will serve to lift the whole controversy into a purer and more reasonable atmosphere.

Biblical Drama.

The question of the limits within which religious experience and emotion are fitting subjects for dramatic and spectacular treatment is too large a one for discussion in these Notes. But we are bound to express the greatest regret at the method in which—according to the report of the *Times* dramatic critic—the story of "Joseph and his Brethren" is being treated at His Majesty's Theatre. Many will be grieved and distressed that the sacred narrative should be made the subject of a dramatic spectacle at all. And even

those who would be prepared to welcome such representation if reverently and seriously treated can hardly fail to be repelled when they read that "an *ingénue* is provided to give Joseph his little 'love interest,'" and that "the chief baker, who was hanged, serves for 'comic relief.'" Apart from all other considerations, what an association is this treatment of the story to produce in the minds of those who witness it! When in private reading or public worship, the whole history, with its tragedy and pathos, is followed, what a jarring and alien note is struck by the recollection of the "comic relief" thus imported into the sacred narrative! Treatment such as this is a degradation of the Bible story.

Lord Haldane's Address.

One of the most striking events in recent international history has been the address given by Lord Haldane at Montreal. Our readers will be familiar with the outline, at any rate, of its main contentions. From one point of view it may be called a constructive essay towards the abolition of war and the prevalence of universal peace. The keyword was the German term *sittlichkeit*—customary or habitual morality. Lord Haldane pointed out how this sanction to good conduct grows up within the limits of any particular State. People do not act rightly merely from fear of the policeman and the magistrate, but in obedience to a general respect for what the feeling of the community at large approves. This purely moral factor is a stronger incentive to right action than any fear of legal penalty. May not this powerful factor operate not only within the limits of any nation or closely related group of nations, but in the international relations of the various peoples of the world? The ideal as sketched by Lord Haldane is lofty and inspiring. For ourselves we feel that the religion of Christ must be the most powerful agent in bringing this aspiration to pass. It well may be, as the fundamental principles of His Gospel are realized and obeyed, that a *sittlichkeit*, a moral habitude, will be developed powerful enough to insure universal peace.

The Bishop of Manchester's Letter.

It will be remembered that in the year 1908 a Sub-Committee of the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury, which had been appointed to draw up an historical memorandum on the ornaments of the Church and its ministers, issued a Report which has become generally known as the Report of the Five Bishops. That Report was pretty severely handled at the time, and its mistakes and omissions pointed out by, among others, Mr. J. T. Tomlinson and Canon Nunn. Notwithstanding the fact that its conclusions had failed to stand the test of close and careful scrutiny, the Archbishop of Canterbury has been reported to have said that it was "unchallenged by any competent authority." In January last, however, the Bishop of Manchester sent to the Archbishop, in the form of an "Open Letter," a very effective criticism of the Report, challenging its main contention, which the Bishop summarized as follows: "I believe that I am correct in understanding the conclusion of that Report to mean that other vestments than the surplice and hood are lawful ornaments of the minister in ordinary parish churches, and, further, that it is specially contended that all ornaments of the minister for which authority can be found in the first Prayer-Book of Edward VI. are thus permissible, or at all events not excluded by law."

The Archbishop sent a brief acknowledgment in which he expressed the opinion that the question was one "of archæological rather than cogent practical importance," thus, in effect, dismissing all discussions upon the history and interpretation of the Ornaments Rubric, though we might naturally suppose that the endeavour to ascertain the real meaning of the rubric was, in view of the existing conditions of the Church, one not only of cogent, but of very urgent practical importance.

The E.C.U. Rejoinder.

It was to be expected that the Bishop of Manchester would not be allowed to remain altogether unchallenged, and the English Church Union has now issued a pamphlet purporting to reply to his lordship's

contention. It is a curious document in many ways. When dealing with the Bishop's suggestion that the vestments were exchanged for the surplice during the service under the book of 1549, it adopts the argument that omission means prohibition, but repudiates it vehemently when the same argument is made use of by the Bishop. It contains some useful admissions, as, for example, that the Church does not provide a service for non-communicants, "the ideal being that those present should communicate." It contains some mistakes in point of fact—*e.g.*, in stating that there was a direction in the first Prayer-Book that in the Baptismal service the minister should make the sign of the cross with oil, there being no such direction in the book. In places, moreover, the Reply is scarcely ingenuous, for, to take one instance, it is stated that the rubrics of the Second Prayer-Book did not exclude non-communicants. There was, it is true, no rubric directing non-communicants to depart, but it is not irrelevant to point out that there was a lengthy exhortation in the service giving them this very direction in the clearest and most explicit terms. Again, the reply of the Bishops to the Puritans at the Savoy Conference, "We think fit that the rubric continue as it is" is given, but without any mention of the fact that after further consideration the Bishops did alter it very considerably.

The Ornaments Rubric.

But perhaps the most interesting part of the Reply is that which relates specifically to the meaning of the Ornaments Rubric. Having criticized the Bishop of Manchester's interpretation, the Reply proceeds to give us what, without undue affectation of modesty, it describes as "the *true* interpretation" (the italics are ours). It may be sufficient to say that the "true" interpretation is arrived at after interpolating certain words into the rubric, and inserting brackets before and after the words "by authority of Parliament," with the result that the rubric, thus altered, appears to require the minister to use or interpolate practically any ornament or ceremony which had ever been in use in the Church of England

up to the time of the Reformation. There is no reference whatever in the Reply to the fact that from the beginning of Elizabeth's reign to a time long after the rise of the Oxford Movement the surplice only, or surplice, hood, and scarf, formed the dress of ministration in parish churches, and that the vestments were never worn by anyone during that whole period. It will require something much more worthy of the name of argument than we find in this pamphlet to set aside this plain testimony of history.

The concluding paragraph of the Reply is curiously significant:

> "It may be noted that it is impossible to bring altar lights, or an altar cross, within the Rubric, if it is to be taken to refer only to such Ornaments as are referred to in the first book, either expressly or by necessary implication."

Exactly so; and hence we suppose the endeavour to find a meaning for it which will include them.