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THE CHURCHMAN

November, 1913.

The Month.

The Church Congress.

THE Southampton Church Congress has come and gone, and the Bishop of Winchester is to be congratulated on what has proved to be a Congress of deep significance, of real seriousness, and of somewhat unique importance. The Bishop of Winchester has always shown himself a brave and courageous leader, and his personality dominated the gathering. In his opening address he struck the keynote of the Congress, a keynote of no uncertain sound. He spoke of the kingdom of God in the world of to-day. "The forces of the kingdom are spiritual forces, centred in the great impetus of grace which was given by Jesus Christ, and continued by the Spirit of Jesus in His people." The kingdom has its foes, and some who know the great interest of the Bishop in social and missionary problems might have expected him to think only of external foes; but no, "we must find the opposition to the kingdom individually in our own breasts and corporately in the faults of our own class, or party, or nation, and fight it there." It is this double attitude, individual and social, self-judgment and championship, which made the Bishop's address one of the most striking and helpful that has ever prefaced the discussions of a Church Congress.

But the Bishop's opening address was not the only service that he rendered to the Congress. His plea for missions, which had no direct place in the Congress programme, was all the more

impressive for that fact. The missionary motive of the Church is not to be relegated to one session of the Congress; it is to underlie the whole. Again, it was a bold thing in this day of suffrage controversy to admit such a subject as the relation of sexes to the Congress programme, but the Bishop realized that it is time that a serious problem was lifted out of the rut of violence and of ridicule and considered in a becoming spirit, and his courage was justified by the event. Miss Royden's address at the Men's Meeting was not only unique as an episode, but unique in its force and impressiveness. Finally, it was a great thing that, at a time when the relations between the Church and Nonconformity are seriously strained, an extra meeting of the Church Congress should be held, and that Dr. Forsyth, Dr. Scott Lidgett, and Dr. Cairns should address a meeting of Churchmen, under the presidency of a Bishop, and with two other Bishops speaking with them. Bishop Talbot has dared to carry into the ecclesiastical atmosphere of a Church Congress a practical illustration of the Bishops' resolution at the last Lambeth Conference.

The Christ of History.

The purely theological discussion centred round the person of Christ in prophecy, history, and experience. Some things were said with which we shall most of us seriously disagree, but the ablest papers faced the problem in a way that will tend to help and reassure. The Dean of Wells drew attention to the tendency which has become almost dominant of late to make an unreal and artificial separation between the Christ of the Gospels and the Christ of St. Paul, and his argument in disproof of this tendency was warmly appreciated by the Congress, and will be a permanent contribution to orthodox theology. The Dean of St. Paul's had for his subject, "The Christ of Experience," and in the course of his paper he dealt several severe blows at another modern tendency—the tendency to regard the Christ of Experience as an idealized presentation of the Christ of History. He declined to be satisfied with the Christ of Ritschl or the Christ of the

Modernist. He repudiated the idea that it is an historical accident whereby we regard Jesus of Nazareth as the author of our Faith. "The Christ of Experience is the same Christ who became flesh nineteen hundred years ago, whose deeds and words are present for us in the Gospels, and who promised that the Holy Spirit should descend after His departure to take His place."

The Invocation of Saints.

The Bishop of London devoted his Congress sermon to a careful examination of the Doctrine of the Invocation of Saints. At first sight it seems a matter of too secondary an importance to warrant its intrusion into so important a sermon. But on the whole we are inclined to think the Bishop has done the Church a service. He did not mention the "Catholic League," and he was chary of speaking words of praise or blame; but his sermon does reveal the real danger of the old practice and the extreme flimsiness of its claim for a place in the Church of England. The Bishop's sermon quotes largely and rightly from writings on the subject, and from writings on both sides. From those who are in favour of some form of the practice, comprecation or the like, we gain three admissions: that the practice of the Invocation of Saints . . . does not involve any opinion that the saints can read the heart or hear our prayers, or even know anything about us or our present needs; that the Reformers omitted all invocation whatever; that the omission was a return to primitive custom, when for about 600 years no invocations occurred in the authorized services of the Church. These admissions are such that the other side hardly needs to be put. The practice has no guaranteed value, it is not primitive, it is not Anglican. Little wonder that the late Bishop of Salisbury condemns the practice and reminds us that "our way is through God to the Saints, not through the Saints to God." Little wonder that the Bishop of London concludes his sermon with a plea for the revival in the Church of the doctrine of the communion of saints, and a clear acceptance of Bishop John Words-

worth's words quoted above. We should have been glad to have seen a clearer condemnation of the superstitious uses to which the "Catholic League" would call us, but we rejoice to note that the Bishop is alive to the danger that a revival of the practice dealt with would play into the hands of the most vulgar spiritualism, and would be dishonouring to the one Mediator, our Lord Himself.

The Church and Society.

In the Extra Meeting of the Congress Dr. Forsyth dealt with the relationship of the Church to Society, and incidentally touched upon the question whether the Church should interfere in the details of social legislation. In a paragraph which we venture to quote Principal Forsyth deprecated such interference, and emphasized the duty of the Church to make men really Christian, and then to let Christians, in their political and social groups, carry their Christianity into practical effect. The speaker's point is an exceedingly important one, and we leave his words to speak for themselves:

"The Christian principle is to buy and sell under conditions that make life worth living in the sight of God. It is the Church's duty to saturate Society with such convictions and ideals, even while it may not be its duty to insist by legislation on a minimum wage. Such a step may be wise or unwise, but it is outside the Church's sphere. So with the detailed legislation about housing. The principle is the Church's trust, not the machinery. And as a rule it is not the Church that should press for particular measures or policies, but the Christians the Church makes—the members of the Church, acting in political or social groups, with entire freedom of procedure and variety of opinion towards the common principle. On such lines the Church can do far more for Society or the State than these can do for the Church."

St. Paul and the Mystery Religions.

In the Congress papers one point occurred of more particular interest to the Christian student. This was a reference by the Dean of Wells to the present disposition, more strongly marked in German scholarship, to trace St. Paul's sacramental teaching and his doctrine of the Second Man from heaven to the Greek mysteries. Professor Ramsay's trenchant pen has already been employed

to show how improbable, in one particular context, this conception is. Those who wish to be informed in this matter of the general relation of St. Paul to the mystery religions will do well to read Professor Moulton's recent Fernley Lecture on *Religion and Religions*, where the treatment of the topic is discriminating and helpful. For those who read German, Dr. Carl Clemen's recent book on *Der Einflus der Mysterien-religionen auf das älteste Christentum* will be found a mine of recent information. It is to be hoped, too, that Professor Kennedy's recent series of articles in the *Expositor* will be published in book form so as to secure a wider circle of readers. These articles show with a wealth of learning and with copious references the great instability of the connection so often asserted now between the influence of the mysteries and the thought of St. Paul.

The Bishop of Calcutta's Letter.

It is greatly to be hoped that the protest which continues to be made from various quarters against the proposed tour of Miss Maud Allan in India will become effective, and that either by persuasion, or, if necessary, by prohibition, the enterprise will be prevented. The strength of the feeling against it has been adequately voiced by the Bishop of Calcutta's letter in the *Times* of October 9. He makes it quite clear that the protest is no mere expression of clerical intolerance or religious narrowness. At Calcutta, he says, "the subject was being freely discussed in the clubs, and I was assured that men of all kinds were agreed, almost to a man, in deprecating the visit." The Bishop, for his own part, has spent the whole of his working life in India, and may therefore claim to be in the closest touch with the characters and conditions of those for whom he has laboured; and he is emphatic in his assertion that, both for the general position of Englishmen in India, and for the cause of Indian morality in particular, this visit will involve grave difficulties and tremendous hindrances. Such an appeal, coming from such a quarter, should not go unsupported by Churchmen at home.

Hindrances to Missionary Work.

It is an old and sadly true story that the work of the missionary and the philanthropist in heathen lands has been hindered by the advent of the trader and the drink-seller, exploiting and debauching the very natives whom their fellow-countrymen are giving their lives to save. Workers at the home base may well strain every nerve and strengthen the hands of their missionary brethren. To create a body of public opinion and a spirit of public life at home which shall be less heedless of and more actively sympathetic with philanthropic ideals abroad is one of the contributions which the home Church may well try to make to missionary enterprise. As Archdeacon Watkins said at the recent Durham Diocesan Conference: "We need ourselves to be a truly Christian people. Would you, if you could, lift any great city from England and place it in the middle of India or Africa, and tell the people, 'We have brought you Christianity'? Would you dare to do it?" The Mohammedan trader is a propagandist of Mohammedanism. We must pray for and work for the time when the life and conduct of the Englishman generally will be a help and not a hindrance to the proclamation of the religion of Christ.

Christian Reunion.

The question of reunion with the Church of England has recently given rise to an interesting series of letters in our contemporary, the *Methodist Recorder*. The correspondence makes it clear that some, at any rate, look with wistful affection to their Mother Church, with deep desire for the ordered services of her liturgy. It is equally clear, on the other hand, that many perceive barriers which are felt, at present, to be insuperable. On some of the letters from this side we have one comment to make. The writers seem to take it for granted that the extreme view of the Sacraments and the ministry stand for the mind of the Church of England. They apparently ignore the not inconsiderable body of opinion in the Church which is not committed to the high sacerdotal view of the ministry, with all its resulting deductions. Our own view of

the matter is clear. We hold that much yet remains to be done in the way of social intercourse and mutual personal acquaintance before the time is ripe for any definite propositions of reunion. Anglicans and Nonconformists at present view one another from opposite sides of a high wall. There are many barriers to be broken down on both sides. Opinion must be enlightened and hearts kindled before formal proposals can be made.

The Needs of the Children.

While it is true that some of the characteristics of our age are calculated to cause grave apprehension in the minds of thinking men, one feature stands out which is of brightest omen for the future, and that is the awakening sense of deep responsibility for the child-life of the country. It has been said that the present century will stand out in our annals as "the children's century." The ways in which this real interest is displaying itself are manifold. A recent Order in Council deals with the establishment of Juvenile Courts in certain of the Metropolitan Police Courts. It is a measure of real humanity that children when under examination for juvenile misdemeanours should no longer be thrown into close association with the hardened and habitual criminal. There is also growing up a better understanding how closely such juvenile "crime" as does exist is bound up with the overcrowded and insanitary conditions into which the children are born. In other words, there is to be noted a wise attempt to remove the causes of juvenile wrongdoing and, where unhappily it exists, to correct it in more humane and reasonable fashion.

A Brighter Outlook.

How recent is this feeling may be realized from the fact that the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children is not yet thirty years old. Since the foundation of that Society many kindred enterprises have been set on foot for the amelioration of child-life, and the Women Workers' Conference, recently held at Hull, had for its main topic "The Children of the Nation." "Here assuredly," as the *Times* emphatically says, "women are in their proper

sphere. Of all the wide-reaching effects of the women's movement none is more clearly right and wholesome than this—that all through the country women are, because of it, increasingly alive to the sufferings and the claims, the rights and the wrongs, the needs and the possibilities, of the children to whom they have given birth." One more aspect of the movement may be mentioned in what may be called the reform on rational lines of Sunday-school work. An exhibition, believed to be the first of its kind, illustrating modern methods of teaching in Sunday-schools, was recently opened by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who, while doing justice to the excellent work of the past 130 years, declared that for the twentieth century we need a different plan, system, and apparatus. A better day is dawning for the nation's children.