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Memorial of the Nine Bishops.

WE are informed that the number of signatures to the Memorial promoted by the Bishop of Manchester and eight other diocesan Bishops against certain of the changes in the Communion Service which have been recommended by the Canterbury Convocation, now reaches upwards of 100,000, including nearly three thousand clergy. The number would have been very much larger but for the fact that at the time when the Memorial was being circulated for signature the epidemic of influenza, which impartially visited every part of the country, was at its height. As it is, however, the list of signatures is an impressive one, not merely on account of its numbers but also of its weight and influence as shown by the names which have been published in the *Record*, a large proportion of which are those of Moderate or High Churchmen. It can hardly be supposed that these changes will be pressed in the face of an opposition so strong as this, especially when we remember that little more than two years ago the Upper House of Canterbury Convocation voted against them by 15 to 5. We trust that the new Convocations will reconsider the scheme of revision as a whole. There is need for some revision, and for some greater elasticity than is permissible at present, but the Church as a whole does not want and will not stand a revision which amounts to a virtual concession of the principal demands of the Romanising party.

Sixteenth Century Controversies.

In the Report of the Committee appointed by the Archbishops to consider the question of the Worship of the Church, the following paragraph occurs :—

"The need of revision is felt with special acuteness in colonial and

missionary churches in which the connection of the Prayer Book with the controversies of the sixteenth century has no particular value or importance." A good deal might be said upon this statement, but it may be sufficient here to note that the controversies of the sixteenth century so far as they related to the Prayer Book dealt mainly with such questions as the "Real Presence," the sacrificial nature of the Holy Communion, Reservation, Auricular Confession, Vestments, etc. These are the very subjects around which controversy is raging to-day in both colonial and missionary dioceses; for unhappily those who are reintroducing sacerdotal and medieval teaching and practice do not confine themselves to the Church in this country. In more than one colonial diocese Churchmen have had to organise themselves in defence of the principles re-asserted in the sixteenth century on lines almost identical with those of the National Church League, simply because of the activity of those who are reviving all the controversies of the sixteenth century by reintroducing the very teaching from which those controversies delivered the Church.

Changes in the Communion Service.

It is a pleasure to announce that the very important letter to his diocese issued by the Bishop of Liverpool in connection with the proposed changes in the Service of Holy Communion, may now be obtained as a separate leaflet from the Church Book Room (82, Victoria Street, S.W. 1) at the price of 3s. net per 100, and we hope that many of our readers will avail themselves of the opportunity of circulating this telling message very widely among their friends. No clearer or more impressive exposition of the true inwardness of the proposed changes has yet appeared, and the Bishop's arguments will be found to be unanswerable. Assuredly the Bishop of Liverpool is no reactionary. In the discussions on Revision he has shown himself to be clear-sighted, far-seeing and progressive. He was prepared to make large concessions, but when he saw the trend of the changes proposed he was compelled to withdraw his support. He has now expressed his strong disapproval of the proposals to alter the Prayer of Consecration, because it seemed to him that with the permissive use of Vestments, and of Reservation and with these alterations in the Consecration Prayer "Prayer-Book Revision was being used to change the character of the central

Service of our Church and to bring it back very much nearer to what [he believes] to be the erroneous teaching of the Middle Ages." The Bishop in his letter describes the proposed changes—the introduction of a new prayer and the "apparently innocent" rearrangement of certain of our present prayers; and then goes on to explain the effect of these alterations. For lucidity of expression and forcefulness of argument the Bishop's statement is most useful. We venture to quote one passage:—

> The effect of these alterations would be not only to introduce into our Prayer Book a view of the Lord's Supper which 370 years ago the compilers of the Prayer Book distinctly excluded, but also to make the consecrated Bread and Wine a Sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, which our present Prayer Book never asserts. We offer indeed to God, at the Holy Communion, the Sacrifice of our alms, of ourselves, and of thankful hearts, and, as some people think, of the unconsecrated Bread and Wine symbolising the fruits of the earth. But to speak of the consecrated Bread and Wine as a Sacrifice is to open wide the door to misunderstanding and error in the future. Moreover, there is no doubt that the latter part of the new Consecration Prayer would lend itself to the teaching and practices which follow a belief in a localised Presence of our Lord on the Holy Table, and would be quoted as supporting the doctrine of the real objective Presence in the Bread and the Wine. Nothing can, now, prevent those who believe in such a localised Presence from *privately* praying to it; but for the first time in the history of the Reformed Church of England we are asked so to alter the structure of our Communion Office as to make the Service, in its central and most solemn part, capable of being made a vehicle for the worship of a localised Presence, and of supporting a theory of the Holy Communion which was deliberately avoided at the Reformation. When Professor Hort was asked to suggest words to be placed over a Holy Table in an English Church in Switzerland, he sent the Versicle and Response which form the most ancient part of our Communion Office, and with which the solemn act of consecration may be said to begin:—"Sursum Corda. Habemus ad Dominum." "Lift *up* your hearts; we lift them *up* unto the Lord." It is to the Living and Ascended Christ enthroned in glory, and yet present as Host in every Service of Holy Communion, not under the forms of Bread and Wine, but in the midst of His faithful people, ready to refresh and strengthen them with the spiritual food of His own most precious Body and Blood that we offer, in this great central Service, our heartfelt worship and adoration.

It is exceedingly important that these views should be thoroughly understood and assimilated by Church of England people, and, therefore, we say again that we hope the Bishop of Liverpool's letter will be extensively circulated.

Another Kikuyu Conference.

It is distinctly unfortunate that there was so much delay in the arrival in this country of the Official Report of the second Kikuyu Conference, and it is also a loss that, now that it has arrived, it should have attracted

so little attention and provoked so little comment. We hoped to find in the *C.M. Review* for December some statement representing the views of the Church Missionary Society upon the Conference and what was effected at it, but possibly the report arrived too late for the purpose and we must wait in patience till the next issue, for some light and guidance are needed upon what is really a new situation. The Conference, which met at Kikuyu towards the end of July, is hardly likely to provoke the controversy which its predecessor of 1913 engendered; for one thing the Bishop of Zanzibar (Dr. Weston), who led the opposition, was himself present on this occasion and was given the opportunity of presenting his views. He explained his position at some length and was listened to with close attention, but the counter-proposals he submitted found no favour with the Conference. It is possible, of course, to admire his courage and persistency, but his scheme was hopeless from the first; if it had been accepted, not only would it have wrecked the cause of Church unity in East Africa; it would have had a disastrous effect upon the progress of unity at home. That the Bishop of Zanzibar longs for unity is clearly apparent—but it must be unity on his own lines. So also do the other members of the Conference—but they are for moving towards that goal by a different road, each mission being ready to go as far as possible and practicable under the present conditions. They took occasion to express their own aspirations in the most definite way:—

"In setting our hand to this Constitution, we, the representatives of the allied Societies, being profoundly convinced, for the sake of our common Lord, and of those African Christians to whom our controversies are as yet unknown, of the need for a united Church in British East Africa, earnestly entreat the home authorities to take such steps as may be necessary, in consultation with the Churches concerned, to remove the difficulties which at present make this ideal impossible.

"In the meantime, we adopt the basis of Alliance, not as the 'ideal,' but as the 'utmost possible' in view of our present unhappy divisions. The members of the Alliance pledge themselves not to rest until they can all share one ministry."

What this second Kikuyu Conference has accomplished is the formation of a working Alliance, to the constitution of which the two Bishops (Uganda and Mombasa) and representatives of the Church Missionary Society, the African Inland Mission, the Church of Scotland Mission, the United Methodist Church Missionary Society and the British and Foreign Bible Society have set their names. The contracting parties have agreed:—

1 To respect one another's spheres, as set out in a map, which a duly authorised representative of each of the Allied Societies shall sign, as an acknowledgment of the assent of each such Society to the Alliance (provided that nothing in this constitution shall be so understood as to prejudice the episcopal or other ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the local Church authorities in any of the Allied Societies over all the members of their own communion). (*a*) Any missionary shall be free to visit and minister to members of his own church living in the sphere of an Allied Society, provided that he shall first intimate his intention of so doing to the local representative of the Society occupying that sphere. (*b*) All missionary work within a district shall be under the jurisdiction of the Society responsible for that district.

2 To respect the autonomy of each Allied Society within its own sphere.

3. To foster the desire for union, and by every possible means to prepare the minds of all Christians for early union.

4. To develop the local Church organizations along similar lines of District and Parochial Councils.

5. To recognise the status (see notes) of every Christian which is assigned to him by the branch of the Church of Christ to which he belongs.

Note (*a*). This refers to the position of a catechumen, or of a baptised or communicant member of some branch of the Church of Christ in connection with the Allied Societies.

Note (*b*). While earnestly desiring such a measure of unity that full intercommunion between the members of the Allied Missions may become possible, we recognise that in existing conditions, such intercommunion between episcopal and non-episcopal Missions is not yet possible.

Note (*c*). The Bishops of the two dioceses concerned in the Alliance realise the dangers to which native converts are exposed through isolation. They deeply regret that it is impossible in the present circumstances to bid the members of their Church to seek the Holy Communion at the hands of ministers not episcopally ordained. But they will be grateful for such spiritual help as it may be possible for other Missions to give to those who may be for the time isolated from the ministrations of their own Church.

Note (*d*). The responsible authorities of the Allied Missions will welcome as guests to their Communion any communicant member of the Allied Missions for whom the ministrations of his own church are for the time inaccessible, and as to whose moral and spiritual fitness they are satisfied, provided always that no obligation shall rest on any such member to avail himself of this liberty.

6. To discouarge proselytising.

7. To respect the decision, in all cases of discipline, made concerning their own members by the respective Allied Societies.

It may be said—indeed it has been said—that such an Alliance does not take us very far along the road to unity; perhaps it does not, but it is at least an important and significant beginning of the journey, and we may be quite sure there will be no turning back till the goal is reached. In regard to the articles of agreement, it may be said that they are, in the main, clear and positive, but it is a pity that the position outlined in Note (*b*) was not more clearly related to that defined in Note (*d*). In the former it is acknowledged that full intercommunion between episcopal and non-episcopal

missions "is not yet possible"; in the latter it is pointed out that the Allied Missions "will welcome as guests" "any communicant member of the Allied Missions for whom the ministrations of his own Church are for the time inaccessible." No doubt the apparent inconsistency can be explained, but at the moment it is not easy to reconcile the two statements. The question of intercommunion is the crux of the problem, and it was hoped that Kikuyu might have given a stronger lead. Not that we wish unduly to criticize; on the contrary we are most thankful for what has been accomplished and we pray God that it may lead to a great advance towards the achievement of that "oneness" of the Lord's people for which He prayed. It was, perhaps, a wise step, having regard to the terms of the Archbishop of Canterbury's "Opinion," to dispense with the United Communion Service at the close of the Conference such as that which shed glory upon the first Kikuyu Conference, although it was made the chief ground of complaint by the Bishop of Zanzibar.

Self-Government for the Church.

The Report of Lord Selborne's Committee on the Relations of Church and State has been superseded, and the Church has now before it for its consideration the Report of a Committee of the Representative Church Council, appointed last year to report upon the recommendations of the earlier body and if desirable to prepare a scheme. This new Committee was a larger, if not a stronger, body than that over which Lord Selborne presided. It consisted of ten bishops, twenty-five members of the Lower Houses of Convocation and thirty-two members of the Houses of Laymen, representing many different shades of opinion. They reported that it is essential to the well-being of the Church of England that means should be devised for giving it a larger measure of self-government, and they proposed a new scheme, but except in one or two important particulars (e.g., the adoption of the baptismal instead of the Confirmation franchise for electors) it follows the lines of the previous Report, upon which, indeed, it is based. The Committee was too large to admit of unanimity, but the extent of the diversity of opinion manifested is not known; probably when the Report is submitted to the Representative Church Council we may have a little more light on the subject. One thing, however, is certain; it is already pro-

voking a great amount of criticism from quite different quarters. Some members of the Committee itself, representing what they claim to be the " Catholic " position, have issued a Minority Report ; the *Guardian* hailed the Report as an example of " more tinkering " ; and the Dean of Canterbury, in one of his most forceful articles in the *Record,* assailed it from the position *inter alia* of the rights of Convocation—a point which had been strangely overlooked. Dr. Wace showed that " in neither of these schemes have the relations between the proposed new body and the existing constitution of Church and State been fully considered," and he declared that all agitation at present for an " Enabling Bill " to carry the new scheme into effect is futile. " The present Report observes," he argued, " that ' the successful working of the whole scheme depends upon the Houses of Convocation being reformed at as early a date as possible, especially in the direction of a larger proportion of the non-official to the official members, and of proportioning the total number of members of the two Lower Houses to the number of members of the House of Laymen of the Church Assembly, and this is expressly contemplated in Clause 15 of the constitution of the Church Assembly which we recommend.' Parliament, however, could not be expected to consider any enabling Bill in which these essential elements are undefined in the Assembly to which some of its functions are to be partially transferred. Nothing can practically be done until the Convocations are reformed, and Convocation thus seems to remain in possession of the ground." We are persuaded that there is great force in the Dean of Canterbury's contention, and the discussion, indeed we might say the dissension, which the appearance of the Report has provoked, makes it clear that the more thoughtful and sagacious Churchmen are fully alive to the perils which the adoption of such a scheme would entail. It may be that there is need for a drastic revision of the relations of Church and State ; it may be that there is need for the Church to obtain wider and larger powers of self-government, but the evidence is daily becoming clearer that the constitutional questions which such changes would involve are of such far-reaching magnitude that nothing should be attempted without the clearest possible evidence that the scheme of reform would make for the greater efficiency of the Church of England with the least possible disturbance of its present constitutional position.

In these circumstances we have great sympathy with the Bishop of Hereford's contention that the whole question should be referred to a Royal Commission. No doubt this would mean delay, but better that than that by the adoption of hastily-considered and ill-conceived " reforms " the Church should be landed in inevitable disaster. We cannot disguise from ourselves the fear that if either of these schemes were presented to Parliament the short answer would be—the Church can have self-government if it cares to pay the price. And that price would probably be disestablishment and disendowment.