ART. IV.—BOARDS OF MISSIONS.

WITHIN the last few years interest has been developed in Foreign Missionary work: previously, as Archdeacon Grant accurately remarked, "Missionary enterprises were, in the minds of many members of our Church, identified with a certain cast of religious opinions which caused offence to sober-minded Christians!" There has, too, been considerable discussion, not unconnected with "party" differences, concerning the proper manner in which Missions should be carried on. It may be convenient first to state the theory, or rather theories, which have been propounded. One is, that "God[1] has ordained a visible system, a holy society, the Church; to which are entrusted the oracles of truth and the means of grace. . . . . To this body the function of preaching and propagating the Gospel is committed. . . . . The Word of God does not represent the future believers of the Gospel as a number of individuals, or as a combination voluntarily formed; but the terms convey the idea of some one single object or person"—the Church.

In accordance with this theory it is held that "the commission to preach the Gospel was imparted by the Church itself, from whence apostolic men went forth." It was not an act merely of individual zeal, but of an authoritative commission also. It was not deemed that individual earnestness was an adequate vocation for the high work of being an evangelist to the nations; nor was it deemed that the authority to send lay in any member of associated individuals, however zealous for the honour of Christ, but that it rested with the Church. This is also the theory of Romanism.[2] Another and an opposite theory is that the propagation of the Gospel was in primitive times not effected through any fixed organization. "There were no great missionary associations; no distinction between home and foreign missions. The Christian had but to cross his own threshold, and he found a pagan people at his door to be converted. Missionaries were not subjected, any more than pastors or

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[1] Archdeacon Grant's "Bampton Lectures," 1843, p. 76.

[2] "Roman Catholics hold that our Blessed Lord called into existence, and Himself directly fashioned, an organic body, a corporation known as the Church; that this Church is His Kingdom *in* the world, but not of it; that to this Church was exclusively committed the guardianship of the Divine Revelation which he had made known; that she alone has the right to judge of the meaning of such revelation and to propound it; that to her solely appertains the duty and privilege of dispensing the mysteries of God; and that she exists for a spiritual end—namely, the salvation of man and the glory of God."—*Great Britain and Rome.* By Monsignor Capel, D.D.

bishops, to any special training." The spontaneity of missionary zeal is vouched for by Celsus: "Many of the Christians without any special calling, watch for all opportunities, and both within and without the temples, boldly proclaim their faith; they find their way into the cities and armies, and then, having called the people together, harangue them with fanatical gestures."

These are the two rival theories which[1] are to a considerable extent, but not altogether, conflicting.

From the theories we pass on to the consideration of what has been the *practice*. It seems undeniable that in Apostolic times individual believers acted often on their own responsibility, without any peculiar mission or vocation. While the Apostles of our Lord were the first preachers and witnesses of His resurrection, in many places others intervened. It is not clear why, or by whose authority, Stephen and Philip so quickly left serving tables and preached the word of God. They which were scattered abroad, upon the persecution that arose about Stephen, went to Antioch; they gathered in a great number of believers; they founded the Church in that great city. Whence did Aquila and Priscilla receive their Christianity, and what authority had they to instruct Tertullus? How came the Word of the Lord to be sounded out through Macedonia and Achaia, but by the individual zeal of the Thessalonians? Later on, who or what was the old man who met Justin Martyr on the sea-shore, and told him that he was only a lover of knowledge, not of truth or virtue? It would be difficult to disprove the position that Christianity was carried from Asia Minor into Gaul by individual zeal, through the commercial relations between the rich city of Marseilles and the East; that it was taken into Germany by prisoners of war; and disseminated in Africa by the persecuted fugitives from Alexandria.[2] In one respect, like our Father Ignatius—namely, as regards mission and authority, although in other particulars he may have differed—Basil, before he was even a priest, and twelve years before he was a bishop, founded his Cænobia in Pontus, which were centres of missionary work.[3] These were effectual missions, the nuclei of great churches. Dr. Maclear has written an article on "Missions," in Smith's "Dictionary of Christian Antiquities," but all he has to tell is that, "little that is reliable has come down to us respecting the work of the founders of the earliest Churches;" and again, "we look in vain for any traces of actual organizations for missions." He begins *his* account of them with the fourth century. He has no information to produce—or, if

[1] Orig. c. Cels., vii. 9. De Pressensé "Martyrs and Apologists," p. 20.
[2] Cf. De Pressensé.
[3] Cf. Bishop Wordsworth, "Church History from A.D. 325," p. 234.

he has, he has not produced any—as to how Christianity was propagated up to that period. Bingham, in his "Antiquities," accepts Christianity as a fact, but does not tell us how it became a fact. In his great work Christianity comes before us full-born, like Minerva from the temples of Jove. Canon Robertson, in his "History," says that, by the end of the third century, although the Gospel had been made known to almost all the nations with whom the Romans had intercourse, we have very little information as to the "agency by which this was effected," even though Origen speaks of myriads of converts among every nation and every kind of men. These readily accessible authorities, which are selected because any one can with ease consult them, may serve to convince that—unless assumption and fancy are to be accepted as equivalent or superior to proof—the feeling of primitive Christianity was, "rem, quocunque modo, rem"—"Converts by all means and anyhow converts." All men of all classes, apostles, prophets, evangelists, presbyters, deacons, laymen, even women, strove indiscriminately to propagate Christianity and largely succeeded, "for the people had a mind to work." They were by no means particular how, where, or by whom, converts were made. The regimen of Churches when gathered out from the heathen is a totally distinct matter, deserving distinct treatment. As Churchmen, we hold it ought to be episcopal, and, so soon as may be consistent with safety, independent of foreign influence.

As might be expected, there are, subsequently to the fourth century, more traces of ecclesiastical organization for Mission work; but they do not extend much beyond particular bishops, who might be filled with holy zeal, interesting themselves in missions; or bishops, often upon the application of Churches which had been gathered by the zeal of private individuals, supplying bishops and teachers when distinct elements of success were perceptible. The history of the Abyssinian Church, through the efforts of private individuals—Frumentius and Ædesius—is a notable case in point.[1] Oddly enough, the most successful corporate action of the Church, if it can be so termed, was heterodox rather than orthodox. Arian Bishops busied themselves in missions; among whom Ulphilas, the great missionary bishop among the Goths, was conspicuous. Nestorian bishops were earnest about Nestorian missions. But the action of individuals was still quite as conspicuous as that of the Church. In times of much darkness and ignorance it displayed itself often in most eccentric fashion. Alcuin remonstrates with Charlemagne for baptizing nations wholesale. "Baptism," he says, "can be forced upon individuals, but belief cannot;

[1] Cf. the Bishop of Lincoln's "Church History from A.D. 325," p. 43.

such baptism is but an unprofitable washing of the body." This might be profitably compared with the later action of the Church of Rome, through the medium of the Portuguese and Spanish, in Africa and America. Some Christianity was the result; but the means employed were scandalous. During the period under review, the corporate action of the Church in missions was of a very miscellaneous and doubtful character. In the corporate aspect it was more conspicuous in the violence of the Crusades than in the action of the Celtic missionaries, which was largely the outcome of individual zeal. Missionary work, in its best aspect, often proceeded from monasteries, which, in those times and in their best days, were, making allowance for difference of customs and manners, pretty much what our modern missionary societies are. Their efforts were within the Church; but not, as a matter of course, authoritatively proceeding from it in its corporate capacity. The monks were associated individuals.

Both the brevity and the length of these prefatory remarks must be excused; the brevity, because within the compass of a magazine article it is not possible to make positions sufficiently clear with more abundant proofs; the length, because the immediate subject has yet to be dealt with. They must not, however, be considered irrelevant or superfluous; for if, indeed, it is beyond dispute that it is contrary to Revelation for missionary work to be undertaken, except by the corporate action of the Church, and that this has in ancient, especially primitive, times been the uniform practice, *semper, ubique, et ab omnibus*, there is nothing more to be said—

"Causa finita est; Deus locutus est."

It is, however, the deep conviction of the writer that the contrary is and ever has been the case; at all times individual Christians and associations of Christians, sometimes in concert with, sometimes independently of, Church authorities, have carried on the work of Foreign Missions. To bring the question to an immediate issue, a fair challenge might be given: let any one show that, from the period of the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons, even if then, to the present moment, the Church of England, in her corporate capacity, whether her Convocations were free or muzzled, or through any other corporate process of her own, has ever engaged in Foreign Missionary Work. The Celtic missions are sometimes claimed as the action of the Church of England. Even if they were a case in point (*vix ea nostra vocamus*), a thousand years have elapsed, and there has been no corporate action of the Church for the conversion of the heathen. The same is true of the Gallican Church. It is true of the Church of Spain, unless the wars against the Moors and the action of the Inquisition can be so designated.

But how have Foreign Missions been carried on subsequent to the sixteenth century, both in the Church of Rome and in the Reformation Churches? It may be convenient to begin with Rome. An assertion has been advanced, that in mediæval times monastic institutions of the better sort were virtually equivalent to our modern Missionary Societies—they were sometimes connected with, sometimes independent of church authority. In the modern Papal Church, missions are confided to religious orders, in which the Jesuits figure conspicuously. There is a distinct society for the Propagation of the Faith, which has its head-quarters at Paris and Lyons, managing all apart from National Churches. No Archbishop, bishop, priest, or laymen, in France or other countries, has any sort or kind of control over Foreign Missions; he has no voice in the management; he pays over his subscriptions and collections, and they are spent for him. The money collected throughout Europe, Asia, Africa, America, Oceania, is remitted to France, and divided out by a council of ecclesiastics there to the different missions. In a certain aspect this is certainly a Board of Missions,[1] but how it consorts with the corporate action of the Church, unless corporate action means simply to subscribe, is most baffling. It is a department within the Papal Church worked by the Jesuits, to the exclusion of the hierarchy, the clergy, and laity generally. In truth, what monastic institutions were in the Middle Ages, religious orders in Papal Rome now are. They may suit the genius of Romanism, and this is probably their best justification; but the result is, that certainly the mass of the faithful in Romish countries are far more outsiders to missionary work, either as churches or individuals, than are English churchmen.

Attention must now be turned to the Church of England. Until disproved, it may be assumed that, for more than a thousand years, there has been no corporate action of the Church of England for Foreign Missions, and no Board of Missions ever dreamed of. The suggestion is a pure novelty among us, which has been held as a sort of nebulous theory for the last thirty or forty years. How, then, have Foreign Missions been constructed? For centuries there were none, except the share which England had in the Crusades. With the growth of our maritime and commercial ascendency, which brought us into immediate contact with heathen nations, there were some vague yearnings of pious individuals on this point of Christian duty.

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[1] The only light in which we can view these bodies (the religious fraternities) is that of voluntary associations . . . . societies within, yet distinct from, the Church.—Archdeacon Grant, "Bampton Lectures," p. 160.

To the Protector, Oliver Cromwell, is due the first germ of the venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.[1] After the Restoration this society gradually became more formed, and obtained its charter from William III. But was there any feeling of corporate action on the part of the Church? The unhesitating answer must be—none.[2] Neither during the Stuart nor the Hanoverian period was there any. Occasionally an Archbishop, like Archbishop Wake, or a Bishop, like Bishop Berkeley, manifested interest in the heathen; but the mass of our Bishops took none—the mass of our clergy took none—the mass of our laity took none. Some prelates and masses of the clergy were positively hostile. The question may here with propriety be put to those who believe that "there is none other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved," but that of Jesus Christ, if, in the face of these facts, individual zeal or the co-operation of individual believers is or can be contrary to the mind of the Spirit?

> The heathen perish day by day,
> Thousands on thousands pass away;
> O Christians to their rescue fly,
> Preach Jesus to them ere they die.

Can it be but that any one who will bring salvation to them is not entitled to do so? Or when individuals send missionaries to them are they guilty of the sin of Saul who did not wait for Samuel to sacrifice? This has been seriously asserted on high authority.[3] Accordingly, Churchmen, as well as Dissenters, have grouped themselves together to propagate foreign missions. High Churchmen have done so, Low Churchmen have done so. Both have gradually enlisted the sympathy and support of the bishops of our church. Both have, through societies commending themselves to their judgment, laboured for the conversion of the heathen. Other societies have recently sprung up, reflecting extra peculiarities. All have now their opportunities of furthering the work of missions in the way most congenial to them, especially by the employment of agents in whom they have confidence. The success has been considerable, with manifest indications that the blessing of God which makes fruitful has rested upon the efforts of His servants. Our present foreign missions, therefore, as conducted by all parties, have been the outcome of individual zeal, and have been the work of associated individuals. In recent

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[1] Richard Baxter was an early and active member of the Society.

[2] Nearly a blank page of indolence or indifference.—Archdeacon Grant, "Bampton Lectures," p. 12.

[3] See Archdeacon Grant, "Bampton Lectures," on the Church Missionary Society, p. 233.

times bishops have given them a general approval, and have co-operated heartily. But lately a desire has sprung up that in lieu of these organizations "the Church" should take the work in hand herself But what is the Church? We all know the definition in our Nineteenth Article. With this the action of societies is by no means incompatible. But there are other theories.[1] In the days of King's Letters, the Sovereign with the Archbishops was pretty much the Church. Some years ago it might have been held that the Bishops were the Church. It is not quite clear that nowadays curates are not the Church. Some have glowing visions of synods, with the Archbishop of Canterbury sitting on the marble chair of St. Augustine, with all his suffragans around him, encircled by a goodly array of clergy; and possibly, but this is uncertain, by representatives of the laity. Others find the Church of England in our Houses of Convocation. Some in practice narrow it still further, and are content with the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury. It is in this latter body that the "Board of Missions" has, to a certain extent, got beyond the region of theory. The notion is, or rather originally was, that a Board of Missions containing the bishops, or some of them, with members of the Lower House, should be formed into a Board of Missions, superseding societies in all except the collection of funds, and some details of outfit of missionaries and such like, while the rest of management should be in the hands of this committee of Convocation. This was considered to be the transfer of Foreign Missions from societies to "the Church!" The project had a perilous resemblance to what is going on in the Church of Rome, as has been indicated. This ambitious scheme, however, utterly and signally collapsed. It found no favour with any one except the originators of the project. High Churchmen were as much opposed to it as Low Churchmen. The storm of opposition was so fierce that it completely disappeared from public view, but not from the penetralia of Convocation. After a while a very considerable modification of the former plan was quickly moulded; a board was actually erected, of which all that is known is that Sir Michael Hicks Beach is a member of it; but so unconscious were even the bishops of its existence—although possibly they may be members—that they had recently to be reminded of the fact by the Archbishop of Canterbury. During the last year a committee, which had been incubating for a period of longer

[1] Dr. J. H. Newman says that Cardinal Bellarmine introduced a new definition of the Church unknown to former times—"a congregation of men bound by common profession and sacraments, under legitimate pastors, especially the Pope."—*Essay on the Catholicity of the English Church.*

duration than the siege of Troy, brought forth a third scheme, which now demands attention:—

(1) That it is desirable for a Board of Missions to be constituted, consisting of bishops, representatives of the Colonial Church, members of the Lower House of Convocation, and laymen. (2) That His Grace the Archbishop be requested to direct the appointment of members of the Upper and Lower Houses, and to invite the metropolitans and bishops of the Colonial Churches to elect, in any way that they may think desirable, representatives of the Colonial Churches. That His Grace be also requested to invite the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and the Church Missionary Society to elect lay members, representatives of these societies, to serve on the proposed Board of Missions. (3) The the Prolocutor be requested to forward a copy of this resolution to the Upper House.

As the bishops in the Upper House would not be shelved as suggested, when the scheme was referred back, the Lower House were apparently unable to understand what they wished for. They, however (July 21, 1881), agreed to the following amended resolutions:—

3. That inasmuch as it was apparently found impossible to carry out the expanded scheme of April 28, 1874, this House, while ready to accept either plan, suggests that the original scheme be now adopted, and that the Board consists of:—1. The Archbishops and Bishops. 2. A number of Presbyters elected by Convocation, equal to the number of Episcopal Members. 3. An equal number of Laymen, elected by the different dioceses. 4. A number of Clergymen and Laymen elected by the missionary societies which might be willing to co-operate with the Board.

4. That this House suggests that there be added to the Board, as originally constituted, a number of metropolitans and other Bishops of the Colonial Church, acting in person or by their duly-appointed Proctors.

5. That this House suggests to the Upper House that it is desirable for the Board of Missions so constituted to act usually through a committee appointed by itself.

Some such sort of a Board will probably hereafter be summoned, if that already in a state of suspended animation is virtually defunct.

This is the penultimate, if not quite the final, form in which the scheme is now presented. The objects aimed at are stated as follows:—(1.) "To promote harmony of action between the several provinces and dioceses of the Church." This seems rather, if not very, vague. (2.) "To vindicate principles affecting the Missionary work of the Church." But this can be, and is, done already in many ways through the medium of the press and manifold similar agencies. (3.) "To give counsel, when consulted by any Colonial or Missionary Church." But,

notably in the Copleston case, neither the Bishop of Colombo himself nor the Church Missionary Society dreamed of referring to the Board already in existence. Perhaps they were not conscious of it. (4.) "To report on the spiritual wants of heathen countries and providential openings." But this is already done; missionary societies are deluged with applications which they cannot meet. (5.) "To enforce the responsibility of the Church with respect to missions." But this, if it is to come from authority, surely ought to, and we are thankful to say does, come already from our Archbishop and Bishops. It is not easy to see why they should be superseded in this part of their functions by a committee of the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury. In fact, so far as can be discovered, the one real plea for this new board is that there are some clergy so curiously constituted that they persistently give no sort of heed to Archbishops, Bishops of any sort or kind, archdeacons, rural deans, secretaries of societies, or any other influence that can be brought to bear upon them. All this heavy artillery is discharged upon deaf ears; but it is hoped that they will open to the siren voice of a committee of the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury! The Province of York has made no sign; the North of England, although it has many men of shrewd intelligence among its clergy and laity, does not seem to make any sign. In point of fact it has not yet been consulted.

The first overt opposition to this new scheme proceeded from the bench of Bishops. When it was placed in their hands they discovered, probably with considerable amazement, that it involved propositions for disfranchising the larger number of their Lordships as though they were so many rotten boroughs. This was a singular outcome—as the first effort at corporate action on the part of the Church—to shelve the major part of the episcopate! They therefore stoutly refused to execute this sort of happy despatch upon themselves, and the proposals were sent back to the Lower House as inadmissible. They have accordingly been altered in theory, but have been still pertinaciously clung to by the promoters, for in the amended scheme there is the ominous notification—"That this House suggests to the Upper House that it is desirable for the Board of Missions, so constituted, to act usually through a committee appointed by itself." Now if this means anything, it is this, that while there is to be a show of the corporate action of the Church with all Archbishops and Bishops presiding, this is merely for parade. The work is to be done by a self-nominated junto of individuals, which may exclude the larger portion of the episcopate and all others whom it does not approve of. Compare with this curious caucus—which, self-nominated, is to act irresponsibly, and call its action the corporate action of the Church—

the constitution of the Church Missionary Society which excludes no bishop of the Church of England, no clergyman who subscribes 10*s.* 6*d.*, and no laymen who subscribes a guinea from a personal share in the management, if he sees fit to exercise it; or that of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, which in its proposed new constitution intends to elect its standing committee from all subscribers by a system of voting papers.

This junto is to perpetuate itself by recruiting itself out of those whose sentiments are identical with those of the ruling majority. A more narrow oligarchy was never schemed, except, perhaps, in the Council of Ten at Venice, or our old boroughs before the period of the Reform Bill. There is not even, so far as can be discovered, a stipulation for publicity of proceedings, as some counteracting influence to the irresponsible despotism of the proposed working board. It is due to some of the leading promoters to say that in the most earnest manner they disclaim any intention of interposing, directly or indirectly, with our great missionary societies or their associations. This disclaimer is, beyond a doubt, thoroughly honest, and without any "back lying intention," to use their own term, on the part of those who utter it; but it is very difficult to reconcile this with the language of other promoters, and still more so with the original scheme as first excogitated. It is said that the proposed Board is content, "in the first instance, to accept a humble position." But what will its position be in the *second* instance? Is the reply to be that of George Fox before his judges: "That is as thereafter may be?" When reading this statement it was impossible to avoid thinking of Virgil's description of Fame:—

> Parva metu primo; mox sese attollit in auras,
> Ingrediturque solo et caput inter nubila condit.

It has not accepted this humble position willingly, but because it has been forced upon it by overwhelming opposition; it is but common sense, therefore, not so much to view it in its enforced humility as in its more ambitious projects. Surely it is unwise to tamper with Missions on the principle of inserting the thin edge of the wedge of anything—which may rend them asunder.

Such is the present position of affairs. But it is said that other churches have Boards of Missions, why should not we? The reference must be to the Episcopal Church of Scotland, whose missionary action is so insignificant that it is positively absurd to quote it, or to the small but wealthy Episcopal Church in America. This Church has a Board. The calling into existence of this Board was a chief element in the disruption which brought on the Free Church movement in America; it collected about £19,000 per annum, in the three years previous to 1877—somewhat less in the subsequent triennial period.

There has been neither progress nor expansion. By its own advocates its missionary resources are pronounced to be "both unreliable and utterly inadequate." We wish those who prefer solid facts to plausible theories would look into this for themselves. Bad as we are, we have both progress and expansion in our missions. There remains the curious experience of the Swedish Church—a very interesting story. There was once a lively missionary spirit in that Church. A Board of Missions was set up. There has neither been progress nor expansion, but there has been stagnation and retrogression. All spontaneity in the work was gone. Authority was substituted for individual zeal. If any remember our Queen's Letters they will understand the force of this. They so nearly killed the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel that it was once in serious contemplation to close the concern.

To sum up: Boards of Missions, certainly, as projected, may reasonably be objected to:—

(1.) Because it is not susceptible of proof that there is Divine authority for confining the work of Foreign Missions to the corporate action of the Church; it is the duty of all Christian people individually and collectively.

(2.) Because, as a practical fact, Missions have ever been carried on by all sorts of agencies in all churches, our own included.

(3.) Because existing agencies are working satisfactorily and successfully in proportion to their means.

(4.) Because spontaneity is a more powerful motive than submission to authority, which leads to indolent acquiescence, not to fervent zeal.

(5.) Because history proves that Church action, so far as there has been any, is fitful, capricious, and sometimes avowedly antagonistic. The General Assembly of the Scotch Church, less than 100 years ago, voted in its corporate capacity that Missions were not to be undertaken. If our own had voted at the same period it would have voted in the same sense, and we should have been officially committed to disobedience to our Lord's commands!

(6.) Because, as it is a practical impossibility to wield the corporate action of the Church in such a matter, it must, of necessity, be relegated to a cabinet, or a department, or a sub-committee, which is an alias for a society, as is the case in Rome.

(7.) Because difficulties can be settled by judicious intervention on the part of Archbishops and Bishops, the legitimate rulers of the Church, *pro re natâ*. In the Copleston case both parties were satisfied, and claimed the victory.

(8.) Because there are schools of thought in the Church of England, each of which has within just limits right to its own

development, but none of which has the right to arrogate control over the other. Assuming these convictions to be sincere and important, it is the height of the illiberality of liberalism, in regard to men of conflicting sentiments, when working lawfully within the Church, to force them to work with each other on the plea of unity.

(9.) Because, although union is strength, when all are of one mind, enforced unity and union are weakness; when men are not so, freedom is strength.

(10.) Because compulsory unity is baneful. Æschylus,[1] in a strong figure, says, if you put oil and vinegar into one vessel, you must expect them to keep apart. This might, by a timely but apposite illustration, be extended. We see five or six cruets in a cruet stand; each contains what suits divers fancies. Empty out the oil and vinegar, the black and red pepper, mustard, ketchup, anchovy all into one bowl, and mix them up—there is unity, but——? The cruet stand is the Church, the cruets its missionary agencies.

(11.) Because from the very constitution of Convocation it is unfit for this work. The members are not elected with any reference to this subject. They are avowedly not adequate representatives of the Church. So much so is this felt, that a sort of Vigilance Committee, in the new Central Council, has been elected, to be a more suitable representation of the Church.

(12.) Because, to use the remarkable language of Canon Gregory, "Convocation possesses no executive, and has neither the power nor the wish to create one, it could not, therefore, undertake any part in promoting for the support of old missions or the origination of new ones;" a fact which, he adds, must be steadily kept in mind.

(13.) Because the sessions of Convocation are short, uncertain, liable to be cut short at any moment, or perhaps altogether suppressed. It may be added that two-thirds of the members of the Lower House do not give sixpence to the Church Missionary Society and many nothing to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. An otiose assent—by the contribution of the conventional half-guinea or guinea—is with many their contribution to missions. They are "sober-minded Christians!"

Therefore, it is not wise—nay, it is most dangerous—to forsake, or to fuse, or to confuse, or to transfer into other and unknown hands an old and tried society, dear to evangelical churchmen, such as the Church Missionary Society is. In the Ceylon *Diocesan Gazette*, Bishop Copleston's organ, it is stated that the secular work of the society was perfect, and he wished it imitated.

[1] Æsch. "Agam." 313.

As for its spiritual teaching, the maxim of the Founders is a wise one: "Evangelical work should be kept in Evangelical hands." Evangelical principles do not change. It would, therefore, be folly to part with the old lamp which gives light, and which has elicited treasures, for new ones, which may or may not give light. Folly to drop solid meat into the water for a vague reflection of something which looks like meat but may not be. Folly to part with a present stock of provisions, though small, and a cruse of water which have not failed the Church at home or the heathen abroad, for a glowing mirage, which, when it is reached, may prove to be barren sand.

GEORGE KNOX.

NOTE.—Since the foregoing was written and placed in the hands of the Editor of THE CHURCHMAN there has been a long debate in the Upper House of Convocation (Feb. 14). The practical result may be summed up by stating that no agreement could be come to by the Bishops on the schemes before them. Serious and complicated objections of all sorts presented themselves. The whole subject is to be taken up *de novo* in accordance with a motion of the Bishop of Lincoln, to the effect that "A general committee of both houses be appointed to consider the subject of the Board of Missions, and that his Grace the Archbishop of York and the Northern Provinces be invited to nominate a committee of their Houses to confer with a joint committee: and that this resolution be communicated to the Lower House and to his Grace the Archbishop of York." In the terseness of military parlance this is tantamount to "As you were" twelve years ago. The Archbishop of Canterbury's more recent speech is said to have been incorrectly reported.

G. K.

EXTON, March 20.

ART. V.—EPISCOPACY IN ENGLAND AND WALES; ITS GRADUAL DEVELOPMENT, TO THE PRESENT TIME.

THERE are thousands who are intimately acquainted with the face of the country in England, and who are familiar with maps of it, who know the facts as they see them, but who could tell nothing of their origin and history. They are ignorant, and they do not dream of inquiring, as to how or when the sections which are now called counties became shire-ground; nor have they ever thought why parishes differ in area or in pecuniary value to their respective incumbents; or what relation, if any, existed between landed estates and civil parishes. A book like Quinn's "Historical Atlas" is very instructive, but vastly more suggestive; for it shows the different ways in which a country may be divided, and the reasons which render such variations necessary or desirable.