

church. All was English and homelike. One's eyes were fixed upon a gentle yet prophetic form, upon a face like Locke's, with more tenderness and elevation in the brow, more weakness in the mouth and lower part, more intensity and mysticism. One's ear was soothed by that voice, so sweet, so clear, so solemn. In all great movements there are three moments—the prelude, the epoch, the sequel. This was the prelude of the Oxford Movement—a time of scarcely understood tendencies, of formulated thoughts, of meanings which had not found their expression. But from the first there was a disposition to substitute effort and machinery for the spontaneousness of the Holy Spirit dwelling within the heart. The marsh of corruption was to be corduroyed (to use an engineering word), by heavy blocks of timber and contrivances, not passed over by souls "caught away," like Philip upon his course. And in the long run, while many attained real holiness, many lost themselves in the mists of superstition, or turned away in sickness of heart to unbelief or unholiness. With this very cold comfort about forgiveness, is connected Newman's famous saying: "God forgive us, if we do not forgive ourselves." What! May we never do so? Is not that a contradiction to our Whitsunday Collect: "Grant us by the same Spirit . . . evermore to rejoice in His holy comfort?"

Bishop Heber's Thoughts.

The following extracts from two letters written by Bishop Heber in 1821, to a relation, who had lost her husband, show how in quiet hearts the thoughts were astir which were to culminate in the Oxford Movement. Not only interesting on this account, they give a glimpse into the depths of a nature so loving and so humble, that one does not wonder at the affectionate reverence in which his own generation and the next held the name of Heber. The Bishop writes: "There is one source of consolation more, which I cannot help mentioning, though from the difficulty and perplexed nature of the disputes to which it has given rise, and the abuses which have been grounded upon it, I mention it with great diffidence even to you, and have never ventured to recommend it generally. Few persons, I believe, have lost a beloved object, more particularly by sudden death, without feeling an earnest desire to recommend them in their prayers to God's mercy, and a sort of instinctive impression that such devotions might still be serviceable to them in that intermediate state which we are taught by Scripture precedes the final judgment. . . . It is, I confess, not so clearly revealed or countenanced in Scripture, as to make the practice of praying for the dead obligatory on any Christian. . . . My own opinion is on the whole favourable to the practice, which, indeed, is so natural and so comfortable, that this alone is a presumption that it is neither displeasing to the Almighty nor unavailing with Him. The Jews, so far back as their opinions and practices can be

traced, since the time of our Saviour, have uniformly recommended their deceased friends to mercy; and from a passage in the Second Book of the Maccabees, it appears that (from whatever source they derived it), they had the same custom before his time. But, if this were the case, the practice can hardly be unlawful, or either Christ or His Apostles would, one should think, have in some of their writings or discourses condemned it. On the same side it may be observed, that the Greek Church and all the Eastern Churches, though they do not believe in purgatory, pray for the dead; and that we know the practice to have been universal, or nearly so, among the Christians little more than 150 years after our Saviour.

. . . I have accordingly been myself in the habit for some years of recommending on some occasions, as after receiving the Sacrament, etc., my lost friends by name to God's goodness and compassion through His Son, as what can do them no harm, and may, and I hope will, be of service to them. Only this caution I always endeavour to observe—that I beg His forgiveness at the same time, if unknowingly I am too presumptuous, and His grace lest I, who am thus solicitous for others, should neglect the appointed means of my own salvation.

. . . That the intermediate state between death and judgment is not one of insensibility, or (as the Socinians fancy), a perfect suspension and interruption of existence, is plain, I think, from many passages of Scripture. . . . As to the condition of the dead, it has always been believed by the Christian world that the souls of men are in situations of happiness or misery—the one not so perfect, the other not so intense as will be at the day of judgment. . . . The early Christians most of them believed, that by the prayer of surviving friends, the condition of such persons might be made better, and a milder sentence obtained for their errors and infirmities from their Almighty Judge, when the doom of all creatures shall be finally settled. This is, as you well know, a disputed point, but it is one which the wisest and most learned divines have always spoken of with doubt, without venturing to blame those who, with becoming humility, recommend the souls of those they have loved to mercy. . . . A more difficult question remains—whether the dead know anything of what is passing among men? On this point I can arrive at no satisfactory conclusion, any further than that there are some passages in Scripture which seem very like it. As where St. Paul encourages us, in Heb. xii, 1, "to run with patience our race, from the consideration that we are encompassed with so great a cloud of witnesses, which witnesses, you will see in the former chapter, are the good and great men of former times."

Peter Lombard.

Most of our readers have seen "The Church Times," and while there may be two opinions as to the Church Times, there is one as to the contributions of Peter Lombard,

which are the delight of all readers. He has recently visited St. David's Cathedral and regretted that in passing the coast of Wales the King had not gone ashore and taken possession of his stall, as three of his predecessors had done. This writer is Canon Benham, who in the October number of his parish magazine, says that it is twenty years since he was instituted and inducted to the rectory of St. Edmund the King and Martyr, that the churchwardens are the same as on the day of his institution, and that he has served under three Primates and four Bishops of London: "I have taken deep interest in the controversies which have arisen during these years in the Church, but not an active part. The form of service which was in use in the times of my predecessor, Mr. Pascoe Hill, I adopted almost exactly, and this still goes on. I am not what is called a party man, and dislike with all my heart all attempts to make things of trivial import matters of strife. I can celebrate the Holy Communion with or without candles, and can preach in a surplice or black gown. For sixty years, including the whole forty-five years of my clerical life, I have been accustomed to the kind of service which we have at St. Edmund's, and so it comes natural to me. And the subject which seems to come most natural to me in the pulpit is Scriptural exposition. I think it is somewhat of a weak spot in the Church system of late years that there has not been enough importance given to the study of the Bible. I am never tired of saying to you: "Read your Bibles," and never so happy as when I am giving diligence to make it clear for my people. Half the discussion and strife which we have seen and heard in newspapers and on platforms have come from a want of Biblical research. If men would read the Bible, not for the purpose of picking holes in it, nor to find confirmation of their pet theories, but just in simple humility, to learn what God is saying of them, and what His will is, we should have not so much "criticism," but a great deal more true knowledge. I have read more books upon these subjects than upon anything else, and shall continue to do so as long as I can read at all. And all my reading has deepened my faith—I earnestly and humbly thank God for His goodness—that in the Bible I find the very Word of God."

THE NEW DEAN OF WESTMINSTER.

The Rev. Joseph Armitage Robinson, D.D., one of the Canons of Westminster Abbey, has been appointed to succeed the Very Rev. Dr. Bradley, as Dean of Westminster. The new dean is a graduate of Cambridge University (Christ's College), and was ordained deacon in 1881 and priest in 1882 by the then Bishop of Ely. In 1883-1884 he was Domestic Chaplain to Dr. Lightfoot, the Bishop of Durham, at Auckland Castle. In the latter year, Dr. Robinson was appointed Dean of his old college at Cambridge, retaining that position in 1890. From 1884 to 1899 he held a Fellow-