

parishes. The "Church in Georgia" has some excellent remarks on this subject: "Someone has said that the city rector is like the captain of an ocean greyhound, he rings the bell, the great engines turn, and the mighty machine moves swiftly on, by reason of its great momentum, its complete equipment, and because it is well-manned at every post. The country parson, however, is like a man paddling a canoe; he gives the whole impulse and momentum to his craft, and must be watched lest he be upset. The village clergyman requires more tact and skill, for he deals with a town meeting, while the city rector deals with a small committee, and they, as a rule, are men of affairs. The city man of necessity puts the emphasis on organization, the country parson on personal contact and inspiration. The city rector must be a master mechanic, the village parson a galvanic battery. The former deals in the main with adult individuals, the latter with the family life. It was Spurgeon who said that he was thankful he was pastor of a large church, for he never had genius enough to be pastor of a small one.

#### Confession in the Church of England.

If anyone should attempt to make confession to a priest compulsory, we are sure that it would excite the greatest indignation throughout the whole Church. It is quite another thing, however, to deny to penitents the comfort of confession and absolution, which the Church provides for them. It would appear, notwithstanding, that this is very much what the Earl of Portsmouth now undertakes to do, as is shown in his correspondence with the Bishop of Bristol. "After this," says the Pilot, "no Bishop, we should think, will be able to persuade himself that any soft words will induce Lord Portsmouth and his allies to put up with any teaching, whether from priest or bishop, that bears the most distant liking to the teaching of the Prayer-Book." A great deal may be said about confession, but if it is to be said with any profit "it must start from the admission that in the Church confession is permitted to all, and enjoined on some." Not to do this is to contradict the Ordination Service, the Communion Service, and the Service for the Visitation of the Sick. The Church Times calls attention to an article by Dr. Watson, in this month's Expositor, who says that in the Scottish kirk in rural districts no one would think of presenting himself for Communion without confessing any serious sin to the minister, and inviting the discipline of the Church. He would expect a "straight talk," but, according to Lord Portsmouth, it seems that such a thing would be indecent; or can it be that the Church Association reserves its contemptuous epithets for the Anglican clergy?

#### Superstition and Spiritualism.

It is very curious to remark how often ages of doubt bring forth strange forms of superstition. We have had a good many illustrations of this principle during the last fifty years—Table turning, Spirit rapping,

Christian Science, Theosophy, etc., etc. Quite lately we find a well-known London clergyman, the Rev. H. R. Haweis, delivered an address on "Spiritualism and Christianity" before the members of the London Spiritualist Alliance, describing the former as a development of the latter. No doubt, he admitted, rogues and cheats meddle with Spiritualism, but those who have had any experience of seances know that its main manifestations are the same as those mentioned in the New Testament. "There are the tongues of flame, the shakings of an earthquake, the coming through closed doors, the mighty rushing wind." Mr. Haweis used to be numbered among those who minimized the supernatural element in the Gospel and in the Scriptures. Perhaps he has been misrepresented; or is he making up for his scepticism on the one hand by a dose of superstition on the other? It may be said with truth that few serious men of science pay any heed to the seances of so-called Spiritualists. It has been well remarked, "the conditions under which they are held, the futile results obtained, the type of man represented by the medium and his dupe, the abject twaddle of Spiritualistic talk, the charlatanism, the imposture, with which the whole subject has been mixed up, stamp it as an evil thing, as a latter-day form of the occultism which has deluded its votaries in age after age of history. But when Spiritualism poses as a development of the Christian revelation, it is as though the devil were making himself appear an angel of light."

#### The Bishop of Liverpool Leaving Oxford.

Oxford men of all parties seem agreed in hoping that Dr. Chavasse will be quite equal to the responsibility of ruling and guiding the great diocese of Liverpool. He is a man of a kind, conciliatory spirit, averse to controversy, and likely to unite men of all schools in the work of the Church. A week or two ago he preached his farewell sermon at S. Peter-le-Bailey, Oxford. There was an overflowing congregation. In the course of an eloquent discourse, Dr. Chavasse said the Bible was passing to-day through a time of fierce controversy. So far as he knew, there never had been a time when the Bible had not been the object of some kind of attack or other, and they might rest perfectly sure that the Bible, which had passed through so many fiery trials before, would not suffer at all in that through which it was passing at the present time. It was possible, it was likely, that some of their preconceived and untrue notions about the Bible would be destroyed, but the Word of God would shine out brighter than ever when the time of its ordeal was over. He urged his hearers to cleave to the Church of England, because she was the great breakwater against unbelief and superstition. If it ever happened—God forbid—that the historic Church of England were swept out of the land, then they would see springing up around them unbelief and superstition, which the most earnest efforts of all other Protestant communities could never hope to check. The enemy would come in like a flood, and the breakwater would have

gone. The Church of England had abuses which needed to be reformed; she had defects which needed to be remedied; she needed more elasticity and the power to adapt herself to changing times and to growing needs. But if her sons and daughters only held together, if they but prayed, and denied themselves, and conferred, these abuses would be removed, these defects would be remedied, and the Church of England, which had a glorious history in the past, would have a still more magnificent future before her. She would be what he believed God meant her to be, the great missionary Church of the West.

#### ASCENSION DAY.

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates!" It is with a true insight that the Church uses these words, originally applied to the entrance of the ark within the sanctuary, in reference to the entrance of our glorified Lord within the courts of heaven. There were two great stages of the work which He came to accomplish on behalf of the human race, His period of humiliation and His state of exultation. In the first stage, He "emptied Himself," "made Himself of no reputation," as we say in our ordinary version. It was necessary that He should do this that He might identify Himself with the race which He came to redeem. He became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. But it was no less necessary that He should be raised and exalted, according to His own words, that the Son of Man should ascend up where He was before. It was His right, not only because He was forever in the bosom of the Father, but because He had won that place as the second Adam. As we contemplate this stupendous event, we are filled with joy and thanksgiving because of the glory which accrues to our Lord, and also because of the benefits which He secures for us. We can never neglect or cease to sympathize with Him, our Lord, in every phase of His manifestation. In all our afflictions He was afflicted. He took part in every sinless experience of human life, sharing our joys and our sorrows, becoming even a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief; and we shall then best understand His work on our behalf when we enter into all His thoughts, emotions, and purposes. And so now, in the great day of His glory, we rejoice that he has overcome the sharpness of death and entered into the glory of God. Here is the Divine seal set to all His professions and His claims. He had spoken words of tremendous import concerning Himself. "Before Abraham was, I am," "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." "I and the Father are One." "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest." And yet He bowed His head in death, being numbered with the transgressors, and He was laid in the grave. But now His words are proved beyond human cavil or question. "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth"—these words are followed by His ascension into heaven. The same Jesus, Who lived and taught and laboured and suffered and died on earth, is