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inherently attaches to the sacred office, and maintain liberty of judgment and speech upon the purely personal opinions and conduct of men sitting in the Apostolic chair. Mr. Waterman has broached a subject upon which I desire to remark in protest, as a relief to long pent-up desire to strike home against an insidious attack for undermining the influence of the clergy in this country mission. For five years I have laboured in a certain village and district, teaching the Catechism, Prayer Book and Holy Writ. While enforcing the relation of the soul with Christ established in baptism, maintained in the Blessed Eucharist, pains have been continually taken to arouse sinners to repent them truly of their former sins, a need so strongly set forth in every Prayer Book service. This by way of a gentle hint that a broken and contrite heart is not despised even by those who have some due sense of sacramental blessings, so far beyond what we either desire or deserve. In the same place meetings are held by evangelists of various kinds. Their theology seems to be admirably reduced to small compass for distribution in "Life in a Look." We hope these gentlemen are profoundly grateful for so handy and effective a weapon wherewith to destroy the houses of God in our land. There are then two assemblies, one under a missionary duly appointed by the Archbishop of Ontario, another led by a variety of preachers claiming for their doctrine the authority, "Life in a Look." May we utter just the faintest chicken-hearted peep for mercy for continuing in obdurate schism. Although peace may be pleasing to our slothful and luxury loving hearts, still duty calls the soldier of Christ to contend earnestly for the Faith. We endeavour to spread the Prayer Book and rid subversive literature out of Churchmen's houses. "True Christians" burn the Prayer Book and cherish "Life in a Look." What priest or deacon would go into Huron or any diocese and exercise such accursed influence! Yet we are to slink away like dumb dogs that cannot or fear to bark when the wolf in Huronian raiment enters the fold and piously steals both sheep and lambs, or posing as a faithful guardian, scares anxious and hungry souls from knocking for entrance to the House of Peace and Bread, with only too well understood insinuations of popery and warning about poverty and death within. We are to sit in the pit and applaud the ranting of Shantymen D—, because his pocket holds and his hand distributes "Life in a Look," confounding the Gospel as proclaimed by Universal Christendom. How lamentable is this fatuous adoration of clerical pets! How wholesome the rule, "Quod ab omnibus!"—a rule well used by a young country-woman after perusal of this book in question.

S. D. HAGUE.

#### A Voice from the Diocese of Huron.

SIR,—A man in one of the rooms on the second floor of a large building is instructing his little boy about how the house was built. He says, "Now, my boy, you can see that this house is built upon the floor on which we are standing." The boy agrees, "Yes, the walls are built upon the floor." By and by the boy grows old enough to examine things for himself. So he leaves the room, descends the stairs to the ground, and goes round about the building examining it carefully. Then he goes down into the cellar and examines the massive foundation stones; and he sees that they are laid upon the solid rock. And he concludes, "How ignorant I was to ever have believed that this great house, or what I thought was the house, was built on the second floor. I know now that the walls hold up the floors." Many denominations, in their rooms, see, as the boy did in his ignorance, that the house—the Church—is built upon the second floor—the New Testament. Let the reader apply the rest for himself. "But the son goes back to his father and says, 'Why, the house, which is fifty times as large as I thought it was, is not built upon the floor upstairs at all.'" The father replies, "Go, along you young rascal, you; why nobody denies the great truths that I have boldly taught you, except Papists—yes, Jesuits—and what's very nearly as bad, High Churchmen." What position does the Church of England hold? Has she any more connection with the Apostolic Church than the denominations about her have? And does her ministry stand upon no different ground? The Pope—"The Bishop of Rome"—was a foolish man to appoint a commission to examine into the validity of Anglican Orders, as almost any of our Low Churchmen could save him the trouble and answer it in one short sentence to the entire satisfaction of the most bigoted of the Roman communion. If we hold no distinctive principles, I ask, "Why have bishops at all?" "Why make much ado about nothing?" The stipend of one bishop would support half a dozen of that very inferior article, "the missionary clergy"; or it would give fair average grants to three times as many. We read that, in the early stage of the Reformation, the Un-Reformed and the Reformed worshiped together in the same church buildings; and that this common

union was broken by the Court of Rome. "Sir Edward Coke, Attorney-General, in the trial of Garnet, the Jesuit, says: 'There were no recusants in England—all came to church, however popishly inclined, till the Bull of Pius V. excommunicated and deposed Elizabeth. On this the Papists refused to join in the public service.'" But I must remember that we have clergymen on our list who are not with us from conviction, but who "turned for their bread, and will make the better Churchmen the better they are fed." And if wire-pulling, and advertising the great work which they pretend to be doing, will accomplish the desired object, they will soon be in a place where they can "eat the fat and drink the sweet," to the exclusion of true Churchmen who laboured ably and faithfully, though in a quiet, Christlike manner, for more than a score of years, but who failed to stoop to do anything beneath the dignity of their holy office. Many of our clergy and laity make as big a fuss as the average Orangeman about being "Protestants"; and if living out the principles of our holy religion were as easy a matter, they would be pretty good people; but living it is a very small part indeed of some men's Protestantism. But our Church is "Catholic" as well as "Protestant." And the "Catholic Faith" is of far more importance than the "Protestant" negation. Surely we must mean something by confessing our faith in "the Holy Catholic Church," "One Catholic and Apostolic Church!" If we do not mean anything, why use the words at all? And if our creeds and services are to be used as words with any or no meaning, what is to hinder Unitarians, Universalists, and even Agnostics, taking holy orders in our Church? But some one will say, "Oh, they could not preach the Gospel like our evangelicals." I admit that they would not preach like such, for their preaching would be so much superior as to admit of hardly any comparison.

T. LOFTUS ARMSTRONG.

(To be continued.)

#### Lay-Readers.

SIR,—I have read with much interest the letters of the Rev. C. E. Whitcombe, and humbly venture some criticisms upon the same. It is highly desirable that laymen should not be doing work that is essentially clerical, or intrude themselves into any office which in decency and in good order should be filled by men whose whole lives are given up to that one work. I never heard of a lay-reader who presumed to celebrate the Holy Communion or to pronounce absolution or the benediction, and I do not think there is any danger of our sinning in that way. But reading the morning and evening services and even preaching are not essentially clerical offices. What is the difference between putting a layman in charge of a large Bible class, where his influence is usually much greater and the work much easier, and sending him out to lead a congregation in prayer and praise and to talk to them in very much the same manner as he would talk to his class, only for a much shorter time. Mr. Whitcombe seems to me to be scarcely consistent in objecting to men who are following secular avocations, being allowed to conduct Divine service and preach, while he employs "acolytes" or "servers" to assist him in the exercise of his highest office as a priest of the Church of God, namely, in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. St. Paul might have been maintained in his apostolic office by the voluntary collections of the saints, but he preferred to earn his living by the work of his hands, and many a country clergyman to-day has his kitchen garden or little farm, and in England discharges secular duties, such as sitting as a Justice of the Peace for example, or on a board of poor Law Guardians, and no one that I know of has ever held that he degraded himself or his office by so doing. A lay-reader, especially if he is to be licensed to preach, should be a person of education and sound in the faith, and I for one am quite ready to submit to a regular examination upon a prescribed course of study, if my Bishop requires me to so, but it seems to me a layman will teach and preach better if he is purely and simply a layman mixing with his fellows on terms of equality during the week, and understanding their view of things—better, I say it with deference, than many clergymen, who by reason of that very "separateness" of which Mr. Whitcombe is the advocate, too often in their discourses give their congregations stones for bread. Then the rev. gentleman forgets that lay-readers are not thrusting themselves forward, but are being constantly called for by the clergy themselves. I think we have no wish to run before we are sent, and from personal experience I can say that it is no easy matter to make the supply equal the demand. Mr. Whitcombe urges laymen to give more liberally of the profits of their worldly business, instead of taking up work for which, according to him, that business unfits them, but I think Mr. Whitcombe will find that those who do most work of this sort usually give most liberally according to their means. Again, what makes Mr. Whitcombe assume that a "true

and holy layman" weakens his influence as such by becoming a lay-reader? Most of us could tell him, I think, that the fact that we are engaged in work of that sort has a very great influence in helping us to lead more consistent and prayerful lives, and I think it would be hard to find any lay-reader in this city who wishes to be "accorded the position of one who has been regularly prepared, ordained and consecrated for the peculiar functions of the holy ministry."

If Mr. Whitcombe wants a parallel for the modern lay reader in the Old Testament, I think he will find one in the story of Eldad and Medad in the 11th chapter of the Book of Numbers. The answer of Moses when complaint was made that these two men prophesied in the camp, was, "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets." Now, neither Eldad nor Medad were priests, nor as far as we know, even Levites. There is abundant evidence in the Old Testament that the gift of prophecy was by no means confined to the priesthood, and in our Lord's lifetime upon earth we know that it was customary for him to be invited by the rulers of synagogues to expound the scriptures, yet He was not of the priestly line. The failure to recognize what laymen can lawfully do in maintaining the services of the Church is one cause of the comparative weakness of the Church of England in our rural districts. Settlers who found themselves without the privilege of the services of the Ministry never thought, in most cases, of gathering their family and neighbours together in their houses on the Lord's Day, and reading the services provided by the Mother Church, and why? Simply because in the old land they had been accustomed to regard that solely as parson's work, and so they and their families attached themselves to the Methodists or Presbyterian congregation in the neighbourhood, where they were ministered to by an elder or local preacher, a layman, and were lost to the Church. I do not think it is an exaggeration to say that thousands have in this way drifted away from us. There are an immense number of thoughtful and loyal Churchmen who, in following their callings at the Bar, or from their connection with political clubs and debating societies, have acquired readiness of speech which, if used from a right motive and in the right way, would make them splendid pioneers in the work of church extension in and around our cities and towns. Why should not the eloquence that is used before the jury by an advocate who is trying to live an honourable, upright life, be used once a week to make a country or even a city congregation think more deeply of those things which concern their eternal welfare? Or, why should not the debating talent exercised "on the stump," be used to put the claims of God and his Church before a Sunday congregation.

ALLEN M. DYMOND.

(To be continued.)

#### House of Laymen—Synod Reform

SIR,—As on a former occasion you very liberally allowed me to make some remarks on the first, I now venture to ask the same privilege for the second of the above subjects. Synod Reform is a very large and serious question, and I approach it with much hesitation and with deep regret. But since the large portion of the laity throughout the Diocese of Toronto were desirous of having granted to them the moderate concession of a free and open meeting, under Episcopal authority, to consider and debate all Church questions for consultative and advisory purposes only, which a House of Laymen would have given them and which might have been established without the least shock or injury to any interests in the Church, and which moreover would have added immensely to her strength, popularity and usefulness—has been by the report of the Executive Committee unfortunately negatived—it seems to be a duty to make them (the laity) acquainted with this position of the question, and to indicate the course of proceeding it is proposed to take in the future. Several prominent representatives have suggested, and the suggestion has met with great favour, that the object of such meeting together, to consider and debate, in the first place, all questions in the Synod notice paper, and then all subjects considered desirable for Synodical action, might be accomplished by a standing committee of the laity, provided that certain alterations were made in the canons, rules and resolutions of the Synod. This proviso is absolutely necessary. For it is feared that any motion for a committee of the laity, under the existing constitution of the Synod, would share the fate of all motions which have been made from time to time, having the mere semblance of reform, and would without much debate be declared lost, by virtue of a very powerful weapon, always at hand, the vote by orders, on which I shall have something to say further on. In the meantime I refer briefly to two or three changes and improvements which seem desirable. 1. And first as to election of lay representatives. Section 8, page 3, of the Constitution of the