

The Consecration of the Layman.

In a recent lecture on the position of the laity at St. Ethelburga's, Bishopgate, on Wednesday, the Rev. R. B. Rackham asked, "What is a layman—i.e., a Churchman?" The answer was given by the Catechism. Baptism makes a man "a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven;" and when confirmation is added he becomes a true "temple of the Holy Ghost." This ideal the early Church strove to carry out in practice, as was shown (1) By the care with which baptism, the admission into the Church, was administered. Candidates for baptism had to abandon all professions or practices inconsistent with Christianity, and undergo a long preparation. The solemn rite of baptism was followed at once by confirmation or the gift of the Holy Spirit. This Spirit is the same Spirit that is bestowed upon bishops and priests at ordination; and the gift was looked upon as the consecration of the baptized to that Christian priesthood which belongs to all members of the Church. (2) By the actual life and work of the Church. Every member or limb of a body has its function, and none can be idle. And the early Church, as a true body, was marked with a wonderful diversity of functions and ministries, not merely with a sharp distinction into two classes, clergy and laity. Every Churchman had his gift or ministry or work, and so it ought to be today. (3) But the difficulty lies with the slack and non-communicant Churchman. In respect of such, the lecturer argued that baptism and confirmation made a man a member of the Church, and gave him the gift of the Spirit. If he did not go on to live as a communicant, he was a member living an imperfect life, but unless formally censured or excommunicated by the Church he had not "ipso facto" forfeited all the gift or wholly lost the membership given him at confirmation. If he gave some pledges of earnestness and loyalty to the Church, he might claim some definite status in the Church, which had been recognized by the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, in adding to the communicants a body of adherents with some limited privileges. Only communicants, as living the full Church life, should hold office in the Church, or elect to the highest offices—e.g., bishops and members of synods; but such adherents might well enjoy a vote for a parochial Church council, for after all, this represented the lowest, and but a limited, suffrage.

Archdeacons and Rural Deans.

In these intensely practical days it is constantly being asked if archdeacons and rural deans are as helpful in the work of the dioceses as they might be. And it is not long since the question was discussed at considerable length in these columns. In the month of December last, the rural deanery of Lincoln, Welland, in the diocese of Niagara, took the question in hand, and without unnecessary delay appointed a committee, consisting of the Ven. Archdeacon Houston and the Rev. Rural Dean Ker, to go into the

whole matter, which apparently they did with great thoroughness. Their report was presented at the last meeting of the rural deanery, held in St. Catharines on the 26th ult., and will be found in another column of this paper. It will merit the thoughtful attention of Churchmen elsewhere, besides the Niagara diocese. If the recommendations are carried into effect, the Bishop will be placed in a direct contact with each parish and mission in a way that is not possible at present, and the office of archdeacon and rural dean will at once become an active and important adjunct in the life of each diocese. In no other department is so little supervision exercised as in the Church, and it is quite out of the question to suppose that any Bishop could, under existing conditions, come into close contact with each separate parish, particularly as the Episcopal functions are made to consist largely in ordinations and confirmations. There is a chasm between the Bishop and his flock, which needs to be bridged by active, rather than honorary, officers.

WHY ARE WE DISLIKED?

There can be no question as to the fact that there exists, on the Continent of Europe and elsewhere, a certain ill-will which rejoices in our misfortunes and grudges our excesses. In France, it has risen to such a height that statesmen are almost apprehensive of the breaking out of war between the two nations; in Germany it is thought that only the will of the Emperor represses, and that only partially, the expression of dislike, if not hatred that is cherished towards us by large numbers of the population. Even Austria, our ancient ally, and the Continental country, which has always been thought most friendly to our people, has many gainsayers. Italy alone remains faithful and grateful to the people who sympathized with her in her efforts for unity and freedom, although even here there are some who love us not. Why is this? Why are we so widely disliked? Is it our fault or is it theirs? It must be one or the other or both, and it becomes us to ask and answer the question. For the most part we are satisfied that it is not our fault. For the most part, we say; but, in saying this, we are also partly confessing that we are in fault. Undoubtedly there is in the average Briton, and in the people at large, a quiet self-satisfaction which is distinctly irritating to other nations. It is not that we boast or brag—or crow, like the Gallic cock; but perhaps the calm assumption that feels there is no need of boasting is more offensive and provoking than boastfulness would be. Along with this there is a certain undeniable insolence which seems to take for granted a kind of superiority to other peoples. If we look further into this matter, we may perhaps conclude that there are reasons—and not very bad reasons—for some part of this ascription; but, on the other hand, we fear this does not improve matters in the eyes of our neighbours. Granting all this, do we believe that the other nations of Europe are justified in their dislike of us?

We certainly believe nothing of the kind, and, moreover, we are satisfied that the principal reasons for it are found in facts and qualities which are honourable to our people. For one thing, there is no doubt that many are jealous of our greatness on land and sea, in possessions and commerce. And yet, what right have they to entertain such a feeling? Our colonial possessions have been gained in a manner at least as honourable as those of other European powers, and we have kept them by good government and liberal treatment. As for our commerce, there can certainly be no charge of selfishness or exclusiveness brought against us. Wherever we go, we permit other powers to trade on precisely the same terms as those which we claim for ourselves. In regard to France, there is, of course, the long-standing enmity of centuries, coming to a head at Waterloo. But assuredly, if the French had any old scores to pay off at the beginning of the present century, we did not increase our debt, but laid them under obligations to us when we conquered and deposed the Corsican tyrant, Napoleon I. Unless they are ready to quarrel with themselves for ending the second Empire, they can hardly blame us for putting a stop to the first; for, however bad and corrupt the second Empire may have been, it was not the curse to France and Europe that the first Empire was. The French are infinitely indebted to us for ridding them of that terrible despotism. There is hardly a nation on the continent which has not been, in some of its sections, indebted to England for refuge and protection. From France there have come Bourbons, Orleansists, Bonapartists, Republicans of all shades, and they have been hospitably entertained, and they have left us full of ingratitude and spite. Perhaps there is one cause, and yet it is no reason, for such feelings. Red republicans, anarchists, and other people of the same sort are almost mad because they are driven to seek, under a limited monarchy, the asylum, the protection which they cannot find in a republic. But surely human ingratitude could go no further. The day may come when England shall shut her door against these aliens who come to her for bread, and then lift up their heel against her. We do not wish to see that day. We do not think it would be really a good day for England. But, if it comes, the verdict of humanity and of posterity on the sufferers will be: "Serve them right."

CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT.*
No. I.

There has hardly ever been a time in the history of the Church of England when it was more necessary for her loyal children to make quite sure of their bearings, to ascertain and understand the principles by which her Faith and Practice have been regulated. That many should be deafened or confused by the clamour of voices around them, by the

*The Church of England, Catholic and Protestant: A sermon preached before the University of Oxford, Sunday, Nov. 5th, 1899. Price one shilling. London: Longmans, 1899.

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