

and words are intended to be the expression of ideas. Talk is the "medium of exchange," the "current coin" of the occasion—the business swims in it and lives by it.

OUR SYNODS ARE NOT IDEAL PARLIAMENTS

—very far from it! They are usually conducted much more like *debating societies*—"palæstra" for the exercise of argumentative power, rather than serious business arrangements. They make rules about ten minute speeches and twenty minute addresses as if their only idea was to see how they will do, and how many they can get to talk in a given time—as if the net result of the talk were not of the slightest consequence! Quantity not quality, variety not value—this seems to be the recognized rate. It is true that there are some

INSUFFERABLE BORES

who cling like barnacles to our Synods, come up smiling every year, pop up on every question, speak as long and as often as the weary listeners give them a chance: but these are exceptions, and not very honourable ones—abuses of the system. They are recognized as a necessary evil. Their usual plea is a desire to "facilitate business": which actually means to *choke off* other voices than their own for the time being, keep the floor, make ideas as obscure as possible, and lay up a plentiful crop of repentance and amendments for future years. But as a rule nine-tenths of our Synod members do not speak at all—they are crowded out, sat upon, and their speeches usually amount to no more than a hurried five minutes squeak!

WE NEED MORE TIME.

This air of hurry, with its accompanied *perfunctory performance* of business, should be abolished. Men should come and stay and talk—as they do in "parliaments proper"—until the thing, in each case, is *talked out*. Then there is some probability that those things which have been "threshed out" by the flail of their tongues will not rise up again every year—like half-buried ghosts!—to demand more decent interment before they consent to stay at rest. This is where the actual trouble—the conscious, glaring unsatisfactoriness of Synods as such—is to be noted.

THE INSIDE OF ONE WEEK NOT ENOUGH!

Delegates come to town on Monday, assemble on Tuesday, do something on Wednesday, begin to scatter on Thursday, "thin out" on Friday, and disappear by Saturday: leaving about nine-tenths of their needed work undone! *This is not business*—it is mere trifling with a serious duty. They should come and stay till their work is *thoroughly done*: and if they "can't stay," let others come in their stead who can devote the necessary amount of time. Only in this way can our Synods be made really interesting and useful. The country parishes can get on for a Sunday—or even two—without the shepherd: or else they must be very badly trained! Surely in almost every congregation there is somebody competent to do a little amateur parson-work, and "fill the gap," till this important business gets properly done. If not, they deserve to suffer.

A PLEA FOR TOLERATION.

BY THE DEAN OF BRISTOL.

"Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."—Ephesians iv. 3.

I do not think you will unite men who differ conscientiously one from another, by *ignoring*, so much as by *recognizing* their differences. There are those who believe that the great trial of the

latter days that are surely coming upon the earth will not be infidelity, as commonly understood, but a *spurious Christianity*. Not a few, observing the growing impatience of definite or dogmatic teaching, and the disposition to compromise conviction, think that the cry from the saints beneath the altar, "Lord, how long?" will be a cry proceeding from bewildered minds, as to what is truth. Reunion of Christendom on lines which involve and demand compromise is, I really believe, as impossible as it is undesirable. You might as well demand that all nature should be uniform in her operations. Do the vast mass of our intelligent laity really believe that any pernicious doctrine is necessarily implied in a surpliced choir, and turning to the East at the Creed, or that where this use does not prevail the soul's salvation is in some degree seriously imperilled? To bring about precise uniformity in ritual is hopeless, simply because the whole spirit of such effort is contrary to, is not in accordance with the law which prevails in the natural kingdom. Are not those cities or parishes often the most dead-alive where hardly anyone differs, or where difference of opinion does not make itself felt? On the other hand, is not the Church of England generally most active, bristling with life, energetic and successful, where you have activities not within her communion? Seen aright, with no jaundiced or prejudiced eye, may not our apparent divisions be our safeguard? Does not our safety lie not in our narrowness or shibboleths, but in our breadth and repudiation of party? Is it possible that the due balance of truth is maintained rather by variety than uniformity? To the increasing majority of our sensible and intelligent laity, whose judgment I should be disposed to prefer, the real sorrow is, not our diversity, but that we seem to be at variance with one another on matters in themselves indifferent. They are grieved and amazed at seeing so much power, time, and money wasted on comparative trivialities. That we should agree to differ, and yet love all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, is the demand, the call of our age. If Christ's truth is to prevail; if the world is to be won back to Him; if erring children are to be restored to the fold, we must present a front as varied in uniform as that of an army, but as one in spirit, as we go forth to battle against Infidelity, Free Thought, Nothingarianism, and all that opposes itself to the truth. It is Carlyle who says, "Men's hearts ought not to be set one against another, but set one with another, and all against the evil thing only."

What I have been putting before you is not "latitudinarianism," pure and simple. It is not saying to you, "It does not matter what you believe." It is a plea not for free thought, but for toleration on matters not essential to salvation. "There is but one name given under Heaven whereby men must be saved. That is the root-truth. The older you grow the more tolerant I think you, as a rule, become. If no man would go so far as to affirm that salvation can be ours only as we attach ourselves to a particular party in Christ's Church, then while preferring one to another, do not quarrel with those who differ from you. Rather in the Master's spirit, strive to win and to reconcile, remembering that "He that is not against us is on our part."

REVIEWS.

ABSOLUTION, examined in the *Light of Primitive Practice*, by Hugh Miller Thompson, Bishop of Mississippi, 2nd edition, 8 vo., pp. 90. 50c. New York: Thomas Whittaker; Toronto: Rowell & Hutchison.

In the reading of this handsomely published work, we are struck, at the outset, with the clear and logical mind that conceived and wrote it, and then with the steady purpose maintaining to the close. In a series of eleven chapters the question of absolution and forgiveness is orderly considered, through all the offices of the Church, and in all the conditions of life. "The Church is not only sent to preach that there is a forgiveness, to announce the terms on which that forgiveness may be obtained, and to urge men to accept it: she is sent, also, to administer it, to sign and seal the forgiveness, to assure men that they have it in their hands." In the chapter upon "The Essence of Absolution" our author shows how the Roman Church has departed both in theory and practice from the Church primitive: she gives absolution first and then penance, first loosing and then binding, punishing for what has already been taken away. His notes are very helpful in illustrating the text, and are given at full length in the original. We should willingly quote a long note upon excommunication and the condoning sin by heavy gifts: it points to a blot that disfigures many a page.

BISHOP LIGHTFOOT (reprinted from the *Quarterly Review*), with a prefatory note by Bishop Westcott, of Durham. 8 vo., pp. 139. London: Macmillan & Co.; Toronto: The Copp Clark Co., Ltd.

In the absence of a detailed life of this eminent prelate, we are doubly grateful for this graceful memoir by some one who was evidently in fullest sympathy with his subject and had access to ample sources of information. The sketch is full of life and gives a just picture of one who was eminent in every sphere of his activity, as man, scholar, and Bishop. The fecundity of his genius as a writer was truly marvellous, and when he became Bishop of Durham his influence was felt everywhere in the old palatinate. His gifts were remarkable, and his devotion to work was no less so at Cambridge and London, and in the duties of his See. Here is a sample: "As soon as Auckland Castle was ready to receive him, he carried out his cherished project of forming a clergy-house under his own roof. Here a band of university men, seven or eight in number, were trained under his own immediate guidance for their future work in the diocese. They were instructed by himself, by his archdeacons, and by his chaplains. The intellectual work followed the lines of a college course in theology; the practical work in Auckland itself and the pit villages which encircle the castle-grounds enabled the students to test their theories by the realities of life: but their chief lesson was the constant influence of their true father in God" (p. 67). Quotations from the letters of a Free Church minister give some lovely glimpses of the Bishop's family among his young men. In the appendix the quotation is made of all his statements upon episcopacy, in order to take away even the slightest pretence for any imagining that he considered the appearance of the Bishop to be a human addition to the Divine purpose and will. The book is beautifully prepared by printer and publisher, and should be on every study and drawing-room table.

Home & Foreign Church News

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS.

ONTARIO.

BELLEVILLE.—An oak altar, with exquisitely painted panels, has been presented to the chapel of St. Thomas' Church. The centre panel has a brass plate with the following inscription: "In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen." This altar was placed in devout thankfulness to Almighty God for the restoration of the daily Eucharist in this parish, and for the pleading of the Holy Sacrifice as the chief act of worship on the Lord's Day.

KINGSTON.—The following were ordained by Archbishop Lewis at St. George's Cathedral, June 18th: For priests—Rev. R. J. Drumbrelle, Trinity College, Toronto, Missionary at Chrysler; Rev. C. B. Clarke, Shrewsbury College, England, Missionary at Osgood and Russell. For deacons—Thomas Hay Lloyd, M.A., Lennoxville University; Edward Costigan,