

is the need of a more missionary spirit in your work at home. You are gradually learning the importance of preaching the Gospel of hope and life to the millions of India, Africa and China. but do you realize the duty of preaching the same Gospel to the masses at home? One fact which ought to weigh very heavily on the consciences of Churchmen in England is that so large a proportion of the population are not merely outside her fold, but outside the influence of organized forms of Christianity altogether. Some years ago I was told by many of the clergy working in poor parishes in the large towns and cities of England that not more than 10 per cent. of the artisans and unskilled labourers ever went to any place of religious worship or were definitely connected with any Christian Church or sect. Think what that means. It is not a case of ninety-nine in the fold and one in the wilderness, but of ten in the fold and ninety outside it. And those outside are precisely those classes to whom the life and teaching of our Lord appealed most strongly while He was on earth. But if that is true, surely there must be something fatally wrong about the life of the Christian Churches in England. When our Blessed Lord preached in Galilee the poor heard Him gladly. In India the Church is emphatically the Church of the poor and the outcaste. But why are such large masses of the poor outside the influence of the Christian Church in England to-day?

#### UNITY OR STRIFE?

And this question leads to another which the Mission-work of the Church is now bringing before you in an acute form through the agitation caused by the Kikuyu Conference. Can you win the masses to Christ without unity and co-operation in the place of strife and division? We are compelled to face this question abroad by the tremendous pressure of our work and the hopeless inadequacy of our forces. You have heard recently of the urgency of this question in East Africa in connection with the Kikuyu Conference. It is even more urgent in India. The Church in India is a small body of 4,000,000 people, divided into 50 different sects, fighting for the conversion of 320,000,000 Hindus and Mohammedans; and at the present moment we are faced with the tremendous problems involved by a great movement among the 60,000,000 outcastes towards the Christian Church. Already our resources are far too small to cope with the movement. In 20 years' time they will be still more inadequate for the task. And the main cause of our weakness lies in our divisions. In the face, then, of this fact we are forced to ask, Are our divisions necessary? Is unity impossible? Can we not at any rate co-operate up to the extreme limit of our principles? But if we are obliged to ask these questions abroad, ought you not to feel equally obliged to ask them at home? You have lost large masses of the poor. You are face to face with a flood of indifference and materialism among the wealthier classes. The influence of the Christian Church is not telling with one-half the force it ought to tell upon the national life. You have a vast missionary work to do in England among rich and poor alike, and you are powerless to do it, because of the divisions and quarrels of the Christian Churches. You can never do the work that the Church of Christ is called to do in England until all Christian bodies cease this suicidal strife and competition, and learn to work together as members of Christ. It may be said that, whatever may be possible in India or Africa, unity and co-operation are an impossible ideal in England to-day. My brethren, nothing is impossible that is in accordance with God's Will. The only thing that can make it impossible is our want of faith. So long as we go on saying that unity cannot come in our day, it will not come in our day. Not till we rise up and say with faith and conviction, "Thy Will be done," will it ever become possible. Do not, then, let us take it for granted that this vision of unity and co-operation is only a vision for the distant future. The best men and women of all denominations are earnestly longing for it. Great movements towards unity are going forward throughout the world. Do you, my brethren of the laity, realize that you, too, as well as the clergy, have a great duty and responsibility towards these movements? There are questions involved, no doubt, which you must leave to theological experts, but it is for you to foster in yourselves and others that deep, earnest longing for unity which makes men feel that discussion is intolerable, and above all, to spread abroad that spirit of broad-minded toleration and charity which alone can make unity and co-operation possible. Make your own the prayer of our Blessed Lord that all who believe in Him may be truly one.

## THIS AND THAT

Thoughts of an Eastern Churchman

THE late Mr. Spurgeon used to warn his students against what he called the "steeple-in-the-throat voice," which, if I remember aright, he added, was the especial failing of the clergy of the Established Church. There are other forms of affectation just as objectionable and irritating, commoner, perhaps, among our brethren who use extemporaneous forms of worship, such as, for instance, the sanctimonious and unctuous and ultra-devotional. With a liturgical form of worship the tendency to the equally offensive and irritating pomposity of enunciation, so wittily and trenchantly characterized by Mr. Spurgeon, is, I suppose, stronger, and I am inclined to think that he was right when he said that our Anglican parsons are specially addicted to this form of affectation. There are clergymen, perfectly natural and unaffected in their ordinary intercourse with their fellowmen, who, from the moment they don their surplice and enter the chancel, clothe themselves with pomposity as with a garment, and seem incapable of speaking in a natural tone of voice. One individual I have just at present in mind, a very worthy, unassuming fellow in private life, with a good, wholesome Canadian accent, unmistakable, but not too aggressively pronounced, who in the chancel almost strangles himself in his desperate attempts to express himself in what the late Bishop Strachan used to call "a guid English auzent." Some men's voices, under this obsession of, what shall I call it, officialism, become transformed out of all recognition. I remember once entering a church a little late, after the service had begun, and hearing while I waited in the porch what I supposed was a strange clergyman reading the Confession and Absolution. When I entered I found that the officiating parson was a close acquaintance, whom I was in the habit of meeting two or three times a week, and whose natural voice was as familiar to me as that of one of my own family. He read the service and preached in one of those wonderful ultra-English accents, absolutely non-reproducible on paper, but more or less familiar to all regular Anglican church-goers in Canada, and, I think, peculiar to this Dominion, or, at all events, to this continent.

The marvel to me is how they keep it up. Here is a man who, for an hour and a quarter, can transform almost out of recognition the tone of his voice, and get apparently quite worked up in his preaching without making a perceptible slip. How is it done? I ask, with wonder not unmixed with respect. It is certainly a great achievement of its kind, and does argue a certain amount of dogged perseverance and an absence of self-consciousness admirable in any other connection. I wonder, by the way, if any attention is given to this matter in our Divinity Colleges.

I would like most cordially to recommend to the careful perusal of the clergy a remarkable book, "Civilization at the Crossroads," by Rev. J. N. Figgis, the substance of three lectures delivered before the University of Harvard. Mr. Figgis is a member of the English Community of the Resurrection. In this suggestive and arresting book the clergy will find present-day problems stated from the standpoint of a believer in historical Christianity, with a breadth and clarity of vision that will in many cases, I believe, clear away and finally dispose of many of those difficulties that perplex and oppress the clergy of to-day. The trouble with so many clergymen is that in their, perhaps, unavoidably superficial and desultory reading they are apt to confuse issues and to get muddled on the real fundamentals. A book like this puts things in their right place and tidies up one's mental furniture. We come to see where, in this age of chaotic theories, Christianity really stands, and how essential it is to maintain its supernatural character as a direct Divine revelation made through Jesus Christ, and how, failing that, there is no logical halting-place between Christianity and any of the innumerable human cults which masquerade under its name. Most clergymen, I suppose, hold this in a general sense, but Figgis shows just exactly how it is Christ Incarnate, the Eternal Son of the living God, or nothing. It is the most tremendous indictment of what has well been called "Reduced Christianity" that I have ever read. Christianity, he shows, is essentially miraculous. To eliminate the miraculous from Christianity, under whatever pretext, is to cut the heart out of it and let it slowly bleed to death. The Gospel story stands or falls together. The book is a fine philosophical defence of miracles and of religion generally, and yet is written in a simple and popular style,

and is as easy reading as an ordinary newspaper article. One rises from the reading of such a book with the comfortable conviction that Christianity, with such defenders, has no reason to fear its modern assailants. The clergy would find in this book material for dozens of sermons.

How many men are saved from failure by their dullness of apprehension. They have never perpetrated any serious failures, because they had no imagination to run away with them. They have always taken themselves with such immense seriousness because they have had no sense of humour, that other people have learned to regard them with respect. They have always successfully resisted the temptation to make experiments, and to strike out into new paths and to venture into the unknown. Their strength has been to sit still. More people "succeed" in this way than is generally imagined. Downeaster.

## Prophecy and the Signs of the Times

THE last of the addresses by Rev. Canon Howitt was given in the Church of the Epiphany, December 15, on "The Second Advent." Canon Howitt began by pointing out the importance of the subject, its relation to other truths. It was the key to the proper understanding of the Scriptures. The man who was not right upon this could not be right upon many of the important doctrines of the Bible. He then said that while all Christians believed in the Second Coming, they differed as to details. There were two schools—Premillennialists, and Postmillennialists. He described what these stood for. The first believed that Christ would come *before* the millennium, the second that he would come *after* it. He then disposed of some false views. 1. Christ's coming is at *death*. He said that could not be, because there would be living ones at His coming. 2. Christ's coming was at the *destruction of Jerusalem*. That could not be, because the Revelation of St. John was written after that event, and that book contains the hope and the prayer for His coming. 3. Christ's coming was at *Pentecost*. That could not be, because the New Testament was written after that event and in these writings the coming is still future. Canon Howitt then gave his own view. 1. The Coming of Christ would be Personal and Literal, Acts 1: 10, 11; John 14: 2, 3. He explained these passages at some length. 2. The Coming of Christ would be before the millennium. The world as it advanced towards the end of the age was not getting nearer the millennium, but further from it. He gave many proofs of this. There were more heathen in the world to-day than when the missionary commission was first given. The world as a whole is more civilized, more cultured, more enlightened than it was at that day, but not more truly Christian. It will be evangelized by the preaching of the Gospel, but not converted. The purpose of God in the present dispensation was "to take out of the Gentiles a people for His name." When the last conversion under the preaching of the Gospel took place then Christ would come. 3. The manner of His Coming. There would be two stages. He will come *for* His saints; He will come *with* His saints. The first will be to *gather* His saints; the second will be to *reward* them. These two stages are distinguished in seven particulars. First, as to place. The first coming will be in the air, 1 Thes. 4: 16, 17; the second, at the Mount of Olives, Zech. 14. Second, as to persons. The first will be to the Church; the second to the world. Third, as to circumstances. As to the first there will be no signs; as to the second there will be many, Matt. 24. Fourth, as to method. The first will be sudden and secret; the second will be visible, gradual. Fifth, as to purpose. The first will be to reward and bless His saints; the second will be to judge the world. Sixth, as to time, Daniel 9 indicates the difference in time. Seventh, as to result. At the first His own will be gathered together; at the second the evil will be separated from the good. Canon Howitt then spoke of two things which followed from all this. There would be two resurrections, Rev. 20: 4, 5. He explained at some length St. Paul's earnest desire (Phil. 3: 11). He desired to attain unto the resurrection *from among the dead*. There would be two judgments. He closed with a most earnest appeal to all present to see that they were right with God, partakers of the fullness of salvation in Christ, waiting, watching, working, so that they might not be "ashamed at His Coming."