

most men who take in hand a serious consideration of the past; on the one hand, a deep sense of thankfulness to God for all His goodness and mercies in the past; on the other a sense of personal humiliation by reason of the small progress we have made in the divine life, in spite of all the privileges we have enjoyed, and the helps which we have received. If only those emotions are deep and permanent, we may hope for good fruits from them in the future. It cannot be concealed, however, that thoughts like these have frequently been awakened, and that too often they have produced very little effect. There must be reasons for this, and they are not far to seek. One is, that we are not steadfastly and earnestly bent on the attainment of Christian perfection. We are not eager to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord. The other is closely connected with this. We are not ready and resolved to put away from us such hindrances as we know to be preventing our growth in grace. Here, then, is work for Lent. First, to find out what hinders us from a closer walk with God. Then to pray for grace to remove them, and in the strength of that grace to resolve and to watch continually against them. But more than this. Mere negative work is insufficient. We must consider. What does the Lord require of us? What can we do for His service—by word, or deed, by service, by alms, by sacrifice. One thing is certain—God is on our side. Only our own desire and willingness are wanting in order to success.

DEATH OF THE PRIMUS OF THE AMERICAN CHURCH.

The death of Bishop Williams, of Connecticut, Primus of the American Church, removes a venerable figure from a sister communion. The Bishop had served his full time in the army of Christ, seeing that he was in his 82nd year. He was born in Deerfield, Massachusetts, August 30th, 1817, and was brought up a Unitarian, the religion of his parents. It is one of the peculiarities of the Anglican Communion in the States that not a few of their bishops have come to them from other communions. In England a good many eminent Churchmen and clergymen have been gained from the Non-conforming bodies, but very few of them have risen to the episcopate. The late Bishop Jacobson, of Chester, was one of the very few. In the States they have been somewhat numerous. Bishop Williams was educated in Harvard University, and at Washington (now Trinity), College, Hartford, from which he graduated in 1835. In the same year he entered the theological seminary at New York. He became a tutor at Trinity in 1837, and was ordained Deacon by Bishop Brownell, of Connecticut, in 1838, remaining at Trinity College until 1840. In 1842 he removed to Schenectady, becoming rector of St. George's Church, in that place. In 1848 he returned to Trinity as President, and in 1851 he was consecrated assistant Bishop to Dr. Brownell, who died 1865. Bishop Williams was a man of influence at

home and abroad. He was conspicuous at more than one of the Lambeth Conferences, and took part in the Commemoration, at Aberdeen, of the consecration of Dr. Seabury, the first American Bishop. To the end of his life he took the deepest interest in the Berkeley School of Divinity, like the Archbishop of Rupert's Land, giving lectures himself to the students. This work he carried on to the end, although for the last two years he has been an invalid, and for most of that time confined to his bed. The end was brought about by an attack of Influenza, under which he succumbed on February 7th. The memory of the just is blessed.

GOVERNMENT IN THE CHURCH.

It is not too much to say that, for a good many years, something very much like anarchy has prevailed in all branches of the Anglican Communion. It is almost certain that this period of unrule is coming to an end. As regards the former of these statements, we imagine that very few persons will seriously controvert it. In England, United States, and Canada, men have assumed that the law was so uncertain as to its meaning and enforcement that it was hardly of any use to invoke it. On this side there has been a curious inconsistency. On the one hand it has been alleged that we are not under the English Courts, so that we need care nothing for their decisions, and on the other hand, we have come to think we may imitate anything done in England. In that country many of the clergy have declared that they will not be bound by the decisions of the Courts, nor even by the commands of the bishops when they enforce these decisions—not even when they declare that they represent their own judgments. Such a state of things is deplorable. It may be true enough that that is the best state of things in which the appeal is least frequently made to the law. But that there should be no law, or that the law should have no clear meaning, or that it should be set at defiance, must be regarded as a scandal. So much may be said of the actual state of things. On the other hand, we have no doubt that this is coming to an end. That it ought to come to an end—that anarchy should cease—that law should prevail—all this stands to reason. But we have now indications that a change is at hand. The meaning of our Church Laws will be defined. Courts will be established or restored, which the clergy will admit to be binding on their consciences, and the "reign of Law" will return. It may be well in such a prospect to consider what may be the responsibilities and the duties of rulers and ruled. When the bishops begin to learn that they have to act, there will be a very different condition of affairs from what has recently existed. They will have to consider well on what principles they will administer the law, what degrees of liberty they will permit, and where they will interpose with their authority. For this they will have to do. The Bishop's Veto will undoubtedly be maintained, and (among other things), he will have to consider how he shall

exercise it. One thing will then be of supreme importance, that a Bishop shall govern on strict principles—not by any kind of partiality or favouritism. If he will have influence, he must be consistent. Is that so very easy? Only the other day, we heard (we cannot vouch for the truth of the report), that a Bishop had peremptorily refused to do a certain thing which he was asked to do, on the ground that the Canons of the Church forbade it. Yet in the case of another parish he conceded the very thing which he had previously refused to allow, and without any pretext of any difference in the circumstances. We give this as one example. Now, we can say without hesitation that if the Church is to be governed in that fashion, we might as well pray for the continuance of anarchy and leave conformity and obedience to the individual conscience. We are not counselors of bishops, but we are their faithful servants in declaring that if their government is to be respected, it must be impartial and consistent.

THE ARCHBISHOP'S WARNING.

We learn, through the Atlantic Cable, that the Convocation of Canterbury has once more assembled, and that the Archbishop has addressed the Upper House on the subject of the present distress. He has also used language which seems to have been misunderstood in reference to the Episcopal Veto. It is of some interest—it may even turn out to be of some importance—to note the evidently well-considered utterances of the Archbishop in reference to the violation of the Law of the Church, now so loudly complained of. "The Archbishop," we are told, "said that the archbishops (bishops?) of England had decided in all cases touching the Ritual to hear all that was said by those concerned." This seems to show that there is no eagerness to proceed to extremities. An informal enquiry will probably in most cases precede legal action. And this is confirmed by what follows. "The Archbishop requested clergymen concerned in such cases to make their statements, and not to resort to the law-courts until every peaceable means of settlement had been exhausted." We give these words as they are reported; but it is tolerably apparent that they have got a little mixed. There is not much danger of the clergymen, who are called to account for illegal practices, being in a hurry "to resort to the Law-Courts." What the Archbishop undoubtedly meant and probably said, was that bishops would not hastily bring their clergy into the courts, but would first give them every opportunity of stating their case, and do their best to find such an accommodation as would preclude the necessity of an appeal to the Law. "Yet," the report goes on, "he did not pledge himself that there would be no prosecutions." This follows on quite naturally after what had been said before. The Archbishop wishes to treat the clergy in a fatherly manner, he desires that they should comport themselves in a correspondingly filial spirit. But—and we must note this—if men are resolved to break the law,

they must expect to be dealt with by the Law. All this is a statement follows. We are told—"is a Ritualist bishops who their initial veto to men against clergy and Confessional." that the Archbishop kind. In the first than two or three be called Ritualists. bishops has interposition undertaken clergyman. But for the bishops generation, regard the useful and necessary remembered that, (Dr. Mackarness), mittee of the House gave it as his opinion Veto should be maintained would it never be of justice, but it might advantage as putting tions which could but mischief. We ment that the Archbishop his brethren on the subordinate clergy defiance, trusting too troublesome Bishop to undertake now warned by t may go too far. an appeal to Ca will have to go.

Life of Bishop W
London: Wells
1898.

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