

great words, 'I absolve thee' have been pronounced.

AS OTHERS SEE US.

THE Church in Canada has met with a sharp criticism in the pages of an American publication. The writer says:—

"The Canadian Church of to-day must, when she looks around her, feel a profound sense of humiliation. In British North America she started with everything in her favour; she was first in the field, and the prestige of her position was a point of immense importance; and now, after a century of work, we find that at nearly every point she has been out-distanced, out-generalled, and out-flanked. In many instances she has not been able even to hold her own, while only in a few large centres of population does she lead. Methodists, Presbyterians, and others are far ahead in population, and, disgraceful to relate, the English Church in Canada comes a bad fifth or sixth behind those who started a long way in her rear in point of time."

The leakage he considers justly to be towards the Methodist body, "which is probably the most aggressive and least scrupulous of any with which the Church of England has had to contend."

There is only too much truth in the following picture.

"The spiritual revival known as the 'Oxford movement' has hardly been felt in the Canadian Church. The backwash, so to speak, swept in a few of the clergy, but unfortunately these men were not of the type from which leaders of great movements are manufactured; they were, as a rule, very earnest, very honest, and very obstinate. In a few instances their congregations went with them heartily, but in the majority of cases they were assailed by the most intolerable bigotry, frequently persecuted, often abused, always suspected. . . . The Canadian Evangelical of to-day means no loyalty to the Church and a doctrinal sympathy which sheers alarmingly close to Plymouthism. No one, unless he had taken leave of his senses, could be foolish enough to believe that a nondescript Church of the Evangelical type could withstand the shock of an aggressive body like the Methodists, who are a unit both in their policy and their methods; and, as a matter of history, Canadian Evangelicalism has failed on all sides. The Methodist brother patted the Evangelical on the back, and for his broad-minded liberality cheered him loudly, as he denounced Scriptural doctrine and Apostolic order; and when the Churchman left himself without a Church, the guileless and estimable Methodist brother quietly landed his net full of Church-members. And when the Evangelical saw this, he was wroth, and blamed everybody but himself. The tide of religious and ecclesiastical revival is again setting in this direction; the Evangelical party is thoroughly discredited and everywhere distrusted, and one by one the men who were duped into an acceptance of their party shibboleths are leaving them in disgust. Evangelical intolerance in the Canadian Church has well-nigh accomplished two results—it has nearly destroyed the Church and killed itself."

The *Church Times* remarks on the above:

"There is the picture as drawn for us, and it is no exaggeration, much less a caricature of the situation. And that the writer is not in error on the broad issue, that Low Churchism is a deadly

danger to any Church in which it is more than a subordinate factor, can be established irrefutably by the comparative method, by extending our survey from the Canadian Church to other Churches of the great Anglican Communion. When we do so, we meet the same unvarying testimony that Evangelical domination means decay, disintegration, and discredit. Take the most conspicuous warning of all, the Irish Church, with its enormous advantages of position, wealth, power, education, and the like, and see how ignominiously it has been worsted in its conflict with the poor and illiterate Roman Catholic body; how it has failed to make any impression on the Presbyterians and other sectaries in Ireland; how it is the only communion which has actually diminished in its ratio to the whole population; how it has lost far more members of the higher classes to Plymouth Brethrenism in proportion to its total numbers than the Church of England lost to Romanism during the fifty years of the Oxford movement. All goes to prove that it is impossible to work a Church successfully on lines which may do admirably for a sect; and Low Churchism is the Church in masquerade, trying, and vainly trying, to pass for a sect—vainly, that is, so far as conciliating the good-will of the sects, or winning any members from them; but only too successfully in destroying the loyalty and orthodoxy of its own members, and making them easy converts to some system which has all the points they have been taught to value, and has them without the checks and drawbacks which interferes with their unlimited operation in the Church. The moral is that till the Canadian Church puts down the Puritan faction as it has been put down in America, it will not and cannot thrive as a healthy member of the Pan-Anglican communion.

BOOK NOTICES.

Mr. Thomas Whittaker has in course of Publication "a complete Manual of Sunday School Instruction." It is an adaptation of Sadler's Church Teachers Manual by the Rev. E. L. Stoddard; and is intended for both older and younger scholars, the questions for both being within the same covers. It is published in three parts at ten cents each. It bids fair to fill a "long-felt want" of an adequate book of instruction for Sunday Schools. The clergy and teachers will heartily welcome it.

THE UNRECOGNIZED PRESENCE.

BY THE VERY REV. DEAN VAUGHAN, D.D.

If an age of scepticism obscures the Presence, so once again does an age of division. It is trying to the feelings, but trying also in no small degree to the faith, to have to live through the working out in detail of that wonderful question and answer of our Lord Himself: "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you nay, but rather division." Scepticism has its home outside the Christian Church, though it may make itself audible and influential within. But the division, which is our second illustration, is between members of the house. We do seem to have passed altogether out of the very idea and imagination of unity. We cannot count or name the denominations. The Anglican communion itself is a Babel of tongues, so we speak. It is the common language of our own fellow-Churchmen not only to deplore and bewail these divisions, but to speak as though they were fatal to the Presence, the Presence with any or all but one of these separate entities of Him whose repeated prayer was "that all may be one." Do not suppose me or any one else to be blind to the dark side of this picture if we repudiate utterly and absolutely the inference that it has no Presence of the Saviour in it. That Christ foresaw this state of things and yet said, "Lo, I am with you always," is something. Whatever we say we do not believe that we have lost the Presence. There is much more fear of our saying that we, only we our-

selves, in the privacy of our little Anglicanism, have it. And this too would be shocking—shocking to our humanity, but shocking also to our Christianity. Did Jesus Christ come upon earth, suffer and die and rise creatures which is governed by, or commensurate with, one section however, in my view, pure and apostolic? For myself I must look further, deeper, and higher for my even partial consolation. I shall remember how miserable a vehicle is speech in things divine! I shall remember how Paul himself, caught up to the third heaven, called the things he heard there "unspeakable things," not lawful, nay, not possible, for a man to utter, and declared, even of his knowledge, not only of his expression of it: "Now we see by mirror, and in riddle and reflection, not by intuition, in dark saying and parable, not in clear conception and speech—now I know in part." I shall remember how the same apostle, if his words to the Ephesians were but correctly rendered, speaks of unity as not the starting-point but the goal of the Church. "Till we all come," he says, "unto the unity of the faith." We are not there yet, and so we are not yet full-grown men. Meanwhile, though the vessel of the Church is not only often disappointed in the prosecution of its night's toil, but is also tossed on the waters of strife and violence of discordant tongues and seemingly adverse doctrines, yet we shall believe that Jesus stands on the shore, sympathizes with its sorrows, directs its efforts, and will sooner or later guide it to its haven. He is teaching by this experience which seems so adverse. He is bidding us listen for the real voice inside the audible; He is teaching us patience in all this impatience, this ignorance which cannot accept the more excellent way, this wilfulness which must seek out for itself new pastures, this unrefined taste which loves noise and loves gaudiness even in its worship, this un-instructed haste this unreasoning positiveness, this passion for the novel or else for the archaic. Yes, these eccentricities are estimated at their worth, and where God sees the one spirit there he recognizes, amid all possible divergencies of speech or worship, a constituent part of that one body which is the temple of His future, His everlasting habitation. Jesus stands on the shore, though the disciples may imagine Him to be any one but Jesus; but they shall observe Him by the three signs—the love which feels, the wisdom which guides, the power which works. "Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said unto Peter, It is the Lord."

Brethren, ages come and go, but Christ changes not. Never was He more needed, never was He more powerful, never was He more beloved than in this age and in this year. We must take a wide range of observation if we would honor Him as we ought. We must see Him in unexpected places, surrounded by unexpected persons, working by unexpected agencies. It is because His arm is not shortened, it is because His work is not rigid but plastic, it is because He can adapt Himself to all circumstances and cases; it is because His enterprise in taking upon Him to deliver man was real, was immortal till it was accomplished, therefore it is that He could say, "Lo, I am with you all the days, even unto the consummation of the great Beyond." The person of Christ and the work of the Spirit—with these two and the love of God—with these three all things are ours—change and change, life and death, things present and things to come, only be we patient, fully persuaded in our own mind, yet doing all things with charity, so shall we represent Him to our age, whom to know is life, whom to serve his freedom. "When the morning was come He stood on the shore." The unrecognized Presence—that is the dawn; "every eye shall see Him"—that is the sun-rising. That Sun never sets, and the healing of humanity is in its wings.

LAY HELP IN THE CHURCH.

When we say that the body of the Church includes the members, the obvious and necessary inference is that everything that each and all of the several members can contribute to the general welfare of the body is involved in their relation to it. The care and sustenance of the body of Christ's Church cannot depend exclusively upon the clergy any more than the head can dispense with the hands or the feet in providing for the wants of the physical body. There is a large sense in which this is already admitted. No one thinks of questioning that the laity should attend to the temporalities of the Church. Their financial sagacity and business habits are everywhere recognized as fittingly employed in managing the Church in all her secular relations. It is not merely the fact that a clergyman's duties lead him away from his business, but by natural, intellectual and moral effect they unfit him for business. If the worldly side of religion is to be attended to with any success, it must be by those who have the requisite training for it. All this is understood. But there are many laymen