

ing a gathering, of which may be safely affirmed that nothing like it has ever been witnessed before, nor has any meeting of Church-folk attracted more widespread attention, either in our own times or in those of our forefathers. A noble gathering, indeed, of which it may not be exaggeration to affirm that it was alike imposing, majestic, irresistible, unique.

To the most casual observer this was no ordinary assemblage. First there was, as many no doubt observed, an absence of all attempt at artistic effect or display. Those brightly gleaming banners and devices which had been so imposing a feature at the Anti-Home Rule meeting, held in the same Hall but a few weeks before, were conspicuous by their absence. No decoration whatever was employed save that afforded by a single chaste and effective band of many-hued flowers and palms that edged the platform, but which was so artfully contrived as not to hide those who occupied it. The absence of all colour, except that produced by the dresses of the ladies, intensified, if possible, that thorough earnestness of purpose which was visible on many a face. Clearly this was no festive occasion, and yet one which was gratifying to all present alike. It was, indeed, a great gathering for business purposes. The Government of the day had thought fit to bring its forces to bear against a portion of the old Church of the land, that portion which it had thought was its weakest point, and it found, probably to its amazement, if not to its dismay, that English Churchmen, and English Church-women too, when once they understood the danger, were ready enough to stand shoulder to shoulder with their Welsh brethren the better to protect their most blessed earthly inheritance.

When the Church Defence Institution first devoted its energies to a plan designed to bring before the nation the real meaning and scope of the now utterly discredited and disreputable Suspensory Bill, it was felt that more than one important meeting of Churchmen in the metropolis might well be organised at which the measure could be discussed, and if the audience were so minded, denounced. Thereupon the president of the Institution, with that rare and commendable foresight which His Grace possesses, immediately formulated a scheme by which at one of these meetings, and that of course the most important and influential of all, a thoroughly representative gathering of the whole Church, including the Archbishops and Bishops, the members of the ancient Houses of Convocation and York, and the modern Houses of Laymen of both provinces; churchwardens elected from each archdeaconry, (and to which was afterwards added such members of the Central Council of Diocesan Conferences as were not included under the above heads), should be assembled.

The next question was where should this assemblage be held? St. James's Hall was pronounced too small. Exeter Hall, much more dingy, was little larger; clearly nothing remained, therefore, but the Albert Hall; the largest building probably under one roof in the world, capable, its officials said, of holding, at a pinch, seven or eight thousand people! And this building was forthwith secured.

"What, fill the Albert Hall," said one. "Impossible!" The sequel shows that all things are possible to those who throw themselves heart and soul into what they undertake.

Whatever, if any, misgivings troubled those engaged to organise this great and important demonstration at the outset, as to the possibilities of securing an audience sufficiently numerous to fill so vast a space as the Albert Hall presents, were soon left behind, for as the days wore on, and they were all too few for the accomplishment of the work, it became evident that the largest building in London was all too small to accommodate those who wished to secure seats in any part of the building where

there was a chance of hearing the words of the speakers. Many were in consequence greatly disappointed at not being able to secure such a position, and many also on the day of the meeting were unable to get in at all, because they had not troubled to provide themselves with tickets beforehand.

The organization of the meeting, it should be observed, fell to the Rev. H. Granville Dickson, General Secretary of the Church Defence Institution, and to Mr. Sidney Flamank, Secretary to the Church House. None better than myself know how they and those associated with them worked. They were well rewarded by the splendid results of their labours.

The day came, the meeting was held, every item in the (somewhat as it appeared to me too long) programme was carried out, the resolutions were affirmed by everyone present, (not a single hand or voice being lifted up against them), the announcement being accompanied by a burst of prolonged applause, which those who heard it will not readily forget.

Taken as a whole, it may be said that the Albert Hall Demonstration will go down to posterity as one of the most important and striking events of the Nineteenth Century. Important, because, gathered under the dome of the largest hall in the world, a representative body of Churchmen from all parts of the country assembled themselves together in their thousands to protest in the most solemn and unanimous manner against a gross act of injustice premeditated against the Church by the Government of the day. Striking, because to the dullest intellect, such a spectacle, so vast, so dignified, and so imposing, must have afforded additional proof, if such were needed, that the old National Church of the land possesses a far deeper hold upon mankind than some would have us believe, and that you have only to sufficiently arouse her adherents to a sense of their danger to find out that she is, indeed, a power to be reckoned with.

But the Albert Hall Demonstration, however successful, nay, glorious as it most certainly was, will have been held in vain if the people of England and Wales do not receive a permanent benefit from the occasion. Surely it ought not to be regarded as the final crushing blow to an ill conceived, unpopular and abortive Parliamentary measure! It was all this, perhaps; but far more than this. If it is to be of any real use and benefit to the Church and nation it must be regarded only as a first step, as indicating a new era in Church defence, the inauguration of a policy the aim and purpose of which shall be to bring before the people of this country, in a way never before attempted, the enormous benefits of a Church which, while it can claim an antiquity older by far than the monarchy, is to-day calculated to adapt itself more perfectly, more thoroughly, and more effectively to the religious, moral, social and intellectual wants, aspirations, and feelings of mankind at large, than any or all of the dissenting communities in the world put together. It is the peculiar value of the Church to the Nation, the irreparable loss which the people would suffer by and under disestablishment and disendowment, which ought to be everywhere taught and insisted upon. Every child in school should receive instruction in this most truly important and necessary matter. Had this been done, say five and twenty years ago, can it be imagined that "disendowment" would have been to-day within the range of practical politics? It is late, but we venture to hope not too late to remedy this defect in our school life.* But above and beyond this, the coming autumn and winter months should be utilised to the full. Every village should have its reading class. Every workman's club in the land should be abundantly supplied with Church Defence literature. The people as a nation know nothing about the Church, its history, or its work. It should be the duty of every parish

priest, every intelligent Church worker, to put the facts clearly before those with whom they come in daily contact. Never was a better opportunity than now, and those who have the welfare of Church and people at heart will do well not to miss it.

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* See Canon Bevan's article in the *Illustrated Church Annual*, 1893.

* Mr. W. Norris, The Mount, Tenbury, has introduced the subject of English Church History in a popular form in many schools in the Diocese of Hereford, and will give full particulars of the working and results to those interested in this important matter.

† The Church Defence Institution will gladly afford help in this direction.

THE FUTURE OF THE SCOTTISH ESTABLISHMENT.

(From *Religious Review of Reviews*, June 15, 1893.)

At the present time no Churchman can afford to be ignorant of certain ecclesiastical movements which are rapidly changing the whole aspect of Scottish Presbyterianism. It is a great mistake to rank the Established Church of Scotland with the anti-episcopal dissenters in England. The difference is not one of position merely—though establishment certainly has tended to preserve a certain subtle element of dignity, lacking in voluntary bodies—but it consists of an entirely different tone of worship and of teaching. So thoroughly has this spirit permeated the Presbyterian clergy in Scotland that the old attitude of antagonism to Episcopacy is rapidly disappearing, and the duty of considering our future attitude towards this friendly Church becomes more and more pressing.

The difference between the "Kirk"* of to-day and of fifty years ago is not only in the "kist o' whistles." Organs are now almost universal, except in remote country parishes. Along with organs there appeared some twenty years ago a society of ministers and laymen called the "Church Service Society," the chief object of which was the study of ancient liturgies.

Evidence of what may be called a more catholic feeling among its members immediately began to accumulate. The "Scottish Hymnal" is practically the work of this Society, and bears the first traces of an observance of the Christian year. The hymnal is authorized by the General Assembly, is used in the great majority of the churches, and represents the stage at which the lay mind has arrived. All over Scotland the Christian year is being thus observed, in a meagre fashion it is true, but in a way that promises well for the future. For, given a minister with "High Church" leanings—and English Churchmen have no idea how many such there are—it is possible for him by committing to memory suitable collects, reading suitable lessons, and preaching suitable sermons, to train his people to a complete appreciation of the meaning of the Christian Year. Many ministers use a liturgy of their own compiling, and in some cases it is boldly read, instead of being committed to memory. In general, it may be said that the long extempore prayers have practically disappeared, and the service generally, in the towns at least, has approximated to the Anglican model. The prejudice against the use of a Liturgy is fast disappearing; and, indeed, it is important to remember that the historical scene in St. Giles, Edinburgh, when Jenny Geddes threw her stool at the Dean's head, was a protest, not against Liturgy *qua* Liturgy, but against the enforcement of "Popish Mass" (thus was Archbishop Laud's