

admitted that the Lay House would practically have a veto on all proposed legislation, as Parliament would never sanction a measure which was recommended by the clergy but disallowed by the lay representatives. A very influential address has also been presented to the Bishop of Oxford, asking him to use his influence in the present critical position of affairs to "prevent any increase of external restraint upon the Church, and to favour the removal or mitigation of the defects of the present judicial system in matters ecclesiastical, and a provision for a more effectual exercise of the means by which her revived life may find due expression in council and action."

From English papers we gathered that it was probable that some concession would be made by the Government when the Burials Bill came up for further discussion, on the principle that it is well, at some sacrifice, to remove, if possible, the grounds of grievance. In Convocation, the Archbishop of Canterbury seemed to speak as if he approved of the "silent burial" clause; so we were happily prepared for the telegram that recently announced that a clause allowing Nonconformists to use their own service in the parish churchyards had passed the House of Lords at the instigation of the Archbishop despite the opposition of the Government. We cannot but express regret at such a decision, feeling as we do that concession on this point but invites concessions on others; but our regret is not mixed with any surprise at the quarter whence the proposal came, for it is no novelty to find Archbishop Tait more in accord with the *Times* and Dissent than with the majority of his own Church.

The Irish Church Synod has completed its work of revising the Prayer Book. The Archbishop of Dublin, who then spoke for the first time since his serious illness, made a strong protest against the final adoption of the new Preface, and appealed to the House of Bishops to reject it. His Grace's action led to a good deal of excitement in the Synod, especially among some of the more moderate men who had assented to the Preface on the supposition that its adoption would prevent any further agitation by the extreme revisionists. The bishops by a majority of one accepted the Preface, to which Bishop Plunket moved that any Bishop signifying his dissent should not necessarily require the assent thereto of candidates for ordinations. This was strongly opposed and eventually, at the Archbishop's request, withdrawn. A proposal that the Athanasian Creed should be read on Trinity Sunday was negatived, and finally a Bill fixing June 30, 1878, as the date at which the new Prayer Book should come into force was adopted, and the work of Revision being ended the Synod adjourned after passing this resolution: "Bearing in mind the great difficulties and dangers of the ordeal through which the Church of Ireland has been called to pass during the last six years, this Synod desires to record hereby its thank-

fulness to Almighty God for having during that period so mercifully preserved the Church from the great peril of disunion, and for having otherwise vouchsafed to it so many tokens of His superior tending care and guidance."

#### TRINITY SUNDAY.

THE account we have of the beginning of the material creation brings forward in forcible relief the persons of the ever-blessed Trinity, and the full revelation vouchsafed to man culminates in the most complete exhibition of the Three in One, the One in Three, that has yet been given. And so the beginning of the acts of our Blessed Lord was associated with a manifestation of the Three Persons of the Trinity, and His last commission to the Eleven was to disciple all nations by baptising them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The perfect revelation of the Holy Three in One may be considered to have been made on the Day of Pentecost, when to the work alluded to "by our Lord in the words, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work," was added that further operation of the Holy Ghost which was formerly unknown to the wisest and holiest sages of antiquity, but has ever since been familiar to the whole world. The significance of the festival of Trinity Sunday, as the end of the cycle of days by which our Blessed Lord and His work are commemorated, is abundantly seen. On Whitsunday we see the crowning point of the work of redemption; and the feast of Trinity, on the Octave of Pentecost, commemorates the consummation of God's saving work, and the perfect revelation to the Church of the Three Persons in One God as the sole object of adoration. The love of each Person had been commemorated in the separate Festivals which memorialize before God and man the Incarnation, Death, Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord, and the sending forth by the Father and the Son of the Blessed Spirit on Whitsunday. In the Festival of Trinity Sunday all these solemn subjects of Belief are gathered into one Act of worship, as the Church Militant looks upward through the door that is opened in Heaven, and bows down in adoration with the Triumphant Church, saying in the sublime language of the Book which closes the Canon of the Inspired volume: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. . . . Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created."

The Athanasian Creed if ever to be used in the services of the Church at all, is most appropriately employed at this Festival. And it is one of the safeguards of the Faith we can by no means afford to lay aside. The fact that unbelievers in the Trinity are found willing to accept the Nicene Creed is ample proof that that Creed is not sufficient for the requirements of the Church; and the strenuous efforts made to get rid of the "Symbolum Athanasii" is confirmatory of its priceless value. Nor have we any right to endeavour to explain away or diminish the

force of the awful words it contains, which are condemnatory of unbelief in its dogmatic statements. In the Creed those condemnatory words are applied in close consistency with our Lord's first use of them, and they must be taken for all they fairly mean. As has been remarked however, a willing assent may be given to the more obvious statements of the Creed by many who are quite unable to enter upon the collateral and inferential statements deduced from them; and a man may thus believe "faithfully" in the substantial truths of the Catholic Faith. With an enlarged knowledge, increased faith is necessary: and all the statements of the creed are so bound together that they whose expanded knowledge of it is not thus accompanied, are in fact rejecting the fundamental Articles of the Faith, as well as those that appear to be subordinate only. The ignorant, who believe according to the measure of their knowledge, are in a more advanced state of religion than those who know much but believe little.

The doctrine of the Trinity, as enunciated in the "Symbolum Athanasii," has been adduced by Romanists in illustration or rather in support of their principle of "development" which underlies all the novel dogmas of the Roman Creed. An example more unfortunate for the purpose intended could scarcely be imagined. For there is not a statement in the "Symbolum" which is not fully borne out by express declarations in Holy Scripture. The Unity of the Godhead, the Divinity of each of the Holy Three, and the distinctness of the Persons, as well as the necessity of faith therein, are just as positively stated in the Sacred Record as in the so-called Athanasian Creed. These dogmatic truths are not found there merely in an embryo state, for some Council in later ages to develop and mature; they are as fully expressed in the New Testament, though not always in the same words, as in the latest and the most complete statement of them which the world has seen. But where in the Sacred Record, or in the early Christian writers, shall we find even the slightest hint of anything that can, without the greatest violence, be twisted into the dogma of the Infallibility, into that of the Immaculate conception, or into anything that can in the remotest degree sanction the present practice of Mariolatry in the Roman Church? Or where in the early Church shall we find even the buddings of the doctrine contained in the statement made in the sermon preached at the recent consecration of Dr. Hannan, as R. C. Archbishop of the Maritime Provinces, when the preacher said: "This morning under the blessed auspices of the Immaculate Mother . . . your prayers have been answered?"

There is no statement in the "Symbolum Athanasii" respecting the Holy Trinity which can be expunged from Scripture teaching without the most transparent explaining away of its most direct and positive declarations. And on the other hand, there is no part of the Roman doctrine on the three above-mentioned subjects which can be found there except by the exercise of the faculty of pure invention.