

long period had sanctioned ritualistic principles and practices, and that these, by our acknowledgment, were embodied in our services—services, be it remembered, which we had freely used and assented to so long as it enabled us to have our church subsidized by the State. I do not think it would serve us were we to give grounds for such a reproach. Besides this, we have an example, in a distant branch of our church as it exists in the United States of America, of how little avail such a measure as is proposed would be as a safeguard against the supposed danger. There our liturgy has been altered, and many of those changes adopted which it is now asserted will suffice to shut out ritualism; but they have had no such effect, for we learn that the Episcopal Church in America is making rapid progress, with the full consent of the laity, towards a very strongly-developed ritualistic system. If these changes have failed to exclude ritualism from the Transatlantic Churches, why should we conclude that they would do so here? If we were to change our liturgy with every wind of doctrine that wafted error into the church, we should soon find the remedy to be as fatal as the disease.

BISHOP TEMPLE ON CHURCH REFORM.

The Bishop of Exeter has addressed to the clergy of his diocese an important letter on the subject of proposed reforms in the Church. The matters discussed are divided under the three heads of Lay Assistants, Lay Co-operation, and Home and Foreign Missions. The value of the principle of lay assistance is assumed, and his lordship divides into three classes the assistants whom he thinks might be employed. The first-class would consist of candidates for orders; the second of men who are willing to make their duties as lay assistants their professional work, and to aim at nothing else; and the third, men who are engaged in ordinary occupations—gentlemen, farmers, shopkeepers, artisans, or the like, but who are willing to devote a little time every day, and perhaps a good deal on Sundays, to parochial work under the clergyman. It appears to his lordship that candidates for orders the good arising from this plan would be mutual, as practice in such work as the clergyman might engage them in would often be an excellent apprenticeship for the duties which they would have to discharge when ordained. And he hints that at some future time it might be well to make it a general rule that none should be ordained without having served such an apprenticeship for six months. As to the duties to be assigned to the lay assistants, the Bishop defines them thus:—To take a leading part in the Sunday-school and in the night school; to visit the sick, and keep the clergyman thoroughly informed of their state; to hold services in schoolrooms, cottages, or any other building not consecrated for public worship; to read written or printed sermons, of which the clergyman had approved; and to explain passages of Scripture selected or approved by the clergyman. The condition upon which a lay assistant may be admitted to office are that he shall be a communicant, and, when not prevented by duty, a regular attendant at church; that he shall be either selected or approved by the Incumbent before receiving any sanction from the Bishop; that his precise duties shall be defined by the Incumbent; that, if he is to be licensed to explain the Scriptures, the Bishop shall be satisfied that he possesses sufficient knowledge; that no license shall be given except after an interview with the Bishop, and that he shall in all cases act under the Incumbent's direction. Upon these conditions his lordship announces that he is prepared to grant licences to lay assistants. With respect to the second portion of his letter, Bishop Temple says it is impossible not to see that there is a very general feeling among the laity that the clergy have too absolute a discretion in the matter of church management, and he instances the large support which Lord Sandon's Bill received from both parties in the House of Commons as an indication of the widely-spread character of this feeling. He warns the clergy that before long some distinct control over the services in the church will be given, either to the parishioners as a body, or to some council that shall represent them, and advises them to use the interval in endeavouring to give a beneficial character either to the measure which may ultimately pass, or to its practical working. What is wanted is to surround the clergyman with a trustworthy council, with whom he may confer on all

parish matters of importance, and his lordship suggests that something of the sort may be obtained by forming a parochial association for church work. In the third division of his letter, Bishop Temple proposes that there shall be collections each half-year for home and foreign missions alternately, his lordship promising to aid the movement by writing each half-year a pastoral letter, addressed to the congregations in the churches, urging them to contribute freely to the societies selected for support.

THE FUTURE OF THE IRISH CHURCH.

The Dublin correspondent of the *Standard* writes upon this as follows, under the date the 14th inst:—The approaching meeting of the General Convention of the Irish Church is looked forward to with anxious interest by its friends. Questions of considerable difficulty are cropping up, and it will need all the patience and wisdom which can be exercised to prevent disorder and dissension in the assembly. In anticipation of the meeting the Representative Body have issued a circular setting forth the grounds upon which they recommend their clergy to commute, and the scale they recommend in cases where any may desire to compound. Great diversity of opinion exists with respect to the two subjects. The clergy are not easily convinced as to the propriety of commuting, and still less of compounding. They love their Church, it is true, and hope the laity will make generous sacrifices to sustain her in her day of trial; but the "flesh pots" are savoury, and in the opinion of many ministers it would be very unwise to exchange the security of the Government for that of the Church Body, lest the supply of "loaves and fishes" should one day fail. Some have frankly declared that they have no notion of running such a risk, but the great majority of the clergy maintains cautious reserve. Those of the diocese of Cork, on the other hand, have expressed their willingness to commute, and the diocese of Down and Connor has shown a disposition to follow their example. It would, of course, be quite unreasonable to expect the clergy to run the risk of losing their annuities. The circular of the Representative Body is intended to prove that they have nothing whatever to fear. It enters into calculations which are supported by tables drawn out by the most competent actuaries, to prove that if the five millions which would be realized by general commutation were invested at 4 per cent., there would be a surplus left after paying all annuities. As regards compounding, they defend the scale which they have laid down, but will have great difficulty in reconciling the clergy to it, many of them denouncing its illiberality in strong terms, and none as yet manifesting any inclination to accept it. While these questions are undecided, the collection of the funds for the future support of the Church proceeds very slowly—a circumstance which does not tend to inspire more confidence in the minds of the clergy, and make them more willing to relinquish the security of the State for the payment of their annuities. This arises not from any want of generosity—at least, such is the impression—but the laity are withholding their contributions until they obtain some guarantees for the suppression of Ritualistic teaching in the future Church. The very small section of Churchmen who call themselves Anglicans, and repudiate the name of Protestants, have assumed a bolder attitude, and obtained some footing of late years. The result is, their opponents are more on the alert to check their progress. One of the subjects of controversy which will be pressed upon the attention of the Convention when it meets next Tuesday will be the revision of the Prayer-book, and this will bring the various sections comprising the assembly into collision. Some will firmly oppose any change, and try to exclude the question; others will insist upon a trenchant revision; and a third party will endeavour to have the matter referred to a committee, with instructions to report to the General Synod, which alone has power of dealing with it. An Irish correspondent of our own says on this subject:—"It is expected that commutation will be very general, as the Church Body has announced their readiness to deal with all propositions that may be made to them. It is probable that there will be a strong Protestant expression of opinion as to the meaning of the Prayer-book; and that the

subject will be referred to a committee. The Synod of Meath meets November 8th that of Dublin November 15th."

EVANGELICAL ANNIVERSARIES

These meetings were held at the church of the Holy Trinity, in New York, last week, and were attended by a large number of clergymen and distinguished laymen, representing the evangelical portion of our church, from all sections of the country. The three days' service were commenced on Tuesday, the 18th, 10 A. M., by a devotional meeting, at which the Rev. Dr. Tyng presided, and in which the keynote was struck of all the succeeding exercises, in the clear and full recognition of a present, all-sufficient, and unchanging Saviour as the only source of power in the ministry, and prosperity to the church.

The annual meeting of the Evangelical Knowledge Society was then held, Bishop Eastburn, of Massachusetts, presiding. The Board of Managers in their report made a good exhibit of work accomplished for the year in the publication of valuable works and periodicals. An interesting discussion followed the motion to accept and print the report. Many testimonials were given by members from various parts of the country, showing the high esteem in which the publications of the Society are held, especially the *Parish Visitor*. The Secretary and General Agent, the Rev. Dr. Dyer, pleaded however, for a still more general co-operation in the work of the Society; and it was the prevailing expression and feeling that it should have a deeper hold upon the sympathies of its friends and draw forth more liberal contributions to its treasury and a more systematic zeal in disseminating its publications.

In the evening the anniversary exercises were held, and a sermon preached by the Rt. Rev. George D. Cummins, D. D., assistant bishop of Kentucky. It was a full and able refutation of the error so extensively held, and a recently re-affirmed by the decision of the Court of Arches in England, of the objective presence of our Lord's body under the form of bread and wine in the Eucharist, and the consequent lawfulness of adoration addressed to elements on the Holy Table. It was a very timely and masterly production, and the great danger of this doctrine as the prolific source of all ritualistic and Romanizing error, and as clearly contradicting both the Scriptures and the standards of our church. If published, as we hope it may be, it will prove in the best sense a tract for the times.

On Wednesday, the American Church Missionary Society held its anniversary.

The Holy Communion was administered at 10½ A. M. and deeply impressive addresses were given by Bishop Eastburn and Bishop Lee of Delaware.

At 12 o'clock the annual meeting was convened, the President, Hon. Judge Conyngham, in the chair. The annual report was read, giving much ground for encouragement, but showing that the friends of evangelical truth in our church have need to rouse themselves to far greater zeal, and liberality than they have yet shown, if the views which they hold dear, and which they believe most truly represent our church and glorify our Saviour, are to prevail. This society aims to send forth men who in these days of error on the right hand and the left, will know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. It was strongly asserted that, while not in antagonism with other existing organizations in our church as such, it was designed to be in express contradistinction from and opposition to the system which, without discrimination, sends forth men of every shade of opinion. Much was said calculated to call out fresh zeal on the part of all who love the truth as held by the evangelical portion of our church, and very much calculated to dissipate the prejudice and the fears that this Society is disloyal to the church.

On Thursday the Evangelical Educational Society held its anniversary. There was a devotional meeting at 10 A. M., followed by the business meeting. The Secretary, Rev. Mr. Matlack, read the annual report of the Board of Managers, which gave a very encouraging view of the condition of the society, from the liberality and zeal with which the indebtedness of the last year was removed. Mention was made of a series of questions addressed by the managers to the students under their care, and the necessity for such discrimination was very clearly and fully presented. The policy had been severely criticised

in some of the church papers, and it gave rise to a very animated debate. The ground was taken, on the one hand, that such a course was calculated to embarrass men of independent thought and turn out only men of narrow views; and on the other hand, it was maintained that there was a call in these times for searching discriminations, and that young men at the beginning of their course were not unfitted to meet it. As the society was formed and supported especially to educate men of evangelical views, it was maintained that fidelity to their trust must constrain the managers, by some such process, to see that the young men whom they assist are of this character. In some respects it was admitted that the questions might be modified with advantage, and it was stated that they would be, but the policy was approved by a very decided vote. So admirable were the statements of evangelical truth in the report, and so clear and strong the reasons given for fidelity in its maintenance, that it was resolved, on motion of bishop Cummins, that those portions be printed separately and circulated as a tract.

In the evening the anniversary services were held. An able and appropriate address was delivered by the Rev. Dr. Butler, of the Philadelphia Divinity School; the Rev. Mr. Currie, of Western Virginia; the Rev. Dr. Newton, of Philadelphia, and the Rev. Dr. Andrews, of Virginia. The meeting continued until a late hour, but with unflagging interest. After a few encouraging words in parting, from Bishop Lee, the anniversaries closed with singing the 27th hymn, and the benediction. All felt that it had been good to be there. The whole occasion has left an impression which must tell very favorably upon the interests of these important societies, and upon the great cause which they are designed to promote. The time intervening between the public services was improved this year, as for several years past, in meetings of earnest conference, on the part of many thus brought together, respecting the present crisis in the church. Great interest was manifested, and there was a free expression of difficulties felt by some minds, and the proposal of remedies more important and more varied than the prevailing expressions were those of entire loyalty and devotion to the church of our love, and deprecation of any thought but that of valiantly contending for the truth in her communion. There was a greater unanimity in counsel, and a calmer and more solemn waiting upon God for light and direction, than have marked these assemblies in former years.

A venerable clergyman of the church of England, the Rev. Mr. Hoare, of Tunbridge Wells, was present, who gave a statement respecting the present difficulties and encouragement of the evangelical portion of Church of England, which was highly interesting and instructive. It was received with expressions of warmest appreciation. Notwithstanding the different circumstances which affect the two churches, the similarity in their trials, and in the course which many of their wisest men think it most judicious to pursue, is very striking.

Great kindness was shown in the hospitalities extended to the visiting clergy and laity; and there were several occasions of social re-union which were very pleasant and refreshing. Brethren separated felling stronger from thus seeing each other face to face and from the frequent opportunities afforded for united counsel and prayer. These anniversaries, if rightly used, may become a rich source of blessing to our church.—*Christian Witness.*

—The *Church Times* professes to be the organ of a section of the English Church. Nevertheless it says:—

"None desire more than we do to see the Pope installed in his due and proper position as the Patriarch of the Western Church—nay, as the Primate of Christendom, if that will please our Roman brethren better.

WHAT THE REFORMATION HAS DONE.—It would be unreasonable to expect the above mentioned paper to regard the Reformation with unqualified approval. That it does not will be evident from the following extract:—

"As for the work of the Reformers, viz., the degradation of national morals, and the alienation of the people from the truth, we are glad to hear of any means which promises to contract it in the slightest degree."