

THE MONTH.

THE debates in the House of Commons, on Irish questions and on Supply, have been very tedious. Lord Randolph Churchill, as leader of the House, has shown dignity and tact.

The anti-tithe agitation in Wales, supported by sectarian as well as political forces, has shown much lawlessness, and is of evil omen.

In recent correspondence, and comment, touching the payment of tithe, not a few appear to forget that, with corn at so low a price, the parson (rector or vicar) is suffering as well as the farmer.

In an article on Home Missions, the *Guardian* strongly supports the suggestion that "diocesan" Mission Preachers should be generally appointed.¹ The *Guardian* says :

Several letters in our columns during the last few weeks have testified to a certain vague feeling of uneasiness as to the state of the Church in country places. This feeling has, we imagine, been greatly stimulated by the revelations which the late elections have made of the alienation, to say the least, of the agricultural labourer from the Church. . . . It is not, however, only on political grounds that we may infer that the work of the Church in country places is far from satisfactory. On every side we are told of the religious ignorance and the immorality that are so terribly rife in our villages, and we are compelled to ask what the Church has done, or is doing, to remedy this state of things. Of course we know that there are bright exceptions, or perhaps it would be fairer to say that the worst cases are exceptional, and that there is a very fair average of work maintained in most of our country parishes. But we imagine that the average is not so high as it ought to be, and that the worst cases are very much worse than they ought to be. The letters in our columns testify to the fact, and give some explanation of the cause. The country clergy are discouraged by the solitariness of their position, by the physical difficulties of their work, by the want of variety in their own surroundings, and in the teaching which their people receive. They wish, therefore, to find some means of coping with one or other of these difficulties. Some appeal for help in building mission chapels ; these will partly supply some of the accommodation which is lacking in large and straggling rural parishes. Others suggest that the services of lay readers should be more frequently utilised, and that open air preaching, perhaps at the old churchyard cross, should be revived. But the best and most hopeful suggestion, because it has already been tested by experience, is that diocesan Missioners should be generally appointed, and that when their services are not required for actual Mission preaching they should afford some help to the single-handed and over-worked clergy of country parishes.

Rev. H. E. Ryle, Fellow of King's, Cambridge, has been appointed Principal of St. David's, Lampeter.—Archdeacon Bardsley, esteemed throughout the diocese of Liverpool, has felt himself unable to accept the Vicarage of Islington.

A *Lancet* article on "Clergymen's sore throat" gives cautions against "hanging the head" while reading or preaching.

At the eighth Synod of the Old Catholics in Austria (*Times*, Sept. 8), it was resolved to request the British and Foreign Bible Society to supply the body with Bibles.

The returns about Pews have been published in a parliamentary paper. Interesting as this paper is (and it contains much curious matter), it will probably do little towards passing the Parish Churches Bill.

Other proposals to celebrate the Queen's jubilee have been withdrawn in favour of the scheme for a Church House adopted by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The *Record*, in an excellent article, speaks warmly of the arrangements made for the Wakefield Church Congress.

The death of that pious and generous philanthropist, Mr. Samuel Morley, has called forth due tributes of respect.

¹ See THE CHURCHMAN, vol. viii., p. 374, "Diocesan Mission Services," by Rev. W. O. Purton.