

THE MONTH.

WE have pleasure in printing the following Resolutions of the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury on the important subjects of Evening Communion and Fasting Communion. The Resolutions were adopted at the recent session of May 5. They permit the one, and repudiate the arbitrary teaching lately current on the other.

I. EVENING COMMUNION.

The Committee of the Upper House of Convocation appointed to consider a Gravenmen relative to the practice of celebrating the Holy Communion in the Evening, which was brought up on February 9th, 1893, report as follows:

1. That in the Apostolic age the Holy Communion was administered in connection with the gathering together of Christians to share in an appointed evening meal.

2. That the celebration of the Holy Communion in the evening was thus apparently the practice of the Church during a large part, at least, of the first century.

3. That about the close of the first century the celebration of the Holy Communion is found separated from the Agape, or appointed evening meal, and transferred to an early hour in the morning; and, except on certain special occasions, evening celebrations of the Holy Communion ceased in course of time throughout the Church.

4. That at the Reformation the Church of England made no express regulation concerning the hour of celebrating the Holy Communion, the only apparent rule being that it should be celebrated in the earlier portion of the day and in connection with Matins.

5. That Evening Communion was introduced into the Church of England in the present century on account of alleged necessity, it being maintained that many would not be able to receive the Holy Communion unless it were occasionally administered in the evening.

6. That, regard being had to the continuous custom of the Church, as well as to the necessity now alleged to exist, it is the bounden duty of every one who publicly administers the Holy Communion in the evening, to assure himself of the reality of the need in the parish where he is appointed to serve.

2. FASTING COMMUNION.

1. That in the Apostolic age the Holy Communion was administered in connection with the gathering together of Christians to share in an appointed evening meal.

2. That the practice of communicating in the early morning appears to have arisen about the close of the first century, probably in order to secure a safer as well as a more reverent celebration, and, by the time of St. Cyprian, to have become so fully established that it was regarded not only as the preferable, but as the proper practice, and as commemorative of the Lord's Resurrection.

3. That the practice of communicating in the early morning, together with the common association of fasting with prayer, led to the practice of communicating only when fasting, and that fasting reception of the Communion became the regular and recognised usage of the Church before the end of the fourth century.

4. That from the close of the fourth century this regular and recognised usage was formulated in rules for the clergy in canons of local and provincial councils.

5. That fasting reception of the Communion was the prescribed rule of the Church of England during the Anglo-Saxon period, and continued to be so to the time of the Reformation.

6. That these strict rules were, nevertheless, subject to relaxation in cases of sickness or other necessity.

7. That at the Reformation the Church of England, in accordance with the principle of liberty laid down in Article XXXIV., ceased to require the Communion to be received fasting though the practice was observed by many as a reverent and ancient custom, and as such is commended by several of her eminent writers and divines down to the present time.

8. That, regard being had to the practice of the Apostolic Church in this matter, to teach that it is a sin to communicate otherwise than fasting is contrary to the teaching and spirit of the Church of England.

These important resolutions of the Bishops of the province of Canter-

bury should be circulated in thousands in all parishes where mediæval and unscriptural doctrine has of late years been introduced, as a valuable defence against all attempts at sacerdotal tyranny and erroneous teaching.

The betrothal of the Duke of York to Princess Victoria Mary of Teck has been welcomed with immense satisfaction by the whole country. From all that the people knew of the young Princess they had made up their minds that there was nobody so fit to be the Consort of one who ought some day to be King of England. The Princess has already endeared herself to the nation, by the zealous and self-denying share she has taken in her mother's extensive philanthropical works, and by other distinguished traits of character. Much has transpired to the advantage of the Duke during his naval career; and it is understood that in principles and conduct he is such as the English would most desire their Princes and Sovereigns to be. It was natural that nothing should be said until after the anniversary of the proposed marriage of his brother. The Queen has given the signal of her cordial approval of the engagement, a feeling which is understood to be universally shared. Few royal weddings will receive more heartfelt good wishes.

The following important passage from the Archbishop of Canterbury's speech at the annual meeting of the S.P.G. at St. James's Hall, should be universally known and quoted :

We believe and know that we possess the one gift of God in the revelation of the Divine. Christianity is one absolute religion of God—its earliest name *Euangelion*, good news. It was to tell men that which they could not know but by direct message from God, and it is God's fresh *Euangelion* to all mankind. And we here in England say without fear that we have this Gospel of God upon the primitive model. Englishmen are fond of criticising and finding fault with their institutions and their own possessions and all that they value most. They take to themselves an especial privilege, like Goldsmith's *Good-natured Man*, of being at liberty to find fault with them. I say this because I seldom take up books or magazines upon such a subject, at present, but I see what I really hope and believe will never be the fashion in this society—a silly carping at our Reformation (cheers). It has begun, and one sees it repeated. To my mind, the English Reformation—and I am as certain of the fact as I can be of anything—is the greatest event in Church history since the days of the Apostles. It does bring back the Church of God to the primitive model (renewed cheers). Here, then, we are in possession of the one message from God Himself, and we have it restored to us in its primitive character, and claim for ourselves that, little as we deserve it and great as our shortcomings are in the use of it, we have a gift for which we are accountable to God Himself and to all mankind (cheers). The fact of the Reformation positively immensely increases and deepens our obligation to teach that which we know of Christ our Lord.

The fusion of the Protestant Churchmen's Alliance and the Union of Clerical and Lay Associations was accomplished at a great meeting at Cannon Street Hotel on Tuesday, May 9. The Bishop of Sodor and Man was in the chair, and made a powerful and statesmanlike speech. Archdeacon Farrar gave an address of the highest eloquence and force, which will no doubt be circulated throughout the country. He pointed out that 4,000 of the clergy are members of the English Church Union; and that whereas ritualistic churches were 10 years

ago 2,581, they are now 5,043. In 1882 there were 336 churches where Eucharistic vestments were used, and there are now 1,029; 177 churches now use incense. The Archdeacon spoke with great strength of the Christian ministry, sacerdotalism, transubstantiation, and auricular confession; and ended with an earnest and eloquent appeal to the Laity to arouse themselves in the present crisis.

The London Diocesan Church Reading Union, which held its anniversary at Sion College on May 9, has now 2,500 members and 53 branches, of which 7 were added during the past year.

The Church of England Sunday-school Institute has been celebrating its jubilee. It is asking for £10,000, of which £4,000 is to clear the debt on its headquarters, and £6,000 to extend its work.

The Church Pastoral Aid Society reports an income of £69,620, which is larger by £10,000 than it has ever been since the society was founded, and exceeds the ordinary income of last year by more than £20,000.

At its annual meeting the R.T.S. reported an income of £197,234, being an increase on the previous year of £6,314. The R.T.S. also presented a most favourable balance-sheet. A special fund of more than £25,000 was raised last year to meet deficiencies, and the free contributions for the year, apart from the special fund, were £23,000 in excess of those of the preceding year, being altogether £137,545. The sale of scriptures yielded £99,800, which is an increase of £2,900.

The Colonial and Continental Society report an increase of £6,000.

At the annual meeting of the Church Missionary Society it was reported that the total receipts amounted to £282,000—the largest yet recorded except ten years ago, when they were swelled by the princely gifts of Mr. Jones. The associations had sent up £123,685—a larger sum than ever before, and representing an increase on the average of the five years ending 1890 of £20,000 a year.

The South American Missionary Society reported an income of £10,532 and an expenditure of £10,373, leaving a balance in hand of £159. The committee made an urgent appeal for increased support. The Bishop of the Falkland Islands, who is in England for a short time, was very warmly received.

At the annual meeting of the Y.M.C.A. the Archbishop of Canterbury heartily commended their excellent work, and their fundamental principle that the society was in no sense to be a substitute for Church, but only to make each member more loyal to his own pastor and place of worship.