

THE MONTH.

CONVOCAION of Canterbury assembled on the 14th. In the Upper House the Archbishop read the Queen's answer to the loyal address. One sentence in Her Majesty's gracious answer runs thus :—

Your representation that the Province of Canterbury might better discharge its duty if some addition were made to the number of Proctors in the Lower House shall receive my full consideration.

In conversation upon this subject, his Grace said that he had communicated with the President of the Northern Convocation, with the result that some changes had been made in the last election. As to further reforms, it was very important that no step should be taken but that which was beyond all doubt constitutional and legal. In the Lower House this subject was brought forward by Canon Gregory; and, after debate, a resolution including a Petition to the Queen was agreed upon, praying that Letters of Business might be issued "directing the Convocation of Canterbury to prepare the draft of a Canon, by which the number of elected Proctors, the manner of their election, and the qualification of the electors may be regulated." On the following day, in the Upper House, his Grace the President said that there would be an inconvenience in approaching the Crown with a request of this character, for the law officers of the Crown had given an opinion that there were precedents against such changes being made by a Canon of Convocation as proposed in this resolution of the Lower House. The Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol afterwards moved :

That his Grace the President be respectfully requested to place himself in communication with Her Majesty's Government with a view of securing a more ample representation of the clergy in the Lower House of Convocation, in accordance with the humble request of Convocation to Her Majesty, to which Her Majesty was pleased to return a gracious answer.

This proposal was carried, and the Lower House afterwards agreed to concur in it.¹

¹ The Bishop of Hereford, in the absence of the Bishop of Bath and Wells, presented a petition from the Ruridecanal Conference of Bath and Keynsham praying for the adoption of healthy changes in the constitution of Convocation whereby the two houses could meet together, the union of the two provinces of Canterbury and York for the deliberation on great and sufficient occasion, the fuller representation of the parochial clergy by the election to the Lower House of two proctors for each arch-

In the Lower House was presented a report on Intemperance. The members of the Upper House were requested—

To support in Parliament all wise measures for the further regulation of the trade in intoxicating drinks, and especially such as would carry out some or all of the following objects :—1. The gradual extinction of grocers' excise licenses. 2. The gradual suppression of houses for the sale of beer to be consumed on the premises. 3. The gradual reduction of the number of public houses until a limit shall have been reached which shall correspond to the wants of a temperate population, inasmuch as any excess of such houses beyond this limit represents so many centres of temptation to intemperance. 4. A large restriction of hours for Sunday traffic, together with some measure for country places for earlier closing at night.

Archdeacon Harrison referred to Canon Miller's work and character.¹ Canon Hopkins in presenting a report on National Education, spoke of the great burdens laid upon ratepayers in many districts by School Boards, and complained of "extra" subjects. A Manual of Private Prayer, which had been prepared by a Committee of the House, and printed by Messrs. Whitaker, was brought forward by the Prolocutor, Lord Alwyne Compton, as Chairman of the Committee, who proposed that it should receive the general approval of the House. Considerable objection was raised to its following the ancient form of the seven hours, and it was eventually referred back to the Committee.

In reply to Canon Trevor, the Lord Chancellor has written that "the Burials Bill does not authorize anything to be done by a layman in the church, but only in the churchyard, and at the grave." An address from nearly 600 clergymen of the diocese of Lincoln has been presented to the Bishop approving the "strong opposition so ably made by his lordship against the Burials Bill."

deaconry, and the use of voting papers in the elections, and the election, throughout both provinces, of a body of lay representatives or assessors to meet and confer with the Houses of Convocation, on the understanding that no action was to be taken on the part of this body without the consent of Convocation.

¹ The Ven. Archdeacon said: "I may claim a special right to speak of Canon Miller (although it is proclaiming my own antiquity), for forty-two years ago I examined him for priest's orders, he then being curate of Bexley, one of the Archbishop's peculiars. I need not remind the House of the part he has taken in our debates. We all remember that his main characteristic was his great honesty. No one could hear him speak without being strongly impressed with the conviction, even when differing from him, that there was the most perfect honesty in all he said. We know that for twenty years he held a most important post in Birmingham; and at a period of great difficulty—although Lord Clarendon says that clergymen are bad men of business—Canon Miller was looked up to more than any other man for the restoration of confidence and order."

The York Convocation devoted a two days' session to the consideration of the Burials Bill. By 35 to 16 the Lower House delivered itself of its responsibility by making a protest. The Bishop of Liverpool thought it was their duty, as the Bill had now become inevitable, to make the best of it.

The Annual Meeting of the Church of Ireland Sustentation Fund was held in the library of Lambeth Palace, the Archbishop of Canterbury in the chair. The Ninth Annual Report—

Showed that the amount received in England from all sources only amounted to £2,090. This made a total of £61,274 received since 1871, when the fund was formed. Of this sum £10,750 had gone to the Episcopal Endowment Fund of various dioceses, £6,110 being thus appropriated by the Bishops of the Church of England, while the remainder was either specially allocated by the donors to that fund or was voted out of the General Fund. To the Representative Church Body, for distribution among the most necessitous parishes £37,000 had been remitted, and £1,789 had been allocated by the donors to particular cases. This left £5,201 invested at interest. The decline of much of the support that was hoped for was a fact to which no one could be blind who studied the conditions under which the Church of Ireland was holding her noble protest, amid the darkness of surrounding superstition.

The Earl of Harrowby moved, and the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol seconded, a resolution commending the report and appointing a committee for the ensuing year. The Bishop of Meath (Lord Plunket) delivered an address on "The Claims of the Irish Church as the Witness for the Reformed Faith in Ireland," and, in the course of his speech, gave some very interesting information showing the vitality of the Church. An eloquent speech by Mr. Robert Hamilton, of Belfast, contained several striking passages.

In considering the Local Option Debate, "Sir Wilfrid Lawson's Victory," *The Church Temperance Chronicle* says:—"Without discounting in the smallest degree the important significance of the heart-cheering victory, we must frankly avow that we still feel but in the beginning of that full perfection to which we are confident the legislative control of the liquor traffic will eventually be brought." The movement for restraint in licensing, whether by local "option" or local "control," has unquestionably been making great progress. The success of Mr. Pease's motion for further restrictions in the hours of Sunday trading, and of a resolution in favour of Sunday closing in Wales, are not unimportant signs and symptoms.

On the 17th, in the House of Commons, Mr. Briggs brought forward a motion condemning the erection of a statue to the late Prince Imperial in Westminster Abbey, as inconsistent with

the national character of the edifice, and calculated to impair the good feeling between England and France. This motion, limited, according to the suggestion of Mr. Beresford Hope, to the former point, was carried by 171 to 116.

The Compensation for Disturbance Bill (Ireland) has taken up no small portion of the present short session. The changes of front by the Government have been almost unparalleled; and they prove the Bill is not the product of mature reflection on carefully collected *data*. Mr. Gibson's speeches against the Bill have, says the *Times*, shown debating power of the first order. Whig supporters have appealed to Mr. Gladstone to withdraw the Bill, and the *Edinburgh* has protested against principles which seem to tend dangerously in the direction of Communism.¹ Much mischief, we fear, is already done. The condition of Ireland in regard to the land agitation appears to be growing worse and worse.

Sir J. E. Eardley-Wilmot's Bill to incapacitate atheists from sitting in Parliament has been shelved on a question of form. Mr. Bradlaugh was permitted, through the intervention of the Government, to make an affirmation, and to take his seat.

The Bishop of Liverpool has issued an admirable Pastoral Address to his clergy. We quote a few sentences:—"I do entreat every clergyman in my diocese, for Christ's sake, to abhor and avoid all needless divisions on non-essential matters, and to follow after peace as well as truth. Let us never forget that division is weakness, and union is strength. I ask no one to give up his principles for the sake of apparent unity, or to cease to work his parish in the way which his conscience tells him is right. But I do ask every one to remember the words of St. Paul: 'Let all your things be done with charity.' By all means let us 'contend earnestly for the faith' handed down to us by the Reformers of our Church. But let us always contend in the spirit of love, both in word and deed."

Evangelical Churchmen throughout the country will regret the loss of Dr. Miller. A First-Class man at Oxford in 1835, ordained in 1837, he left Birmingham for Greenwich in 1866. A very effective preacher, with a firm grasp of Evangelical

¹ Mr. Justice Lawson, in a charge to the Grand Jury of Kerry, has referred to a determined and organized opposition in certain districts to the payment of rents and to the carrying out of the process of the law, a state of things, which, if allowed to go on unchecked, must lead to the breaking up of all the bonds of civilized society. "Communitistic doctrines," added the eminent Judge, "are contagious." Mr. Disraeli's remark, "confiscation is contagious," with other sayings in the Irish Church Debate, are not likely to be forgotten by many eminent Liberals. The Marquis of Lansdowne, a large owner of land in Ireland, a representative Whig, has resigned his Under-Secretaryship for India.

principles, a ready speaker—not seldom eloquent—and a hard worker, “in his parish indefatigable,” Dr. Miller won, as the *Times* remarks, “the warm respect and affection of men of very opposite opinions.”

Of Mr. Roundell’s proposal to throw open to laymen all Fellowships and Headships of Colleges at the Universities, the Prime Minister expressed neither approval nor disapproval.

Affairs in Afghanistan make, unhappily, but little progress. The error with regard to the cost of the Afghan war, discovered a few months ago turns out to be nine millions.

There is some reason for serious anxiety respecting the Eastern Question. It has entered into a new phase. The Porte may submit, however, if the Powers of Europe exercise pressure.

The action of the French Government in regard to the Jesuits has so far proved successful.

The Sunday School Centenary Conferences and Meetings throughout the country have been as a rule satisfactory; they are likely to prove beneficial in many ways.

The settlement of the case which has been going on for some years in the Courts of the Free Church of Scotland against Professor W. Robertson Smith, of Aberdeen, was deemed by many staunch members of that Church unsatisfactory. Two months ago, it will be remembered, an admonition was addressed to the Professor by the Moderator of the General Assembly, and he was replaced in his chair. A new prosecution has been initiated on the ground of an article on “Hebrew Language and Literature” in the eleventh volume of the “*Encyclopædia Britannica*” lately published, in which, according to the Edinburgh correspondent of the leading journal, he repeats his offence.⁴

¹ *Times*, July 15th.—He has been at no pains in it to conciliate his opponents or to show regard to the sensitiveness of the traditionalists, though it would have been prudent for him to do so, and he probably would have done so could he have foreseen the Assembly’s deliverance in his case at the time of writing it. Indeed, it is known that he endeavoured to withdraw the article and to stop its circulation after the meeting of the Assembly, but by that time the volume had been printed off, and the matter was beyond his control. . . . “It may fairly be made a question,” he says, “whether Moses left in writing any other laws than the Commandments on the tables of stone.”