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NOTICES OF BOOKS.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND EPISCOPACY. A. J. Mason, D.D., Canon of Canterbury. (Cambridge University Press.) 10s. 6d. net.

We shall probably not err if we regard this book as evoked by the Kikuyu incident; for, though that is not dwelt upon, it is hardly possible to avoid seeing a reference to it in the dedication to the Archbishop of Canterbury, "called to be Primate of All England . . . at a time which peculiarly needs" his eminent "gifts of courage and caution, of largeness of mind and firmness of principle." The Archbishop's deliverance has since been published: His Grace will be gratified—whether Dr. Mason is altogether so or not—to find in this *catena* of high Anglican authorities a powerful support to both the main positions he has taken up. Dr. Mason has succeeded in the task he set before him, of proving that the Church of England as a body, and by her most weighty and representative divines, has always stood for Episcopacy as an institution having apostolic sanction and affording the best security for a valid ministry; but he has also supplied abundant evidence that, along with this, she (and they for the most part) have equally shrunk from judging the Reformed Churches of other lands, and from pronouncing their Presbyterian Orders utterly invalid. Prior to the Restoration "Act of Uniformity," there were undoubtedly cases where men in the orders of such Reformed Churches as those of France and Scotland were received into her ministry; Dr. Mason does not mention the fact that even in that Act there is a clause which empowers the King to give preferment in England—not excluding the cure of souls—to ministers of the foreign Reformed Churches.

It is naturally on the former of these positions that Dr. Mason lays stress. An Irish Churchman might wonder how he has managed to omit from his ample list the mighty name of Jonathan Swift. He would have found—had he looked into Swift's writings—not a little wherewith to brighten his dullest pages with the spark of genius. Who that ever read it could forget the great Dean's satire on the "discreet" divine of his day, with "his dreadful apprehensions of Popery, his great moderation toward dissenters of all denominations; with hearty wishes that by yielding somewhat on both sides, there might be a general union amongst Protestants, and the arts he used to obtain a mitre by

writing against Episcopacy"¹; or his strong pronouncement: "A Church of England man has a true veneration for the scheme established among us of ecclesiastical government; and though he will not determine whether Episcopacy be of Divine right, he is sure it is most agreeable to primitive institution, fittest of all others for preserving order and purity. . . . he should think the abolishment of that order among us would prove a mighty scandal and corruption to our faith. . . . nay, he would defend it by arms against all the powers on earth except our own legislature; in which case he would submit as to a general calamity, a death, or a pestilence."²

But is there any one in England—or for that matter outside of England—who desires for a moment to see the Anglican Church recede from Episcopacy? Who, nowadays, wishes its subversion? Her careful retention of the historical Episcopate at the crisis of the Reformation was her recommendation to the Saravias and Casaubons of the succeeding generation. It is at this moment one of her chief attractions to those in other communities who bewail our unhappy divisions, and who long and pray for a truly Catholic reunion. They may wish, with Thorndike and Ussher, to see the presbytery associated with the bishop, "as the strings to the lyre"; but they feel increasingly the need of the bishop for framing them together and making their music perfect. Nay: was it not with the view of securing such an Ignatian constitution for the nascent native Church of British Africa that the Kikuyu incident took place? One does not need to approve of all that was done at Kikuyu to acknowledge the excellence of this part of its author's purpose. It would be worth the while of those who are making such a pother over it to consider whether they are not imperiling the chance of attaining, by what Dr. Mason describes as "a patient method" (p. 511), a consummation so desirable.

The present writer, as a Scotsman, cannot close without expressing his disappointment and regret that Dr. Mason should be so severe on what he entitles in his index, "the Presbyterian Church of Scotland." The reviewer, like many Scotsmen, is no admirer either of Andrew Melville's dogmatism or of the Covenanters' violence in 1638, or of the men and methods whereby Presbyterian Government was restored in the Church of Scotland in 1690. His sympathies, in fact, are all the other way; though, of course, he believes in the lawfulness of the present settlement. But he feels keenly that it is unworthy of Dr. Mason—unworthy of his fair-

¹ *Fates of Clergymen*. Swift's Works, Sir Walter Scott's Edition, vol. viii., p. 368.

² *The Sentiments of a Church of England Man*. *ib.*, p. 388.

ness elsewhere—to pronounce dogmatically that in the case of Scotland “the plea of necessity is wholly out of place” (p. 526). Did no necessity lie on the Church of Scotland to refuse to have her whole service, and her entire constitution, altered at the bidding of a King, without the consent or even the advice of her legally constituted courts? Or again, was it wonderful, or inexcusable, if the religious feelings of the nation revolted against the later line of bishops, who (with one or two bright exceptions) approved, and even hounded on, the persecutors of the Covenanted remnant under Charles II. and James II.? Archbishop Leighton left Scotland in disgust at those atrocities; he told the King that he could not approve of promoting Christianity itself by methods of the kind. It is the memory of these things that, above all, keeps Scotland Presbyterian. They ought not to have been ignored in Dr. Mason’s reference to the position of her National Church. It is more pleasing to note Dr. Mason’s admission “it can hardly be doubted that most of those who founded the Presbyterian system in Scotland”—and the same is true of Ireland—“were themselves presbyters, and that the succession has been maintained and even jealously insisted on” (p. 527). He seems to allow also the expedients of 1610 and 1661, and mentions the interesting fact that the method then adopted—which did not re-ordain any of the parish clergy, but required the bishop to preside at all future ordinations—“commended itself at first for England to a mind so zealously Catholic as that of Bishop Morley” (p. 511.)¹

JAMES COOPER.

SOME ALTERNATIVES TO JESUS CHRIST. A Comparative Study of Faith in Divine Incarnation. By J. L. Johnston. “Layman’s Library.” (Longmans.) 2s. 6d. net.

The Study of Comparative Religion has raised many questions. As Mr. Johnston says, “the classification of the beliefs of men and their similarities seems (though indeed illogically) to suggest that they are all about equally true—that is, either that all are different, but almost equally valuable ways of approaching one Reality, or else that all are equally illusions.” The very essence, however, of the Christian faith is that in Jesus of Nazareth we see a unique Sonship of the Father, that He is *the* Son to whom all the other sons must come, that “God hath spoken unto us through His Son.” There is no doubt that for many who for the first time study the other Great Faiths of the world and see how in many points they approach the Christian ideals, the question presents itself: Is Christ a unique Revelation? or is He but the One among

¹ See article “The Historical Side of the Re-Union Question.” *I. C. Q.*, Oct., 1914.