

LAW REPORT.

THE SECULARIST WILL CASE.

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE, CHANCERY DIVISION.

BEFORE MR. JUSTICE JOYCE.

THE question at issue in this case was whether the gift of the residuary of the late Mr. Bowman in trust for the Secular Society, Limited, was valid.

The Secular Society is a Company Limited by Guarantee. Clause 3 of the Memorandum of the Company states its objects. Object A is, "To promote in such ways as may from time to time be determined the principle that human conduct should be based on natural knowledge and not on supernatural belief, and that human welfare in this world is the proper end of all thought and action."

The next-of-kin of the testator attacked the validity of the bequest on the ground that it was illegal under the Blasphemy Law and void as being against public policy.

Mr. Toulton, K.C., and the Hon. M. M. Macnaghten appeared for the Secular Society; Mr. George Cave, K.C., M.P., and Mr. J. A. Price appeared for the next-of-kin of the testator; Mr. Hughes, K.C., and Mr. L. W. Byrne appeared for the trustees of the will.

Mr. Toulton opened the case.

Mr. Cave argued that the gift was bad under the Blasphemy Law, and referred to the Blasphemy Act of William III. (1697). This statute imposes severe penalties on persons who shall by writing *inter alia* shall deny the Christian religion to be true or the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be of Divine authority. Until this statute was amended in favour of the Unitarians it denounced similar penalties against them, and on this ground it was decided (1835) by Lord Lyndhurst, in the case of *A. Torney-General v. Pearson*, that Unitarians were unable to participate in Lady Hewley's Charities.

Mr. Cave referred to the prosecutions under the Blasphemy Law, tracing them back to the seventeenth century. He admitted that at the present time the Blasphemy Law is in confusion, since some judges take the view of the late Mr. Justice Stephen that a denial of the Christian religion, in whatever language expressed, renders the offender liable to prosecution, while others follow the view adopted by the late Lord Coleridge in the *Foote* case, that blasphemy consists only in a denial of Christian verities expressed in contumelious language. He also referred to the case of *Biggs v. Hartley*, 1850, where Vice-Chancellor Shawell held that a legacy for an essay to show the sufficiency of natural theology to constitute a perfect system of religion was bad as being against Christianity, and to *Cowan v. Milbourn*, 1887, where a contract to let a hall for free-thinking lectures was held to be unenforceable.

Mr. Cave also urged that the Secular Society, Limited, was a mere dummy to obtain legacies for the National Secular Society, which was more avowedly atheistic; but the Judge would not allow evidence on this point to be put in. He also urged that it was bad on public policy. If public policy made bequests for Masses for the dead illegal, surely public policy must do the same with bequests for atheism.

At several points during Mr. Cave's argument Mr. Justice Joyce insisted that he could see nothing contrary to Christianity in the secularist Memorandum. His lordship expressed his approval of Lord Coleridge's view of the meaning of the Blasphemy Law, and with the statement that Christianity is no longer part of the law of the land. At the same time, his lordship stated that he had no sympathy with the secularists.

Mr. Justice Joyce, in a brief judgment, said the case must be decided by law, and he did not find anything in the Memorandum of the Secular Society subversive of morality or contrary to law. Consequently the bequest was good.

The decision of Mr. Justice Joyce *in re* Bowman, which we report at length elsewhere, is of considerable historical interest. A testator had left his residuary estate to the Secular Society, Limited, a Society which has Mr. Foote for its president. The Society boasts a somewhat colourless Memorandum which, however, it is difficult to reconcile with Christianity. The next of kin of the testator attempted to set the gift aside; but this attempt failed, Mr. Justice Joyce deciding that the objects of the Society are not contrary to morality. The question, however, is whether they are contrary to Christianity. Cases as late as the Victorian epoch have decided that such gifts are invalid. Probably the case will be appealed; but the judgment shows that the Chancery Division of the High Court has been affected by the wave of opinion which has modified the

Blasphemy Law, finding a punishable offence no longer in a denial of Christianity, but only in a denial couched in vulgar and offensive language. It is now more ridiculous than ever to say that Christianity is part of the Common Law of England.

It is truly shocking to see how enterprising tradesmen are exploiting the deaths of our gallant soldiers for their personal ends. Several times since the war began bereaved parents have uttered, through the medium of the Press, protests against the persecution they have undergone at the hands of undertakers or makers of tomb-stones. Most abominable of all is a case reported in the *Times* a week ago. The father of a young soldier who fell in Belgium in the autumn told how he had received a letter from a certain firm,

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SUMMARY.

THE charges formulated against England by the exact thinkers of Germany come in such bewildering variety, and with so many quick changes, that our penitence can hardly keep pace with them. To Dr. Arnold Meyer, Professor of History in the University of Rostock, we are indebted for yet one more rebuke. It seems to have occurred to him that the activity commonly attributed to Sir Edward Grey, the astute manipulation of a war in which France and Russia should do the fighting while England should reap the benefits, would really be a fine example of *Realpolitik*, in the strict following of the great tradition of Frederick and of Bismarck, so that Germans should rather admire it than otherwise. This would be unfortunate. He has therefore made a new investigation of the causes of the war, which he finds to be due to the mere incapacity of the English Minister. The truth is that Sir Edward Grey desired peace, and laboured for it assiduously. For a time he was successful, but his incompetence and stupidity were such that he at last brought about the very evil which he was trying to avoid. That is much more satisfactory. The war has been caused by English blundering, the kind of blundering that is worse than crime. Good Germans can therefore hate England without any tiresome reserves of unwilling admiration.

The operation in the various war areas are bewildering in their multiplicity. In addition to the work that is being done on our Eastern and Western fronts, we have on hand five separate African campaigns, where against our successes as a whole must be set a defeat in German East Africa. This defeat occurred probably in January, and from sources other than German it would appear to have been a most gallant defence of a small British force against overwhelming numbers. Nearer home there has been terrific fighting round Hill 60, which the British recently captured and the Germans have so far vainly attempted to recapture, losing many men in their furious assaults. Our French ally appears to be strengthening his grip on St. Mihiel, that point in the German front which has been so long and stubbornly held against all attacks. Of the Russian operations there is less than usual to record for the moment, but the temporary lull perhaps is only the prelude to fresh activities. The gallantry of the British Navy was exemplified by the dashing enterprise of the men of the *Triumph* and *Majestic* in destroying our submarine E 15, which had been stranded, and its possession by the Turks would have been an asset of immense value if they could have appropriated it to their own uses. To the latest aerial attack of

the Germans on English towns and villages there has been a warm response by our own airmen in the enemy's country.

The Prime Minister paid a visit on Tuesday evening to the war-workers on Tyneside for the purpose of arousing among them the spirit of patriotism. He began his speech with an *apologia* of the Government, which, he said, was not responsible for the lack of munitions: this could and should be explained by the fact that more shells were needed than the military authorities ever anticipated. (Mr. Lloyd George, in fact, stated in the House of Commons on Wednesday that as many shells were fired in the fortnight covering the battle of Neuve Chapelle as had been fired in the whole of the Boer war.) Mr. Asquith then deprecated the suggestion that there has been anything like a general slackness among the employers and the employed in the manufacture of arms, seeing that the registers show an average of sixty-seven to sixty-nine hours of weekly work per man. The trouble is that there is a shortage of skilled labour in those particular industries, but the Government, using the powers entrusted to it, will deal with this difficulty, preferably without compulsion, but, if necessary, with compulsion.

For these sacrifices, Mr. Asquith said, employers and men must be prepared. There must be a limitation of profits; existing trade rules and practices must be suspended; and provision must be made for the reasonable compensation of those who can prove material loss or hurt. Appealing to their sense of obligation to King and country, the Prime Minister asked his hearers with confidence to "deliver the goods." He had not long to wait for the answer. The representative of the Trade Unions, Mr. Wile, recalling Mr. Asquith's favourite formula, "Wait and see," said to him, "Wait and hear;" then, turning to the workers, he asked those who would engage themselves to deliver the goods to say "Aye;" whereupon there came a deafening response. Perhaps it was just as well that the Prime Minister's speech contained not the slightest reference to drink, but its entire omission was, to say the least, surprising. And still more surprising is the difficulty of reconciling his speech with that delivered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer a short time ago. However, it matters little, as long as the Army is getting all that it requires.

In the House of Commons on Tuesday Mr. Tiekler asked the Prime Minister if the Government, in order to employ all the forces of the Empire in the prosecution of the war, intended to introduce conscription. In putting his question the hon. member pointed out that it is desirable to rally the single eligible men to the colours, for it is notorious that the great majority of those who are defending the country are men with wives and dependents. For one reason and another the young unmarried men are holding back, and this ought not to be. Nevertheless, Mr. Lloyd George, replying for the Government, denied that there was any ground for believing that the war would be brought to a speedier end by means of conscription, adding that Lord Kitchener is satisfied with the response made to his appeal for volunteers. If this is the case, it is useless to say anything further, except that it does not seem to us right or fair that those who are fittest and youngest, and have no ties of wife and child, should stay at home, while their elders bear all the brunt of the war. Volunteering has not put an end to this anomaly, and we believe that the country would not oppose compulsory service if Lord Kitchener were to ask for it.

"When thieves fall out—" The Welsh Parliamentary party is at sixes and sevens over the Welsh Church Postponement Bill. Some, among whom Mr. Llewelyn Williams is prominent, are content with a modification of the Bill so as to make it certain that the Act of Disestablishment shall come into full and effective operation before the next General Election. Others, for whom Mr. Ellis Davies speaks, affirm that it is unthinkable that the Government should, despite the protests of Welsh Dissenters, proceed with the Postponement Bill. Mr. Williams appears to find that

Mr. Davies and his associates are lacking in that political instinct which, he says, the Welsh people possesses to a degree "unsurpassed by any community in the kingdom." Yet he is not without hope that his Parliamentary colleagues "will before long display the same admirable good sense" that the elect, among whom he himself is numbered, have exhibited, in recognizing that the Government cannot commit another breach of faith, and in concentrating their energies on securing "such modifications as will ensure the safety of Welsh Disestablishment." Meanwhile, the Bill is more than justifying its title as the Postponement Bill, for it seems to recede further and further into the distant future, and the evils it is designed to remedy continue unabated and unrelieved.

The annual festival of the S.P.G., which is being kept this week with a very full programme, receives due attention in another part of our present issue, and elsewhere will also be found a statement made by the Secretary of the Society, at the usual monthly meeting, which must not be missed, as it is of unusual interest and importance. The question of the relation of the Church, particularly in non-Christian lands, to the various Christian bodies which are engaged in work there, was brought prominently to the front by the Kikuyu Conference and the action of the Bishop of Zanzibar thereupon almost a year ago. The problem has long caused the Society much searching of heart. The peculiar conditions of missionary life and work make it desirable that, so far as it may be done without compromising distinctive principles, there should be a considerable degree of co-operation. In non-Christian lands, for instance, the Secretary writes: "the best method of obtaining efficiency in such questions as general education in literature, science, and medicine is to have strong central institutions for all secular knowledge, all Christian bodies combining for such common and secular instruction." However those central institutions are built, whether by the Governments or by voluntary efforts, it is essential that Churchpeople using them must have special provision made for their religious requirements. The S.P.G. accordingly has resolved that grants will be made only to hostels attached to such institutions, and that in these hostels "full Church life and teaching must be guaranteed to the persons for whose use the buildings are intended." This religious provision, it is explained, includes "a chapel for daily worship, and fully vested and furnished, or else daily access to a church contiguous to the hostel." We are glad to see that the S.P.G. will have nothing to do with the experiments in re-union in which certain persons, in recent years, have ventured to dabble. Union between the Church and the Protestant denominations in religious teaching and life "does not make for real union," but rather retards it, and this is especially the case in non-Christian lands, where the Church is numerically weak. Bishop Montgomery adds that he is stating no new principles on behalf of the S.P.G., but merely enunciating its policy, so that there may be no uncertainty on the part of applicants, who henceforth will be discouraged from asking for favours which cannot be granted them. We have only one complaint to make, which is, that the expression, "The Anglican Church," is retained and is in use by the venerable Society.

The decision of Mr. Justice Joyce in *re Bowman*, which we report at length elsewhere, is of considerable historical interest. A testator had left his residuary estate to the Secular Society, Limited, a Society which has Mr. Foote for its president. The Society boasts a somewhat colourless Memorandum which, however, it is difficult to reconcile with Christianity. The next of kin of the testator attempted to set the gift aside; but this attempt failed, Mr. Justice Joyce deciding that the objects of the Society are not contrary to morality. The question, however, is whether they are contrary to Christianity. Cases as late as the Victorian epoch have decided that such gifts are invalid. Probably the case will be appealed; but the judgment shows that the Chancery Division of the High Court has been affected by the wave of opinion which has modified the

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We shall all be agreed, we think, that the Bishop of London has justly deserved the distinction which the King has graciously conferred on him by making him a Knight Commander of the Victorian Order. Ever since the war broke out his lordship has done a knight's service in the way of kindling patriotism and cheering our soldiers. His recent visit to the front, where he pursued amid dangers and difficulties the task he had undertaken of cheering comrades and ministering to them as a pastor of souls, earned him the gratitude of men and officers and the high praise of the Commander-in-Chief. Upon this general approval of the Bishop of London's action his Majesty sets the seal of Royal favour, and his lordship is added to the select company of Churchmen who can call themselves Knights. We trust we may offer the Bishop our hearty congratulations on so honourably winning his spurs.

BRIGHTON.

THE formation of the new parish of St. Alban's marks yet another important step in the history of the parish of St. John's, Preston. A short time ago the parish contained over 22,000, consisting of the northern and most rapidly growing part of Brighton. During Frebendary Moor's ten years' incumbency the two mission churches of St. Matthias and St. Alban have been replaced by handsome permanent churches, and both districts have now become separate parishes. The town and diocese owe a heavy debt of gratitude to the vicar and Mrs. Moor, for it is mainly owing to their generosity that both churches have been built. On Thursday in last week the Rev. R. H. Broadhead was instituted and inducted as first vicar. The Bishop of Lewes spoke of the importance of rightly forming the traditions of a new church, and it is gratifying to know that the appointment of Mr. Broadhead ensures that these traditions will be on Catholic lines. Another appointment has this week been made, that of the Rev. D. F. Campbell to the vicarage of St. John's, Carlton Hill. Mr. Campbell is at present curate-in-charge of Fishersgate, a poor suburb of Hove, and his work there aptly fits him for the arduous task he has undertaken at St. John's, which is undoubtedly the poorest and most squalid parish in the diocese. Carlton Hill is the Wapping of Brighton, and a Saturday night visit would astonish most visitors, and perhaps many Brighton people as well.

C.E.M.S.—The annual Conference of Federation Secretaries will be held on Wednesday next, April 28. The day will begin with the Holy Communion at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields Church, the delegates being entertained afterwards at breakfast by Mr. G. A. King, Hon. Treasurer of the Society. The Conference will take place in the Church House in the morning, when the question of "Our Responsibility towards the Troops at Home and Abroad" will be discussed. At the afternoon session the Bishop of Chelmsford will be one of the speakers. At 8 o'clock in the evening there will be a Conference upon the work of commendation, the speakers being Sir Harry Wilson, K.C.M.G., and the Rev. F. A. Iremonger, Head of the Oxford House.

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happiness to some of these unknown (had the diocese been smaller they need not have been unknown) priests, and to the Churchworkers. Yet, in spite of all the good his visitation must have done, he damps their joy by telling them that he is uncertain when—which sounds rather like "whether"—he will be able to come again.

He pleads that a bishop must have time for thought, and here everyone will agree with him. It was the fact that he had no time for study that acted as one motive in urging the late Bishop of Oxford to strive to promote the division of that diocese. Many Churchmen feel that when some great thinker is made a bishop, we shall no longer receive help from his writings, and that, amongst other things, has led some of us to work for Church Reform.

The Bishop says that he feels that the increase of the episcopate is being based on grounds that are not sound. Many people accept what a bishop says simply because he says it, and therefore it would seem more reasonable that when he gives his opinion he should back it by arguments, and refute those of the opposite party. To us, at least, the unsoundness appears on the other side. We have produced quantities of literature to show the unsoundness of the present state of things in England. Our huge, unwieldy dioceses are contrary to the principles of the Catholic Church, as expressed in its writings and arrangements, and to the aims and ideals of our own Church leaders of earlier days.

The only sound principle is that "with an increase of the faithful, there should also be an increase in the Episcopate." Under this flag we fight, and being Englishmen as well as Catholics, we mean to go on fighting till we win.

A. R. SHARPE.

Queen's Park, Bournemouth.

CONVOCATION.

Sir,—It would be interesting to know how many of your thousands of readers even know that Convocation meets next week, much less with what it will be concerned. May I, as a relation of Mr. Henry Hoare, who at such infinite expenditure of time, in conjunction with Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, revived Convocation, urge on Churchmen to be present next week in the Lower House of Canterbury at the Church House? The attendance in February was almost nil, and in a debate on the reply to the King's Letters of Business was so small that a motion was made to have the House counted. The attendance of strangers at York is far greater than at Westminster, and the reports in the leading daily papers in the Northern Province are far longer and fuller than in the London daily papers. If it was not for the reports in your paper little would be known of what happens at Westminster. Yet, strange to say, while so badly attended and reported, Convocation is constantly alluded to as a great authority in both Houses of Parliament.

DUNELMENSIS.

April 20.

PUNCTUATION OF THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Sir,—The following, which I made up some time ago from a photographic copy in my possession of "The Annexed Book," may be useful. Printed copies are only misleading.

The Lord's Prayer occurs altogether nineteen times. In fifteen cases there is a full-stop after "Thy Kingdom come." In the remaining four—i.e., the first places at Matins and Evensong respectively, the Prayers at Sea, and the Ordaining of Deacons—it is replaced by a comma.

In the sentence "Thy will be done in earth as it is in Heaven" there is no comma or other stop in ten cases. This is uniform down to the Office for Public Baptism of Infants, inclusive; and in the Office for Confirmation, and the Prayers at Sea.

In the remaining nine cases there is a comma after "earth."

In the Office for Private Baptism only is there a comma after "done," as well as after "earth."

I offer no conclusion; I only state facts. JAMES G. WOOD.

Lincoln's Inn. April 17.

Sir,—When questions of this nature are raised, it is interesting to see how they are actually treated in Greek by the Greek Church. In the New Testament issued by authority of the "Great Church of Christ" in 1864, the Lord's Prayer is printed in lines, thus:—

Πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου ἔλθῃ ἡ βασιλεία σου γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου. ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ, καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δός ἡμῖν σήμερον· καὶ ἄφεσις ἡμῶν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν, ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφίμεν τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν· καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμῶν, ἀλλὰ ῥῆσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ. ὅτι σὺ εἶσθαι ἡ βασιλεία καὶ ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ἀμήν.

The order of the Greek words makes it impossible to reproduce the punctuation exactly in English, but the lines indicate that the punctuation favoured by The Church Times ("done in earth, as it is") is right. On the other hand, the Embolism found in the ancient liturgies of the East makes it quite clear (against an often repeated opinion of

The Church Times) that τοῦ πονηροῦ, "The Evil One," is masculine and personal.

It is satisfactory to find the Doxology retained. Its discovery by Bryennios in the Didache affords documentary attestation far more ancient than the four manuscripts on which the English Revisers relied for its omission. The Revision began to the accompaniment of the guns of the Franco-Prussian War, and we may perhaps see in the German victory an explanation of the Revisers' lamentable choice of text and mechanical accuracy of translation. The Greek Testament issued under the Patriarchal Seal might well be made a new *Textus Receptus*. It is better and more authoritative than either Stephanus or Elzevir, and greatly to be preferred to the little group of closely related manuscripts on which Lachmann and his successors depended.

D. R. FOTHERINGHAM.

Charing. April 17.

Sir,—The letter of the Vicar of Lacoek in your issue of the 16th raises many interesting and some important questions. But first as to the Lord's Prayer. Archbishop Benson brought before the delegates of the Press the subject not only with regard to the Lord's Prayer. No doubt the Sealed Book has no comma after "Thy will be done," but punctuation is by no means a strong point in that book. The question really turns on whether the words "in earth, as in heaven" refer to one or to each of the preceding clauses. The Vulgate, which is no mean guide in such matters, reads, St. Matt. vi.: *Fiat voluntas tua, sicut in caelo, et in terra*. So far as an inference goes, it is in favour of a comma after the word "done." The Greek equally shows that the sense requires it. In the parallel passages of St. Luke's Gospel the clause does not occur. Whether the same reason given for the absence of the Doxology in St. Luke holds in this case is at least debatable, viz., that the form as we have it in St. Matthew was for liturgical use, and that in St. Luke was not. Probably the text of St. Matthew was made to conform to the liturgical form used from the very first with both clauses in the Prayer.

Another change in punctuation was made at the same time, a change about which there can be no question. In Psalm cxlv. 3 the verse ran: "Great is the Lord, and marvelous, worthy to be praised," whereas the true meaning is as the translation of 1606, "Great is the Lord, and most worthy to be praised," or as the authorized Version of 1611, "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised." There are other changes, all due to Archbishop Benson's suggestion, and done by the deliberation of the Delegates of the Press and (not by the fancy of the printers) which are more than interesting, but you could hardly give space for their discussion. One change appears now to be called for. In the longer exhortation in the Order of the Administration of the Holy Communion the sentence, "Ye must give most humble and hearty thanks to God," the first two commas after "the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," ought to be removed, so that we might give thanks explicitly to the "One God n Trinity and Trinity in Unity."

JOHN L. DARBY.

April 17.

[We have received many similar letters to the foregoing, for which we cannot find room, nor can we continue the correspondence on this subject.—ED.]

FATHER BENSON OF COWLEY.

Sir,—On the death of Fr. Benson at Cowley last January the question arose whether it would be possible to compile some literary memorial of our Father-founder. After consideration it was decided that no biography of one whose life was so especially hidden should be attempted, nor indeed are there sufficient materials for the purpose. But it occurred to us that amongst the friends who survive him valuable letters may have been preserved, from which, if the owners were willing, a volume of spiritual counsels might be gathered, which would carry to a later generation something of the treasure that we have known, and that should not be lost.

The object of this letter is to ask any friends of the late Father who possess letters from him, to entrust them to us for a time on the assurance that they will be carefully returned and treated confidentially by the Father appointed to select from them extracts generally edifying, and suitable for publication.

The possibility of editing such a volume depends, of course, upon the response made to this appeal.

A few words accompanying any letters that may be sent to us, explaining the circumstances of the owner's correspondence with Fr. Benson, might be valuable, but not necessary.

GERALD S. MAXWELL, Superior-General.

Society of St. John the Evangelist, Mission House, Marston-street, Oxford.

"RINGING HIM OUT."

Sir,—In answer to Mr. Rogers' question I beg to pass on to him the explanation given to me by a village sage when I came into North Hants twenty-five years ago, and first heard the bells chimed as he describes:—"Well, sir, you must know the devils be tarrble busy when folks be a-dying. But

devils they can't abide the sound of church bells. And there's some devils be most feared by one bell, and others be most feared by other bells. And so we chimes 'em all to fear them all." I may add that I once heard the bells of Lucerne Cathedral rung during a violent thunderstorm, and received very much the same sort of explanation from a native. Whilst writing about bells I may mention another North Hants custom. In many villages a peal is rung immediately after a funeral. This is to notify St. Peter that the soul, which cannot leave the earth so long as the body is unburied, is now coming, and will he please to come and open the Gates. Once, on a bitter winter's afternoon, my sexton had neglected to ring this peal till he had finished 'vullin' in the grave. Whereupon an aged goody came and complained bitterly, "T'wer a tarrble cruel deed to keep a poor soul a shiverin' i' the cold all that long time."

ROBT. M. HEANLEY.

Weyhill Rectory, Andover. April 17.

AN APPEAL FROM THE BISHOP IN JERUSALEM.

Sir,—Gratitude to you filled my heart on reading the paragraph directing public attention to this appeal in your issue the week before last. The Council of the "Jerusalem and the East Mission" have appointed me one of the hon. treasurers to receive contributions for the fund, and the powerful support of The Church Times is indeed a welcome asset. In an advertisement, which will be found in another column, I now supplement your paragraph by giving further particulars of the Bishop's appeal as to the remittance of donations. On the eve of his departure to his Mission in the battle-fields the Bishop of London sent to me the following words to be endorsed on the appeal which is now being circulated:—"As Chairman of the Home Council, I heartily commend this appeal to Churchpeople throughout the world.—A. F. London." These words will, I feel sure, give additional support to the appeal.

On Good Friday we prayed for the conversion to Christianity of Jews, Turks, and infidels, and it is fitting, and indeed imperative, that our prayers should be supplemented by our alms for the work to which Bishop MacInnes has been called in succession to the late Bishop Blyth—that the Catholic and Apostolic Church should seize the grand opportunity now presented, and advance to the very front in promoting Christ's work in and from the city of Jerusalem.

Contributions may be sent to me to the address at foot, or direct to the account of the Fund at the Bank of England, London, E.C.

ARTHUR J. INGRAM (Prebendary).

St. Margaret's Rectory, Ironmonger-lane, Cheapside, E.C.

BOARDS OF FINANCE.

A Serious Proposition.

At a meeting of the St. Albans Diocesan Board of Finance, held last week at St. Albans, with Mr. H. Trustram Eve in the chair, the Board discussed the draft memorandum and articles of association.

An interesting discussion arose with regard to the payment of members. The chairman explained that there was no intention of adopting the practice of payment of members, and it was suggested that the clause having reference thereto should be eliminated from the memorandum. The Bishop pointed out that the present members had no intention of accepting payment, but it might be that hereafter there would come on to the Board men who could not afford to pay their own expenses, and then it might be thought advisable to pay their expenses. It was decided to leave the clause, with a slight amendment.

A more important matter, which is likely to affect the general acceptance of these Diocesan Boards of Finance, if adopted, was introduced by the Chairman, who gave notice to bring up at the next meeting the following clause:—

To contribute to, or bear the expenses of, any prosecution or proceedings under the Clergy Discipline Act, or any Act passed, or which may be passed, for the control or discipline of the clergy of the Church of England; or of any action or proceeding in any court for the protection of any church or church property or church rights within the diocese of St. Albans; or in respect of any dilapidation or waste thereof.

He said that it seemed to him that with such a slender income as that of the Bishop of St. Albans, it was quite wrong for these heavy law costs to fall upon the Bishop. If he were Bishop, he would take jolly good care not to proceed against a parson if it was going to cost him £100 which he had not got. It was a most Gilbertian situation, and one which needed to be cleared up.

Mr. Guy Kindersley said the clause raised the whole question of Church government, and in his opinion the suggested powers were much too wide.

The Bishop said the matter of these proceedings which fell upon the Bishop was a very serious one, and became more difficult as bishoprics were founded with small incomes. He had intended to raise the question in some form, not for himself, but for his successor. He was a bachelor, and had been able to bear some of these expenses, but when they came to a case of criminal and scandalous clergy, it was a very serious thing indeed. The Bishop then quoted an experience of his own which had cost him £50 12s. This ought not to be done at the cost of the Bishop. (Hear, hear.)

The Chairman, at this point, ruled that a discussion on the notice of motion was not permissible.

The Central Board of Finance.

A meeting of the Executive Council was held at the office of the Board (1, All Hallows'-lane, Upper Thames-street, E.C.), on Tuesday last, when some questions of special interest and importance were dealt with during a long sitting.

In compliance with the resolution of the Central Board "that it be referred to the Executive Council to select a committee to prepare a comprehensive Pension Scheme for the ordained and lay ministers of the Church," the Council selected the following gentlemen to serve, with power to add to their number:—

The Lord Bernard (Chairman of the Board); the Hon. Evelyn Hubbard (Chairman of the Council); Rev. Canon G. R. Bullock-Webster (Hon. Secretary of the Board); Sir Paget Bowman, Bt. (Secretary of the Sons of the Clergy Corporation); Mr. J. A. Brooke (Chairman of the Wakefield Diocesan Board of Finance); Mr. Herbert W. Chell (Secretary of the Manchester Diocesan Board of Finance); Mr. P. Lyttelton Gell (member of the Archbishops' Committee and Chairman of its sub-Committee on Pensions); Mr. A. Stoughton Harris (Fellow of the Institute of Actuaries); the Ven. E. S. Spencer Noakes, Archdeacon of Derby; Mr. Walter Peel; the Ven. J. E. Stocks, Archdeacon of Leicester; Sir Edward P. Thesiger, K.C.B. (Chairman of the Clergy Pensions Institution); Mr. Henry Cockburn (Fellow of the Institute of Actuaries).

Another important committee was also appointed to consider the future relationship of the Central Board of Finance to existing organizations, diocesan and general, concerned with the several departments of Church Finance, as set forth in the Report of the Archbishops' Committee.

LAW REPORT.

THE SECULARIST WILL CASE.

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE, CHANCERY DIVISION.

BEFORE MR. JUSTICE JOYCE.

THE question at issue in this case was whether the gift of the residuary of the late Mr. Bowman in trust for the Secular Society, Limited, was valid.

The Secular Society is a Company Limited by Guarantee. Clause 3 of the Memorandum of the Company states its objects. Object A is, "To promote in such ways as may from time to time be determined the principle that human conduct should be based on natural knowledge and not on supernatural belief, and that human welfare in this world is the proper end of all thought and action."

The next-of-kin of the testator attacked the validity of the bequest on the ground that it was illegal under the Blasphemy Law and void as being against public policy.

Mr. Tomlin, K.C., and the Hon. M. M. Macnaghten appeared for the Secular Society; Mr. George Cave, K.C., M.P., and Mr. J. A. Price appeared for the next-of-kin of the testator; Mr. Hughes, K.C., and Mr. L. W. Byrne appeared for the trustees of the will.

Mr. Tomlin opened the case.

Mr. Cave argued that the gift was bad under the Blasphemy Law, and referred to the Blasphemy Act of William III. (1697). This statute imposes severe penalties on persons who shall by writing *inter alia* shall deny the Christian religion to be true or the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be of Divine authority. Until this statute was amended in favour of the Unitarians it denounced similar penalties against them, and on this ground it was decided (1835) by Lord Lyndhurst, in the case of A. Torney-General v. Pearson, that Unitarians were unable to participate in Lady Hewley's Charities.

Mr. Cave referred to the prosecutions under the Blasphemy Law, tracing them back to the seventeenth century. He admitted that at the present time the Blasphemy Law is in confusion, since some judges take the view of the late Mr. Justice Stephen that a denial of the Christian religion, in whatever language expressed, renders the offender liable to prosecution, while others follow the view adopted by the late Lord Coleridge in the Foote case, that blasphemy consists only in a denial of Christian verities expressed in contumelious language. He also referred to the case of Briggs v. Hartley, 1850, where Vice-Chancellor Stowell held that a legacy for an essay to show the sufficiency of natural theology to constitute a perfect system of religion was bad as being against Christianity, and to Cowan v. Milbourn, 1897, where a contract to let a hall for free-thinking lectures was held to be unenforceable.

Mr. Cave also urged that the Secular Society, Limited, was a mere dummy to obtain legacies for the National Secular Society, which was more avowedly atheistic; but the Judge would not allow evidence on this point to be put in. He also urged that it was bad on public policy. If public policy mad bequests for Masses for the dead illegal, surely public policy must do the same with bequests for atheism.

At several points during Mr. Cave's argument Mr. Justice Joyce insisted that he could see nothing contrary to Christianity in the secularist Memorandum. His lordship expressed his approval of Lord Coleridge's view of the meaning of the Blasphemy Law, and with the statement that Christianity is no longer part of the law of the land. At the same time, his lordship stated that he had no sympathy with the secularists.

Mr. Justice Joyce, in a brief judgment, said the case must be decided by law, and he did not find anything in the Memorandum of the Secular Society subversive of morality or contrary to law. Consequently the bequest was good.

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