

THE CHURCH OF FINLAND.

By the Rev. T. E. N. PENNELL, M.A.

(Continued from July Number.)

II. WORSHIP AND LIFE.

THE Sunday morning service is the centre and culmination of the Finnish Church's worship. It is drawn from the same main sources as the English Holy Communion and follows much the same form. This liturgy is the only one which the Church possesses (there is nothing to correspond to the Morning and Evening Prayer of the Church of England), and consequently it is used even when there is no communion. (For the following translation the writer is responsible.)

Daily Divine Service.

1. *The Opening Hymn.* During the last verse the minister goes to the altar, kneels and prays secretly (suggested forms are given) for grace for himself and for blessing upon the service he conducts.

2. *The Opening Greeting.* The hymn ended the minister turns towards the people and recites :

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.
Congregation (and choir) : Amen.

3. *Introductory Sentence or Antiphon.* This is for festivals only, e.g. Advent I has Matthew xxi. 9, Psalm xxiv. 7, Isaiah xl. 3 ; Christmas Day has Isaiah ix. 5, Luke ii. 10, 11, Isaiah ix. 1. The people respond either with Amen or with Glory be to the Father, etc.

4. *Exhortation to Confession of Sin.*

Dear friends, brother and sisters in Christ Jesus ! We are now assembled in Divine worship to thank God for His good works and to pray to Him for things both spiritual and bodily. But God is holy and we are sinners, wherefore duly humbling ourselves let us confess our sins to Him Who is our heavenly Father, and pray for His mercy and compassion, saying thus :

5. *Confession of Sin*, which the minister reads on his knees, facing the congregation, the congregation also bending forward or (where possible) kneeling.

I, a wretched sinful man, who have sinned in a sinful race, confess to Thee, holy and righteous God, that I have not loved Thee above all, nor my neighbour even as myself. In thought, word and deed I have violated Thy holy Will, and I know that my deserts are eternal condemnation. But Thou, dear heavenly Father, hast promised to grant

forgiveness of sins to those, who with repentant heart and faith in Jesus Christ desire to resort to Thy grace. Thither I resort and pray Thee : pardon me, and grant my sins forgiveness, to the praise and glory of Thy holy Name.

Or

I, a wretched sinful man, who was born in sin and have sinned and committed sin in my whole lifetime, confess with all my heart before Thee, Almighty, Everlasting God, my dear heavenly Father, that I have not loved Thee above all, nor my neighbour even as myself. With my fathers I have sinned in thought, word and deed, opposed Thee and Thy holy commands, and I know therefore that my deserts are eternal condemnation, if Thou shouldst judge me even as Thy holy justice requires and my sins have deserved. But now Thou, dear heavenly Father, hast promised Thy grace and compassion to all miserable sinners, who desire to amend and with sincere faith flee to Thy incomprehensible mercy and to the protection of the Saviour Jesus Christ. To such Thou art willing to be gracious, howsoever they have offended against Thee, and never in the world wilt Thou reproach their sins. There I myself, a wretched sinner, trust and pray for protection : be to me, according to Thy same promise, gracious and compassionate, and grant forgiveness of all my sins, to the praise and glory of Thy holy Name.

Congregation (and choir) : Lord, have mercy upon us !
 Christ, have mercy upon us !
 Lord, have mercy upon us !

Then the minister, standing and turning towards the congregation, declares

6. *The Absolution.*

The Almighty and gracious God, according to His incomprehensible compassion, hath had mercy upon us in His Son Jesus Christ, and granteth us for His sake forgiveness of sin, life and blessedness. So God loved the world, that He gave. . . .

Or

May the Almighty and Eternal God, through His incomprehensible compassion and the Saviour Jesus Christ, grant to us forgiveness of all our sins and grace that we may flee our sinful life and by Him obtain eternal life.

Congregation (and choir) : Amen.

(Alternative forms of exhortation, confession and absolution are given.)

Then the minister, turning towards the altar, sings :

7. *The Gloria* (the congregation standing).

Glory be to God on high !

Congregation (and choir) : And on earth peace, good will to men.

8. *The Hymn of Thanksgiving.* The congregation stands during this thanksgiving, and at other times in the singing of praise to the Holy Trinity.

We give thanks to Thee, we worship Thee. . . . (i.e. the Gloria in excelsis.) Alternatively a hymn to the Trinity may be sung.

9. *The Mutual Salutation.*

The minister, turning towards the people, sings : The Lord be with you !

Congregation (and choir) : And with thy spirit !

10. *The Collect* (the minister turning to the altar).

11. *The Epistle or Gospel for the Day*, the minister first pronouncing :

Let us hear with devout minds the words of the epistle (gospel) for this holy day. . . .

Or

The holy words of the epistle (gospel) for this day are written. . . .

(There are three sets of readings from the gospels and epistles and also a set from the Old Testament for each Sunday and holy day.)

The congregation listens standing.

12. *Hymn or Anthem.*

13. *Creed*, read by the minister, the congregation standing. The Apostles' Creed is read on ordinary holy days, the Nicene Creed on festivals. But a credal hymn may be substituted.

Let us rise and confess our common Christian faith.

14. *Sermon Hymn.*

15. *Sermon.* The text must be taken from the series read for the day, epistle or gospel or Old Testament, and the particular reading from which the sermon is to be preached is given from the pulpit. The sermon begins with the apostolic greeting (2 Corinthians xiii. 14), or other appropriate introduction, and, either before the Scripture reading or after, prayer is made for the Spirit's guidance in speaking, hearing and receiving. One of the suggested forms runs :

O God, dear Heavenly Father ! grant Thy Holy Spirit, that we may rightly understand and receive Thy Word into the field of our hearts as a living seed, to take root, grow and bring forth fruit ; to Thee, O Lord God, be the praise and the glory, to us amendment, confirmation of faith and eternal blessedness, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

16. *A Festive Hymn* (the congregation standing).

17. *The General Church Prayer.* The Litany is used at seasons of fasting, and on Good Friday, Prayer Sundays and Prayer Days.

Minister : Let us pray.

Merciful God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ! We thank Thee, that Thou hast called even us into Thy Kingdom of grace, and hast granted us Thy dear Son for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Grant us to know in our life this grace and there in faith to become rooted more deeply. Bless the preaching of Thy Word in all Christian congregations, and give Thy Holy Spirit to the hearts of all teachers and hearers of the Word.

(A prayer is inserted here for the Church Assembly during its session.)

Protect us from erroneous doctrine and evil ways of living. Have mercy upon all who wander in heathen darkness, and grant the light of Thy Gospel to dawn upon them. Guide Thine own people Israel to conversion, and restore backsliding children truly to the land of faith unto Thee, and to Him Whom Thou didst send, Jesus Christ.

Bless the missionary work amongst our seamen and emigrants. Send also, O Lord, according to Thy promise, faithful workmen into Thy harvest.

Protect and bless the lawful government, our President and statesmen and members of the Diet. Mercifully aid our government in their laws to defend the nation, to hinder vice and to further righteous and peaceful life in our land.

(A prayer is inserted here for the Diet during its session.)

Guide subjects into obedience to the laws and the authorities, the married into mutual love, children into Christian education, hosts into a sense of law, servants into faithfulness, and guide us all into earnest amendment of life.

Be Thou the Father of the orphans and the defence of the widows. Be merciful to all who are oppressed, poor, sick and troubled in conscience. Encourage and comfort all who are persecuted and oppressed for Thy Holy Name or for the truth of conscience.

(Special Prayers are inserted here when petition or thanksgiving is made on behalf of particular persons.)

Thou God of peace! Vouchsafe to us and to all nations of the world peace and reconciliation. Protect us from war and bloodshed, from famine, pestilence and wicked, violent death.

Gracious Father! Bless our land in corn and fatness, grant in the growth of the ground favourable weather, and of Thy goodness send a full harvest. Give us our daily bread and graciously grant us that as thanksgiving we may rejoice in Thy fear. Bless all business and labour, which seeks the glory of Thy Name and the betterment of our fatherland. Defend also all travellers in their necessary and lawful journeys by land and sea.

O God, the Holy Spirit! Confirm Thine own dwelling-place in our hearts. Protect us from all which parts us from the love of our Lord Jesus Christ. And in the day we approach temporal death help us to use rightly Thy gift as a day of grace. (Bless, O God, all who to-day intend to be present at Thy holy Supper. Fill them with Thy Holy Spirit and grant them Thy peace, which the world cannot comprehend. Strengthen them in their faith and help them ever to walk in the light of Thy Gospel.) Guide us all at last into Thy eternal glorious kingdom in heaven, where with all Thy saints we will give thanks to Thee in perfectness. Amen.

(There are various alternative general church prayers.)

18. *The Church Notices*—days of prayer, etc. ; births, marriages and deaths ; the collection, with some such exhortation as Hebrews xiii. 16, Galatians vi. 9 or 10, Proverbs xix. 17, etc.

19. *Valediction from the Pulpit*—some such passage as 1 Peter v. 10, 11, Ephesians iii. 20, 21, Hebrews xiii. 20, 21, etc.

20. *A Hymn of Prayer*, during which the collection is taken and the minister arranges the Holy Communion vessels. Scrupulous hygienic directions are given.

21. *Antiphonal Salutations*.

The minister : The Lord be with you !

Congregation (and choir) : And with Thy spirit !

Minister : Lift up your hearts to God !

Congregation (and choir) : We lift up our hearts !

Minister : Let us give thanks to God, our Lord !

Congregation (and choir) : To Him alone be thanks and glory !

22. *The Consecration*, the minister turning towards the altar.

Verily it is meet, right and blessed, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to Thee, Holy Lord, Almighty Father, Everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Who has offered Himself unto death, to save us from our sins ; and for a remembrance of this gives us in the Holy Supper His body and blood. For this Thy great grace and mercy we give thanks with all the saints and glorify Thy most praiseworthy Name.

The minister and people (standing) sing the Sanctus :

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty ! Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. Hosanna in the height ! Thanks be to Him, Who cometh in the Name of the Lord ! Hosanna in the height !

The minister, still turning towards the altar, reads the words of Institution :

Our Lord Jesus Christ, in that night in which He was betrayed took bread. . . .

Let us now pray all, as our Lord Jesus Christ hath taught us, thus saying :

Then follows the Lord's Prayer, the people saying Amen or possibly joining in the Gloria (For Thine is the kingdom. . . .).

23. *The Mutual Salutation*.

(Where a second minister is to take part in the distribution he goes now to the altar.)

Minister (turning to the people) : The peace of the Lord be with you !

Congregation (and choir) : And with thy spirit !

24. *The Distribution of the Supper*.

The minister pronounces to the communicants—once only :

Our Lord Jesus Christ saith, Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will refresh you.

Or

Jesus saith, Come, for all is prepared.

Or

He who is thirsty, let him come, and he that will, let him take of the water of life freely.

Or

Jesus Christ saith, he who is thirsty let him come unto Me and drink.

When the communicants have knelt, the congregation (and choir) standing, sing :

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us ! O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us ! O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us Thy peace and blessing !

After this, Communion or other suitable hymns may be sung.

The elements are distributed with the words :

The body (blood) of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life.

Or

The body (blood) of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Or

The body (blood) of our Lord Jesus Christ, given (shed) for thee. Returning to the altar and turning to the communicants, the minister pronounces :

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve your bodies and souls unto everlasting life. Amen.

Or

Go and show forth the Lord's death till He come.

Or

Even as ye have received the Lord Jesus Christ, so also walk in Him.

Other suitable sentences may be used.

25. *The Mutual Salutation.*

26. *The Thanksgiving*, the minister turning towards the altar :
O Lord, Almighty God, Who hast made us to be partakers of Thy holy sacraments ! We thank Thee for this Thy grace and we pray : make us also with all Thy chosen saints to be partakers of Thy everlasting glory and brightness : for Jesus Christ's sake, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

(There are various alternative thanksgivings.)

27. *Mutual Praise.*

The minister, turning towards the congregation :

Let us thank and glorify the Lord : Hallelujah ! Hallelujah ! Hallelujah !

Minister, congregation (and choir), standing :

To God be thanks and glory ! Hallelujah ! Hallelujah ! Hallelujah !

28. *Divine Blessing*, the minister turning to the people :

Humble your hearts before God and receive His blessing.

The Lord bless you and defend you. The Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord turn His face to you and give you peace.

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

29. *Closing Hymn* (one or two verses).

When the Lord's Supper is not celebrated, Divine Service continues after the General Church Prayer (No. 17) in the following form :

18. *The Lord's Prayer.*

19. *Church Notices.*

20. *Valediction from the Pulpit.*

21. *A Hymn as Conclusion to the Sermon*, showing gratitude and joy for the proclamation of the Word. During this hymn the collection is taken and the minister goes to the altar.

22. *The Mutual Salutation.*

23. *Prayer.* A concluding prayer is appointed for each Sunday and holy day.

24. *Mutual Praise.*

25. *Divine Blessing.*

26. *The Closing Hymn.*

Ritual.

Regarded from an English standpoint there is a strange co-ordination of evangelical doctrine with catholic ritual and dissenting practice. Thus the proclamation of the Word is fundamental, but the passages set from Gospel, Epistle and Old Testament are extremely short, and there is no attempt at comprehensiveness. It is true that this is, in part, compensated in the numerous meetings, but not altogether so. Almost invariably there is an immense picture behind the Communion Table, which is always called the "altar." Upon the Table there is generally a crucifix and candles of varying number, wax or electric. No open Bible stands symbolically in the centre as among the German Lutherans. Religious pictures and other such aids to devotion are in common use. The dress of the minister has no distinguishing mark on week-days, not even in the case of a bishop. On Sundays, a black frock-coat with high stiff collar and bands is worn, and a bishop dons a pleated silk top-hat. The ordinary church vestment (as in Sweden) is a long, pleated black fall, depending from the shoulders, a relic of the priest's cloak. On special occasions—but not for Holy Communion, so far as one's experience went—alb and chasuble are used. These are an ancient tradition, and chasubles from the seventeenth century are still common.

At the Holy Communion only one set of vessels is employed : all eat of the one bread and drink of the one cup. Wafers, symbolically stamped, are usual and perhaps invariable. Both bread and chalice are given direct to the mouths of the communicants by the minister. No manual acts accompany the consecration, fresh wafers are taken from the ciborium without a second consecration, and there is no consumption of any superfluous elements—they are removed to the vestry and mingled with the unconsecrated. The words of administration, it will be observed, are the first portion only of those in the English Prayer Book. As each "table" of communicants rises from its knees, it is customary for them to bow to the minister who bows also to them.

The church furnishings are typically Lutheran. It is practically impossible to kneel in the pews, in spite of a rubric that indicates its desirability. A crouching attitude for prayer is accordingly normal, except among Renquist's followers. The service is taken from the Communion Table, the minister either facing the people or kneeling with them. A semi-circular rail, generally accommodating about thirty people, surrounds it, openings being not in the centre but (except in the newest churches) by the walls to give convenient access to the vestry behind. There is no reading desk or lectern. From the pulpit there is given the Scripture from which the sermon is preached, the

sermon, the church notices and the general church prayer. The organ and choir are in the gallery at the back of the church—one cannot say west end, since the building may be on any line of the compass.

It is customary to stand for the reading of God's Word and for the creed and hymns in praise of the Holy Trinity. The German practice of standing for prayer and sitting for all hymns is not followed. Hymns occupy an important place in the liturgy, the more so since neither psalms nor canticles are recited. An official hymn book is issued, which alone is permissible in church services, but each of the religious movements has its own book, and there are others. Some psalms are included in a metrical form, and it is customary to sing one of these during the taking of the collection—the latter in non-conformist fashion by bags on long rods—the number of verses being accommodated to the length of the collection.

Services, in spite of the hymns, are not of so congregational a character as in the Church of England. The people take no part in the confession, thanksgiving, creed (though a rubric permits it here), or even Lord's Prayer, except by an Amen. With the choir they sing a few responses and the Gloria, but normally they are limited to hymns. For this reason perhaps a hymn can replace the creed.

Occasional Services.

The great distances between villages and homes, and the difficulties of transport, often make it impossible for a gathering of anything at all approaching the whole congregation on a Sunday morning. Thus it is part of the clergy's routine to visit different centres and homes on Sundays and during the week for extra services. These meetings are of a quite informal nature, and consist simply of addresses and hymns and a short extempore prayer.

Thus one Sunday evening in August the writer was included in a small party from the vicarage at Mikkeli, going by boat to an island in the neighbourhood. At a typical red and white farmhouse by the water's edge the Finnish flag was flying as a welcome (this is a general courtesy to visitors), and the host greeted our arrival. Following the usual offer of coffee we joined some fifty men, women and children in the main living-room of the farm. These buildings have changed little for centuries, and what are museum pieces in Helsinki are still usual in the country. Walls, floor and ceiling were thick timber, uncovered and dark with time. Chairs, benches and tables were equally bare, and no seat had the luxury of a back. Household implements hung from the beams overhead, and in a corner was a great square stove and oven. Windows were small, and even the August heat did not avail to have them properly opened. A subtle smell of birch leaves suggested a "sauna," but this may have been fancy. After a hymn the children were called forward, and were instructed and questioned by the vicar's wife, concluding with children's hymns. Addresses were then given by each of the clergy present, interspersed with hymns, the whole prefaced by a short Scripture reading and ending with a short extempore prayer. The proceedings took a good two hours. And so, with

another cup of coffee, back to the vicarage. Similar meetings may be discovered almost everywhere—in a country church, a schoolroom, a drawing-room.

In addition, there are, of course, the usual meetings for Bible study, for instruction, and also in connection with the various revival movements. Of the last-named more may be said shortly. Two features, however, mark every meeting.

(a) An address or addresses, often the latter. There is an address at every wedding and every funeral. For the Finn it is the ministry of the Word that is important—not sacrament, not prayer. At the same time, the passages read from Scripture are no more than a long text in the Church of England. Yet it is true that the Bible is the basis of all. Part of the wedding ritual is the presentation of a Bible as the guide to happiness and true living.

(b) Hymns. Finns know their hymn books as well if not better than their Bible. They delight in this aspect of devotion, and it is common for them to break into a hymn spontaneously—slow and loud in the Finnish fashion, for a fast time suggests worldliness—in greeting or farewell, after special services, always at family prayers, even in public places and vehicles.

A development of recent years has been the occasional use of Vespers on Sunday afternoons. Still the only Prayer Book Service for Sundays after the main service is an arrangement of hymns, Scripture reading, sermon and prayer. But Vespers have become popular, though they are of a type that leaves little scope for congregational participation in the Anglican fashion. The following is an outline of a Vesper composed by the Bishop of Borgå, and used amongst the Swedish-speaking parishes, especially at the institution of a vicar. It is called a "Shepherd Vesper," and the details centre round the title-theme.

1. *Organ Prelude.*
2. *Congregational Hymn* (fixed for the service).
3. *Sermon.*
4. *Organ Interlude* (Bach's "Erschienen ist der herrliche Tag").
5. *Introductory Versicle and Gloria* (sung).

Precentor : The Lord is a strength unto His people, and He is a stronghold of salvation to His anointed.

Choir : Save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance : feed them also and bear them up for ever.

Precentor : Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost.

Choir : As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

6. *Antiphons* (sung).

Precentor : Tend the flock of God.

Choir : Which is among you.

Precentor : And this not of constraint.

Choir : But willingly.

Precentor : Not for filthy lucre.

Choir : But of a ready mind.

Precentor : Not as lords over God's heritage.

Choir : But making yourselves as examples to the flock.

Precentor : When the Chief Shepherd shall appear.

Choir : Ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

7. *Congregational Hymn* (fixed for the service).

8. *Prayer*.

Precentor : The Lord be with you !

People : And with thy spirit !

Precentor : Let us pray (collect follows).

People : Amen.

9. *Scripture Reading* (2 Timothy i. 6-12).

Precentor : The Lord write this word upon our hearts !

10. *Choir Hymn* (fixed for the service).

11. *The Apostles' Creed* (Precentor and people together, standing).

Concluded by a threefold Amen.

12. *Solo and Choir Hymn* (fixed for the service).

13. *Psalm* (sung).

Precentor : The Lord is my shepherd ;

Choir : I shall not want.

Precentor : He maketh me to lie down in green pastures ;

Choir : He leadeth me beside the still waters.

Precentor : He restoreth my soul ;

Choir : He guideth me in the paths of righteousness for His Name's sake.

Precentor : Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil ;

Choir : Thou art with me ; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.

Precentor : Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life ;

Choir : And I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

14. *Thanksgiving and Lord's Prayer*.

Precentor : Let us give thanks and pray. . . .

People : Amen.

15. *Magnificat* (part only, in metrical form).

16. *The Blessing* (as in the Daily Divine Service).

17. *Concluding Hymn* (fixed for the service).

The meetings held by the revival movements are not all of the same type. It should be noted that these do not clash with the main church service, but that this has in all probability been attended by those who, later on, Sunday or on a week-day meet in their own groups. Frequently but not necessarily the clergy are members of these groups.

Those who are followers of Renquist lay great stress on prayer, and practise the habit, exceptional indeed amongst Lutherans, of a kneeling posture. To be present at a Renquist "seurat" is a moving experience. The prayers (by any who feel the impulse) are passionate to an intense degree, only just short of ecstatic. The meeting follows a regular sequence, with three prayers respectively of confession, thanksgiving and commendation : the first and last are concluded by the Lord's Prayer, and a verse of a hymn is sung kneeling, the verse being begun spontaneously by some other worshipper. In between are addresses

by any who are so led, each preceded by reading of the Scripture to be expounded, and hymns from the book of the movement. A certain Puritanism still holds good with many members, e.g. the dark clothes, long hair, and absence of instrumental music in the meetings. Sin and forgiveness are primary themes.

A pietist meeting leaves itself open to the direction of the Spirit. No hymns are announced, but are begun by any present; similarly, any present may give the Word felt to be committed to him or her. The Pietists are severely evangelical (in the English sense) in their theology, and again black clothes and black kerchiefs distinguish the Pietist country women.

In the case of the other two movements, the Laestadians and Evangelicals, their conduct is determined by their respective emphasis upon sin's forgiveness and Christian joy. The meetings are more formal than those of the Pietists. The old Laestadians are somewhat ecstatic, and high-pitched cries break into a sermon at mention of the pains of Christ. Sin is realized in all its heinousness, and the conclusion of a meeting may be men and women weeping for sin and crying out for forgiveness. The latter may be pronounced by any Christian (it is the Christian's privilege), not by the minister only. They are serious Christians indeed. At a short convention in Kuivaniemi near Oulu (such occur three or four times in the summer) they were holding five two-hour meetings each day, interspersed by meals or coffee from a temporary canteen. Each meeting followed the same form—hymn, Scripture, hymn, address, hymn. Prayer was made only at the beginning and ending of the day. The singing was of the slowest possible. They stress the order in Christian experience of belief, confession and absolution, guidance by the Holy Spirit. Their usual greeting or farewell is "Jumalan rauha"—"God's peace."

The Christian Life.

The contribution that Finland can make to the Catholic Church of Christ is not small.

First, there is the unity of the church life. The various movements of spiritual life during the past 150 years have not given way to schismatic tendencies in the English fashion, but have remained as a permanent enrichment of the whole body. Such recognition by the church of God's different ways of giving life to His people, such recognition by the revival movements of the unity of the Spirit are central for our Christian life as well as for our oecumenical hopes.

The Church of Finland, like our own church, is a national church. Whilst difficulties may not be minimized, and a certain drift away, this national character is still impressive. One cannot think that the English people is at heart less religious, and the Church of England is (we believe), the expression of the national religious feeling. But one cannot but covet that same outward expression which can claim over 96 per cent of the nation as its voluntary members; so much so that denominational religious instruction can be given in the schools, church registers be also national registers, and days of prayer be the affair of

government and people as one whole. Nor is the activity of the church in many directions affecting the needs of the nation—People's High Schools (after the Danish pattern of Grundtvig, for adult education), Hospitals, Y.M.C.A., etc.—less impressive, for so often in England these are only in part connected with the church.

The attitude towards ritual, and the relationship between ritual and doctrine, is very different than in England. Details of church decoration and religious ceremony have become charged for us with doctrinal significance. Party differences have been expressed and accentuated by varying ritual practices, and by their means variant doctrines have established themselves within our church. It is accordingly startling to an Englishman to see in Finland Divine Service in evangelical truth, accompanied by an ornateness of decoration and liturgical form. But in its very naturalness there lies a lesson and a solution to one of the greatest of our English problems.

The evangelical character of the Church of Finland is a factor of the highest importance. One cannot but be impressed by the manner in which this affects not only the official standpoint of the church but also the general life of its members. The obedience to the Prayer Book ; the necessity and importance of the sermon, as the proclamation of God's Word ; the concern of youth and student conferences with devotional rather than social topics ; the more natural place which religion has in life and speech than amongst Englishmen ; the realization of the deadly fact of sin ; the stresses of the great revival movements—these features form a valuable part of the Christian life. The evangelical character of the Church of England can receive much help and strength from Finland. Along with this goes a serious attitude towards spiritual things, seen in the pleasure taken in the church services and other meetings : an hour is of no account, and the better part of a day may be taken by two services with only a brief interval for refreshment. Or, again, a bishop's visitation of a parish, which occurs each fifth year, is welcomed for the concern with its moral and spiritual welfare.

In practical matters also, the aid of the Church of Finland could well be claimed for our common life. There is the careful and thorough training of candidates for the ministry. There is the more detailed instruction given in the confirmation schools, where not less than a hundred hours is required. There is the way in which Finland has solved the problem of her enormous parishes, enormous in both area and numbers. And surely for winning youth for the church and for Christ (Finland makes them synonymous), we need something of her methods—the church clubs, the summer homes, the pastors specially for youth.

Conclusion.

The relationship of England and Finland began in distant centuries, with Henry and Thomas. Since those times the development of the churches has never been entirely unconnected. We both experienced the crisis of the Reformation and received its benefits : we both have

known the grace of God in movements of spiritual life in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in part from the same sources. Some English devotional writers, like Bunyan and Wilcocks, have meant not less to Finland than to their home country. It is but expression to a relationship of fact that has been given by the conferences of recent years.

But there is more behind this expression than history. The name of Christianity in the first days was "the fellowship." It was the new thing that came from the new experience of God in Christ. "We, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another." The many members do not merely *belong* to one body: they *are* one body. From the new life in Christ must come a new fellowship one with another, both individuals and churches. It finds new and wonderful experiences through the unity of the Spirit, new possibilities of growth in Christian life and service. If universal fellowship is not yet possible—though the Edinburgh Conference brings encouragement and hope—at least we can and we ought to come closer to such a church as the Church of Finland. Our learning with and from one another may well be the means of stronger life for us both, of greater usefulness in the service of our common Lord and Master.

HENRY T. HODGKIN: A MEMOIR. H. G. Wood, D.D. *S.C.M.* 5s.

Biography has always a charm of its own, but this charm is enhanced when the subject of the study is a man of stature in every way. Those who may not agree with the outlook which was Dr. Hodgkin's, must admire his singleness of heart and resolution of purpose. This memoir traces his life from childhood to his Home-call. Readers are allowed to see him at school, at the university, as a missionary and friend of China, to note his work for the Fellowship of Reconciliation, and see him at his last task in U.S.A. The Quakers have produced many noble men within their ranks, and there seems to be little doubt that Dr. Hodgkin will be counted as a great character. It is most fitting that this book should have been published by S.C.M.

RESPECTABLE SINS. By Hugh Elder, M.A. *Allenson & Co.* 2s. 6d.

Amongst the sins which are dealt with in these twelve sermons preached to Scottish congregations are Worry, Censoriousness, Loveless Religion, Compromise. Perhaps this short list may lead some to obtain the book and find out what the others are. They will repay attention, for each discourse is an example of simple and sound exegesis, with practical application. As the Introduction rightly says, "it is a remarkable fact that in the teaching of Jesus 'Respectable' Sins had a larger place than 'Disreputable' Sins." "The sins which brought Jesus to the Cross were 'respectable' sins." A helpful volume and very well produced.