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THE MONTH.

THE debates on Procedure have progressed very slowly. The Closure Rule was carried yesterday (the 18th) by a majority of 221.

Mr. W. Paget Bowman, the Registrar of the Sons of the Clergy Corporation, has issued a circular, containing a letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury, on the subject of a Clergy Distress Fund.

Much that I learn [the Archbishop says] appears to show that temporary assistance would at this moment be very serviceable to many, and might prevent increased distress; such assistance, for example, as would prevent mortgages to Lands Improvement Companies from being foreclosed, or would aid in immediate losses in tithe or upon glebe.

Might I venture to suggest that the Corporation of the Sons of the Clergy, which is familiar both with the cases of distress and with its causes, which has a system and organization able (if funds were at its disposal) and accustomed to deal quickly with individual cases, and which is so highly valued for the quiet delicacy with which it discharges its constant duty in still more painful instances, is the best possible channel for receiving and distributing judiciously, with full knowledge of all the incidents, reliefs placed at its disposal?

I would venture to ask your Governors whether it might not now be possible and desirable to open such a Special Fund—apart from their ordinary agencies and trusts. If the Governors entertain the suggestion, I should be ready to support such a Fund to the best of my power. It should, of course, be understood to be wholly independent of ordinary subscriptions to the Corporation.

The Corporation, accordingly, has opened a Special Fund, called the "Clergy Distress Fund." To this most timely movement we earnestly invite the attention of our readers, lay and clerical. The Fund already exceeds £13,000.

The second reading of the Church Patronage Bill was agreed to without a division, after vigorous speeches by the Bishops of London and Peterborough. In the course of his severe criticism, Lord Grimthorpe referred to a recent "article by Canon Espin in the CHURCHMAN magazine." The Council of Presentations, we gladly note, disappeared in passing through Committee, and the measure has been much improved. For the sweeping "reforms" advocated in some quarters—as we said a year ago—the leading Laymen of the Church are by no means prepared.

The Government Bill to facilitate the sale of Glebe Lands passed through Committee with slight alteration. An amendment (proposed by the Bishop of Lichfield), to give a veto to the Bishop, was rejected by 61 to 21.

Of a letter in the *Times* referring to the 39th Report of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, here is a significant paragraph:

Even in the past year, notwithstanding that beneficial leases have expired so as to bring in £16,000 a year from land and tithe rent-charges, the total income of the Board from sources of that nature is smaller than it was for the preceding year. There is now the certainty of further reduction in the tithe averages which must continue for some years, and the improbability of their being in the near future any improvement in the income derived from agricultural land.

The Primate (Dr. Barry) has sent a reply from the Bishops of Australia to a memorial touching the Eastward position:

The Bishops have no hesitation in pronouncing their opinion that, in the celebration of Holy Communion, it is in all cases essential that the celebrant should take care that the "manual acts of breaking of the bread and taking the cup into his hand" should be performed in the sight of the congregation. Such care, in the opinion of the Bishops, accords with the whole idea of the Communion Service itself and with the Rubrical directions of the Prayer Book. They consider that this is one of the points on which it is within their power and duty to speak with authority.

The *Rock* has an interesting report of a gathering of some two hundred officers belonging to the Army and Navy Prayer Union, Major-General Sir Robert Phayre in the chair.