

several hours as we had done, one felt that the body also needed refreshment. Therefore, to find a table spread with dainties of every description made one feel at peace with all mankind, friend and foe alike. The special Easter dishes on this occasion are the "pascha" and the "kulitchi," the former being a sort of sweet cheese, and the latter a kind of cake, tracing its origin, I believe, to a Phœnician custom. It requires a special training to partake of the pascha with impunity, notwithstanding that it always has to be blessed, with all the other dishes, by a priest before being eaten. A conspicuous feature of the table is also the Easter eggs, which are exchanged by everybody with the usual salutations. Big baskets of them are sent each year from the Russian Consulate, with loaves of bread, to the various monasteries, personal friends, and to the Turkish prisons, where they are most thankfully received by the wretched prisoners, who all live in a state of perpetual semi-starvation. The Easter table is kept laid all the following week, supplanting the regular meals of the household, and everyone is made welcome, be he friend or stranger.

N. HENDERSON.



ART. VII.—THE ISLINGTON CLERICAL MEETING:  
A NOTE.

THE Islington Clerical Meeting of 1902 was in some of its aspects so interesting that it calls for more than passing mention. It was the first of a new series. We have, however little the fact may be noticed, left behind us the old Islington Meeting, with its private character and its sense of personal obligation to an individual. We have now to deal with a new Islington Meeting, an institution in charge of a Committee, a gathering over which the Vicar of Islington may or may not preside. If there are likely to be gains from the change, there are also likely to be losses; but, whilst the new method is still upon its trial, it is unnecessary to conjecture which will be the greater. It must, however, be noted that the first gathering under the new order was a very decided success.

But the distinguishing characteristic of the 1902 Meeting was not this mark of novelty; it was rather the manifest return to old paths. The outstanding feature of the papers and addresses was, without exception, the firm statement of what some people may possibly call old-fashioned Evangelical

principles. Although the best utterances of the day had a modern touch about them, they were in their substance a return to the message and the method of the old school. This was particularly apparent in the papers of the Rev. W. H. Stone and the Rev. A. B. G. Lillingston. Now, both the readers may be classed, for Islington purposes, with the younger men; their audience was in a degree unparalleled before composed of the younger men, and these papers were received and talked of with every sign of assent.

There is a significance about all this. There have been times of late when it almost seemed as though the great Islington gathering was to lose something of its individuality. There appeared to be indications—possibly unintentional and not even recognised by many persons—of a tendency to modify the old distinctive character, to avoid anything which stamped the Meeting beyond question as a gathering of men of one school of thought, and to make it merely a meeting of Churchmen without reference to particular ties or aims.

There were some who saw with pleasure and hope what they, perhaps hastily and wrongly, thought was a tentative endeavour to widen the Islington platform. From certain points of view there is much to be said for their position. But probably the great majority of those who come up year by year to the Meeting observed the apparent tendency with misgivings if not with absolute regret. Their view was that, whilst there is much to be urged in favour of a more general gathering, it was a pity to do anything which might impair the traditional character and influence of Islington. That character is protected by no constitution and defined by no laws. A High Church or a Broad Church Vicar might, if he cared to retain the gathering, alter its character absolutely, and no one could say him nay. But whilst the succession of Evangelical Vicars is maintained the inauguration of a definite policy of comprehension in regard to its message would, it is clear, be keenly resented by those to whom I refer.

They may claim that the Meeting of 1902 lends support to their position. The old lines were strictly adhered to, and yet there was but one weak spot in the long series of papers and addresses. Never, perhaps, was the attention keener, the general interest greater, the feeling of the Meeting more definitely spiritual and receptive. If there had been any resort to battle-cries, to catch-phrases, to the conventionalities which promise cheaply-won applause, this would hardly have been so. But these things were absent. And yet the speakers stood in the old paths. To me, and I think to many others, the fact is full of significance and hope.