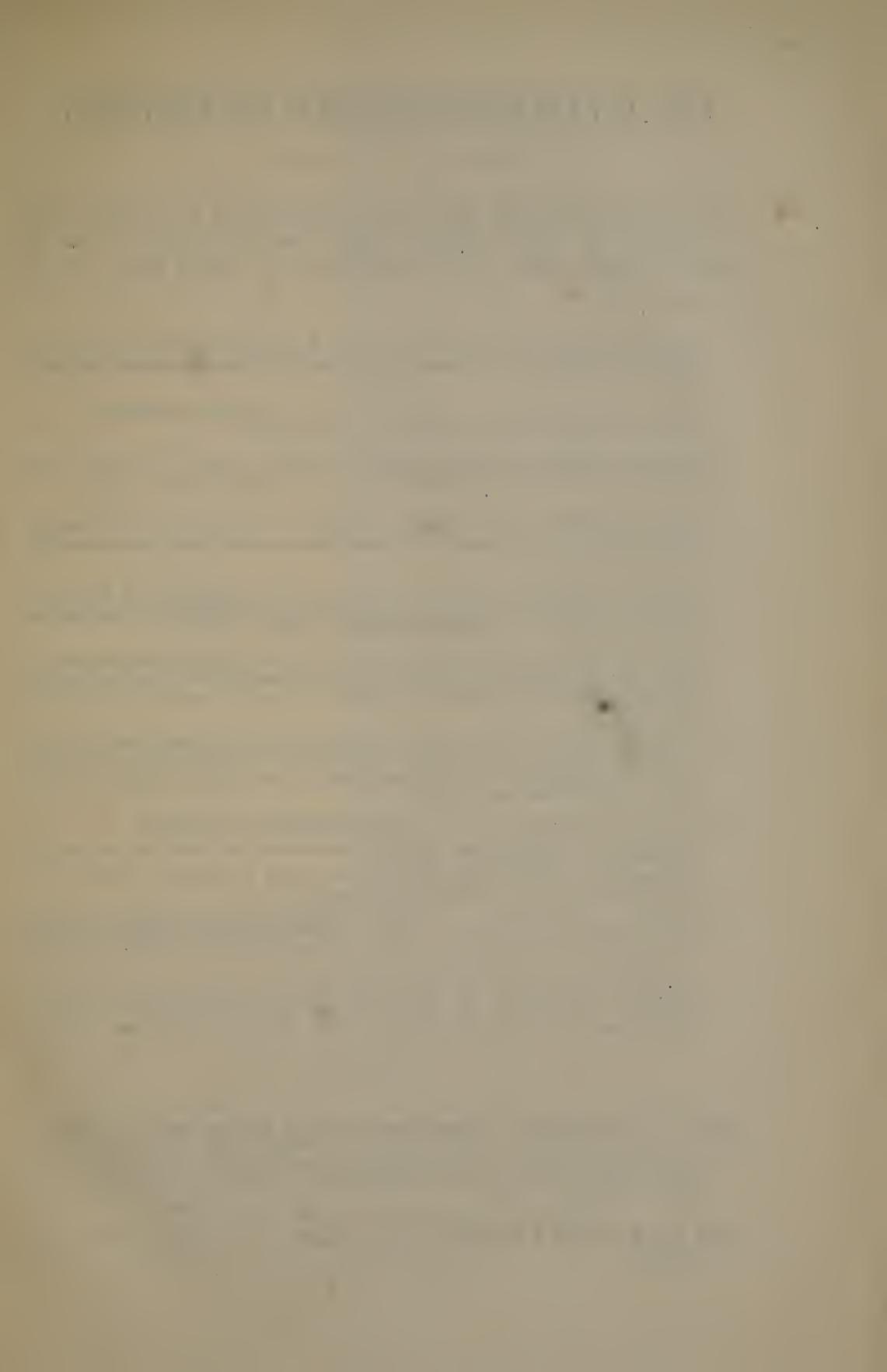


LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS



31
from Lord Halifax.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED TO

MEMBERS OF

THE ENGLISH CHURCH UNION

AT THE

FORTY-SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING

JUNE 27th, 1905

BY

VISCOUNT HALIFAX

Price Threepence.

LONDON

OFFICE OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH UNION

35, WELLINGTON STREET, STRAND, W.C.

1905

AN ADDRESS BY VISCOUNT HALIFAX

Reassertion of Old Principles.

It will be remembered that some six years ago the Members of this Union, in face of the attacks which were being directed against them in Parliament and in the Press, made a solemn and serious endeavour to vindicate their position and to explain their principles. We made that effort, not so much to justify ourselves, as to assert the rights of the Church of England, and to promote the peace of the Church. We met to invoke God's blessing by the offering of the Holy Sacrifice in St. Paul's Cathedral, and by the Corporate Communion of as many Members of the Union as could be gathered together, and we then put out a statement of our principles and objects, which, we hoped, might help to clear up misunderstandings and vindicate our loyalty to the Church of England.

I repeat that statement, for it is as applicable to-day as it was then.

“We, the Clergy and Laity of the English Church Union, have been publicly accused of lawlessness and disloyalty.

“We might have disregarded such accusations if they had been directed only against ourselves; we cannot disregard them when we see them used to damage the Church of England, to the service of which we are pledged.

“It was open to the rulers of England in the sixteenth century to have thrown in their lot with the foreign reformers, and to have established a new religious body in the place of the ancient English Church. They did not do so. With one voice they rejected all idea of separating themselves from the Catholic Church. They disclaimed all intention of dissociating themselves from ‘the Churches of Italy, France, Spain, and Germany,’ except in such particulars as these Churches had themselves departed from primitive antiquity.

“They declared that nothing was to be taught except what could be collected from the Catholic Fathers and ancient

Bishops. They justified their position by an appeal to Holy Scripture and primitive custom. In the sphere of Government they claimed for the Crown only such power in respect to the Church as had always been claimed by the Sovereigns of England—namely, to see legal justice administered in regard to all persons and causes, free from any foreign interference. In the sphere of doctrine and religious observance they rejected all changes which ‘struck at any laudable custom of the whole Catholic Church of Christ.’ The Ordinal provided for the continuance and succession of the priesthood as it had hitherto been understood and received. Provision was made that “the chancels should continue as in times past,” and the ancient vestments used by the Clergy “in all times of their ministrations” were enjoined.

“What have we said or done that is not in strictest harmony with these requirements?”

“We have asserted, and we assert again, that the Church of England cannot consistently with her principles release herself from the obligations imposed upon her by her relation to the rest of the Catholic Church.

“We have maintained, and we shall continue to maintain, that the doctrine, discipline, and ceremonial of the Church of England, as they have at any time during the course of her history been prescribed by her, remain in force and operation, except in such specific instances as they have been changed by her own authority.

“We have denied, and we deny again, that a new religious Establishment was set up in England in the sixteenth century.

“We have denied, and we deny again, the right of the Crown or of Parliament to determine the doctrine, the discipline, and the ceremonial of the Church of England.

“We are content, if need be, to suffer for these things, and to suffer gladly. What we are not content to do is to sacrifice the rights and liberties of the Church of England to popular clamour and ignorant prejudice.

“If the nation, at a moment when the Church is doing more for souls, both at home and abroad, than at any previous time, is no longer prepared to recognise the Church of England on the lines which have always been hers, so it must be. We shall protest against the spoliation of the Church; but we are not prepared to barter the principles of the Church for the sake either of Establishment or Endowment.

“It is hateful to us even to seem to be in opposition to our Bishops.

“We claim no right to introduce new ceremonies or novel doctrines at our own good pleasure; but we do claim that the rights of the Church of England shall be respected, and that



matters, which, in view of all the circumstances of the case, may rightly be subjects for regulation, shall not be condemned on a principle of interpretation to which it is impossible we can assent.

“ We cannot admit, in view of the history of the Church of England, that any interpretation of the rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer can be legitimate which relies on the principle that omission to prescribe is equivalent to prohibition to use. Neither can we admit that arguments founded on non-user, however long and continuous, can be legitimately adduced as evidence of what the Church of England forbids or enjoins.

“ A Church which, prescribing a Service for Ascension Day as full and as particular as that ordered for Christmas and Easter, has yet, for long periods of time, acquiesced in a general neglect of Ascension Day, has no continuous tradition or practice which can be appealed to as evidence of what it enjoins or forbids.

“ We insist that it is for those who assert that certain usages formerly prevailing in the Church are not covered by the Ornaments Rubric to prove that they are forbidden, not for those who uphold those usages to show that they are explicitly ordered.

“ We submit that when the use of the English Prayer Book was first enjoined it was used by a Clergy accustomed to the traditional way of performing the Services of which the Prayer Book was for the most part a translation and adaptation. Such Clergy would inevitably be guided in the use of the new Service Book by their practice under the old. What was legitimate then cannot be illegitimate now.

“ These are the principles which the Members of the Union have maintained in the past, they are the principles they will continue to maintain in the future. Relying upon them we earnestly beseech the Rulers of the Church not to use their spiritual power to curtail the glory and the splendour of the Services of God's House on earth by imposing on the Church a narrow and disputed interpretation of the rubrics.

“ We no less earnestly entreat the rulers of the State not to incur the risk of certain disaster by encouraging any legislation which should aim at enforcing upon the Church in England any decisions of secular courts in spiritual matters.”

It is a serious duty incumbent on us all to do what we can to further a peaceful solution of existing difficulties, and that duty was never greater than it is to-day. I believe nothing is so likely to promote that end as a perfectly frank statement of our aims and objects, and an enunciation of the principles that have governed our action in the past, and

which I am confident I shall have your sanction for saying, will continue to govern our action in the future. Let me attempt something on those lines to-day.

The Royal Commission.

The Royal Commission on "Ecclesiastical Discipline" is still sitting; it was originally called the Royal Commission on "Ecclesiastical Disorders." There is no concealment why the Commission was appointed, or what those "disorders" are supposed to be. The appointment of the Commission was due to the agitation responsible for the various Bills dealing with ecclesiastical discipline which emanate from Liverpool, and the disorders are the disorders of which the Members of this Society are supposed to be guilty. Speaking generally, those disorders are our assumed lawlessness and disregard for ecclesiastical authority, as evinced by our refusal to recognise any obligation of obedience, in regard to matters of doctrine and ritual, to the rulings of the existing ecclesiastical courts, and the Judicial Committee of Privy Council, our alleged contempt for episcopal authority, and more particularly what is called the Romanizing character of our teaching and practice.

I think those responsible for the present agitation would not wish the case stated differently.

The Courts.

Now, in regard to the Courts, let me state quite distinctly that we do repudiate the authority of the existing Courts to determine the doctrine and ritual of the Church of England. We maintain that the claim made by those Courts to adjudicate on matters of doctrine and ritual, and the assertion of an appeal from them, in regard to such matters, to the Sovereign in Council, is a claim that cannot be sustained, that it has no historical foundation, that its development is due to accident and to ignorance of the facts of the case, and that those who seek to defend it do so either because they have no adequate conception of the claims made by the Church as a whole, and of the claims made by the Church of England in particular, or else because, knowing those claims, they deliberately choose to ignore and defy them. I have discussed the matter, and given what I think are proofs of this, in former Addresses, more particularly in a letter to the Members of the Union in February, 1881, in an Address to the Members of the Union on June 22 of the same year, and again

in a letter to the present Archbishop of Canterbury when Bishop of Winchester. It would be tedious to go over the same ground again, more particularly as I am republishing the addresses in question with a few words of preface attached to them, but I see nothing to retract in those papers; they show, as I think, conclusively, that the hierarchy of ecclesiastical courts with an appeal from them, as long as such appeals were lawful, to Rome, and subsequently to the King in Chancery, were concerned with quite other matters, and intended for the adjudication of very different concerns than those which relate to doctrine and ritual. The matters with which these courts were concerned were largely matrimonial and testamentary matters, actions for the recovery of ecclesiastical payments, tithes, and customary fees, questions of title to property, dower, patronage. They took cognizance of immorality of various kinds, they discharged some of the duties of a police-court; but of such matters as we connect with doctrinal and ritual suits, with an appeal in regard to such matters to Rome, there is nothing to show that they had any cognizance whatever.

Bishop Stubbs's Opinion.

I will call one witness in support of this assertion, but he is one the weight of whose authority will be universally recognised.

Bishop Stubbs, of Oxford, in a letter to Professor Freeman, dated 1883, recently published, writes:—"I believe that Henry never intended the Court of Delegates to entertain appeals on doctrine or ritual. There never had been such appeals in Papal times, and they were not contemplated then. Nor were they contemplated under the Heresy Acts or Acts of Uniformity"* and in a paper of the same year embodying a statement he had made before the Ecclesiastical Courts Commission, after stating that he thinks "the constitution and working of the Judicial Committee alike bad," the Bishop goes on to say, "I believe that it obtained its legal position as regards the matters now before us (doctrine and ritual) by a culpable oversight; it has worked calamitously for the Church of England, having done more than anything else to promote the growth of Roman Catholic influence; its composition and rules are incompatible with the securing of unbiassed, enlightened, and convincing decisions; and the attitude which, since this Commission began to sit,

* "Letters of William Stubbs, Bishop of Oxford," page 192

the Judicial Committee has assumed towards the Church of England, its constitution, and its standards of belief, is a defiance of history and commonsense alike.”*

What Bishop Stubbs further thought of the attitude generally taken by the lawyers in regard to the whole subject, and of the Judicial Committee itself, may be gathered from the following letters, one to Professor Freeman written in November, 1882, and the other to Lord Coleridge, dated July, 1882.

In the letter to Professor Freeman Bishop Stubbs says : “ Our lawyers agree in nothing—and yet object to everything. Lord Coleridge reads the Reformation Acts as if he saw them for the first time, and then corrects those who have spent years in study of them it is quite ludicrous to see the men whose reading and training we know to be so merely empirical, as soon as they become wigged, secured from all risk of error—practise themselves by hiring themselves out to confound right and wrong, to adjudicate on historical matters of which they know not the first elements, and then lift up their hands in pious horror because we do not see that what comes from their mouth is *law*.” †

In his letter to Lord Coleridge the Bishop says: “ It is asserted that so long as temporal rights and property are held on conditions dependent on the acceptance of certain formularies, it is impossible to avoid having those formularies interpreted by a lay or State tribunal. Fully granting that the title to temporalities must be determined by a temporal tribunal, is it not fair that the Church should have a share in informing that tribunal and in interpreting her own formularies? For it is not merely the right to temporalities, but the right to teach that is really determined on. The claim of the Judicial Committee as now working affects the very form and matter of every Scripture Lesson, Sermon, or Service in Church, and out of Church, of every Churchman, clerk or lay. If we allege anything at variance with the *dicta* of this tribunal we are liable to be called unfaithful and accused freely of unlawful teaching. Surely the temporality side is not all that is in question, and, if not, cannot be the exclusive consideration. . . . That these decisions have no spiritual authority seems to me quite true, but then they have to act by the same binding effect that spiritual authority would have. They limit the area and development of spiritual teaching; they claim authority to interpret documents that have spiritual authority; and, as I have said, the non-acquiescence in them

* “ Letters of Bishop Stubbs,” pages 222, 223.

† “ Letters of Bishop Stubbs,” page 188

is made the ground of a charge of spiritual unfaithfulness." * That is precisely the point, and it is what lies at the root of the present agitation. We are called law-breakers and accused of unfaithfulness because we repudiate the authority of the Judicial Committee and of the courts subject to its jurisdiction on matters of doctrine and ritual, whereas in fact we ought to be thanked for vindicating the spiritual rights of the Church of England, and the rights of the Episcopate in regard to such matters.

The Bishop sums up the question in the paper, read to the Ecclesiastical Courts Commission, from which I have already quoted:—"If," he says, "we are to retain or create a bad court of final appeal, all the improvements we may make in the lower courts will be aggravations of the evils under which we are now struggling. I cannot persuade myself to look on the point before us (the constitution of a Court of Final Appeal) merely in relation to the question of Establishment; to the conditions under which the Clergy may possess lands or privileges, or to the question of the interpretation of documents. . . . To my mind it concerns the very essence of the truth that we are to preach to our people, and the determination of the problem how we are to retain the services of an intelligent and learned Clergy." †

Such were Bishop Stubbs' opinions. I submit that they entirely exonerate the Members of this Union from any charge of lawlessness and spiritual unfaithfulness so far as our attitude to the courts is concerned. The Bishop's words accurately express the principles which have governed our action in regard to the courts. Let me read you the Resolutions moved by the Rev. Canon Carter, with the express approval of Dr. Pusey, at the Annual Meeting of the Union on June 13, 1876, and unanimously accepted by the Society. They are as follows:—

"That having regard to the fact that the State, by determining the meaning of the Church's formularies, now practically pronounces on very grave and delicate questions of Christian Doctrine and Ritual; and that it is sought to enforce the interpretations of the Law Courts as though they were the interpretations of the Church herself;

"This Union, in obedience to the certain truth that Christ, as the Head of His Body the Church, is the only source of Spiritual power, and that, therefore, no such power in that body can be exercised except by derivation and express commission from Him, hereby declares:—

"1. That in all purely spiritual matters—*e.g.*, the Custody of the Faith, Administration of the Word and Sacraments, the Regulation of Divine

* Draught of a Letter to Lord Coleridge, July 8, 1882, "Letters of Bishop Stubbs," pages 216, 217.

† Paper printed for use of Ecclesiastical Courts Commission, 1883, "Letters of Bishop Stubbs," page 222.

Worship, Ordination, Mission, Inhibition, Admonition, Suspension, and Excommunication — no decision that is not the free decision of the Church can be binding on the conscience.

“ 2. That the Church knows no other way of arriving at such decisions in matters purely spiritual, as apart from their temporalities, than in the first instance through her Bishops canonically administering and interpreting her laws in their own Dioceses, and in the last resort by means of her Synods.”

I submit that the principles embodied in those Resolutions are identical with those expressed in Bishop Stubbs' letters. They are proofs of no disloyalty; on the contrary, they are dictated by a true and intelligent loyalty to the Church of England. What we said then, we say now, and till these principles are acknowledged and acted upon, I say quite deliberately there can be no peace for the Church.

The Authority of the Bishops.

I pass on to our relations to the Episcopate, and to our alleged contempt for Episcopal authority. We can understand, it is said, your refusal to acknowledge the right of Parliament, constituted as Parliament now is, and containing amongst its members Dissenters from the Church, Jews, Mahometans, infidels, and non-Christians of all sorts, to interfere in the internal affairs of the Church. We can admit that it was neither to Kings or to Parliaments, or even to lawyers, that our Lord committed the determination of matters affecting the faith and worship of His Church. We will acknowledge that our Lord entrusted the exercise of His authority to His Apostles, and to their successors, the whole Episcopate of the Catholic Church; only, if so, we would ask, how do you justify your attitude towards the Episcopate, and the conspicuous disregard which, from time to time, has been shown by those who insist most on the authority of the Church, to Episcopal directions? I will reply by another question. When have the members of the Anglican Episcopate, in their individual or collective capacity, in simple reliance on their position as Catholic Bishops, and with a full sense of the obligation attaching to them as such, of being able to justify any decisions they might give before the rest of the Catholic Church, issued decisions in regard either to ritual or doctrine which have been disregarded?

I know of none. What has been disregarded has been the exercise of Apostolical authority invoked, not for its own proper purposes, but to back up the demands of Protestant prejudice, and to enforce the decisions of civil courts and Episcopal

regulations avowedly founded on the narrowest interpretations of obsolete Acts of Uniformity.

The Lambeth "Opinions."

Some six years ago the late Archbishop of Canterbury, in conjunction with the Archbishop of York, announced his intention of hearing such ritual matters as might be referred to him by the Episcopate, and of deciding them on their merits; of deciding them, that is, as was certainly understood, not in accordance with Acts of Parliament, or with the decisions of the Judicial Committee of Privy Council, and of the courts subject to Privy Council decisions, but as the spiritual head of the Church of England, himself responsible to the Catholic Church for his decisions, and prepared to justify those decisions on principles which recognized, as such decisions were bound to do, the abiding and continuous authority of the Church of Christ.

Attitude of the Union.

Did the Clergy concerned decline to appear? On the contrary, they welcomed the occasion as an opportunity for the vindication of the exercise of a true spiritual authority, and for the determination of matters affecting doctrine and worship in a manner consistent with right principle, and in accordance with the ancient practice of the Church of England. I remember in a speech made to the Union on February 27, 1899, urging upon the Members of this Union that it was their duty and their wisdom to make the most of such an opportunity for the hearing of spiritual matters by the Archbishops. Such an occasion, I said, might, by the blessing of God, be the opportunity of lifting all these ritual and doctrinal discussions out of the area of mere legal and technical discussion, into the sphere where alone they could properly be adjudicated upon and determined—into the hands of the Church itself. It was the opportunity of doing for ourselves and developing on a voluntary basis, what it was likely would not be obtained in any other way, or at least not without a struggle which might endanger the whole existing relations of Church and State. Did the Members of this Union refuse their assent to these propositions?

On the contrary, in the declaration to which I have already referred, they put their hands to the statement "that it was hateful to them even to seem to be in opposition to

their Bishops," . . . "that they claimed no right to introduce new ceremonies or novel doctrines into the services and teaching of the Church at their own good pleasure." What they did claim was that the spiritual rights of the Church of England should be respected, and that matters which, in view of the circumstances of the case and the special history of the Church of England, might rightly be the subject of regulation, should not be adjudicated upon by courts the authority of which they could not recognise, or determined on a principle of interpretation to which it was impossible for them to assent. Was there anything to find fault with in such an enunciation of principle? Were they not the principles which as loyal members of the Church of England we are bound to maintain?

Whose, then, was the fault that proposals which seemed to provide, within the organization of the Church itself, for that which was the great need of the Church—the development on a voluntary basis of a true and adequate machinery for the decision of spiritual matters, should have resulted in so disastrous a failure? Was it not the fault of the ecclesiastical authorities themselves—of the authorities who, when their children came to them for bread, gave them a stone, and could find no other rule for deciding the present ritual, and incidentally the claims and teaching of the Church of England, than by reference to the narrowest clauses of an ancient Act of Uniformity?

I will say more. Did not loyalty to the Church of England, and to the real claims of the Anglican Episcopate, preclude the acceptance of such decisions? Would not the acceptance of such decisions have stultified the whole teaching of the Oxford Movement, and infinitely increased the controversial difficulties of the Anglican position in the face of Christendom? In such matters, it is often not so much the matter decided, as the principle on which it is decided, that is the point of real importance. What is it that has lain at the back of our long struggle on behalf of the ancient ceremonial of the Church of England? Is it that ceremonial itself? I do not undervalue the importance of enlisting in the service of the Sanctuary the forces that are derived from historical association with the past. He must be blind indeed who ignores how potent an influence is exercised by the imagination in the affairs of men. I am sure that it is our wisdom and our duty to quicken our faith, and the faith of others, in the realities of the world invisible, by the use of those external means with which the instinct of the Catholic Church has ever clothed the Celebration of the Divine Mysteries; but behind all this, and it is what gives Ritual its real importance at the present time, lies

the doctrine symbolized. We have fought for the ancient ritual of the Church of England, as contemplated by the *Ornaments Rubric*, not merely for the sake of the beauty and dignity with which it invests the service of the Sanctuary, not merely for the appeal it makes to the imagination, but because of the doctrine which it symbolises, because it is a witness to, and a guard of the true doctrine of the Sacraments, more especially of the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist, because it preaches, in a way none can mistake, that the Church of England of to-day is the same Church, not merely by a legal continuity, but in all essentials of doctrine and practice, as the Church of St. Gregory and of St. Augustine, of St. Wilfred, St. Anselm, St. Thomas of Canterbury, and the long line of Bishops and Saints that adorn the English Calendar.

How could we accept decisions based on grounds which, in principle, as far as the manner of conducting Divine worship is concerned, denied this continuity, which cut at the very roots of the Church of England's authority, which left her defenceless against the attacks of those who deny her claim upon our allegiance? We could not accept such decisions as loyal members of the Church of England, in regard to ritual, any more than we could accept statements in the regions of doctrine, and fact, even though such statements should be embodied in Episcopal charges, which seemed to imply that the teaching of Calvin in regard to the Holy Eucharist was the teaching of the Church of England, although the alternative heresy of consubstantiation might be tolerated, or that the re-marriage of divorced persons is allowed by the present law of the Church of England?

Attitude of the Bishops.

I desire to say nothing which may irritate. I wish to go every possible length in the way of conciliation. I would even venture to go so far as to say in regard to our ritual disputes that if such matters as the Eucharistic Vestments, Lights, the Mixed Chalice, Wafer Bread, the Use of Incense, and Reservation of the Blessed Sacrament for the Use of the Sick were recognized as part of the acknowledged heritage of the Church of England, it would be easy to make concessions which at present are so difficult as to be practically impossible. Many a Parish Priest, if anything like an appreciable number of the genuine congregation and parishioners attending the Church deprecated its use, might acquiesce in the non-introduction of the *Ornaments and Observance* contemplated by the *Ornaments Rubric*, if the use of the Vestments accustomed to be

used at Mass, as contemplated by that Rubric, obtained, say, at Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's, and the doctrine the Vestments represent was admitted to be the authorised teaching of the Church. There is, indeed, hardly any limit to what might be possible on lines such as these. What is not possible is the surrender of externals as long as the right to use them under the existing rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer is denied and the doctrine they symbolize held to be only tolerated in the Church of England. What is not possible is a submission to particular Episcopal directions which is inconsistent with the general principle on which the whole duty of submission to Episcopal authority rests.

The Bishop of Birmingham has recently said that if he were an incumbent and his Bishop were to desire the introduction of Evening Communion he should be compelled to disobey him.

Dr. Liddon and the present Dean of St. Paul's refused to obey the then Bishop of London, Bishop Jackson, when he wished them to give up the Eastward position. To a correspondent Dr. Liddon writes:—"I should make every concession (to Episcopal directions) if I could." "If I could," he adds, "because it is conceivable that concession beyond certain limits would be so ruinous in its effects on souls for whom I had to answer that for their sakes I might consider disobedience the lesser moral evil of the two." "The duty of obedience is clearly modified by other obligations. There are times when an army is saved by a subaltern's disobedience to his commanding officer.* We cannot forget in this connection such possibilities as those referred to by Dr. Liddon, when, in opposing Archbishop Tait and other of the Bishops in reference to the Athanasian Creed, he said, under circumstances very similar to the present, "that it is no civil court, but the Bishops, the guardians of the Faith, who are attacking the Catholic Creed in the Upper House of both Convocations." † We cannot forget how much that is universally accepted now was denounced by the then Episcopate fifty years ago. We cannot forget the letter written by Sir George Grey, as Home Secretary in 1850, by the Queen's command, to the Archbishop of Canterbury, directing him to call on all the Bishops in the Queen's name "to discourage and prevent innovations in the services of the Church," the chief innovations denounced in connexion with this letter being reading prayers in the chancel, chanting, preaching in a surplice, and "dressing-up" the choir in surplices, thereby "exciting

* "Life and Letters of Henry Parry Liddon, D.D.," pages 217, 218.

† "Liddon—Life and Letters," page 166.

curiosity and derision in the profane, and distracting the attention of the devout," we cannot forget the action of the Bishops at that time. Nor can we forget how often, since that time, as Dr. Liddon said again, on a later occasion, the action of the Episcopate has made it seem almost impossible "to speak the truth about their office without seeming to invite a catastrophe." * We cannot forget the duty imposed upon us, as much now as ever, whatever may be the action of certain members of the Episcopate, to resist all attempts to tamper with the position of the *Quicumque vult* in the Book of Common Prayer. But, though I say these things because truth and plain dealing require it, I would fain anticipate that such occasion of trouble will not arise. On the contrary, I would rather hope that our present difficulties may be merely the price we have to pay for a better comprehension of what the Church is, and of the nature of the obligation which membership in the Church entails. You will remember the remarkable prophecy recorded in Dr. Pusey's Life uttered by an old Clergyman, Dr. Sikes by name, before the beginning of the Oxford Movement.

"The day would come," he said, "when the question of the nature and character of the Church would absorb all other questions; that it was a subject on which he had found the widest and greatest ignorance; that those who raised it would be accused of Popery, and exposed to every kind of misrepresentation; but that nevertheless it was a question which must be raised, for it was the essential question which had to be faced, and upon which every other would be found ultimately to depend."

The Doctrine of the Church.

We may say to-day that this prophecy is being fulfilled in our ears. This doctrine and that, this or the other point of practice, have been vindicated in turn. The doctrine of the one Baptism for the remission of sins, of the provision our Lord has made in His Church for the forgiveness of grave sin after Baptism, of the Real Presence of the Body and Blood of Christ under the consecrated species in the Holy Eucharist, of the offering of that Body and Blood to the Eternal Father in commemoration of all Christ did or suffered for us throughout His whole life and on the Cross, no "Nuda Commemoratio," as the Archbishops say in their letter to Leo XIII., but the abiding perpetuation in our midst of the one

* *Ibid.*, page 270.

holy, eternal sacrifice which takes away the sins of the world—these and many other like matters, which have all been the subjects of attack, have been substantially vindicated and maintained. What remains to be done is to consider the authority upon which such doctrines ultimately rest, and the bearing which the acceptance of those doctrines ought to have on our conception of the Church.

In the last chapter of Dr. Moore's Lowell Lectures, recently published, Dr. Moore points out a fact which is very often forgotten: "that when the authority of Scripture is spoken of the question really always is: Whose is the authoritative interpretation of Scripture? And there are only two possible answers—that this authoritative interpretation is the privilege of the Church; or that it is that which vindicates itself as true in the devout and learned thought; it is that which verifies itself in the pure conscience and the humble life of the individual believer." And this last, says Dr. Moore, "is the true and invincible position of Protestantism." The consequence, of course, is (1) that there can be amongst Protestants no such thing as an infallible interpretation of Scripture which must be recognised as such by all; and (2) that if so, one man has as much right to find the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist in the sixth chapter of St. John, and in the words of Institution, as another man has to deny it; one man to find the whole of the extremist Roman claims in our Lord's words to St. Peter, as another to deny them. Such a position, if any Creed at all is to be maintained, is intellectually impossible; it involves a *reductio ad absurdum*, and as anyone who considers the matter must see, its negation cuts at the root of three-quarters of the usual Protestant declamation, while at the same time it suggests the only principle which provides an escape out of our present difficulties. It suggests that if the whole authority of Holy Scripture is not to be evaporated it is to the witness of the whole Church that we must look for its interpretation.

Relation of the Church of England to the Whole Catholic Church.

Apply this principle to the question of present controversies. What is the relation of the Church of England to the whole Catholic Church? It is that of a part. As a part, the Church of England is bound by the authority of the whole Church. The Church of England is not an independent body. There are things it can do consistently with its position as a part, and there are things it cannot do without violating its own claim to

speak with authority. The Church of England cannot draw distinctions, and say that it recognizes the authority of the Catholic Church up to a certain date, and no later, the authority, say, of six centuries rather than the authority of seven, eight, or ten. The authority of the Church is the same in all ages, and though, owing to our unhappy divisions, methods for a final and authoritative determination of any new doctrinal point, should such arise, are more complicated and indirect than was formerly the case, is there any real doubt, for all practical purposes, what the teaching and practice of the whole Church, East and West alike, is on all such matters as are the subject of present controversy.

I venture to say that none of these matters are, or can be, open questions. The Church of England has no peculiar doctrine of its own as to the Real Presence, the Eucharistic Sacrifice, the absolving power of the priesthood. All these questions have been settled long ago, and the business of the members of the Church of England, both Clergy and Laity, is to witness to those doctrines as they have been always held and taught, and not to set up a distinctive and separate teaching of their own, or try to discover some impossible *Via Media* as far removed from Rome as from Geneva.

You will say, perhaps, we grant this as to matters of doctrine, but surely in matters of discipline or ceremonial, matters of merely ecclesiastical observance, a local Church has the right to make her own regulations.

Certainly it has; but let us distinguish. A local Church, as the Church of England has actually done, might restore the practice of communicating in both kinds; it might, as the Church of England has also done, relax the disciplinary obligation imposed by the Lateran Council (if, indeed, which is a disputed point, the Council in question did impose such an obligation), of each person of either sex being bound to confess himself or herself to their parish priest once a year, even in the case of non-mortal sin.

It might make changes in the Liturgy, it might alter its ceremonial, but—and here comes in the distinction—on what principle might it make such changes? On the principle, surely, of better maintaining and teaching Catholic truth. It would have no authority to make changes in order to deny that truth. It would not be difficult to cite instances during the Middle Ages of all kinds of liturgical changes introduced by the authority, or with the sanction, of the Bishop of the Diocese; but do you suppose such changes would have been tolerated or accepted if they had been changes contradictory of the received faith of the Church. Would the faithful of those days have accepted rulings of their Bishops which forbade

reservation for the sick, on the ground that it was a superstitious practice? Assuredly they would not, for they would have known that such reservation had the sanction of the whole Church of Christ. Would they have obeyed their Bishop's regulations as to how, and with what precautions, such reservation should be carried out? Assuredly they would, for they would have known that such regulations were strictly within the province of the Episcopate, and were in no way contrary to the mind of the Church. It is needless to press the matter further; its application is obvious, but I may perhaps illustrate the general position here claimed by a reference to some other matters to which public attention has been directed, and which are largely being made use of to strengthen the accusation of general disloyalty to the Book of Common Prayer made against the Members of this Society.

Prayers for the Departed.

1. As to prayers for the departed.

I freely admit that, greatly to the loss of the Church of England, the more explicit prayers for the departed, which had a place in the more ancient Offices of the Church of England, have no place in our present Prayer Book. But if there is one matter more than another that has the explicit sanction of the whole Church, from the earliest times, it is the practice of offering the Holy Sacrifice, and of praying for the dead in Christ. It is, therefore, not open to the rulers of the Church of England, consistently with the principles proclaimed in the later English Formularies, to forbid such practice. At the very time the English Prayer Book was put out under Elizabeth, Primers were also put out by authority for the use of members of the Church of England with explicit prayers for the dead. At the solemn Dirige and Requiem celebrated for Henry II. of France at St. Paul's, at which Archbishop Parker was the celebrant, and Bishops Barlow and Scory were deacon and sub-deacon, the suffrages for the psalms began, "Lord, give Thy people eternal rest, and light perpetual shine upon them; from the gates of hell, Lord, deliver their souls," and amongst the prayers are these: "Almighty God be merciful to the souls of Thy servants, being departed from this world in the confession of Thy name, that they may be associate to the company of Thy saints. . . . Lord, bow thine ears unto our prayers, that Thou wilt bestow the souls of Thy servants, which Thou hast commanded to depart from this world, in the country of peace and rest, and cause them to be made partakers with Thy holy servants." But,

indeed, there can be no doubt in regard to the public use of prayers for the faithful departed that the Reformers, as the Archbishop of York said in his sermon before the Norwich Church Congress, "in the storm and stress of the sixteenth century may sometimes have mistaken their course, and cast out too hastily some of the precious lading of the ship." Does any blame attach to those who try to restore that "precious lading"? "The full statement of the doctrine of the intermediate state with its practical corollary of Prayer for the Faithful Departed"* is, says Dr. Liddon, in one of his letters recently published, "one of the needs of the present time."

Is it too much to ask that our Bishops should speak out boldly on the subject, and take steps themselves to remedy an omission which is productive of much evil, leading men too often both to ignore the evil, and the consequences of sin, and to reject the teaching of the Church as to its punishment in the world to come.

Is it too much to ask that proper collects, epistles, and gospels should be authorised for services of Requiem, together with the ancient office for the dead, and that such services should be used in all the Cathedrals in England?

If the Bishops shrink from doing this, can they wonder that others should attempt the duty that they decline.

If leaders are to be followed, must they not accept the responsibilities of leadership?

They do not shrink from suggesting alterations in the use of the Athanasian Creed. What holds their hands when it is a question of vindicating the faith and practice of the Catholic Church?

Celebrations without Communicants.

The second subject to which I would refer is the Celebration of Holy Communion without any to communicate with the Priest. I freely admit that the Prayer Book does not contemplate such Celebrations, but neither does the Prayer Book contemplate the Celebration of Holy Communion with only three Communicants, except in the case of the infinitesimal number of Parishes, if, indeed, there be any such, where there are only twenty persons in all the Parish qualified to communicate. What the Prayer Book contemplates is always a large number of persons communicating with the Priest. Experience has shown that the provisions the Reformers made to secure this end have completely failed, that instead of

* "Liddon—Life and Letters," pages 286, 287.

substituting a general Communion at every Mass for a Mass at which there might be no Communicants, those provisions have, in fact, substituted Matins for Mass, a service of human for one of Divine appointment. That, far from increasing the number of Communions, the changes made by the Reformers of the sixteenth century have had exactly the opposite effect, and that the Churches in which as a rule the greatest number of Communions are made are those in which those arrangements are disregarded, and where it may sometimes happen that there are none to communicate with the Priest. Is not an attack upon such Churches, apart from every other consideration, to sacrifice the end aimed at by the Reformers, and the spirit which dictated their regulations, to the mere letter of the Rubric, in a word to subordinate the end to the means? We hear a good deal about the rights of the Laity at the present time. Let me say, then, on behalf of thousands of Laymen, that there is no right they value more dearly than the privilege of being able to attend a daily Mass; and, next, that the Clergy who are being attacked because it may happen that they say Mass without three Communicants are many of them those who are doing most for the spiritual life of the Church of England at the present moment, to whom it is due that the Holy Eucharist is once more taking its proper place in the worship of England, and who are the representatives of those to whose efforts the wonderful revival of Church life during the last fifty years is due. It is recorded of Bishop Blomfield that one day, driving down Ludgate-hill with Bishop Wilberforce, he said, pointing to St. Paul's, "I wonder what that great building has ever done for the cause of Jesus Christ?"* Could he say that now, and if not, why not, and to whom is the change due?

Sacerdotalism.

The third matter to which I will refer is that of "sacerdotalism" and "sacerdotal pretensions." Allow me to point out that here as elsewhere the question is, not whether men like certain claims and believe certain doctrines, but whether the formularies of the Church of England endorse them. I will call a witness on this point whose authority, owing to his position as Lord Chief Justice of England, and to the hostile attitude he took up in his later years in regard to such questions, cannot be questioned. In speaking of Sacerdotalism and of the Prayer Book Lord

* "Liddon's Life and Letters," page 135.

Coleridge writes:—"Powers conferred on an order of men, and not dependent on this man or that man's qualifications for exercising them, is Sacerdotalism. "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," "I absolve thee from thy sin," "Let him come to Me that he may receive the benefit of absolution, are all bits of sacerdotalism, intelligible, no doubt, in a non-natural sense, so as to let one stay comfortably in a Church which uses them, but leading, in my judgment, to every kind of folly and mischief. Our Clergy, having, as I always contend, an undoubted legal defence for themselves, found upon this a system which I do not think them the least dishonest for trying to maintain, but which I for one should be glad to take away from them the means of honestly maintaining."* In other words, the Clergy are traitors and Romanisers, not because they do not conform to the Prayer Book, but because those who call them so do not happen to like what they find in the Prayer Book. But it is useless to multiply instances. It has always been the case since the beginning of the Oxford Movement and before, that those who are the least in harmony with the spirit of the Prayer Book, and ignore its plainest requirements, are precisely those who are always accusing their brethren of disobedience and unfaithfulness.

Conclusion.

Let me, in conclusion, ask anyone, if he still professes to doubt our loyalty to the Church of England, to imagine himself living under Henry VIII. when the quarrel with Rome first began, and to ask himself what would have been the position of the average Englishman, priest or layman, at that time. There was a difference with Rome. There had been quarrels with Rome before. There were differences which chiefly touched powers and rights which, whatever might be said for or against them, in no way, or very slightly, affected the distinctly spiritual authority of the Apostolic See as such. It was quite possible to recognise the Primacy of the See of Peter, and the undefined prerogatives attaching to that Primacy; it was, indeed, possible to recognise much more than this, as Dr. Pusey pointed out in his "Eirenicon," and yet to feel that the abrogation of many of the powers and much of the jurisdiction which had gradually become attached to the Holy See were matters in which, without the sacrifice of any essential principle, Catholics could acquiesce. Such was the position of Bishop Gardiner, Bishop Bonner, and for a

* "Life of Lord Coleridge," vol. ii., page 245.

certain time that of Sir Thomas More. They were matters outside, and independent of what touched the faith and life of the Church. Because appeals in testamentary and matrimonial causes were forbidden to Rome, because the Pope's external, independent, and coercive jurisdiction in England was denied, it did not follow that England was departing from Catholic unity. The faith of men who thought thus remained what it was, and when later, under Edward and Elizabeth, the serious struggle began between the radical innovators on the one side, and those who wished to stand on the old paths on the other, the question for such men would be whether the changes, which emerged as the result of conflict between themselves and their opponents, were such as they could accept; such as preserved what was essential to Catholic life; or such as destroyed the old Church altogether. What was thought by such a man as Bishop Tunstall, of Durham, and by Bernard Gilpin, the rector of Great Houghton, in the diocese of Durham, known as "the Apostle of the North," we know, and it is clear that neither of them thought the changes in themselves, apart from the way in which they were being carried out, were such as destroyed Catholic life, and might not be accepted by men like themselves who had no intention of departing from the Catholic Faith in which they had been brought up. That is indeed our position, and if so, whatever lodgment unbelief and heresy may have effected in practice within the limits of the Church of England, they are extraneous bodies within the Church, and the old principle of Catholic authority remains where it was, and supplies the true standard of what is the teaching and the practice of the Church of England. I insist upon these things, for they are essential to our position. How irreconcilable they are with a view of the Church of England which can see nothing beyond the formularies of the last three hundred years, and attributes to this later and detached Church of England all the prerogative authority of the Catholic Church, I need not point out. We may believe that the Anglican Communion has a great and a providential mission. It has opportunities for missionary work, great, perhaps unrivalled. It may do much to promote the greatest of all works—the reunion of Christendom. It may do a great deal to help to reconcile the claims of science and faith, but it will succeed in all these things only in proportion as it is true to its own principles; and among these principles none is more important, and none goes so deeply to the root of existing difficulties, as that the whole is greater than the part, and that the Church of England and the Anglican Episcopate can only claim obedience, and bring others to the obedience of the faith, in proportion as they are obedient themselves to the teaching

of that whole Catholic Church from which they derive their own authority, and their only right to claim obedience from others.

I was talking not long ago to a person in an influential position, on these subjects, who, after much discussion as to the nature of ecclesiastical authority and the reform of the ecclesiastical courts, inquired at last, "What authority will you obey?" I replied, "Though I do not believe that such courts were ever at any time intended for the determination of questions touching doctrine and ritual, yet, if it is thought desirable to create a hierarchy of courts for such a purpose, I suppose that an Episcopal Court in every Diocese, which really represented the authority of the Bishop, free from any civil interference, but subject as to its decisions to the law and practice of the whole Catholic Church—a law and practice which, after all, it is not so difficult to ascertain—would meet with the ready obedience of all loyal Churchmen; and that, if the inquiry were pushed from the Diocese to the Province, a similar Court representing the Metropolitan, itself in like manner bound to administer the law of the Catholic Church from which the Metropolitan derives his own claim to spiritual authority, free from any civil interference and from reference to Acts of Uniformity, with, in the last resort, an appeal to the Synod of the Province—how secured, so that it was really secured, would be a matter of secondary importance—would win the ready assent and obedience of loyal Churchmen. I would only point out, I added, "that this is precisely what Churchmen—the men who are now accused of lawlessness, unfaithfulness, and disloyalty—have been asking for for the last fifty years, as it is precisely that which they have been repeatedly told neither their accusers in and out of Parliament, or Parliament itself, would consent to their having." "No," he said, "Parliament would never consent to that; but perhaps a mixed tribunal of lawyers and Bishops might be possible." "Did our Lord," I replied, "confide the exercise of His authority in His Church to the Apostolic College and to their successors, the united Episcopate, or did he entrust it to a mixed commission of Bishops and lawyers?" It is because men will not face first principles that we remain in our present difficulties, and till we do there will be no escape from them. Meanwhile, let us, as far as we are concerned, do all we can to promote the cause of peace and mutual understanding. If we would strive to cultivate friendly personal relations with those who in our own Communion are unhappily opposed to us, to make friends with our brethren in the Roman Communion at home and abroad, from whom we have so much to learn, and who, perhaps, may have something to learn from us, to seek how we

may help the great Presbyterian Communion in Scotland, and the Nonconformist bodies in England, to that which, without sacrifice of principle, might help to re-unite us all in one visible Communion, I believe it is impossible to say what great and glorious things it might not be given to us to see, even in this our day. If the Anglo-Saxon race were at one in regard to matters of belief, what might it not accomplish for the extension of the Kingdom of Christ! "It is the heart which makes the theologian." If we desire Unity, strive for it, and pray for it with all our hearts, it will in God's good time be realized, and, perhaps, with the suddenness of one of those unexpected thaws which seem in a moment to turn winter into spring. There never was a time when the Church more needed to be at one, or when a strong and united Church was more necessary for the welfare of the world at large. Among the impediments both at home and abroad in the way of this reunion are the unworthy suspicions we have of one another, the little trouble we take to inform ourselves of the facts before we pass judgments on others, the unreasonable prejudices we allow ourselves to entertain, and that exclusive national spirit which can see nothing beyond the interests of the local Church of England. May God give us more charity, a wider outlook, more generous and more universal sympathies, and may He help us in our endeavours to hasten the day when there shall be again, as in the days of yore, one fold and one shepherd, and all shall be again of one heart and of one mind in the possession of that one truth which it is the office and work of the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church to keep and to proclaim.

