

ECCLESIASTICAL DISCIPLINE

A CHARGE  
TO THE CLERGY AND LAITY OF THE DIOCESE OF VERMONT

BY  
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### THE CHURCH'S POSITION

*My Brethren of the Clergy and of the Laity:*

In two previous Charges I have dealt with particular matters which fall under the head of Ecclesiastical Discipline. Both of them were connected with Marriage, its indissoluble character when once rightly entered upon,<sup>1</sup> and the limitations as to those among whom, by reason of existing relationship, it may be contracted.<sup>2</sup> It was assumed that the Christian Church was bound in her Lord's name to instruct her children as to their right line of conduct, and to impose penalties upon those who neglect or disobey her teaching. On the present occasion I desire to go back a step further, and consider the question of discipline itself, the right and the duty to exercise it. Behind differences of opinion as to particular questions, whether concerning Marriage or other matters, there is not infrequently a doubt as to the right of the Church to lay down rules or to punish transgressors.

We are speaking, of course, of a discipline purely spiritual in its character, exercised over persons who voluntarily accept the obligations along with the privileges of the Christian Church; we are not concerned with any penalties affecting temporal possessions or civil rights, such as may in some countries be inflicted by the Church with a certain delegated power from the State, or by the State backing up and reinforcing the authority of the Church.<sup>3</sup> We are concerned only with discipline as a spiritual weapon, pronouncing censure upon an offender, suspending from spiritual privileges, or as a last resort cutting off from their enjoyment.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, we must remember that the privileges of the Church are of the highest value, as being spiritual, belonging to the spiritual sphere. Exclusion from the Body of Christ, in whom we have access to the Father, means separation from God's favour. To quote William Law (in his *Defence of Church Principles*): "If there be any blessing or happiness in our being admitted into the Church; there must be as much misery and punishment in our exclusion out of it. For as it implies the loss of all those privileges and favours we were made partakers of, by our admission into the Church; so we must needs be punished in the same degree that we

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<sup>1</sup> The Church's Discipline concerning Marriage and Divorce, 1896.

<sup>2</sup> Marriage with Relatives: Prohibited Degrees of Kindred and Affinity, 1901.

<sup>3</sup> See Bingham, *Christian Antiquities*, Bk. xvi., ch. ii., for an account of "The Discipline of the Church." Compare *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, vol. i., under "Discipline" and "Excommunication," and Pusey, *The Councils of the Church*, p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> S. Ambrose, *De Officiis Ministrorum*, Bk. ii. ch. xxvii. "Not without pain is a limb of the body cut off which has become corrupt. It is treated for a long time, to see if it can be cured with various remedies. If it cannot be cured, then it is cut off by a good physician. Thus it is a good bishop's desire to heal the weak, to remove the spreading ulcers, to burn some parts and not to cut them off; and lastly when they cannot be healed, to cut them off with pain to himself." (Nicene Fathers, vol. x., p. 64.)

were happy.”<sup>5</sup> “In all such actions the Church acts as a spiritual Body, wielding spiritual powers in connexion with sin, and not like a corporation enforcing by-laws.”<sup>6</sup>

The Christian religion, we must remember, is essentially social in its character. Jesus Christ did not call men to a merely individual discipleship. He intended them to be welded together in a body. We are called into fellowship one with another, under and in Him our Leader and Head.<sup>7</sup> Consequently we have interest in one another, dependence on one another, care and responsibility one for another. The Christian Church is described in the New Testament writings as a Family, a Kingdom, a Body. Each figure involves the ideas of authority and subordination. In the Church it is intended that there should be rule by which we are to be trained; there must be exclusion if rules are persistently disregarded. The exclusion of offending members from social privileges is a right inherent in all societies.

Our Lord in His teaching committed “to the Church not the right, but the duty, to bind and to loose: that is, to pass judgments as to what is right and what is wrong, what is to be permitted and what is not to be permitted in the Christian society.”<sup>8</sup> Again, after His resurrection He gives to His apostles the power and the duty to apply these judgments to persons, to absolve and to retain sins.<sup>9</sup> So it is that St. Paul expressly tells the Corinthian Church that, as a Christian society, they are to judge, not those that are without, but those that are within their own body: and he severely condemns them because they had let pass, or tolerated, a serious moral offence without discriminating judgment being passed upon it.<sup>10</sup> It is the same where doctrine is concerned. The New Testament continually warns Christians that they are to have standards of judgment; to test all things, and hold fast that

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<sup>5</sup> Law continues: “For if there be anything in baptism which is just matter of joy, there is something equally terrible in excommunication; which, when rightly executed, as effectually makes us aliens from the promises of God, as baptism, when rightly administered, makes us children of God, and heirs of eternal life. So that he who can ridicule and expose the terrors and effects of excommunication is acting just as Christian a part as he who fleers at and despises the benefits and advantages of baptism.” William Law’s *Defence of Church Principles* (edition by Nash and Gore, 1893), p. 257. The whole of Letter iii., ch. iii., “Of the authority of the Church as it relates to excommunication,” may be referred to.

<sup>6</sup> T. B. Strong, *God and the Individual*, p. 49.

<sup>7</sup> See Strong, Preface to *God and the Individual*, with his valuable criticism for its unbalanced individualism of Prof. James’s *Varieties of Religious Experience*. “The full claim and meaning of Christianity will never be explicable on the basis of Individualism: for from first to last it deals with minds, which are in relation with actual truth, in regard to the soul, and the world, and God; and which have not fully attained the limits even of their own nature, till they are united in the one Spirit-bearing Body through Christ to the Father.”—p. xxiii.

<sup>8</sup> Matt. xviii. 15-18, compare Rackham, *Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, p. 266, and Gibson, *The Thirty-nine Articles*, art. xxxiii.

<sup>9</sup> John xx. 23. Compare Latham, *The Risen Master*, pp. 172, 173: “I consider that these words of the Lord were regarded by those who heard them ... as conveying to them authority for the conduct of the Christian society and for enforcing and remitting penalties, such as expulsion, in the case of members of the society charged with wrong doing.”

<sup>10</sup> I. Cor. v.

which is right,<sup>11</sup> to test the spirits whether they be of God.<sup>12</sup> And if any teacher come with a doctrine calculated to subvert the principles which lie at the basis of the Christian life, St. Paul and St. John alike recommend an attitude towards him which cannot exactly be described as tolerance. “As we have said before, so say I now again, if any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema.”<sup>13</sup> “If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works.”<sup>14</sup> These injunctions are given in view of cases where fundamental matters of principle are at stake. About minor matters St. Paul adopts a tone of the widest toleration.”<sup>15</sup>

The object of spiritual discipline is twofold: (i) It is designed *for the common good*, for “the preservation of sound members of the Christian body from the evil example and contagion of the unsound.”<sup>16</sup> Notorious evil that is not condemned is practically tolerated. Moreover, the Church is established in the world to bear witness to the truth,—of life as of faith,—to testify against evil and error; this must be done not only by word but by act. The society that is to give light must be purged as far as possible from unworthy members who would defeat or hinder its illuminating mission. (2) Discipline is also designed *for the good of the individual offender*, who, it is hoped, may by the censure of his brethren be brought to repentance and a better mind. All discipline must be exercised with a view to securing these ends, and therefore in a spirit of love and consideration. This is taught by our Lord’s parable of the Tares.<sup>17</sup> He does not condemn the exercise of discipline, which elsewhere He enjoins. Rather is He showing the spirit of patience in which discipline must be exercised, lest it prove hurtful instead of helpful. All

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<sup>11</sup> II. Thess. v. 21.

<sup>12</sup> I. John iv. 1.

<sup>13</sup> Gal. i. 9.

<sup>14</sup> II. John 10, II.

<sup>15</sup> E.g., Rom. xiv., I. Cor. viii. Charles Gore, *The Sermon on the Mount*, pp. 158, 159.

<sup>16</sup> *Dictionary of Christian Antiquity*, vol. i., p. 639. Comp. S. Cyprian, Ep. lix. §20: “To some either their own crimes form so great a hindrance, or the brethren so resolutely and firmly object, that they cannot be received at all, without the scandal and peril of very many. For neither should some ulcerous parts be so brought together as to occasion wounds in others that are whole and sound; nor is he a useful and prudent shepherd, who so mingles the diseased and tainted sheep with his flock, as to afflict his whole flock with the infection of their contagious malady.” Oxford transl., p. 167. The whole letter (numbered liv. in the Ante-Nicene Library, vol. viii.) is interesting.

<sup>17</sup> See *The Parabolic Teaching of Christ*, by A. B. Bruce, p. 56: “While the world lasts, there will be need and room in the Church for the exercise of discipline, that the reality of Christian life in the holy commonwealth may come as near as possible to its high ideal; and yet the lesson of our parable will always be valid as a protest against all Church censures springing out of an impatient view of the evils inseparable from the kingdom of God in its present earthly state, and as an admonition to those who have authority in the kingdom to exercise their authority in accordance with the rule so well expressed by Augustine: ‘Let discipline preserve patience, and let patience temper discipline, and let both be referred to charity, so that on the one hand an undisciplined patience may not foster iniquity, and on the other hand an impatient discipline may not dissipate unity.’” (*Ad Donatistas post collationem*, iv. 6.)

must be done in a spirit of gentleness and charity, and with a view to the good of the offender, whom it is intended not to crush or kill, but if possible to win and heal.

In accordance with this principle the rubrics at the beginning of the Order for Holy Communion are framed.

“If among those who come to be partakers of the Holy Communion, the Minister shall know any to be an open and notorious evil liver, or to have done any wrong to his neighbours by word or deed, so that the Congregation be thereby offended; he shall advertise him, that he presume not to come to the Lord’s Table, until he have declared himself to have truly repented and amended his former evil life, that the Congregation may thereby be satisfied,” etc.

“The same order shall the Minister use with those betwixt whom he perceiveth malice and hatred to reign; not suffering them to be partakers of the Lord’s Table, until he know them to be reconciled.”

Warnings are addressed to the congregation, forbidding any who may be living in grievous sins from coming to Holy Communion: “If any of you be a blasphemer of God, an hinderer or slanderer of His Word, an adulterer or be in malice, or envy, or in any other grievous crime; repent you of your sins, or else come not to that holy Table.” But more than this; any “open and notorious evil liver” is to be repelled.<sup>18</sup>

These rubrics recognize the limitations under which ecclesiastical discipline is to be exercised: (i) It is reserved for grave and notorious or public offences, clear contraventions of the Christian law, on condition of promising obedience to which the person was admitted to the Christian society.<sup>19</sup> (2) Private admonition and pleading are first to be employed before public censure is inflicted, if these are disregarded. (3) A sentence of discipline is always subject to revision on an appeal from a lower to a higher authority. The parish priest repelling any from Communion “shall be obliged to give an account of the same to the Ordinary (i.e. the bishop), within fourteen days after, at the farthest.” Provision has always been made to guard against hasty or partial action. Appeals were generally allowed from an individual bishop to a synod of neighbouring

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<sup>18</sup> It may be well to call attention to the distinction between the exercise of formal discipline contemplated in these rubrics and the pastoral dealing which a priest would have with a person making a private confession with a view to ghostly counsel and private absolution. In the latter case a priest might advise the person not to receive the Holy Communion for a certain time, or until certain conditions had been fulfilled; he might even refuse individual absolution unless the person promised to follow such counsel. But he would have no right to refuse Communion should the person fail to comply with these conditions. Formal and public discipline—whether in the way of exclusion from Communion or of restoration thereto—is limited to cases of open and notorious evil living. Other cases must be dealt with by pastoral counsel.

<sup>19</sup> For the distinction between spiritual and merely ecclesiastical offences, see *God and the Individual*, pp. 49, 50.

bishops,<sup>20</sup> and our Lord Jesus Christ was always regarded as the Supreme Authority, who disallows a sentence of retaining sins which is not according to His will, as he refuses to ratify a remission when the conditions which He requires are not fulfilled. In this sense he openeth and none shutteth, and shutteth and none openeth.<sup>21</sup> “Unjust bonds are broken by the justice of God,” says St. Augustine.<sup>22</sup> (4) In this connection a further limitation should be noted. While (as has been said) the effect of discipline is not merely external, but spiritual, the refusal of sacraments being not merely the withdrawal of a right to vote in parish meeting or convention (though according to our canons this follows), but a suspension of fellowship with our brethren, and with Christ, the head of the spiritual body;<sup>23</sup> nevertheless, a solemn excommunication, extending even to denial of Christian rites at death, is not to be considered as a final sentence on the person’s eternal condition. In such a case the Church leaves the person to God’s judgment, to whom all is known, not having the evidence of repentance which would warrant her in pronouncing his reconciliation and restoration.<sup>24</sup>

The bishop has been mentioned as the principal authority in matters of discipline, any refusal of Church privileges by ministers of lower rank being reported to him, for

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<sup>20</sup> As in the fifth canon of the Council of Nicæa: “Let examination be made whether any have been excommunicated by the captiousness, or party spirit, or any such like unpleasantness of the bishop.” *Canons of the First Four Councils*, p. 9, and Dr. Bright’s Notes on the same, pp. 13, 14. *Comp. Dict. Chr. Antiq.*, vol. i., p. 642; Bingham, *Chr. Antiq.*, Bk. xvi., ch. ii., 10.

<sup>21</sup> Rev. iii. 7.

<sup>22</sup> *Serm. de Verb. Dom.*, lxxxii. (Ben.), Nic. Fathers, vol. vi., p. 359. *Comp. Robertson, Regnum Dei*, pp. 77, 220, 221, 371: “So far as the authoritative acts of the Church or her ministers are true to the known will of her Master, we must recognize in them the mandate of Christ from his throne: He that heareth you heareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me.”

<sup>23</sup> A distinction was made in early days between what was called the lesser and the greater excommunication. The former excluded persons from participation in the sacraments, but did not expel them from the public prayers, in which, like the catechumens preparing for baptism, they were allowed to share in various degrees. By the greater excommunication persons were wholly debarred from the society of the faithful—not only excluded from communion in sacred things, but shunned and avoided in civil conversation as dangerous and infected persons.” (Bingham, *Chr. Antiq.*, xvi., ii. 7, 8.) This severer punishment would correspond with our Lord’s words, Matt. xviii 17, “Let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican,” and with St. Paul’s, I. Cor. v. ii, “with such an one, not even to eat.” This was the delivering unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus (I. Cor. v. 5; I. Tim. i. 20), the withdrawal, that is, of the protection enjoyed by those who in the midst of an evil world are made citizens of the kingdom of heaven, and the surrender of them to “the prince of this world.” (See Dr. Liddon’s Explanatory Analysis of St. Paul’s First Epistle to Timothy, *in loc.*) The sixty-eighth canon of the English Church (1604) recognises the distinction between the lesser and the greater excommunication, forbidding the clergy to refuse Christian burial according to the Church’s rites “except the party deceased were denounced excommunicated, *majori excommunicatione*, for some grievous and notorious crime, and no man able to testify of his repentance.” This deprivation “of all privileges of Church membership,” as distinct from repulsion from Communion subject to an appeal to the bishop, is contemplated in the last clause of our canon 12, Title ii., but is only to be carried out in accordance with rules and process laid down by either general or diocesan canons.

<sup>24</sup> Bingham, *Chr. Antiq.*, xvi., ii., 16 *ad fin.*

sanction or revision. This lodging of powers of discipline in the hands of the bishop as the chief pastor of the diocese or district, which is a general principle of Christian antiquity,<sup>25</sup> is plainly recognized in our Order for the Consecration of Bishops. In the collect we pray, “Give grace, we beseech Thee, to all Bishops, the Pastors of thy Church, that they may diligently preach thy Word, and duly administer the godly Discipline thereof.” The newly consecrated bishop is solemnly charged, with reference to this part of his office, “Be so merciful, that you be not too remiss; so minister discipline, that you forget not mercy.”

This is the bishop’s prerogative or responsibility as the *persona ecclesiae*, the representative of the Church in the neighbourhood. He is not a mere delegate of the body, but he is the appointed organ through which the body acts in these functions.<sup>26</sup> He should act, therefore, with the general approval and consent of the body of the faithful, and, when possible, using the presbyters as his council.<sup>27</sup> So St. Paul, in the case of the incestuous Corinthian, associated the local church with himself in both the exclusion and the reconciliation of the offender.<sup>28</sup>

“I verily, being absent in body but present in spirit, have already, as though I were present, judged him that hath so wrought this thing, in the name of our Lord Jesus, ye being gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.” (I. Cor. v. 3-11.)

“Sufficient to such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the many; so that contrariwise ye should rather forgive him and comfort him, lest by any means such a one should be swallowed up with his overmuch sorrow. . . To whom ye forgive anything,

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<sup>25</sup> See *Dict. Chr. Antiq.*, i., p. 231 and p. 641; Bingham, xix., iii., “Of the minister of ecclesiastical discipline,” and Cyprian, Ep. xvii.: “I hear that some of the presbyters, neither mindful of the Gospel, nor considering what the martyrs have written to me, nor reserving to the bishop the honour due to his priesthood and chair, have already begun to communicate with the lapsed, and to offer the oblation for them, and to give them the holy eucharist, whereas they ought by a due course to attain hereto. For since in lesser offences penance is done for an appointed time, and confession made, with enquiry into the life of him who is doing penance, nor may any come to communion, except hands shall first have been laid on him by the bishop and clergy, how much more in these most grievous and extremest sins ought all things to be observed, with caution and reserve, according to the discipline of the Lord!”

<sup>26</sup> Compare, with reference to priestly ministrations in general, Gore, *The Church and the Ministry*, 4th ed., p. 78.

<sup>27</sup> The public use of the keys, to excommunicate from all Christian company, belonged to the bishop as pastor of the place.” “Yet to temper the pastoral power of bishops that it might be fatherly, as it hath been always in the house of God from the beginning; and not princely, for fear of reigning over the Lord’s inheritance; the Church of Christ did in certain cases of importance not suffer the bishop to attempt any thing without the consent of his presbyters or a synod.” Bp. Bilson, *The Perpetual Government of Christ’s Church*, ch. xiv., pp. 410, 402 (Eden’s ed.).

<sup>28</sup> The identity of the case referred to in the first and second Epistles to the Corinthians is assumed; but for the purpose of the discussion it is not important.



I forgive also: for what I also have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, for your sakes have I forgiven it in the person of Christ.” (II. Cor. ii. 6-10.)

“The Church of the apostolic age was neither democratic nor despotic. Not democratic: for the pleasure of the multitude was not the ultimate sanction of the office of its leaders. Not despotic: for its officers were not lords over subjects, but divinely commissioned leaders of a divine society of brethren.”<sup>29</sup>

Our provisions requiring the concurrent action of bishops, clergy, and laity in the Convention, General or Diocesan, for the enactment of canons (disciplinary or other) is a strong (some would think unduly strong<sup>30</sup>) assertion of the principle that, while the bishop is the administrator of discipline, the whole body is concerned in the matter and should consent to the application in detailed rules of the great principles of the Christian life received, unalterable, from our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>31</sup> The provision that the Standing Committee, or in certain cases the clerical members thereof, should act with or for the bishop, is a recognition that the bishop is not an absolute monarch, but a constitutional ruler, the representative and head of the diocesan church.

Offences which would be treated with discipline naturally fall under two heads,

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<sup>29</sup> Report of the Committee of the Convocation of Canterbury on the Position of the Laity, p. 10. Compare *Some Aspects of Primitive Church Life*, by W. Bright, pp. 73-75, and the quotations there given from Döllinger (regarding Callistus), Eusebius (regarding Cornelius) and Cyprian. In all these cases the laity are seen to be on the side of strictness. For a summary account of the system of Discipline in the early Church see the same book, pp. 137-140.

<sup>30</sup> Dr. Bright says that “As in the General Councils, of which the Nicene was the first, so in the Provincial [as distinct from Diocesan synods] clerics and laymen might be present, and might by permission speak, but were not constituent members, and had no ‘votum decisivum.’ “ Notes on the *Canons of the First Four Councils*, p. 14.

<sup>31</sup> Bp. Seabury admitted, “That the assent of the laity should be given to the laws which affect them equally with the Clergy, I think is right, and I believe will be disputed nowhere, and the rights of the laity we have no disposition to invade.” Letter to Bp. White, June 29, 1789. Beardsley’s *Life of Bp. Seabury* (English edition, 1884), p. 272. The matter of lay representation is being much discussed at the present time in England in view of the proposed National Church Council. The following may be quoted from an article on “Church Autonomy and a National Council” from the *Church Quarterly Review* for July, 1903: “The true ideal, obscured, but never lost, is the one expressed in the well-known Cyprianic formula, . . . asserting strongly episcopal leadership, but ‘doing nothing without the counsel of the presbyters and the consent of the laity.’ How that consent should be given, whether by the ‘diffusive voice’ of acceptance, recognised as essential even for Conciliar decrees, or by consultation in the earlier stages of Church action, is not a matter of principle. For it is not, as Mr. Keble said long ago, *prima facie* essential at what stage that voice is permitted to be heard.’ No one supposes that in earlier days, before the full development of the representative system in all government which is characteristic of advanced civilization, it expressed itself systematically through such formal and balanced representation as is now proposed in England, and fully organized in the other Churches of the Anglican Communion. But this, again, is a matter of detail, not of essential principle. And in our own Church [of England], from Anglo-Saxon times downwards, the union of laity with clergy in matters ecclesiastical and civil certainly assumed an unusual development, not without irregularities and occasional conflicts, and in the Reformation settlement of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was a leading and determining principle.”—p. 425.

such as involve a violation of the Christian rule either of faith or of life. These may be considered separately, and with a certain distinction between clergymen and laymen.

I. We are admitted into the Christian society on our profession of belief in “all the Articles of the Christian Faith, as contained in the Apostles’ Creed.” The Creeds, both the Apostles’ and the Nicene, rehearse facts, not theories, great truths revealed by Almighty God, not explanations of those truths. We believe in the Father our Creator, the incarnate Son our Redeemer, the Holy Spirit our Sanctifier. No doctrine of the Trinity, as a method by which in thought we reconcile the truth of the absolute unity of God with His threefold being, is propounded for our belief; nor any theory as to the manner in which the divine and human natures are united in the single person of our Lord Jesus Christ; nor any explanation of the availing virtue of His death “for our sins.” So with the exact limits or organization of the Christian Church, the way in which the inner grace is linked with the outward sign in sacraments, the nature of the resurrection body. We profess our belief (I repeat) in facts, not theories. Persons may legitimately entertain varying explanations of the facts without violation of their baptismal obligations. The Church teaches much that she does not impose as necessary to be believed. To building up man in the more perfect knowledge of God and of things spiritual she trusts to the continual presentation of the truth by reading and expounding the Holy Scriptures and by other forms of instruction. To deny the great truths of the Creed is to rule oneself out of the Christian society which is based on the acceptance of these facts. Conscientious inability to repeat the Creeds because (after careful thought and explanation) one does not believe their statements, would seem a bar to the reception of the Holy Communion, which is in part prepared for by our profession of the Christian faith.<sup>32</sup> But even here no sentence of excommunication would be pronounced against a person for secret disbelief or misbelief. If he openly and publicly controverted the faith of the Church, the case would be different, for the congregation would be scandalized.

A clergyman, as an authorized teacher, is in a somewhat different position. With him considerable liberty of prophesying is and should be allowed. But clearly there must be limits to his individual freedom, for the sake both of the society whose accredited representative he is, and of the people to whom he speaks. At any rate he cannot be permitted while speaking in the Church’s name to deny the fundamental truths which he is commissioned to teach, whatever freedom in the interpretation of those truths may be

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<sup>32</sup> Apart from the Gospel narratives, the Virgin Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ is plainly stated in the earliest creed which we possess. Irenæus, who represents both East and West, writing certainly not later than A.D. 190, says: “The Church, though scattered over the whole world to the ends of the earth, yet having received from the apostles and their disciples the one faith in one God the Father Almighty, and in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who was incarnate for our salvation, and in the Holy Ghost, who by the prophets announced His dispensations and His comings: and the birth from the Virgin, and the passion, and resurrection from the dead,” etc. Compare the quotations from the Epistles of Ignatius (Trall. 9, Smyrn. i) given in the Appendix to the author’s *The Virgin Mother*, p. 221. See also Gore, *Dissertations on subjects connected with the Incarnation*, pp. 41-54.

conceded. The Thirty-nine Articles of Religion (which are not imposed on the laity, and to which our clergy are not required explicitly to subscribe) were not intended so much to bind to particular explanations or theories, as to prevent unseemly clashing and contradiction in the maintenance of rival theories. This in part accounts for their studied comprehensiveness. They were designed in several cases to cover what were considered allowable variations of opinion, while shutting out certain doctrines, on one side or another, which were judged absolutely incompatible with the position of the reformed Church and her appeal to the general consent of Christian antiquity. The Church can have no desire to stifle inquiry or hamper thought. Under the guidance of the Spirit of truth she will seek to grow continually into a fuller apprehension of the significance and bearing and harmony of the revelation she has received. But contradiction of the truths (though it be under the guise of explanation) she cannot tolerate.

2. Unchristian living is perhaps more generally recognised as matter for ecclesiastical censure. Renunciation of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, and Obedience to God's holy will and commandments, with the promise that we would walk in the same all the days of our life, are, along with profession of the Christian Faith, the conditions of baptismal initiation into the Christian Church. Plain and persistent violations of these obligations in serious matters should be rebuked, that others may be warned, and that the whole standard of Christian living be not lowered.<sup>33</sup> Is not this the lamentable condition that we now experience as a result of the practical disuse of discipline? Persons are brought into the Christian Church, but too often they sink down to the woefully unchristian level of conduct and aim and temper which they find to prevail among those who are unrebuked sharers in Christian rites, prominent perhaps in the parochial organisation, while notoriously untrue to their Christian profession. Inquisitorial methods, or minute rules forbidding occupations and amusements which may be undesirable and dangerous, but which cannot be regarded as essentially sinful, are alien from the Church's mind.<sup>34</sup> Here again she would seek by persuasion and appeals to reason and conscience to lead to higher and better things rather than enact prohibitory laws which provoke resistance or invite evasion. But the Church fails to bear one large part of her witness to Christ before the world if for fear or favour she shrinks from rebuking positive wrong-doing of any kind, dishonesty as much as uncleanness, among those who claim to be her members.

The exercise of discipline among the clergy, who are bound to be examples of the flock, is of course doubly important. They are to be pattern Christians in word and behaviour, in love, in spirit, in faith and purity.<sup>35</sup> The plainly inconsistent life of a priest

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<sup>33</sup> I. Tim. v. 20.

<sup>34</sup> Such as the prohibition of dancing and games of chance, attending theatres, horse races and circuses, by the Methodist Book of Discipline (1900, ¶248), and of public balls, attendance at horse racing and theatrical amusements by a canon (xix.) of the Diocese of Virginia (1900).

<sup>35</sup> I. Tim. iv. 12.

is a stumbling-block which not only cries woe to the man himself, but to the authorities also who do not seek to remove it from the path of Christ's little ones. The Pastoral Epistles of St. Paul to Timothy and Titus, and the messages sent by our Lord through St. John to the Angels (probably the chief pastors) of the Churches in Asia (Rev. ii., iii.), illustrate the divine view of ministerial responsibility in these as in other respects. The frequent depositions from the ministry (in ten years I have been officially notified of 176)—not all, but a large number of them, directly or indirectly, due to misconduct—show that there is a real effort to get rid of unfit priests, whatever hint the large number may give as to the need of greater care in admitting men to the sacred ministry. Our diocesan canons provide ample safeguards against arbitrary action on the part of a bishop in regard to the clergy. What is sorely needed is the provision by the general Church of a court of appeal, where a diocesan decision might be reviewed. The absence of such a provision (which it is most earnestly hoped the approaching General Convention will remedy) is not only unfair to a clergyman, but also to the whole Church, which might seem to be committed to a thoroughly untenable position by the irreversible decision of a diocesan court. Practically the knowledge that there is no possibility of an appeal makes every one concerned shrink from the exercise of discipline save in the most palpable cases of wrong-doing. Save for this serious defect, abundant provision is made in the canons for the discipline of the clergy.

As regards the laity, the only canonical (as distinct from rubrical) provision for discipline is in reference to marriages that are contrary to the Christian law. In defence of this at first sight singular exception, this may be pleaded. An unlawful marriage stands on a different footing from the commission of a single act of sin. This, however grievous, may be repented of and forsaken, and reparation as far as possible made for the wrong. But the unlawful marriage is not a past act merely; it involves a continuance in a forbidden relationship, and therefore may be thought to demand special treatment. So long as persons are living together otherwise than as God's Word doth allow, they cannot be in a fit state to receive the sacraments.

Our existing canon "Of Marriage and Divorce" (Title II., Canon 13) is generally recognized as unsatisfactory on account of its ambiguity and the consequent possibilities which it affords for mistakes. To some (and myself among the number) it is also unsatisfactory because it distinctly allows the remarriage of what is called "the innocent party" in a divorce for the cause of adultery, a permission which many of us do not believe to be in accordance with the true understanding of our Lord's teaching. I cannot here enter into a discussion of this confessedly difficult question. This I have done in an earlier Charge.<sup>36</sup> But I feel bound to make a strong protest against the proposal favoured

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<sup>36</sup> *The Church's Discipline concerning Marriage and Divorce*, delivered 1896, 3d edition with prefatory note 1898. The only modification I would make in this Charge is in the summary of the textual question concerning Matt. xix. 9, where it is said (p. 18), "that the words which allow that a man who has put away his wife may marry another are wanting in two of the five great manuscripts." This is hardly an accurate

by several persons of influence, which is now made, and which will be pressed at the General Convention, viz., that the Church should forbid her ministers to solemnize the marriage of any divorced person, whose first partner is still living; thus adopting as regards the use of the marriage service the strictest interpretation of our Lord's words, making a marriage once rightly contracted indissoluble save by death; but that—with a view to getting this strict rule adopted, or because we are not quite certain about its being right, or having divine sanction—we should omit from the canons any disciplinary law (such as we now have) concerning persons who enter into unlawful or questionable unions. I wish to point out what the effect of such legislative action would be. (i) Parishioners might ask their clergyman to solemnize their marriage; this he would be bound to refuse to do, if either of them had been divorced for any cause, guilty or innocent; they could go to a neighbouring minister of some other religious body, or to a civil magistrate, be married, and present themselves at the altar next Sunday, and the clergyman, who had refused to bless the marriage, could not refuse to give persons so married the holy sacrament, leaving to them the responsibility of contracting and living in a union which the Church would not sanction. (2) This would apply (as I said) not merely to the innocent party to a divorce who had chosen to remarry, but, by the abolition of our present canonical provision, also to the guilty person who had been divorced for unfaithfulness.<sup>37</sup>

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statement of the case, for A (the Alexandrine MS.) does not contain the passage; so that only four great manuscripts can be considered. Of these only one (B, the Vatican) omits “and shall marry another.” C (Ephraem) has a confused text. A strictly accurate statement would be that no two manuscripts of the four give exactly the same text. So that (as I said) “the text must be considered extremely doubtful.”

With regard to the critical question it is certainly noteworthy that so eminent a critical scholar as Dr. Arthur Wright in the second edition (1903) of his *Synopsis of the Gospels in Greek* unhesitatingly declares that “our Lord indisputably taught the indissolubility of the marriage-tie.” “Any one,” Dr. Wright says, “who will look carefully at these passages [Matt. xix. 9, v. 31, with Mk. x. 10 and Luke xvi. 18], as they are printed here, will see at once that there is good reason for our contention that the exception in S. Matthew is in both cases a later interpolation. For (i) it stultifies the argument. In the passage from the Sermon on the Mount our Lord maintains that Christians must have a higher standard of morality than that which satisfied the Jews. Their life must be ideally pure. He gives several examples of which this is one: Moses (He said) permitted divorce under certain circumstances and with certain safeguards: but his rules were a concession to the hardness of the Jews' hearts, a departure from primitive purity. Our Lord does not say that the interpreters of Moses were wrong and that Shammai was better than Hillel in this matter. He goes to the root of the matter and declares the Mosaic legislation to be temporary and time-serving. The Church must have a purer rule. But the introduction of the words in question simply reasserts the Mosaic rule. (2) If our Lord had permitted divorce at all, He would surely have granted it to that sex which most needed it. Here it is conceded to that sex alone which had the voting power and was able to extort it.” Dr. Wright understands *πορνεία* (which he declares “a darker word than *μοιχεία*”) of the life of an harlot. When this exception was interpolated (at Alexandria he thinks), “they did not pass the rule that *μοιχεία* [adultery] gave a claim to divorce, but only granted it when the wife became so lost to shame as to ply for hire in the streets.” *Synopsis*, pp. 98, 99.

<sup>37</sup> I do not urge in the text the further effect which the omission of these provisions concerning discipline in the existing canon would have with regard to the admission to sacraments of persons who had in other

It will, I know, be urged that with regard to the remarriage of guilty divorced persons the rubric, already cited, is sufficient to enable a priest to repel such persons from the Holy Communion. Some would contend that the same rubric is sufficient warrant for a priest who holds a strict view of the indissolubility of marriage to repel an “innocent party” to a divorce who has been remarried. The answer to this argument must, one would think, be obvious, (a) The general impression made on the community by abolishing the disciplinary restrictions of the present canon would be that the Episcopal Church had surrendered any attempt at the exercise of discipline in such cases, (b) Reliance on the rubric would mean that the responsibility of taking any steps would be thrown on each parish clergyman, however young or inexperienced or subject to pressure from influential persons; if the congregation were not offended, he might not feel authorised to take action. People would certainly resent the application of a rule concerning “notorious evil livers” to persons, otherwise entirely respectable, who had contracted a marriage not allowed by God’s Word, but sanctioned by the civil law. Such cases need special enactments. The likelihood of varying standards and rules in different dioceses, if discretion were granted by canon to the bishop, has been made much of; surely this certainty of different action under the rubric in different parishes, perhaps in the same diocese or city, would be far worse, (c) And remember that under the rubric the bishop’s authority as chief pastor, and minister of discipline on behalf of the diocesan Church, would be taken away, save only in cases where the local pastor had refused Communion and the bishop might reverse his action. Each priest would be free to admit to the sacrament without appeal or need of sanction. (d) Moreover, great confusion would be caused by persons who had been refused Communion under the provisions of the existing canon claiming admission on the strength of these provisions having been expunged.

In view of all these considerations I am impelled to say that, while my strong personal conviction is in no way weakened, that according to Christ’s mind no divorced person has a right to remarry during the lifetime of the former party, yet I would prefer the retention of the old canon with its imperfections (some of the ambiguities might be cleared) to the sacrifice of all the canonical discipline we now have in the matter for the sake of a refusal to bless the remarriage of an innocent party to a divorce. If the Church is not prepared to exercise her power of “binding” by altogether forbidding the remarriage of any divorced person (and the prohibition is not absolute if she gives Communion to those who contract such unions), then it would seem better frankly to allow such remarriages in that one set of circumstances (however they may be discouraged), and to strengthen and enforce the prohibition of remarriage after divorce in any Other case than that of a person who has put away a guilty partner for the proved cause of adultery. Sorry

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respects than with regard to divorce been “joined together otherwise than as God’s Word doth allow”—as by entering into union with persons near of kin; because it has been held that Canon 13, “Of Marriage and Divorce,” does not apply to any such case.

as I should be to have this exceedingly doubtful exception still allowed among us, I believe this course would be preferable to the inconsistency of admitting to the Church's highest privileges persons living in a union on which they have entered in defiance of the Church's refusal to bless and sanction it.<sup>38</sup> Still more deplorable (let me repeat this) would it be, for the sake of a rigorous refusal to solemnise the marriage of any divorced person, practically to throw away the disciplinary enactments we now have with regard to any kind of unlawful marriage.<sup>39</sup>

Cases of individual hardship will undoubtedly be found in the application of these, as of any, laws which are framed for the common good; and cases of difficulty, too, where reference should be made to the bishop, as is required in our present canon. No dispensation can be given from the divine law; but there seem to be cases where ignorance and good faith may be taken into account in mitigating the ecclesiastical consequences of past transgressions. For such authoritative ruling (which should be within certain fixed lines) the bishop must be responsible; but I should be glad to have him required by canon to employ as assessor in the hearing and weighing of any such case a professional lawyer elected or approved by the Convention of the Diocese.

Beside questions connected with marriage, two other points of discipline have

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<sup>38</sup> I know that the Resolution of the Lambeth Conference of will be quoted in defence of this inconsistency: "Recognizing the fact that there always has been a difference of opinion in the Church on the question whether our Lord meant to forbid marriage to the innocent party in a divorce for adultery, the Conference recommends that the Clergy should not be instructed to refuse the Sacraments or other privileges of the Church to those who, under civil sanction, are thus married." About this one must say: (i) It will be a disastrous result of these "Conferences" if "Resolutions," agreed to (possibly as a compromise) by bishops representing national churches having each its own code of discipline, are allowed undue weight in our responsible legislative bodies. (2) In this particular case the Resolution looks very much like an attempt on the part of English bishops to soften the force of their ecclesiastical law (which does not allow remarriage to either party to a divorce), which they may wish were less stringent, but to the alteration of which they could not gain the consent either of Church people generally or of the representative Convocations. Since the attitude of the English Ecclesiastical law stated above has been disputed (*Church Standard*, Dec. 19, 1903), it may be worth while to explain how the matter stands. The post-Reformation canon (No. 107 of 1604) dealing with the subject requires persons separated by a divorce *a thoro et mensa* to live chastely and continently; it does not contemplate any divorce *a vinculo matrimonii*. With regard to this it is taken for granted that the old prohibition (common to the whole of Western Catholic Christendom) remained in force. To this rule witness is borne by *The Institution of a Christian Man* (1537): "In marriages lawfully made, and according to the ordinance of Matrimony prescribed by God and holy Church, the bond thereof can by no means be dissolved during the lives of the parties." O. D. Watkins, *Holy Matrimony*, pp. 402, 426.

<sup>39</sup> This position, I may be allowed to point out, I took in 1901, saying in a note to my Charge delivered that year (p. 20): "Whatever hindrances there may be in the way of enforcing discipline, and whatever consideration may be shown to persons who have in the past become entangled in forbidden marriages, the proposal openly to declare that the Church cannot bless a marriage, but that the persons contracting it may be received to her highest privileges, seems utterly illogical. If a marriage is lawful, though perhaps undesirable, the Church cannot refuse to bless it; if unlawful, she cannot welcome to the Communion persons unlawfully joined together."

been debated of late: (i) the admission to occasional participation in the Holy Communion in our churches of persons who are members of other religious bodies; (2) the permitting ministers of other religious bodies to preach in our churches. Concerning each of these questions something should be said by way of upholding the Church's discipline, at the risk of being thought narrow and bigoted, charges which, it is hoped, may largely disappear when the reasons for the position maintained are fairly considered.

(i) The Communion of our Lord's Body and Blood is the great token of fellowship with Him and with His Church.

(a) What security can be had that persons not trained in the Church, or subject to its rules, hold the Christian faith with regard to our Lord Jesus Christ, without which the Holy Communion would be, according to the Church's teaching, a mockery? Where can you draw the line between orthodox and unorthodox believers, between such as worship Christ as the incarnate Son of God and such as regard Him merely as a highly gifted religious teacher? To throw the whole responsibility on the person who comes would be abdication of all guardianship of sacred mysteries, and certainly wanting in charity towards those who might be permitted or encouraged, unwarned, to incur a serious risk, while it would also be a cause of grievous scandal to earnest believers.

(b) As a symbol of union the sacrament is meaningless if union is now accepted and now rejected, if according to preference or convenience a person receives on one occasion at the Church's altar, and on another in a place of worship where the Church's distinctive teaching is contradicted, and the idea of an external and visible unity as Christ's intention for His Church denied.

(c) Confirmation being, in Hooker's phrase, the sacramental complement of Baptism, the Laying on of Hands as the completion of the person's initiation into the Christian Church should, of course, save in extraordinary cases of need, precede admission to the Holy Communion.<sup>40</sup> So far from this rule applying (as is sometimes urged) only to children who have been brought up in the Church's fold, there is an added necessity for the administration of this rite in the case of those whose baptism has been irregular if valid (as well as their teaching imperfect), that it may be formally ratified and sanctioned by the chief pastor.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> See the author's volume on *Confirmation* (in the Oxford Library of Practical Theology), pp. 88-90, with the quotation from Wheatley there given.

<sup>41</sup> So far from the regard of Baptism as securing perfect membership in the Christian Church, by whomsoever it might be administered and under whatsoever conditions, provided only Water and the Trinitarian formula were used, being the universal doctrine of the early Church, St. Augustine continually asserts that while Baptism administered in schism is not to be repeated, the sacrament only becomes spiritually effective on the person being reconciled to the unity of the Church. One passage will suffice to illustrate his general teaching: *De Bapt. contr. Don.* i., 18 (Nicene Fathers, vol. iv., p. 419). "In the case of the man who, while an enemy to the peace and love of Christ, received in any heresy the baptism of Christ, which the schismatics in question had not lost from among them, though by his sacrilege his sins were not



(d) True it certainly is that historically considered the rubric requiring Confirmation before Holy Communion did not directly contemplate (that is, it was not first composed with a special reference to) the case of members of other religious bodies, since it belongs to an age when the Church in any particular country was practically one; but it is entirely fallacious to argue from this fact that it does not apply to such persons, who at the time the rubric was framed would certainly have been formally reconciled to the Church on seeking her privileges, and confirmed if they had not received that rite.<sup>42</sup>

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remitted, yet, when he corrects his error, and comes over to the communion and unity of the Church, he ought not to be again baptized: because by his very reconciliation to the peace of the Church he receives this benediction, that the sacrament now begins in unity to be of avail for the remission of his sins, which could not so avail him as received in schism.”

Again we must ask, Where is a line to be drawn? If the Baptism of any “who profess and call themselves Christians” is to be accepted as a sufficient initiation into the Body of Christ, provided it be administered with Water, and “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost,” then the Baptism of Mormons must be accepted, since they conform to these requirements, though they denounce the Baptism of infants. See *Covenants and Commandments*, sec. xx. 71-74, and *The Book of Moroni*, ch. viii.

<sup>42</sup> Dr. Leighton Parks has published a sermon, which has been widely circulated in pamphlet form, under the title of *Who is the Discourteous Guest?* having special reference to a particular case of receiving a Unitarian minister to the Holy Communion. In reply to his argument concerning the understanding of the rubric by famous Anglican divines, Bp. Cosin among them, as shown by their action, two questions may be asked.

(1) Would those to whom he refers as sanctioning and participating in the sacraments of non-episcopal Protestant bodies have for a moment consented to hold communion with any who denied fundamental truths of the Christian faith, such as that of our Lord’s Godhead?

(2) Would they have tolerated the setting up of separate religious bodies when the sacraments could be had without submitting to unlawful terms of communion? Their toleration was of supposedly reformed *national* churches, where the alternative presented to people was between adherence to the historical (and as we believe apostolic) ministry, burdened with corruptions of faith and life, and on the other hand preserving evangelical purity at the cost of abandoning (for the time at any rate) the historic ministry. Their treatment of “separatists” from the English Church (where this grievous alternative was not presented) shows that their conduct towards *Foreign* Protestants was in no way indicative of carelessness about the evil or danger of schism. Canon n of 1604 might be studied in reference to this position.

Note 2 at the end of Dr. Parks’s pamphlet gives a version of the action of the Savoy Conference which neither the original documents (preserved in Cardwell) nor Proctor (to whom Dr. Parks refers) give any sanction.

It may be worth while to give the history of this rubric, which stands as follows at the end of the Order of Confirmation in the present English and American Prayer Books: “There shall none be admitted to the Holy Communion, until such time as he be confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed.”

This is taken from the rubric in the Sarum Manual: “Nullus debet admitti ad sacramentum corporis et sanguinis Christi Jesu extra mortis articulum, nisi fuerit confirmatus, vel a receptione sacrament! confirmationis fuerit rationabiliter impeditus.” Maskell, *Monumenta ritualia Ecclesiae Anglicanae*, vol. i., p. 35 (2d ed.). This in turn is drawn from the fifth of Abp. Peckham’s Constitutions (1281). See Johnson’s *English Canons*, vol. ii., p. 278. It may be well to quote the reason given for this enactment. “Many neglect the sacrament of confirmation for want of watchful advisers; so that there are many, innumerable many, who want the grace of confirmation, though grown old in evil days. To cure this damnable neglect, we ordain,” etc.

To treat the rubric as having reference only to those who are to be counted as regular communicants is to regard the communicants' roll (which moreover does not exist in England) as of more importance than the holy sacrament. Such an argument, one would think, could only have been devised to justify a lax practice.

(e) Equally unreasonable is the argument, sometimes pleaded, that there is no mention of Confirmation among the requisite conditions for Holy Communion in the exhortation, "Ye who do truly and earnestly repent," etc. Neither is there any mention of Baptism. The bidding (in the midst of the service) is, of course, addressed to those who are presumed to be externally qualified as members of the Church for receiving her privileges, reminding them of the internal disposition which is necessary for any profitable participation.<sup>43</sup>

The only Reunion that is worth working for must be based on the recognition that there is, according to our Lord's intention, One Body—not a variety of disjointed fragments—as well as One Spirit; consequently that only can be held a valid eucharist, *ἑββαῖα εὐχαριστία*, which is celebrated in communion with the bishop as chief pastor of the Christians, representing the whole body, in any particular district.<sup>44</sup> Whether they

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In the first English Prayer Book, 1549, the rubric read: "There shall none be admitted to the Holy Communion until such time as he be confirmed." In the books of 1552 and 1559 the last clause ran, "until such time as he can say the Catechism and be confirmed." (Two Liturgies of Edward VI. compared, p. 351; Liturgical Services of Queen Elizabeth, p. 216.) For this was substituted the present clause, "or be ready and desirous to be confirmed," in the book of 1662, clearly with reference to the large number of persons who during the previous twenty years, when the use of the Prayer Book had been proscribed, had not been confirmed. The divines at the Savoy Conference distinctly declined to accede to the desire of the Puritans, "that Confirmation may not be made so necessary to the Holy Communion as that none should be admitted to it unless they be confirmed." The bishops' answer was: "There is no inconvenience that Confirmation should be required before the Communion, when it may be ordinarily obtained." Cardwell, *Confereces on the Prayer Book*, pp. 329, 360.

<sup>43</sup> The rubric before the service in the English Prayer Book, requiring those who intend to partake to signify their names beforehand to the priest would exclude any such wide interpretation as that referred to from the intention of the framers of the service.

<sup>44</sup> Epistle of Ignatius to the Smyrnæans, §8. "Shun divisions, as the beginning of evils. Do ye all follow your bishop, as Jesus Christ followed the Father, and the presbytery as the Apostles; and to the deacons pay respect, as to God's commandment. Let no man do aught of things pertaining to the Church apart from the bishop. Let that be held a valid eucharist which is under the bishop or one to whom he shall have committed it. Wheresoever the bishop shall appear, there let the people go; even as where Jesus may be, there is the universal Church. It is not lawful apart from the bishop either to baptize or to hold a love-feast; but whatsoever he shall approve, this is well-pleasing also to God; that everything which ye do may be sure and valid." (Lightfoot's translation, *Apostolic Fathers*, pt. ii., vol. ii., sect. i, p. 565.) *Comp. Magnesians*, §7 (Lightfoot, p. 548), *Philadelphians*, §4 (p. 560).

Valid, *ἑββαῖα*, is not to be understood here as equivalent to efficacious, but as secure, and having the assurance or guarantee of the divine approval. We may well rejoice in this security of the Church's ministrations without presuming to pronounce any judgment upon the efficacy of other ministrations which have not the like guarantee. Not only may we believe that God gives all that is looked for in the sacraments of non-episcopalian bodies, but we may entertain the hope that His gifts surpass the expectation and

agree with this position or not, people will come to see its reasonableness and consistency. It is not by denying the external oneness of the Christian Church that reunion is to be brought about, but by emphasising this, along with a large-hearted adaptation of the Church's ministrations to the needs of various classes of men.

2. With regard to the other proposal (not so commonly thought possible as that with which I have been dealing), to permit ministers of other religious bodies to preach in our churches, two questions may at once be asked: (a) Where can a line be drawn? How would it be possible to ensure any reasonable conformity to Christian standards of teaching? How practically and logically possible to admit Presbyterians and Methodists, who have fixed standards, and exclude Congregationalists, of various kinds, who have none? (b) Would it tend to conciliate such ministers for us to say, We will allow you to preach, because we do not consider that this requires ordination, but we cannot permit you to minister the sacraments, because we regard your ministerial position as at any rate doubtful?<sup>45</sup> Surely the declaration of the Ordinal "that from the Apostles' time there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church,—Bishops, Priests, and Deacons," would be much more likely to win respect, with its logical and reasonable deduction, that "to the intent that these Orders may be continued, and reverently used and esteemed in this Church, no man shall be accounted to be a lawful Bishop, Priest, or Deacon, in this Church, or suffered to execute any of the said Functions [of which the Ministry of the Word is certainly not the least important], except he be called, tried, examined, and admitted thereunto, according to the [prescribed] Form ... or hath had Episcopal Consecration or Ordination."

An argument for allowing exceptions to the principles thus laid down has been based on the words of the canon (Title I., 17), which is entitled "Of Persons not Ministers in this Church officiating in any Congregation thereof," and which forbids permission being given "to any person to officiate, without sufficient evidence of his being duly *licensed or ordained* to minister in this Church." It is pleaded that (apart from the case of Lay Readers, who are explicitly recognized<sup>46</sup>), a person who is not "ordained" may be "licensed" (presumably by the bishop) to officiate. But the position of the canon in the Digest (as well as the general principle of the harmonious interpretation of formularies) seems to make it clear that the licensed person who is spoken of is a Minister already regularly ordained by a bishop in a Foreign Country (e.g. Canada, or Great Britain, or Haiti) in communion with this Church (see canon 14), or by a bishop not in communion

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realization of the recipients and ministers. Compare Gore, *The Church and the Ministry* (4th ed.), pp. 313 sq., and *The Mission of the Church*, p. 19 (Scribner's ed.).

<sup>45</sup> This is the proposal of *The Church Standard*. See the articles on the subject in the numbers for January 23 and 30, 1904.

<sup>46</sup> These, it should be remembered, must have received the laying on of hands in Confirmation, and must be in full communion with the Church. Neither of these qualifications—apart from any question of distinct ministerial qualification—would exist in the preachers whom it is proposed to introduce, as such, into our churches.

with this Church (e.g. of the Roman obedience, or belonging to the Russian Church). Such a deacon or priest, on promising conformity to our doctrine, discipline and worship, is licensed to officiate among us (see canon 15). In the latter case the priest or deacon would become by reception a minister “in this Church;” but in the former case he might still retain his canonical standing in the English, Canadian, South African, or Haitien Church, while “licensed” as a visiting clergyman to officiate and minister in congregations of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America.<sup>47</sup>

We heartily and thankfully acknowledge all the witness for God and Christ which is being borne, and that effectively, by separate religious bodies and by their ministers, in numberless not places only but districts, where we are doing nothing; but this is no reason that we should abandon our witness to those distinctive principles of the Christian Religion (such as the outward unity of the Church, the authority of its ministry, the real efficacy of its sacraments), which we believe to be integral parts of Christ’s revelation, and as such to be necessary for the permanent and effectual carrying out of His purpose in the winning of men to His obedience, and their training in His likeness.

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<sup>47</sup> While the canon as it stands appears to favour, and certainly covers, the interpretation given in the text, the history of its enactment seems to make it clear that Lay Readers were the “licensed” persons in the minds of the framers of the canon. See a communication by the Rev. Leighton Hoskins in *The Church Standard* for April 23, 1904.