

ART. VI.—OUR DUTY TO THE REFORMATION.<sup>1</sup>

IT has, no doubt, been startling to a vast number of the clergy who believed that the interpretation of the rubrics which has prevailed for the last three hundred years, practically undisputed until the last half-century, did indeed express the true mind of the Reformed Church of England, to find that the law may be interpreted so as to cover some of the practices which are without question innovations with regard to that interpretation.

I have, however, before had occasion to point out that such a result was likely to be the effect of an appeal to law. Law does not set itself to discover the truth, but only to investigate the very different question as to whether a statute has been absolutely infringed. Where property and freeholds are involved the law is susceptible of interpretations which almost appear strained, in order to go to the utmost lengths in jealously protecting rights. The promoters of an ecclesiastical suit as to disputed matters of ritual are not in reality asking the law to determine what is strictly true, right, and proper; but, as a matter of fact, however little they may think it or wish it, they are asking a very different question: whether the law may not be strained to cover the practices of which complaint is made.

There is this, also, as to ecclesiastical law-suits and their results: that never was any body of law in so great a state of confusion as the ecclesiastical law of England. Bishop Jackson, of London, used to say that there were sufficient precedents on any particular point in question to decide it in any number of different ways. The choice of the particular line of precedents must be very largely determined by the prevailing influences of the time. Where nothing is clear, selection is necessary; and the prevailing influences of the time will lend strength and colour to those precedents which are in harmony with those prevailing influences.

The Lincoln Judgment says that it is not illegal to mix water with wine before it is brought to the place of Communion; that it is not illegal to sing "O Lamb of God" at any point in the service; that it is not illegal to use the eastward position; and it seems to indicate that it is not illegal to have lighted caudles on the holy table, provided they are lit not ceremoniously, but before the service begins.

But there would be a tremendous fallacy in supposing that because the Judgment says that these things are not incon-

<sup>1</sup> A paper read to the Tunbridge Wells Clerical Conference on Tuesday, June 13, 1893, by the Archdeacon of London.

sistent with a conceivable interpretation of the law, therefore the Judgment pronounces them to be the right and proper interpretation. It does nothing of the kind; it leaves all that alone. It places us exactly where we were before; the old interpretation remains. The practices are not inconsistent with a conceivable interpretation of the law; that is all. When Bishops say that they hope the Judgment will be accepted by their dioceses, they do not for a moment mean that everybody is to adopt this conceivable and somewhat strained interpretation of the law. It is only a polite way of expressing their desire that no ritualist will go beyond it; it is the maximum of what is permissible. And the Archbishop took the sting out of that conceivable interpretation by saying that none of the practices as permitted gave any support whatever to the sacrificial view of the Holy Communion.

I am not asked to discuss the Lambeth Judgment, or to point out the consequences of the principle on which it rests of investigation into the mediæval ages before the Reformation. I am asked to make suggestions as to the proper conduct of the great mass of clergymen and laymen to whom the principles of the Reformation are dear, in consequence of the formal legal permission of practices which they had supposed forbidden.

Our own position and practice as clergymen is, as I have shown, not in the smallest degree affected by the Judgment. The proper historical direct interpretation of the rubrics remains precisely where it was before; but the position of the laity is thus far altered, that any young sacerdotal clergyman who is appointed to a parish and desires to make innovations can now say that he is acting according to a conceivable interpretation of the law, and by permission of the Lincoln Judgment as confirmed by the Privy Council. As the highest legal authorities have now recognised this dual interpretation, the rulers of the Church are bound, in my opinion, to give some redress to the laity, to whom these innovations are abhorrent. Unless two-thirds, or some very large majority, of the parishioners wish for the innovations, in my opinion it is very unjust indeed that the innovations should be permitted. As there are now two sets of practices permitted by law, it is, in my opinion, contrary alike to sound policy, good sense, and common fairness that one man should have the power to introduce the obnoxious set contrary to the wishes of the bulk of his parishioners. It is not to the point to say that the practices mean nothing; in the eyes of the man who introduced them they would mean everything, and the parishioners would know that such was his view of them,

else he would not care to introduce them at all. This is a matter to which our rulers are bound to see.

But it is more important for us to devote our attention to the state of things which the Lincoln Judgment emphasizes: the comparative weakness of those who profess Reformation principles; the comparative strength of those who look for the principles in the mediæval ages before the Reformation. It is indicated by the fact that four Bishops and 1,600 clergy belong to the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament; that more than 13,000 copies of their Intercessory paper are issued every month; that they pray that they may be permitted to receive the Holy Communion in Roman Catholic churches; that their revered and excellent leader tells them that there is no difference between them and the Church of Rome on Eucharistic Adoration; that the Guild of All Souls flourishes, which exists for the promotion of Prayers for the Dead, and masses to get them out of purgatory; that altar-books are now common which interpolate the use of Sarum with the English Communion Office, so that the clergy may have their eye on both during the Communion Service, while altar-cards are provided for the congregation that they may follow; that there are 326 churches in which masses are celebrated for the dead every month; that there are a larger number which use incense; that there are more than 1,000 which use eucharistic vestments; that the President of the English Church Union and his friends have lately put out a manifesto, "The Lord's Day and the Holy Eucharist," which points out with great frankness the mistakes of the Reformers in our present Prayer-Book, speaks most candidly of their shortcomings and blots, proposes the omission of the Ten Commandments, advocates mediæval additions to our office to bring it into line with Sarum, pronounces fasting reception to be necessary, urges the practice of Reservation, proposes the introduction of the Romish service of Benediction, wishes to alter our Cathedral Services so that there should be Mass every morning, longs that everybody should recognise that our chief religious duty is the oblation of the Lamb of God, insists on the restoration of the word "mass," and deplors the disastrous effects of the Reformation. The English Church Union has now 34,761 men in its ranks, of whom 4,200 are in Holy Orders and 29 are Bishops. This is the sort of thing which makes action necessary. The change of feeling is, indeed, so wide and great that when Cardinal Newman died the ablest, most influential, and most respected of Church newspapers, which used long ago to be considered central and moderate, said that the Church of England as we see it was his work. Quite lately the same great and important news-

paper declared that a new Reformation was going on in the Church of England which was not yet complete, and that not till it should be complete could the question of Disestablishment be viewed with any hopefulness. I have before noticed that seven of the diocesan Bishops of England have adopted mitres, the symbol of the episcopate of the unreformed Church. A large number of Theological Seminaries are diligently training young men in the principles of the Oxford Movement, between which and the symptoms which I have mentioned the grades of difference are imperceptible. The great body of church musicians, church decorators, church painters of windows, and church architects are on the same side. In planning a new church, an architect does not, as a rule, wish to make his building expressive of the principles of the Reformation, but to be a reproduction, as far as he can possibly contrive it, of the spirit of the unreformed period to the style of which his taste has led him. The same with windows and decorations. The artist tells you that art has its own laws and principles, into which such notions as the Reformation or purity of doctrine do not enter; when you assert the duty of avoiding errors long ago repudiated, he stares you in the face in unconcealed surprise. Thus the whole movement goes on merrily, and many adventitious circumstances help its rapid spread. What are you to do?

First, to understand the principles of the Reformation, and to be able to defend them. It is not enough to say: "The customs which I follow are evangelical, and were followed by my fathers; so they must be true, and that satisfies me." That is merely the policy of the obstinate and pigheaded. You must show why they are true, and why the mediæval teaching is mistaken, and in what respects the Reformers so beautifully and perfectly understood the mind of the primitive Church and of Holy Scripture. Let one recommend such books as Boulton's "Thirty-Nine Articles," Moule's "Manual of Christian Doctrine," Lightfoot's article on the Christian ministry in his "Epistle to the Philippians," and Schaff's "History of the Christian Church," published by T. and T. Clark, of Edinburgh, especially the volumes dealing with the Apostolic and Anti-Nicene periods.

Secondly, if Reformation principles are to be maintained, I cannot understand why their adherents do not see to the training of candidates for orders. They have a theological college at Highbury, a small hall at Oxford, a small hall at Cambridge, and a theological college at St. Bees. The Evangelical Pastorate at Oxford, to meet the influence of the Pusey-house, does not seem to have been taken up with zeal. Mr. Chavasse, the honoured and beloved Principal of Wycliffe Hall, tells Evan-

gelicals that there are three hundred undergraduates at Oxford coming from evangelical homes, to whom he cannot attend. He urges the scheme with great energy; he asks for £20,000, and not much more than a tenth has yet been subscribed. But besides that, surely an obvious need is a clergy school somewhere in the great towns, in South London, in Birmingham, in Sheffield, in Hull, in Manchester, in Liverpool, where graduates of Oxford and Cambridge could learn their work before they are ordained. The other great High Church newspaper, the *Church Times*, itself declares that it does not wish to see Evangelical principles extinct. Many men brought up in loyalty to the Reformation go to the seminaries and become sacerdotalists because there is nowhere else to go to learn their work. Before they are ordained they need to know something of the poor and their wants and ways; they need to know how to read aloud, how to manage their voice, how to compose an address and a sermon.

Thirdly, the adherents of the principles of the Reformation need to organize their middle-class schools, both for boys and girls. Canon Woodward in that respect set them a noble example. His schools are in the interests of the Oxford Movement, and have done probably more than anything else to make its principles familiar amongst the middle classes. It is very singular that those who adhere to the old Reformation, and do not wish to promote the new, should have done so little for the education of the children of the middle classes.

Fourthly, it would be desirable that simple, wise, well-considered handbooks and pamphlets, setting forth the principles of the Reformation and the reasons against the sacerdotal movement, should be available for everybody, and should be known far and wide amongst the people. This was the way the Oxford Movement made such wonderful progress. Every parish clergyman who does not belong to bodies with an opposite view should have a list of books and pamphlets on all kinds of subjects connected with modern controversies, and he should, if possible, have a depôt for distribution in his town or village. The Pastoral Aid Society is preparing such a catalogue, and I believe it will be of great benefit; but it must be encouraged and supported with zeal.

Fifthly, it is astonishing that the adherents of Reformation principles do not seize hold of such an opportunity as that which is open to them in London at the present moment. The Bishop of London declares, on mature consideration and experienced advice, that, after the revelations of the recent census, he requires between fifty and sixty new churches in his vast diocese. If there was one adherent of Reformation principles of the same loyalty and single-hearted enthusiasm as the late

Mr. Baird, of Cambusdoon, in Scotland, who left £500,000 to the Established Church in that country, the thing would be done. The churches would be built, and, according to the principles of the early Church, when Christianity was first planted in this country, he or those who built the churches would retain the advowson, and the principles of the Reformation would receive such an accession of support in London that nothing could possibly shake their stability. Both sides of the Church have the opportunity before them.

Sixthly, with regard to selection for the more influential and responsible positions in the Church, those are generally taken who are most in evidence. I do not think the adherents of Reformation principles sufficiently realize the influence in the present day of the ideas of Liberalism. The great question with bishops and other patrons at the present time is not so much what views does a man hold, but what work has he done, what activity can he show, what vigour and efficiency does his past record predict. There are some men who have a real spite against Reformation principles as such, but I think the greater number of bishops and patrons cannot resist the evidence of good work. Now, in our times good work comprises, amongst other elements, the following:

1. Absolute unworldliness.
2. Entire self-sacrifice.
3. Unceasing and unwearied devotion to the interests of the parishioners, spiritual and temporal.
4. Missionary zeal for home work as much as for foreign.
5. No efforts spared to get a full church.
6. An affectionate and brotherly sympathy with the character and affairs of every single human being in the parish, whether well affected to the Church or otherwise.
7. Zealous and effective preaching, suited to the simplest capacity, but interesting to all, and, if possible, extempore.
8. Sincere and unaffected interest in the social questions which interest all classes.
9. Vigorous participation in the life of the rural deanery, whether in theological discussions, unions for the support of schools, or other matters of common importance.
10. An unaffected zeal for all that concerns the united action of the diocese, in the promotion of diocesan funds, such as educational boards, church building, pensions for the clergy, and other interests, and thorough and earnest participation in diocesan conferences and meetings of every kind. It cannot be denied that the feeling of co-operate action animates in a very favourable and exemplary way all Nonconformist bodies, and the votaries of the Oxford Movement.

When every single individual adherent of Reformation

principles exhibits in these ways the sincerity of his belief and the earnestness of his work, depend upon it it will be a happy day not only for the Church, but for Reformation principles.

Seventhly, permit one who has probably preached in more churches, and of a more diverse character, than most ministers of the Church of England, to offer you a word of advice with regard to the character of your services. There is no more harmful superstition than the notion that all services in all churches ought to be of a cathedral type. In cathedrals, collegiate churches, and churches of the larger and more important sort, where the service can be monotoned with reverential musical effect, and where the responses rise and fall softly and devotionally on the vast and spacious atmosphere, there may be much to be said for such a type. But in most other churches the music cannot help being of a rough and simple description, and all ambitious efforts are damned by their want of skill. Besides that, the space is small, and it would require extraordinary proficiency to make the chanted responses sufficiently soft and harmonious to awake devotion. Where the responses are neither soft, harmonious, nor devotional, the effect is monstrous and detestable, and banishes the spirit of prayer. Many recognise that much. But then they act on a fallacy still more calamitous. They think that because they have got a choir in their chancel, and the choir is not good enough to intone a cathedral service, therefore the choir ought to monotone. If you desire to restore the spirit of devotion, earnestness, and impressiveness to your public worship, you will sternly and relentlessly expel that calamitous fallacy from your own mind, and from the minds of your organists, your choirs, your ladies, and your congregation generally. Nothing is more false or more hateful than an unmusical and uncultured choir monotoning the service on behalf of the congregation. The only excuse for it is when it is beautiful and musical—when it cannot claim these qualities it is calamitous and monstrous. As you love reality in prayer, I urge upon you with all the earnestness of which I am capable to concentrate the efforts of your choir on the chants and hymns. Require them to be silent altogether in the prayers and responses. Throw those on the sincerity and piety of the congregation. Persuade your people to repeat the prayers and responses in their own natural voice. If you doubt my words, make a pilgrimage to St. James's, Holloway, and hear what united prayer can be when it is lifted by the heartfelt devotion of a united people. If you can make the people feel that the heartiness, the beauty, the unity of the service depends upon them, you will be astonished at the fervour, reality and acceptance which will come through

the presence of the Holy Spirit Himself to your common prayer.

Eighthly, you should, I think, one and all, take a vigorous and sympathetic part in Ruridecanal Chapters, Diocesan Conferences, and such other occasional assemblies as Church Congresses. There will be your opportunity for asserting with learning, judgment, good temper, faith, prayer, and love, the pure and simple principles of the Gospel as taught by the Apostles and the Primitive Church. It betrays a want of faith to suspect that if the adherents of Reformation principles mix much with others they will lose their loyalty and the purity of their profession. If you have not the courage nor the confidence in your Lord and Master to represent His cause in such assemblies against superstition and error, then, indeed, you deserve to find the general Church moving in the opposite direction, and departing under alien influences from her ancient moorings. Upon you it depended to uphold the principles of the Gospel against all comers; and when they came, you had deserted your post.

Ninthly, let all controversy be begun, continued, and ended in prayer. It is astonishing—but it ought not so to be—how asperities are softened, and bitternesses quelled, and misunderstandings set right, when there is present the humble, trustful, forbearing, loving disposition that must be engendered by true, unceasing, fervent petitions at the throne of grace. Whether in Ruridecanal Chapter, or Diocesan Conference, or Church Congress or any other assembly, let that spirit of firmness, humility, knowledge, and power be yours, which will make opponents and friends alike take knowledge of you that you have been with Jesus. If you can trust yourselves to such a spirit there is no reason why, like Luther, you should not take every opportunity of inviting discussion, and, like Luther, nail up your Gospel thesis and invite full and free controversy wherever it can be obtained.

Ninthly, do not think about promotion. Forget altogether that there are such things as Archbishoprics, Bishoprics, Deaneries, Archdeaconries, and Canonries. Do what duty, carefully considered, summons you to perform, and do not care for the consequences. That is how the Oxford Movement has won its way, and in that it has shown you its secret. In these days, the man who speaks his own mind from the bottom of his heart, with his whole soul, without reserve, putting aside all thought of fear and favour, commands as much attention as bishops, deans, and archdeacons. Only let it be done with absolute sincerity, trustworthy learning, entire disinterestedness, and whole-hearted love and faith.

Lastly, let me remind you how much there is to encourage



you. The laity are with you. They care little about controversies, but with all their hearts they hate the confessional and sacerdotalism. Just now they are holding aloof from the life of the Church, and not much helping the objects which the Church has in view. It is for you to restore their confidence in the good sense, the stability, the loyalty of the English clergy. On the whole, you have the Bishops with you. Let me recall to you that very remarkable series of resolutions passed by the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury on the subject of Fasting Communion and Evening Communion. All necessary obligation to the one they repudiate, all necessary condemnation of the other they reject. You may not be able completely to agree with the historical survey which they present, but for their conclusions you may well be profoundly grateful. I ask you also to bear in mind yourselves, and to publish to your people, the remarks of the Archbishop of Canterbury about the Reformation, delivered first at the annual meeting of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and again in the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury. These things should be to all a great encouragement. I believe that we have only, one and all of us, to speak out in our different spheres with courage, knowledge, forbearance, love, faith and hope, and the nightmare of sacerdotalism will pass away like an evil dream; and our young men will see that there is an English and Gospel Christianity, a Primitive Catholicism, which is the truest of all ecclesiastical attitudes, and by our zeal and our good works we shall be able to convince the gainsayers, and re-establish in their full recognised national position the true and irrefragable principles for which our fathers fought and suffered and died. With the Holy Scriptures and the Book of Common Prayer firmly in our hands, in the face of all these innovations and this unwelcome new Reformation, there is ground which we can occupy with sure hope, and in which the laity will join us, indicated by the old and clear and noble motto of our ancestors, "*Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari.*"

