

Hold Fast

by

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The fourth triennial charge to the Diocese of Liverpool, November 4, 1890.

A Bishop's Triennial Visitation is in one point of view a very solemn occasion. The roll-call which precedes the Charge brings forward the grave fact that we are all passing away, and that our own names will one day disappear from the Clergy List of our Diocese. The changes of the last three years among members of our body are neither few nor unimportant. The removal of such well-known men as Archdeacon Jones, Canon Hopwood, and Canon John Stewart makes gaps in our ranks which are not easily filled up. But I cannot forget some of the last words of the late Bishop Lightfoot,¹ as he approached the end of his career: 'Men may come and men may go; individual lives float down like straws on the surface of the waters till they are lost in the ocean of eternity; but the broad, mighty, rolling stream of the Church itself—the cleansing, purifying, fertilising tide of the river of God—flows on for ever and ever.' That this stream in our Diocese may become every year wider, deeper, and more powerful, whoever among us is removed before next Visitation, is my heart's desire and prayer.

In the Charge which I am now going to address to you, I purposely refrain from saying anything about our own Diocese. I have already handled that subject at such length at the opening of our Annual Diocesan Conference last month, that I can add nothing more today. I shall confine myself exclusively to matters affecting the whole Church of which we form a part. I propose to speak my mind with the utmost plainness about certain points of peculiar importance in the present day, and to charge you with all affection, as your Bishop, to take care that you 'discern things that differ,' and 'hold fast that which is good.' I have resolved to do so, partly because I have reached an age when I cannot expect many more opportunities of addressing you collectively, and partly because of the dangerous character of the times in which we live. In the year 1890 the trumpet of an English Bishop ought to give no uncertain sound.

Perhaps we are poor judges of our own times. If we had lived in the era of the Long Parliament, when Archbishop Laud and Charles the First were beheaded, we should very likely have thought the world was coming to an end. Yet the horizon of our own times, politically, socially, and ecclesiastically, clouded by unequalled violence in parliamentary parties, by unequalled strife between labour and capital, and by unequalled absence of discipline among Churchmen—this horizon, I say, is so black that it demands the gravest attention of all sensible patriots and Christians. With abounding temporal prosperity, we seem, as a nation, to be sitting on the edge of a volcano, and at any time may be blown to pieces, and become a wreck and a ruin.

Worst of all, the air seems filled with vague agnosticism and unbelief. Faith languishes and dwindles everywhere, and looks ready to die. The immense majority of men, from the highest to the lowest, appear to think that 'nothing

is certain in religion,' and that it does not signify much what you believe. Even in our Universities, the tendency to multiply the 'dubia,' or doubtful things of Christianity, and to diminish the 'necessaria,' the essentials, appears to grow and increase every year. All the foundations of faith are out of course.

In times like these, I shall make no apology for charging my Clergy to beware of losing, insensibly, their grasp of Christian truth, and holding it with slippery and trembling fingers. I ask them, therefore, to hear me patiently this day, while I try to set before them a list of cardinal points on which I think it of essential importance to 'hold fast that which is good.' Of course I do not expect you all to agree with some of the things I am going to say. Far from it! A wise Bishop lays no claim to infallibility. But at any rate you will not be left in ignorance of your own Bishop's opinions.

I. First and foremost, let me charge you *to hold fast the great principle that Christianity is entirely true, and the only religion which God has revealed to mankind.*

You may think it strange that I begin with such an elementary proposition as this. But our lot is cast in an age of abounding rationalism, scepticism, and, I fear I must add, downright infidelity. Even among those who have not cast off all faith, some tell us there is a good deal to be said in favour of Buddhism and Mahometanism. Never, perhaps, since the days of Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian, was the truth of revealed religion so openly and unblushingly assailed, and never was the assault so speciously and plausibly conducted.

In reviews, magazines, newspapers, lectures, essays, novels, and sometimes even in sermons, scores of clever writers are incessantly waging war against the very foundations of Christianity. Reason, science, geology, anthropology, modern discoveries, free thought, are all boldly asserted to be on their side. No educated person, we are constantly told nowadays, can really believe supernatural religion, or the plenary inspiration of the Bible, or the possibility of miracles. Such ancient doctrines as the Trinity, the Divinity of Christ, the Personality of the Holy Spirit, the Atonement, the obligation of the Sabbath, the necessity and efficacy of prayer, the existence of the devil, and the reality of future punishment, are quietly put on the shelf by many professing leaders of modern thought, as useless old almanacs, or contemptuously thrown overboard as lumber! And all this is done so cleverly, and with such an appearance of candour and liberality, and with such compliments to the capacity and nobility of human nature, that multitudes of unstable Christians are carried away as by a flood, and become partially unsettled, if they do not make complete shipwreck of faith.

The existence of this plague of unbelief must not surprise us for a moment. It is only an old enemy in a new dress, an old disease in a new form. Since the day when Adam and Eve fell, the devil has never ceased to tempt men not to believe God, and has said, directly or indirectly, 'Ye shall not die, even if you do not believe.' In 'the latter days' especially, we have warrant of Scripture for expecting an abundant crop of unbelief: 'When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?' 'Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse.' 'There shall come in the last days scoffers.' (Luke 18. 8; 2 Tim. 3. 13; 2 Peter 3. 3.) Here in England scepticism is that natural rebound from semi-popery and superstition, which many wise men have long predicted and ex-

pected. It is precisely that swing of the pendulum which far-sighted students of human nature looked for; and it has come.

But, as I tell you not to be surprised at the widespread scepticism of the times, so also I must urge you not to be *shaken in mind by it*, or moved from your steadfastness. There is no real cause for alarm. The ark of God is not in danger, though the oxen seem to shake it. Christianity has survived the attacks of Hume and Hobbes and Tindal; of Collins and Woolston and Bolingbroke and Chubb; of Voltaire and Paine and Holyoake. These men made a great noise in their day, and frightened weak people; but they produced no more real effect than idle travellers produce by scratching their names on the great Pyramid of Egypt. Depend on it, Christianity in like manner will survive the attacks of the clever writers of these times. The startling novelty of many modern objections to revelation, no doubt, makes them seem more weighty than they really are. It does not follow, however, that hard knots cannot be untied because our fingers cannot untie them, or that formidable difficulties cannot be explained because our eyes cannot see through or explain them. When you cannot answer a sceptic, be content to wait for more light; but never forsake a great principle. In religion, as in many scientific questions, said Faraday, the famous chemist, 'the highest philosophy is often a judicious suspense of judgment.'

When sceptics and infidels have said all they can, we must not forget that there are three great broad facts which they have never explained away; and I am convinced they never can, and never will. Let me tell you briefly what they are. They are very simple facts, and any plain man can understand them.

(1) The first fact is *Jesus Christ Himself*. If Christianity is a mere invention of man, and the Bible is not from God, how can infidels explain Jesus Christ? His existence in history they cannot deny. How is it that without force or bribery, without arms or money, without flattering man's pride of reason, without granting any indulgence to man's lusts and passions, He has made such an immensely deep mark on the world? Who was He? What was He? Where did He come from? How is it that there has never been one like Him, neither before nor after, since the beginning of historical times? They cannot explain it. Nothing can explain it but the great foundation-principle of revealed religion, that Jesus Christ is very God, and that His Gospel is all true.

(2) The second fact is *the Bible itself*. If Christianity is a mere invention of man, and the Bible is of no more authority than any other uninspired volume, how is it that the book is what it is? How is it that a book written by a few Jews in a remote part of the earth, written at distant and various periods without concert or collusion among the writers; written by members of a nation which, compared to Greece and Rome, did nothing for literature—how is it that this book stands entirely alone, and that there is nothing that even approaches it, for high views of God, for true views of man, for solemnity of thought, for grandeur of doctrine, and for purity of morality? What account can the infidel give of this book, so deep, so simple, so wise, so free from defects? He cannot explain its existence and its nature on his principles. We only can do that who hold that the book is supernatural, and is the book of God.

(3) The third fact is *the effect which Christianity has produced on the world*. If Christianity is a mere invention of man, and not a supernatural, Divine revelation, how is it that it has wrought such a complete alteration in the state of mankind? Any well-read man knows that the moral difference between the

condition of the world before Christianity was planted, and since Christianity took root, is the difference between night and day, the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of the devil. At this very moment I defy any one to look at the map of the world, and compare the countries where men are Christians with those where men are not Christians, and to deny that these countries are as different as light and darkness, black and white. How can any infidel explain this on his principles? He cannot do it. We only can who believe that Christianity came down from God, and is the only Divine religion in the world.

Whenever you are tempted to be alarmed at the progress of infidelity, look at the three facts I have just mentioned, and cast your fears away. Take up your position boldly behind the ramparts of these three facts, and you may safely defy the utmost efforts of modern sceptics. They may often ask you a hundred questions you cannot answer, and start ingenious problems about geology, or the origin of man, or the age of the world, which you cannot solve. They may vex and irritate you with wild speculations and theories, of which at the time you cannot prove the fallacy, though you feel it. But be calm and fear not. Remember the three great facts I have named, and boldly challenge them to explain them away. The difficulties of Christianity no doubt are great; but, depend on it, they are nothing compared to the DIFFICULTIES OF INFIDELITY.

II. In the next place, let me charge you *to hold fast the authority, supremacy, and Divine inspiration of the whole Bible.*

About the authority of that blessed book I need not say much. I am speaking *ad clerum*.² I am addressing men who have answered the solemn questions of the Ordination Services, and subscribed the Thirty-nine Articles. By so doing you have declared your belief that the Scriptures are our Church's rule of faith and practice. The clergyman who preaches and teaches anything which flatly contradicts the Bible, appears to me to forget his own pledges and subscriptions, and to deal unfairly with the Church of which he is a minister.

About the inspiration of the Bible I feel it necessary to speak more fully. It is, unhappily, one of the chief subjects of controversy in the present day, and one about which a Diocese has a right to know what its Bishop thinks.

The subject of inspiration is *always important*. It is the very keel and foundation of Christianity. If Christians have no Divine book to turn to as the warrant of their doctrine and practice, they have no solid ground for present peace or hope, and no right to claim the attention of mankind. They are building on a quicksand, and their faith is vain. If the Bible is not given by inspiration throughout, and contains defects and errors, which would invalidate any legal settlement or will, it cannot be a safe guide to heaven. We ought to be able to say boldly, 'We are what we are, and we do what we do, and teach what we teach, because we have here a book which we believe to be, altogether and entirely, the Word of God.'

The subject without doubt is a *very difficult* one. It cannot be followed up without entering on ground which is dark and mysterious to mortal man. It involves the discussion of things which are miraculous, supernatural, above reason, and cannot be fully explained. But difficulties must not turn us away from any subject in religion. There is not a science in the world about which questions may not be asked which no one can answer. It is poor philosophy to say we will believe nothing unless we can understand everything! We must not

give up the subject of inspiration in despair, because it contains things ‘hard to be understood.’

One cause of difficulty lies in the fact that the Church has never defined exactly *what inspiration means*, and consequently many of the best Christians are not entirely of one mind. I am one of those who believe that the writers of the Bible were supernaturally and divinely enabled by God, as no other men ever have been, for the work which they did, and that, consequently, the book they produced is unlike any other book in existence, and stands entirely alone. Inspiration, in short, is a miracle. We must not confound it with intellectual power, such as great poets and authors possess. To talk of Shakespeare and Milton and Byron being inspired, like Moses and St. Paul, is to my mind almost profane. Nor must we confound it with the gifts and graces bestowed on the early Christians in the primitive Church. All the apostles were enabled to preach and work miracles, but not all were inspired to write. We must rather regard it as a special supernatural gift, bestowed on about thirty people out of mankind, in order to qualify them for the special business of writing the Scriptures; and we must be content to allow that, like everything miraculous, we cannot entirely explain it, though we can believe it. A miracle would not be a miracle, if it could be explained! That miracles are possible, I do not stop to prove here. I never trouble myself on that subject, until those who deny miracles have fairly grappled with the great fact that Christ rose again from the dead. I firmly believe that miracles are possible, and have been wrought; and among great miracles I place the fact that men were inspired by God to write the Bible. Inspiration, therefore, being a miracle, I frankly allow that there are difficulties about it which at present I cannot fully solve.

The exact manner, for instance, in which the minds of the inspired writers of Scripture worked when they wrote, I do not pretend to explain. I have no doubt they could not have explained it themselves. I do not admit for a moment that they were mere machines holding pens, and, like type-setters in a printing-office, did not understand what they were doing. I abhor the ‘mechanical’ theory of inspiration. I dislike the idea that men like Moses and St. Paul were no better than organ pipes, employed by the Holy Ghost, or ignorant secretaries or amanuenses, who wrote by dictation what they did not understand. I admit nothing of the kind. But I do believe that in some marvellous manner the Holy Ghost made use of the reason, the memory, the intellect, the style of thought, and the peculiar mental temperament of each writer of the Scriptures. How and in what manner this was done, I can no more explain than I can the union of two natures, God and man, in the Person of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ. I only know that there is both a Divine and a human element in the Bible, and that, while the men who wrote it were really and truly men, the book that they wrote and handed down to us is really and truly the Word of God. I know the result, but I do not understand the process. The result is, that the Bible is the written Word of God; but I can no more explain the process, than I can explain how the water became wine at Cana, or how five loaves fed five thousand men, or how the Apostle Peter walked on the water, or how a few words from our Lord’s lips raised Lazarus from the dead. I do not pretend to explain miracles, and I do not pretend to explain fully the miraculous gift of inspiration.

The position I take up is, that while the Bible-writers were not ‘machines,’ as some sneeringly say, they only wrote what God taught them to write. The

Holy Ghost put into their minds thoughts and ideas, and then guided their pens in writing and expressing them. Even when they made use of old records, chronicles, pedigrees, and lists of names, as they certainly did, they adopted, used, and compiled them under the direction of the Holy Ghost. When you read the Bible, you are not reading the unaided, self-taught composition of erring men like yourselves, but thoughts and words which were suggested by the eternal God. The men who were employed to indite the Scripture ‘spake not of themselves.’ They ‘spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.’ (2 Peter 1. 21.) He that holds a Bible in his hand should remember that he holds not the word of man, but of God. He holds a volume which *not only contains, but is God’s Word.*

In saying all this, I would not be mistaken. I only claim complete inspiration for the original languages in which the books of the Scripture were written. I admit fully that transcribers and translators were not infallible, and that occasional mistakes may have crept into the sacred text, though wonderfully few. When, therefore, some critics object to a word or a verse here and there, reason would that we should bear with them patiently, and agree to differ. Difficulties about the meaning of many places in the Bible, apparent discrepancies, obscure passages, no doubt, there always will be. But the book, as a whole, contains nothing that is not true.

But unhappily the battle of inspiration does not end here. A school of men has risen among us, who boldly deny the inspiration of large portions of the Old Testament. The book of Genesis, for example, is declared by some to possess no Divine authority, and to be only a collection of interesting fictions. I can find no words to express my entire disagreement with such theories. I maintain firmly that the Old Testament is of equal authority with the New, and that they stand or fall together. You cannot separate them, any more than you can separate the warp and woof in a piece of woven cloth. The writers of the New Testament continually quote the words of the Old Testament as of equal authority with their own, and never give the slightest hint that these quotations are not to be regarded as the Word of God. The thrice-repeated saying of our Lord, taken from Deuteronomy, ‘It is written,’ when tempted by the devil, is deeply significant and instructive. (Matt. 4. 5-10.)

But this is not the whole of my objection to these modern theories. I contend that attacks on Genesis in particular involve most dangerous consequences. They tend to dishonour our Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles. That they appear to regard the events and persons mentioned in Genesis as real, historical, and true, and not fictitious, is clear to any honest reader of the Gospels and Acts. Now, how can this be explained if Genesis is, as some say, a mere collection of fictions? You cannot explain it except on the supposition that our Lord and His apostles were ignorant, and did not know as much as modern critics do, or else that they secretly suppressed their knowledge in order to avoid offending their hearers. In short, they were either fallible or fallacious, deceived or deceivers. God forbid that we should adopt either one conclusion or the other!

I frankly confess that my whole soul revolts from these modern teachings about Genesis. When I read that our Lord Jesus Christ is ‘One with the Father,’ that ‘In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,’ that He is ‘the Light of the world,’ my mind cannot conceive the possibility of His being ignorant, as latter-day theories about Genesis certainly imply, however

fully I admit the 'Kenosis' of His Incarnation. That blessed Saviour to whom I am taught to commit my soul, in the very week that He died for my redemption, spoke of the Flood and the days of Noah as realities! If He spoke *ignorantly*, with Calvary in full view, it would shake to the foundation my confidence in His power to save me, and would destroy my peace. I abhor the idea of an ignorant Saviour! From all distrust of any part of the Bible may you ever be delivered. How any English clergyman can read a lesson from Genesis in church, if he does not believe its inspiration, I cannot understand. And how after this he can gravely ascend the pulpit, select a text from Genesis, preach a sermon on the text, and draw lessons from it, when he does not believe in his heart that the text he has chosen was given by inspiration, this, I say, is one of those things which fill my soul with amazement, and make me tremble for the ark of God. Well and wisely has this age been called 'an age of downgrade theology.' The man who only admits a partial inspiration of the Bible, has been justly compared to one with his head in a fog and his feet on a quicksand. From theories like these may you ever be preserved!

I take occasion to say that I decline to admit the correctness of the translation of '2 Tim. 3. 16, which is given in the Revised Version. I stand firmly by the Authorized Version of the text, in company with Chrysostom and Bengel, and I maintain that the translation of this verse given by the Revisers is a strained, harsh, and unnatural rendering of the Greek words. The translation 'all scripture' is amply justified by 'all flesh' in Luke 3. 6.

III. In the next place, let me charge you *to hold fast the old doctrine of the sinfulness of sin, and the corruption of human nature.*

I can find no words to express my sense of the vastness and importance of this subject. It is my firm conviction that a right knowledge of sin lies at the root of all saving religion. The first thing that God does when He makes man a new creature in Christ is to send light into his heart, and show him that he is a guilty sinner. The material creation in Genesis began with 'light,' and so also does the spiritual creation. I have an equally firm conviction that a low and imperfect view of sin is the origin of most of the errors, heresies, and false doctrines of the present day. If a man does not realize the extent and dangerous nature of his soul's disease, you cannot wonder if he is content with false or imperfect remedies. I believe that one of the chief wants of the Church in the nineteenth century has been, and is, clearer, fuller teaching about sin.

Sin, I need not remind any Bible reader, consists in doing, saying, thinking, or imagining anything that is not in perfect conformity with the mind and law of God. 'Sin,' as the Scripture saith, is 'the transgression of the law.' (1 John 3. 4.) The slightest outward or inward departure from absolute mathematical parallelism with God's revealed will and character constitutes a sin, and at once makes us guilty in God's sight. The Ninth Article of our Church declares that sin is 'the fault and corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam; whereby man is very far gone (*quam longissime*, is the Latin) from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit; and, therefore, in every person born into the world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation.' Sin, in short, is that vast moral disease which affects the whole human race, of every rank and class and name and nation and people and

tongue, the plague of rulers and statesmen, the divider of Churches, the destroyer of family happiness, the cause of all the miseries in the world.

Now I am obliged to declare my conviction that the extent and vileness and deceitfulness of sin are a subject which is not sufficiently brought forward in the religious teaching of these last days. I do not say it is ignored altogether. But I do say that it is not pressed on congregations in its Scriptural proportion, and in harmony with the two grand Confessions of our Prayer-book. The consequences are very serious.

One result, I am persuaded, is the immense increase of that *sensuous, ceremonial, formal kind of Christianity*, which has swept over England like a flood in the last forty years, and carried away so many before it. I can well believe that there is much that is attractive and satisfying in this system of religion, to a certain order of minds, so long as the conscience is not fully enlightened. But when that wonderful part of our constitution is really awake and alive, I find it hard to believe that a sensuous, ceremonial Christianity will thoroughly satisfy us. A little child is easily quieted and amused with gaudy toys and dolls and rattles, so long as it is not hungry; but once let it feel the cravings of nature within, and we know that nothing will satisfy it but food. Just so it is with man in the matter of his soul. Music and singing and flowers and banners and processions and beautiful vestments and confessionals and man-made ceremonies of semi-Romish character may do well enough for man under certain conditions. But once let him awake and arise from the dead, and he will not rest content with these things. They will seem to him mere solemn triflings and a waste of time. Once let him see his sin, and he must see his Saviour, in order to obtain rest for his soul. He feels stricken with a deadly disease; and nothing will satisfy him but the Great Physician. He hungers and thirsts; and he must have nothing less than the bread of life. I may seem bold in what I am about to say, but I fearlessly venture the assertion, that one half of the semi-Romanism of the last forty years would never have existed, if English people had been taught more fully and clearly the nature, vileness, and sinfulness of sin.

I believe the likeliest way to cure and mend this defective kind of religion is to bring forward more prominently, and expound more frequently, the Ten Commandments as the true test of sin. They really seem to me to have fallen into the rear of late, and, with the exception of the sixth and eighth, to receive less attention than they deserve. It is an awkward fact that, in consequence of early administrations of the Lord's Supper, the ante-communion service at our full morning worship is so often omitted, that many persons rarely hear the Decalogue at all. Let us try to revive the old teaching in nurseries, in schools, in training colleges, in universities. Let us not forget that 'the law is good if a man use it lawfully,' and that 'by the law is the knowledge of sin.' (1 Tim. 1. 8; Rom. 3. 20, 7. 7.) Let us bring it to the front once more, and press it on men's attention. Let us expound and beat out the Ten Commandments, and show the length and breadth and depth and height of their requirements. It is the way of our Lord in the Sermon on the Mount. It was the way of great divines like Bishops Andrews and Leighton and Hopkins and Patrick, whose works on the Commandments are classics to this day.

We should do well to walk in their steps. We may depend upon it, men will never come to Christ, and stay with Christ, and live for Christ, unless they feel their sins, and know their need of a Saviour. Those whom the Holy Spirit draws to Christ are those whom the Spirit has convinced of sin. Without real

conviction of sin, men may seem to come to Christ and follow Him for a season, but they will soon fall away and return to the world.

I commend this point to your private consideration. I suspect that the prevailing desire to make things pleasant to hearers, and the fear of giving offence by plain speaking, have much to say to the neglect of the law in this day. But the testimony of the Bible is clear: 'By the law is the knowledge of sin.' (Rom. 3. 20, 7. 7). The words of the late Bishop Lightfoot are most deeply true: 'The consciousness of sin is the true pathway to heaven.'

IV. In the next place, let me charge you *to hold fast the great foundation-principle of Scripture and our Church, that forgiveness of sins is only given to man through the atoning death of Jesus Christ on the cross.*

This is a deep and solemn subject; but there is such an immense amount of strange doctrine floating in the air about it, that I dare not pass it over. It seems to me to lie so near the roots of the Gospel, that it is my duty not to be silent.

So far as I can understand and I am not sure that I do—the theory of many appears to be that it is the incarnation rather than the sacrifice—the human nature that Christ took on Him rather than the death He died—which is intended to be the chief ground of hope for our souls. It seems to be held that the blood which 'cleanseth from all sin' is not so much the life-blood which Christ shed when He died, as the blood of human nature of which He became partaker when He was born into the world, and by partaking ennobled all Adam's race, and made salvation possible for fallen man. As to the old doctrine that the blood which flowed on Calvary was the ransom paid for our souls and the price of our redemption from the punishment due to our sins, it seems to be thrown aside by many like an obsolete dogma, unworthy of these latter days. Some even sneer at it as 'blood theology,' and tell us that Christ's death was only the death of a great martyr, and a grand example of perfect submission to God's will, but not a propitiation for sin.

Now I know not what some of you may think of the theory I have tried to delineate; but I must plainly say that I cannot for a moment admit that it is true, and will bear the test of calm examination. The subject is one about which I dare not call any one master.

(1) I cannot reconcile the theory with scores of *plain texts in the New Testament*, in which the forgiveness of sins, salvation, justification, reconciliation, redemption, deliverance from wrath to come, and peace with God, appear to be inseparably connected with the sufferings and death of Christ, and not with His life. The expression in Romans, 'We shall be saved by his life' (Rom. 5. 10), is sometimes quoted as a reply to what I am saying. But that text does not mean anything but Christ's life of intercession, and it is like the words in Hebrews: 'He is able to save to the uttermost ... seeing that he ever liveth to make intercession.' (Heb. 7. 25.) When Moses and Elias appeared in the Transfiguration, the one subject they were heard speaking about was our Lord's 'decease,' and not His life. (Luke 9. 31.) When the saints in Revelation are shown to us in vision as singing a new song before the throne, the theme of it was, 'Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.' (Rev. 5. 9.)

(2) I cannot reconcile the theory with the uniform language of *our authorised formularies* on the subject of Christ's death. The Te Deum, the Litany, the Office for the Visitation of the Sick, the Communion Service, all contain expressions about the precious blood and death, which point to our Lord's vicarious sufferings on Calvary, as the object on which Christians should espe-

cially look in all their thoughts, when they look to Him for salvation. Redemption by death appears to my eyes to turn up everywhere. The well-known Homily of Salvation confirms this view most fully, to say nothing of other Homilies.

(3) I cannot reconcile the theory with the uniform teaching of the *Old Testament dispensation* about the way of access to God. The great principle which, like a red line, runs through the whole Mosaic ceremonial, is the absolute necessity of sacrifice. Day after day, all the year round, and especially at the Passover, the Jew was taught by emblems and figures that ‘without shedding of blood’ there was no safety for the soul, and ‘no remission of sins.’ If the Mosaic system was meant to keep before the mind of Israel, by types and figures, the great future sacrifice of the Lamb of God on Calvary, and redemption by His blood, I can quite see its reasonableness. But if the vicarious death of Christ was not to be the main purpose of His coming into the world, the incessant slaughter of innocent animals on Jewish altars for fourteen hundred years appears to my eyes an unnecessary waste of animal life, inconsistent with God’s mercy towards all His creatures, and admitting of no satisfactory explanation.

(4) Last, but not least, I cannot reconcile the theory with the unvarying *language of our Prayer-book* on the subject of the Lord’s Supper. In that holy ordinance, St. Paul tells us that we ‘show the Lord’s death till He come.’ (1 Cor. 11. 26.) His death, observe, not His life! Hence our Catechism tells every child that this blessed sacrament was ordained ‘for the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ.’ The Communion Office in one place speaks of Christ’s ‘meritorious cross and passion, whereby alone we obtain remission of our sins.’ In another it bids us give hearty thanks ‘for the redemption of the world by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ.’ In a third it tells us that God did give ‘His only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption, who made there by His one oblation of Himself once offered, a full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.’ If these remarkable expressions do not point to the death of Christ rather than His life, His crucifixion rather than His incarnation, as the object of faith and the one ground of man’s hope for his soul, I do not know what Prayer-book words mean.

I may not dwell longer on this solemn subject. If time permitted, I might remind you how the ‘story of the cross’ and the blood has always been found the most effective weapon in the mission field all over the globe. But the limits of a Charge will not allow me. If others are content to turn away from the ‘old paths’ of redemption by blood and substitution, and to rest on a vague hope that, *somehow or other*, they will be saved by Christ’s incarnation, I am not their judge. Give me rather for my faith the standing-place of the noble army of Martyrs and the goodly company of Reformers, namely, the blood and passion of Christ. I dare not launch forth into a world unknown on any other plank but this. To use the words inscribed on an old Kentish tombstone:

*Christ’s death is my life;
My death to life the portal;
Thus through two deaths
I’ll reach one life immortal.*

V. Let me charge you, in the next place, *to hold fast sound and scriptural views of the work of the Holy Ghost.*

Faith in the Holy Ghost, we must always remember, is as truly a part of Christianity as faith in Christ. Every child who repeats the Church Catechism is taught to say, 'I learn to believe in God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me and all the elect people of God.' Furthermore, the work of the Holy Ghost, though mysterious, will always be known by the fruits it produces in the character and conduct of those in whom He dwells. It is like light which can be seen, and fire which can be felt, and wind which causes noticeable results. Where there are no fruits of the Spirit, there is no presence of the Spirit. Those fruits, I need not tell you, are always the same, conviction of sin, true repentance, lively faith in Christ, and holiness of heart and life.

Now I believe this kind of truth about the work of the Holy Ghost needs strongly to be pressed on congregations in the present day. I am afraid there are myriads of professing Christians throughout the land, who really know nothing about the Holy Ghost, except the declaration of belief in Him in the Creed. They seem to think that as baptized members of a great ecclesiastical corporation, they possess all the privileges of members. But of the work of the Spirit on their own individual hearts, of conversion, repentance, and faith, they know nothing at all. They are spiritually asleep and dead, and unless they awake are in great danger. To arouse such persons to a sense of their unsatisfactory condition, to stir them to see that if there be any Holy Ghost, they ought to know something of Him by inward experience, and never rest till they feel this. This is work which I am convinced every clergyman ought to keep continually in view, and I entreat you to do so this day. Not only preach Christ, but take care that you also preach the Holy Ghost.

But I may not stop here. There are other classes of Christians besides those to whom I have just referred, who need sound scriptural teaching about the work of the Holy Ghost. Let me explain what I mean. I suppose no intelligent Churchman can fail to see that there has been of late years an immense increase of what I must call, for want of a better phrase, *public religion* in the land. Services of all sorts are strangely multiplied. Places of worship are thrown open for prayer and preaching and administration of the Lord's Supper, at least ten times as much as they were fifty years ago. Services in cathedral naves, meetings in large public rooms like the Agricultural Hall and Mildmay Conference Building, mission services carried on day after day and evening after evening, Holiness meetings, Higher-life conventions—all these have become common and familiar things. They are, in fact, established institutions of the day, and the crowds who attend them supply plain proof that they are popular. In short, we find ourselves face to face with the undeniable fact that the last quarter of the nineteenth century is an age of an immense amount of *public religion*.

I am not going to find fault with this. Let no one suppose that for a moment. On the contrary, I thank God for the revival of the old apostolic plan of 'aggressiveness' in religion, and the evident spread of a desire 'by all means to save some.' (1 Cor. 9. 22.) I thank God for shortened services, home missions, and evangelistic movements like that of Moody and Sankey, and Mr. Aitken.³ I thank God for any organized effort to raise the standard of holiness in the land. It has long been, and is, terribly low. Anything is better than torpor, apa-

thy, and inaction. 'If Christ is preached, I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.' (Phil. i. 18.) Prophets and righteous men in England once desired to see these things, and never saw them. If Whitefield and Wesley, and Rowland, and Grimshaw, and Berridge had been told in their day that a time would come when English Archbishops and Bishops would not only sanction mission services, but take an active part in them, I can hardly think they would have believed it. Rather, I suspect, they would have been tempted to say, like the Samaritan nobleman in Elisha's time, 'If the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be?' (2 Kings 7. 2.)

But while we are thankful for the increase of *public* religion, we must never forget that, unless it is accompanied by *private* religion, it is of no real solid value, and may even produce most mischievous effects. Incessant running after sensational preachers; incessant attendance at hot, crowded meetings protracted to late hours; incessant craving after fresh excitement and highly-spiced pulpit novelties—all this kind of thing is calculated to produce a very unhealthy style of Christianity; and, in many cases, I am afraid, the end is utter ruin of soul. For, unhappily, those who make *public* religion everything, are often led away by mere temporary emotions, after some grand display of ecclesiastical oratory, into professing far more than they really feel. After this, they can only be kept up to the mark, which they imagine they have reached, by a constant succession of religious excitements. By and by, as with opium-eaters and dram-drinkers, there comes a time when their dose loses its power, and a feeling of exhaustion and discontent begins to creep over their minds. Too often, I fear, the conclusion of the whole matter is a relapse into utter deadness and unbelief, and a complete return to the world. And all results from having nothing but a *public* religion! Oh that people would remember that it was not the wind, or the fire, or the earthquake, which showed Elijah the presence of God, but 'the still small voice.' (1 Kings 19. 12.)

I desire to lift up a warning voice on this subject. I want to see no decrease of *public* religion, remember; but I do want to promote an increase of that religion which is private between each man and his God, and that religion which is most beautifully exhibited at home. I want to see more attention paid to those passive graces which are the truest evidence of the work of the Spirit. To be religious among the religious, and spiritual among the spiritual, all this is comparatively easy. But to adorn the Gospel, and be Christ-like, in the midst of a large family circle of unconverted and uncongenial relatives; to be always patient, gentle, loving, kind, unselfish, good-tempered; this is the grandest fruit of the Holy Ghost. We want more of this kind of religion. The root of a plant or tree makes no show above ground. If you dig down to it and examine it, it is a poor, dirty, coarse-looking thing, and not nearly so beautiful to the eye as the fruit or leaf or flower. But that despised root, nevertheless, is the true source of all the life, health, vigour, and fertility which your eyes see, and without it the plant or tree would soon die. Now, private religion is the root of all vital Christianity. Without it we may make a brave show in the meeting or on the platform, and sing loud, and shed many tears, and have a name to live, and the praise of man. But without it we are dead before God.

Our forefathers had far fewer means and opportunities than we have. Full religious meetings and crowds, except occasionally in a large room or in a field, when such men as Whitefield or Wesley or Rowland preached, these were things of which they knew nothing. Their proceedings were neither fash-

ionable nor popular, and often brought on them more persecution and abuse than praise. But the few weapons they used, they used well. I have a strong impression that they had among them more of the presence of the Holy Ghost than we have. In quantity of religious profession we have far surpassed them; in quality, I fear, we are sadly behind. With less noise and applause from man, they made, I believe, a far deeper mark for God on their generation than we do, with all our conferences, and meetings, and mission rooms, and halls, and multiplied religious appliances. Their converts, I suspect, like the old-fashioned cloths and linens, wore better and lasted longer, and faded less and kept colour, and were more stable and rooted and grounded than many of the new-born babes of this day. And what was the reason of all this? Simply, I believe, that they gave more attention to private religion than we generally do. There was more deep, solid work, quiet work of the Holy Ghost, among them. There was more private Bible-reading and private prayer. They walked closely with God, and honoured Him in private, and so He honoured them in public. Oh, let us follow them as they followed Christ! Let us exhort our people to go and do likewise. Let us honour the Holy Ghost more than we have done.

VI. Let me charge you, in the next place, *to hold fast the old doctrine of our Church about the two sacraments.*

You must not suppose that I am about to discuss the thorny questions which are connected with the Baptismal Service and the ritual of the Lord's Supper. Nothing of the kind! The one only point which I am going to press on your attention is the importance of always teaching the necessity of a right reception of the sacraments. We must not only receive them, but receive them *rightly*.

You must all be aware that extravagant views of the effects of Baptism and the Lord's Supper have been in every age of the Church the most fertile source of mischievous superstition. Such is the intensity of man's natural tendency to formalism in religion, that myriads have always clung to the idea that these two sacraments necessarily confer grace, independently of faith, in those that receive them, and that they work on the soul in a kind of physical way, if I may so speak, like medicines on the body. The high-flown rhetorical language of the Fathers about them did immense harm in the early ages. The Church of Rome has stereotyped and crystallized the error, by the decree of the Council of Trent, which says: 'Whosoever shall affirm that grace is not conferred by these sacraments of the new law, by their own power (*ex opere operato*), but that faith in the Divine promise is all that is necessary to obtain grace: let him be accursed.'⁴ Thousands of English Churchmen, wittingly or unwittingly, seem to maintain practically the same view as the Church of Rome, and to attribute to the mere outward administration of the two sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper a kind of invariable influence and power, no matter how, or with what feeling, intention, heart and spirit, they are used.

Now, to these extravagant views of the effect of the sacraments, I unhesitatingly assert that the Church of England gives no countenance at all. The Twenty-fifth Article declares plainly about both sacraments, that 'in such *only* as worthily receive the same they have a wholesome effect or operation; but they that receive them unworthily, purchase to themselves damnation.' The Twenty-eighth Article says: 'To such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ,

and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ.’ The Twenty-ninth Article says: ‘The wicked, and such as be *void of a lively faith*, although they do carnally and visibly press with their teeth the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, yet in no wise are they partakers of Christ: but rather, to their condemnation, do eat and drink the sign or sacrament of so great a thing.’

I do hope my Clergy in this day will stand firm on this subject. There is, I am afraid, a sad disposition to give way and recede from scriptural and Church of England truth in this direction. Partly from a fear of not honouring the sacraments enough, partly from the pressure of modern teaching, there is a strong tendency to exalt Baptism and the Lord’s Supper to a place never given to them in Scripture, and especially not in the pastoral Epistles. Let us set our foot down firmly on the wise and moderate principles laid down in our Articles, and refuse to go one inch beyond. Let us honour sacraments as holy ordinances appointed by Christ Himself, and blessed means of grace, though most shockingly neglected, I grieve to say, by many churchgoers who never go to the Lord’s Table. But let us steadily refuse to admit that Christ’s sacraments convey grace ‘*ex opere operato*,’ the external act, and that in every case where they are administered, good must of necessity be done, no matter how or by whom they are received. Let us refuse to admit that they are the principal ‘*media*’ between Christ and the soul—above faith, above preaching, above prayer, and above the Word. Let us maintain, with the judicious Hooker, that ‘all receive not the grace of God, who receive the sacraments of His grace.’ Above all, let us never encourage any one to suppose he will receive any benefit from the Lord’s Supper, unless he comes to it with the qualifications laid down at the end of the Church Catechism, ‘with repentance for sin, and lively faith in Christ, and charity toward all men.’ St. Paul says there is such a thing as ‘eating and drinking unworthily’ in the Lord’s Supper. To press men to become communicants who neither repent nor believe, is no kindness, and does more harm than good.

VII. In the next place, let me charge you *to hold fast the old doctrine of the Church of England about the sanctity and right observance of the Sabbath Day*.

I name this point because our old English Sunday appears to me to be in great danger. We live in perilous times. Partly from the spread of infidelity, that old enemy of the Lord’s Day; partly from the morbid love of liberty, and letting every one do as he likes; partly from the exaggerated love of pleasure which marks this age; partly from the facilities afforded by railways for Sabbath travelling, of which our fathers knew nothing, and got on well enough without them; partly from one cause and partly from another, the devil is just now getting more help in his campaign against the Lord’s Day than he has done since the Reformation. You may see what I mean in the persistent attempts frequently made to throw open places of amusement, aquariums, libraries, theatres, museums, picture galleries, and the like, under the plausible pretence of ‘affording recreation to the working-classes’! All such attempts, I maintain, ought to be firmly and vigilantly resisted. They are the first steps towards a Continental Sunday, and a general flood of Sabbath desecration, Sunday shop-opening, and Sunday delivery of letters in London. I would not have you give way to such attempts. ‘No surrender!’ should be our cry. Let us

fight to the last plank for the old English Sunday. Give up the outworks, and the citadel will soon fall.

That laymen of high position and education, noblemen, philosophers, and scientific lecturers, should assist the attempt to break down the standard of Sunday observance, is matter for deep regret. I can only suppose that they do it in ignorance. If they would only study hearts and consciences and death-bed feelings half as much as they study political economy, or stones and plants and beasts and geology and astronomy and light and chemistry and the secrets of earth and air and sea, I believe they would not act as they do. I pity and pray for them. 'They know not what they do.'

But how any clergyman holding office in the Church of England, and reading the Fourth Commandment every Sunday to his congregation, can lend his aid to movements which must infallibly prevent the Sabbath being kept holy, if they succeed, is one of those mysteries of the nineteenth century which pass my understanding. I am amazed, pained, troubled, grieved, and astonished. The good that the best clergyman does at his very best in a fallen world is small. But he that expects to do good by introducing a Continental Sunday into his parish, exhibits, in my judgment, however excellent his intentions, great ignorance of human nature. He is cutting off his right hand, and destroying his own usefulness. Whatever may be the bad habits of the working-classes in large parishes, they will never be cured by organizing modes of breaking the Fourth Commandment. We should call that statesman a poor lawgiver who sanctioned petty larceny in order to prevent burglary; and I call that clergyman an unwise man, who, in order to stop drunkenness and its concomitants, is prepared to throw overboard the Sabbath Day. Surely to sacrifice one commandment in order to prevent the breach of another, is neither Christianity nor common-sense. It is, in my opinion, 'doing evil that good may come.'

The best practical way of resisting the attack made on the Sabbath in the present day, is to supply the working-classes with plain instruction on the subject, and to open their eyes to all its bearings. I make no apology for urging my brethren in the ministry to do this continually.

Tell the working-classes never to be taken in and deluded by those who want the sanctity of the Lord's Day to be more publicly invaded than it is, and yet say they are 'their friends'! However well-meaning and fair-spoken such persons may be, they are not real friends. They are in reality their worst enemies. They are taking the surest course to add to their burdens. They do not mean it, very likely, but in reality they are doing them a cruel injury.

Tell the working-classes that if English Sundays are ever turned into days of play and amusement, they will soon become days of labour and work. It is vain to suppose that it can be avoided. It never has been in other countries. It never would be in our own land. Once establish the principle that libraries, picture galleries, aquariums, museums, and crystal palaces, are to be thrown open on Sundays, and you let in the thin edge of the wedge. The enemy would have got inside the walls. The sacredness of the day of rest would be gone. Shops would soon be opened. Farmers would insist on cultivating the land, or getting in hay or corn on Sundays. Factories would go on working. Contractors would press forward their operations.

Tell the working-classes that if they ever lose their old English Sabbath, they will soon find that they have lost their best friend. Tell them that those who want to secure them a little more time for rest and relaxation should not

try to take that time out of Sunday. Let them take a little piece out of one of the six working days, if possible, but not a bit out of the day of God. Tell them that as the world has got six days for its business, and God has only left Himself one for His, it is only fair and right that the world should give up some of its time before we begin robbing God of His.

After all, there is a world to come, a life after death, an eternity either in heaven or hell. We must all die at last, and stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, when we rise again. Never, never let us cease to maintain and proclaim these great realities, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. Never let us forget that the value we put on the Lord's Day, and the manner in which we spend it, are some of the most useful and searching tests of our fitness to die, and our readiness for heaven.⁵

VIII. Let me charge you, in the next place, *to hold fast the teaching of Scripture and the Prayer-book about the state of man after death.*

This is a very solemn and painful topic, and flesh and blood naturally shrink from its contemplation. But so many strange doctrines are floating in the air about the whole subject, that I dare not refuse to consider it. The language of the Bible and the Liturgy about 'judgment to come' and the future punishment of those who die impenitent, appear to me so distinct, that I do not see how it can be explained away. Those who object to the doctrine of future punishment, talk loudly about love and charity, and say that it does not harmonize with the merciful and compassionate character of God. But what saith the Scripture? Who ever spoke such loving and merciful words as our Lord Jesus Christ? Yet His are the lips which three times over describe the consequence of impenitence and sin, as 'the worm that never dies, and the fire that is not quenched.' He is the Person who speaks in one sentence of the wicked going away into 'everlasting punishment,' and the righteous into 'life eternal.' (Mark 9. 43-48; Matt. 25. 46)⁶ Who does not remember the Apostle Paul's words about charity? Yet he is the very Apostle who says the wicked 'shall be punished with everlasting destruction' (2 Thess. 1. 9). Who does not know the spirit of love which runs all through St. John's Gospel and Epistles? Yet the beloved Apostle is the very writer in the New Testament who dwells most strongly, in the book of Revelation, on the reality and eternity of future woe. What shall we say to these things? Shall we be wise above that which is written? Shall we admit the dangerous principle that words in Scripture do not mean what they appear to mean? If so, where are we to stop? Is it not far better to lay our hands on our mouths and say, 'Whatsoever God has written must be true.' 'Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.' (Rev. 16. 7.)

The language of our Prayer-book on this deep and awful subject is very remarkable. Almost the first petition in our matchless Litany contains this sentence, 'From everlasting damnation, good Lord, deliver us.' The Catechism teaches every child who learns it, that whenever we repeat the Lord's Prayer we desire our Heavenly Father to 'keep us from our ghostly enemy and from everlasting death.' Even in our Burial Service we pray at the grave-side, 'Deliver us not into the bitter pains of eternal death.' Once more I ask, 'What shall we say to these things?' Shall we teach our congregations that even when people live and die in sin, we may hope for their happiness in a remote future?

Surely the common sense of many of our worshippers would reply, that if this is the case, Prayer-book words mean nothing at all.

I lay no claim to any peculiar knowledge of Scripture. I feel daily that I am no more infallible than the Bishop of Rome. But I must speak according to the light which God has given to me, and I do not think I should do my duty if I did not raise a warning voice on this subject, and try to put the clergy of my Diocese on their guard. Six thousand years ago, sin entered into the world by the devil's daring falsehood: 'Ye shall not surely die.' (Gen. 3. 4.) At the end of six thousand years, the great enemy of mankind is still using his old weapon, and trying to persuade men that they may live and die in sin, and yet at some distant period may be finally saved. Let us not be ignorant of his devices. Let us walk steadily in the old paths. Let us hold fast the old truth, and believe that, as the happiness of the saved is eternal, so also is the misery of the lost.⁷

(1) Let us hold it fast *in the interest of the whole system of revealed religion*. What was the use of God's Son becoming incarnate, agonizing in Gethsemane, and dying on the cross to make atonement, if men can be finally saved without believing on Him? Where is the slightest proof that saving faith in Christ's blood can ever begin after death? Where is the need of the Holy Ghost, if sinners are at last to enter heaven without conversion and renewal of heart? Where can we find the smallest evidence that any one can be born again after death, and have a new heart, if he dies in an unregenerate state? If a man may escape eternal punishment at last, without faith in Christ or sanctification of the Spirit, sin is no longer an infinite evil, and there was no need for Christ to die on Calvary.

(2) Let us hold it fast *for the sake of holiness and morality*. I can imagine nothing so pleasant to flesh and blood, as the specious theory that we may live in sin and yet escape eternal perdition; and that, although we 'serve divers lusts and pleasures' while we are here, we shall somehow or other all get to heaven hereafter! Only tell the young man who is 'wasting his substance in riotous living,' that there is a heaven at last, even for those who live and die in sin, and he is never likely to turn from evil. What does it signify how he lives, if there is no judgment to come? Why should he repent and take up the cross, if he can get to heaven at last without trouble?

(3) Finally, let us hold it fast *for the sake of the common hopes of all God's saints*. Let us distinctly understand that every blow struck at the eternity of punishment, is an equally heavy blow at the eternity of reward. It is impossible to separate the two things. No ingenious theological definition can divide them. They stand or fall together. The same language is used, the same figures of speech are employed, when the Bible speaks about either condition. Every attack on the duration of hell is also an attack on the duration of heaven.⁸ It is a deep and true saying, 'With the sinner's fear our hope departs.'

I turn from this part of my Charge with a strong sense of its painfulness. I feel keenly, with Robert M'Cheyne, that 'it is a difficult subject to handle lovingly.' But I turn from it with an equally strong conviction, that if we believe the Bible we must never give up anything which it contains. From hard, austere, and unmerciful theology, Good Lord, deliver us! If men are not saved, it is not because God does not love them, and is not willing to save them, but because they 'will not come to Christ.' (John 5. 40.) But we must not be wise above that which is written. No morbid liberality, so called, must induce us to

reject anything which God has revealed about the next world. Men sometimes talk exclusively about God's mercy and love and compassion, as if He had no other attributes, and leave out of sight entirely His holiness and His purity, His justice and His unchangeableness, and His hatred of sin. Let us beware of falling into this delusion. It is a growing evil in these latter days. Low and inadequate views of the unutterable vileness and filthiness of sin, and of the unutterable purity of the eternal God, are fertile sources of error about man's future state. Let us think of the mighty Being with whom we have to do, as He Himself declared His character to Moses, saying, 'The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin.' But let us not forget the solemn clause which concludes the sentence: 'And *that will by no means clear the guilty.*' (Exod. 34. 6, 7.) Unrepented sin is an eternal evil, and can never cease to be sin; and He with whom we have to do is an eternal God.

IX. In the last place, let me charge you *to hold fast the great Protestant principles on which the Church of England was reformed three hundred and fifty years ago, and to resist firmly all attempts to promote reunion with the Church of Rome.*

There was a time when it would have been needless for a Bishop to offer such advice to his clergy. But times have strangely altered. No intelligent observer can fail to observe that the tone of public feeling in England about Romanism has undergone a great change in the last sixty years. There is no longer that general dislike, dread, and aversion to Popery, which was once almost universal in this realm. The edge of the old British feeling about Protestantism seems blunted and dull. Some profess to be tired of all religious controversy, and are ready to sacrifice God's truth for the sake of peace. Some look on Romanism as simply one among many English forms of religion, and neither worse nor better than others. Some try to persuade us that Romanism is changed, and not nearly so bad as it used to be. Some boldly point to the faults of Protestants, and loudly cry that Romanists are quite as good as ourselves. Some think it fine and liberal to maintain that we have no right to think any one wrong who pays taxes and is in earnest about his creed. And yet the two great historical facts, (1) that ignorance, immorality, and superstition reigned supreme in England four hundred years ago under Popery; (2) that the Reformation was the greatest blessing God ever gave to this land—both these are facts which no one but a Romanist ever thought of disputing fifty years ago! In the present day, alas! it is convenient and fashionable to forget them. In short, at the rate we are going, I shall not be surprised if it is soon proposed to repeal the Act of Settlement as too narrow and illiberal for the nineteenth century, and to allow the Crown of England to be worn by a Papist.⁹

The *causes* of this melancholy change of feeling are not hard to discover.

(1) It arises partly from the untiring zeal of the Romish Church herself. Her agents never slumber or sleep, whatever English Churchmen may do. With unwearied zeal they compass sea and land to make one proselyte. With a watchful pertinacity, worthy of a better cause, they leave no stone unturned, in the palace or the workhouse, to promote their cause. (2) It has been furthered immensely by the proceedings of a zealous, well-meaning, but sadly mistaken party within the Church of England, which has given many converts, like

Newman and Manning, to the Church of Rome. The novel teaching and ritual of modern days have gradually familiarized people with every distinctive doctrine and practice of Romanism—the real presence, the mass, auricular confession and priestly absolution, the sacerdotal character of the ministry, the monastic system, and a histrionic, sensuous, showy style of public worship. The natural result is that many simple people see no mighty harm in downright genuine Popery. (3) Last, but not least, the spurious liberality of the day we live in, helps on the Rome-ward tendency. It is fashionable now to say that all sects should be equal, that the State should have nothing to do with religion, that all creeds should be regarded with equal favour and respect, and that there is a substratum of common truth at the bottom of all religion, whether Buddhism, Mahometanism, or Christianity! The consequence is, that myriads of ignorant folks begin to think there is nothing peculiarly dangerous in the tenets of Papists any more than in the tenets of Methodists, Independents, Presbyterians, or Baptists, and that we ought to let Romanism alone, and never expose its unscriptural and Christ-dishonouring character.

The *consequences* of this changed tone of feeling, I am bold to say, will be most disastrous and mischievous, unless loyal Churchmen can be aroused to see their danger. Once let Popery get her foot again on the neck of England, and there will be an end of all our national greatness. God will forsake us, and we shall sink to the level of Portugal and Spain. With Bible-reading discouraged, with private judgment forbidden, with the way to Christ's cross narrowed or blocked up, with priestcraft re-established, with auricular confession set up in every parish, with monasteries and nunneries dotted over the land, with women everywhere kneeling like serfs and slaves at the feet of clergymen, with men casting off all faith, and becoming sceptics, with schools and colleges made seminaries of Jesuitism, with free thought denounced and anathematized—with all these things the distinctive manliness and independence of the British character will gradually dwindle, wither, pine away, and be destroyed; and England will be ruined. And all these things, I firmly believe, will come, unless the old feeling about the value of Protestantism can be revived.

I warn all who hear this Charge, that the times require you to awake and be on your guard. Be ready, with all diligence, according to your ordination vow, to 'drive away all erroneous and strange doctrine contrary to God's Word.' Hold firmly, if you please, the old loyal High Church principles of Andrews and Hooker and Ken and Taylor and Barrow and Stillingfleet and Bull and Beveridge, if you conscientiously prefer them. But, like those great divines, resist Romanism, and beware of any religious teaching which, wittingly or unwittingly, paves the way to it. I beseech you to realize the painful fact that the Protestantism of this country is gradually ebbing away, and I entreat you, as Christians and patriots, to resist the growing tendency to forget the blessings of the English Reformation.

For Christ's sake, for the sake of the Church of England, for the sake of our country, for the sake of our children, let us not loose our moorings, and drift back into the waters which our fathers wisely left three hundred and fifty years ago. They separated from Rome for just and sufficient reasons, as Bishop Jewel has shown in his matchless, though little-read, Apology. Those reasons remain to the present day unshaken and unrefuted. Nine times over, your own Thirty-nine Articles condemn, in plain and explicit language, the leading doc-

trines of the Church of Rome; and these Articles are still binding on every minister of the Church of England. Then let us resolve to have no peace with Rome till Rome abjures her errors, and is at peace with Christ. Till Rome does that, the vaunted reunion of Western Churches, which some talk of, and press upon our notice, is an insult to the Church of England.

I must now bring this over-long Charge to a conclusion. I am afraid it will appear to some a mere dry statement of fossil theological points, unworthy of the nineteenth century. Be it so. I am content to wait. The dark days of sorrow, the sick-bed, the death-bed, and above all the day of judgment, will teach us all in a few years whether the old-fashioned theology which men are so fond of decrying in 1890, is a thing to be despised. I will wind up all with a few practical words about our present and our future duty.

(1) As to *the present*, it is vain to deny that our beloved Church is placed in a most dangerous position by our ‘unhappy divisions,’ and the conspicuous absence of any attempt to heal them. Year after year the gulf between discordant parties within our pale seems to yawn wider and grow deeper, and some violent catastrophe appears ultimately inevitable. So long as that wretched puzzle, the Ornaments Rubric, which is interpreted in two diametrically opposite ways, remains in the Prayer-book; so long as the existing Ecclesiastical Courts are thought by many conscientious clergymen worthless and incompetent, and their decisions are ignored and disobeyed without any interference; so long as those who think the Courts incompetent decline to take any steps to have better Courts created; so long as it appears to be held, even by many in this Diocese, that no clergyman is ever to be called to account whatever he may teach and do, and every one is to do what is right in his own eyes; so long as that barbarous law remains unrepealed by which conscientious clergymen declared guilty of contumacy in doctrinal suits, may be sent to prison—so long, I say, as this miserable state of things continues, the present condition of the Church seems at first sight hopeless. A house divided against itself cannot stand; and sooner or later we shall be disestablished, disendowed, and broken up. But I said ‘seems’ hopeless advisedly. When I read how wonderfully God kept our Church alive in the days of Queen Mary, in the times of the Long Parliament, and during the deathlike apathy of the last century, I refuse to despair. Nothing is impossible. Our present duty is to hope and pray and work on and wait. He that healed lepers and raised the dead can heal and revive the Church of England.

(2) As to *the future*, I lay no claim to the gift of prophecy, and I shall certainly not attempt to offer counsel as to the line of duty in certain hypothetical cases. ‘Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.’ (Matt. 6. 34). It will be time enough to make up our minds when a crisis arrives. After all, it is the thing unexpected which often comes to pass.

In any case, as long as we live, I trust we shall always cultivate the habit of treating Churchmen of other schools of thought than our own, with kindness, courtesy, and respect. Let us give them credit for being as much in earnest as ourselves, though we may think them sadly mistaken. Let us believe that many Churchmen with whom we now disagree, may be, and often are, real Christians, in spite of all their errors. Their hearts may be right in the sight of God, though their heads seem to us very wrong. However erroneous we may consider their views, we must charitably hope that they are in the way of life and

travelling toward heaven, and will be ‘saved by the grace of God, even as ourselves.’ However much we may believe they mar their own usefulness by their imperfect statement of truth, we must not rashly pronounce them godless and graceless, lest we be found condemning those whom God has received. To speak plainly, it never will do to brand people as unconverted heretics and children of wrath, because they differ from us about the effect of the sacraments, or about ritual, or about the precise nature of inspiration. Firmly as we may cling to our own views of such subjects, we must carefully remember that it is possible to hold the Head, and stand on the Rock under a great cloud of error.

In any case, let us not lightly forsake our mother, the Church of England. So long as the Church of England sticks firmly to the Bible, the Articles, and the principles of the Protestant Reformation, so long I advise you strongly to stick to the Church. When the Articles and Prayer-book are altered or thrown overboard, and the old flag is hauled down, then, and not till then, it will be time for us to launch the boats and quit the wreck. At present, let us stick to the old ship.

So long as we preserve our Articles, Creed, and Prayer-book whole and unaltered, how can we better our position by secession? Where shall we enjoy such liberty, though now we may not have things all our own way, whether High or Low or Broad? To whom can we go? Where shall we find better prayers? In what communion shall we find so much good being done, in spite of the existence of much evil? No doubt there is much to sadden us; but there is not a single visible Church on earth at this day doing better. There is not a single communion where there are no clouds, and all is serene. ‘The evil everywhere are mingled with the good’. The wheat never grows without tares. But, for all that, there is much to gladden us—more good preaching than there ever was before in the pulpits of the Establishment, more good work done both at home and abroad. Then let us all work on, and fight on, and pray on, and stick to the Church of England, and make the best of our position. The Churchman who walks in these lines, I believe, is the Churchman who ‘understands the times,’ and does his duty.

I now close what may possibly be the last Charge I may ever be allowed to deliver, with St. Paul’s words: ‘I commend you to God, and the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.’ ‘Watch ye; stand fast in the faith; quit you like men; be strong. Let all your things be done with charity.’ (Acts 20. 32; 1 Cor. 16. 13, 14.)

FOOTNOTES

1 J. B. Lightfoot, Bishop of Durham 1879-89 (d. 1889).

2 To clergymen.

3 Rev. W. Hay M. H. Aitken, Incumbent in Liverpool, 1891; founded Church Parochial Mission Society, 1876; Mission preacher.

4 J. M. Cramp, *A Text-Book of Popery*, London 1851, p. 155.

5 In September 1889, the French Government, anxious to take steps to win back 'the lost Sabbath', called an International Congress to consider what could be done to secure the Sabbath for France. Delegates attended from England, Germany, United States, Switzerland, Belgium, Italy, Norway, Austria, Brazil, and many other countries. M. Leon Say, the Minister of Commerce, presided, and forty-eight resolutions were passed, all in favour of the Sabbath Day.

6 'If God had intended to have told us that the punishment of wicked men shall have no end, the languages wherein the Scriptures are written do hardly afford fuller and more certain words than those that are used in this case, whereby to express a duration without end; and likewise, which is almost a peremptory decision of the thing, the duration of the punishment of wicked men is in the very same sentence expressed by the very same word which is used for the duration of happiness of the righteous.' Archbishop Tillotson on Hell Torments. See Matthew Horbery: *Scripture Doctrine of Eternal Punishment*, 1744, vol. ii, p. 42.

7 'There is nothing that Satan more desires than that we should believe that he does not exist, and that there is no such place as hell, and no such things as eternal torments. He whispers all this into our ears, and he exults when he hears a layman, and much more when he hears a clergyman, deny these things for then he hopes to make them and others his victims'. Bishop Christopher Wordsworth, *Sermon on Future Rewards and Punishments*, p. 36.

8 'If the punishment of the wicked is only temporary, such will also be the happiness of the righteous, which is repugnant to the whole teaching of Scripture; but if the happiness of the righteous will be everlasting (who will be equal to the angels, and their bodies will be like the body of Christ), such also will be the punishment of the wicked'. Bishop Christopher Wordsworth, *Sermon on Future Rewards and Punishments*, p. 36.

9 See appendix.

APPENDIX CHAPTER 9

Some readers may think the statement of this paragraph extravagant and overdrawn. I request them to read the following passages from a statement recently made by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Salford, Manchester:

ENGLAND'S CONVERSION NO DREAM

I hear some one whisper: You are dreaming, you are raving; to talk of the conversion of England is childish babble. You are not two millions out of twenty-seven millions of the population. You lose thousands of your poor through the workhouse system and proselytism for hundreds you gain in the upper classes. You misunderstand the English race, you misread their strong Protestant character, if you expect their conversion to Catholicism.

THE PENAL TIMES

To this I reply: Compare the attitude of England during the last three hundred years towards the Catholic Church with her attitude today. For three hundred years Catholics were socially and civilly proscribed. They lived, or rather groaned, under all manner of disabilities. It was a crime to profess the Catholic religion, to hear Mass, to harbour a priest, to possess beads or medals blessed by the Pope, to communicate with Rome, to perform any act of the Catholic religion. The legal penalties were fines, confiscation, imprisonment, banishment,

torture, and death, and they were all applied with a remorseless hand. No Catholic could hold a commission of the peace, a commission in the army or navy, or any civil position of trust and responsibility. Catholic education was proscribed, so that the children of Catholics had to grow up in ignorance, or to pass the seas if they would obtain education. Even the fathers of men now living remember the time when the only safe way for a Catholic to retain his estates was by legally conveying them to a Protestant, and when a Catholic could be compelled by any stranger on the road to give up his horse for a five-pound note. Not only were the laws of the land directed against Catholics, but for nigh three centuries the whole literature and the social and public life of the country seemed to combine with the Legislature for their degradation and utter extinction. But what is the attitude of England towards Catholics today?

ENGLISH CATHOLICS TODAY

They are in honour equal with their fellow-countrymen. They fill all posts of trust and honour save only the highest: they are viceroys, governors of colonies, lord-lieutenants, privy councillors, members of parliament, cabinet ministers, chairman of county councils, and magistrates. They are generals in the army, admirals of the fleet, judges of the land. There is no path of civil or public service which is not now open to them, and in which they are not welcomed. Once and again there has been a brief outburst of the old Protestant fear and bigotry, as forty years ago, when it is thus that a Protestant contemporary writes: 'Liberals and Conservatives vied with one another in uttering furious nonsense, and the whole heart of the nation went with them. But the legislative results were a miserable penal law, which was never put in force, and was repealed a few years ago with every expression of contempt.'—Now put this change down to whatever cause you please—to communication with the Continent, contact with Catholics, the abolition of class privileges and ascendancy, indifference in matters of religion, the spread of education among all sections of the people, the decay of prejudice, critical research, which is causing the history of England to be re-written—whatever be the causes, the result, the change is undeniable.

CHANGE IN THE ESTABLISHMENT

Nor is this all. Not only has the attitude of the population changed, but the very Establishment which was set up in rivalry to the Church, with a Royal supremacy triumphantly pitted against a Papal supremacy, this very Establishment has changed its temper and attitude. Its Bishops, ministers, and people are busily engaged in ignoring or denouncing those very Articles which were drawn up to be their eternal protest against the Old Religion. The sacramental power of orders, the need of jurisdiction, the Real Presence, the daily sacrifice, auricular confession, prayers and offices for the dead, belief in Purgatory, the invocation of the Blessed Virgin and the saints, religious vows, and the institution of monks and nuns—the very doctrines stamped in the Thirty-nine Articles as fond fables and blasphemous deceits—all these are now openly taught from a thousand pulpits within the Establishment, and as heartily embraced by as many crowded congregations. Even the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary has been set up with honour over the principal side entrance to Westminster Abbey, and she has been recently enthroned upon a majestic altar under the great dome of St. Paul's.

I give this passage without comment. If it does not open man's eyes to the danger in which the Reformed Church of England stands at this moment, I fear nothing will. Unhappily none are so blind as those who will not see.