

CHARGES AND ADDRESSES

to the Diocese of Liverpool,

by

the Right Reverend Bishop of Liverpool,

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Liverpool and England.

The second triennial charge to the Diocese of Liverpool, October 21, 1884.

My Reverend Brethren, By the mercy of God we are allowed to meet together again at the second Visitation of the new Diocese of Liverpool. On this occasion, I have thought it best to assemble all the clergy of the Diocese in one place, to address the whole body at one time, and to give up a second day's Visitation at Wigan. In adopting this arrangement, my chief aim has been to consult your convenience. The area of our Diocese is very small, and it is thoroughly intersected by railways. The total number of our clergy is not large, and to the great majority of you, I believe, no meeting-place is more accessible than Liverpool. To this let me add that the arrangement follows the precedent of the Diocese of London. In the visitation of that great See, the whole of the clergy meet the Bishop on one day in St. Paul's Cathedral.

A triennial gathering like a Visitation is always a solemn season, and the calling over of names ought to raise in our minds solemn thoughts. Our eyes cannot fail to see gaps in our ranks, and some of us perhaps are reminded of the famous picture of 'The Muster-roll' on the morning after a battle in the Crimean War. The incumbents of Walton, Ormskirk, Grassendale, Garston, Prescot, Skelmersdale, Sefton, Ravenhead, St. Luke's, St. James the Less, and Christ Church, Hunter Street, are no longer with us. Who can tell what gaps there may be before another three years have passed away? May we all be found ready when our turn comes! It is a comfortable thought that the great Head of the Church 'dieth no more,' 'death hath no more dominion over Him.' John Wesley's memorial tablet in Westminster Abbey contains a striking say-

ing, 'God buries His workmen, but carries on His work.'

On an occasion like this, a Bishop may reasonably be expected to say something to his assembled clergy about two great subjects. One of those subjects is the special condition of the Diocese over which he is appointed to preside; the other is the general condition of the whole Church, of which his Diocese forms a part. On each of these subjects I propose to say something today.

I. Concerning *our own Diocese*, I shall have to begin with some facts and figures, which I hope you will hear patiently. But it is impossible to form a correct estimate of the spiritual condition of the district in which we live unless we understand the very peculiar position which it occupies, in many respects, compared with other Dioceses in the land. I desire to use great plainness of speech on this point, because of the many unfavourable and unfair criticisms to which the Churchmen of this new See are frequently subjected. I say without hesitation, that there is not a Diocese in England or Wales in which the Established Church has to work under such *disadvantages and difficulties* as the new Diocese of Liverpool.

(1) Our first difficulty consists in the painful *disproportion between the number of our clergy and the number of souls residing in the Diocese*. The West Derby Hundred of Lancashire, which forms the new See of Liverpool, contains a population of little less than 1,200,000. For this immense mass of people we have only 187 incumbents with Parochial Districts. Let this proportion be compared with that of the six Dioceses which exceed Liverpool in population. In York there are 630 incumbents for 1,300,000 people; in Manchester, 490 for 2,300,000; in Ripon, 490 for 1,600,000; in Worcester, 480 for 1,200,000; in London, 500 for 3,000,000; and in Rochester, more than 300 for 1,600,000. Of course, I have used round numbers. Nor is this all. Out of the 187 consecrated churches in our new Diocese, no less than 137 have been built since the year 1800, and are churches practically without endowment, and dependent upon pew rents and voluntary offerings. As to livings well-endowed with rectorial tithes or lands, such as you may find by hundreds in some Counties of England, I cannot find twenty in the whole West Derby Hundred. And, to crown all, out of the 187 incumbencies, the income of at least 100 does not exceed £300 a year; and in many cases an incumbent with £300 a year has 8000 or 10,000 people, or even more, under his charge! I doubt whether there is anything like this state of things in the Church of England from the Isle of Wight up to Berwick-on-Tweed.

(2) Our next difficulty consists in the *very peculiar and exceptional character of our population*. Outside our great city of Liverpool, there is a most singular and remarkable scarcity of resident nobility and large landed proprietors, who, as a general rule, are the chief supporters of the Established Church. A glance at any county map of the West Derby Hundred will show few of

those green spots which usually denote the presence of a landed proprietor. Nor must it be forgotten, that at least three of the largest estates in the district are in the hands of old Roman Catholic families. In Liverpool, which comprises half the population of the Diocese, about one half the people are either Roman Catholics, Scotch Presbyterians, or Welsh or English Nonconformists. It is a notable fact, moreover, that few of the wealthy and successful merchants of our great city seem to be rooted and tied down to Lancashire, and that not a few leading families have left Liverpool in the last fifty years for other parts of England, after an honourable success in business. Their names have disappeared on our Exchange, and they are no longer connected with us.

Beside this, it must never be forgotten that Liverpool is the largest seaport in the world, and that many of our people are sailors of all nations, continually moving and changing, here today and gone tomorrow. Moreover, the north and south ends of our great city contain myriads of people connected with the docks, who are almost always in a most destitute condition, living from hand to mouth in very miserable and poor dwellings, and terribly disposed to give way to intemperance, improvidence, and habitual neglect of the means of grace. I might say something besides about the dense colliery population round Wigan, and the thousands employed in the chemical works at St. Helen's and Widnes, if time permitted. But I think I am justified in saying that we have altogether in our 1,200,000 souls a mass of people presenting most peculiar difficulties to the Bishop and clergy of our new See. And I say once more that I doubt whether there is anything quite like it in the Church of England.

(3) Our third, but not our least difficulty, consists in the *conspicuous absence of much of the machinery* for carrying on the work of the Established Church with which other Dioceses are supplied. Next to Archdeacons there are no Diocesan officers more useful to a Bishop than Rural Deans. But of these helpers there are only 9 in the Diocese of Liverpool. In York there are 31, in London 25, in Rochester 19, in Worcester 31, in Manchester 21, in Ripon 24. We have no endowed Dean and Canons, and the services at the Cathedral in the second city in Great Britain are carried on by the voluntary aid of unpaid Honorary Canons, in many cases with great inconvenience to themselves. We have nothing that can be called a Cathedral worthy of the Diocese up to the present day. When Manchester and Ripon Dioceses were formed, there was a Cathedral in each case ready made to hand. At Newcastle there is a parish church of a size and scale fitting it to be a Cathedral. At Wakefield, when the See is formed, there is another parish church far exceeding anything we have in Liverpool. At Southwell there is already a beautiful Minster. In the whole city of Liverpool there is not a single church which could be made into a proper English Cathedral. We have before us the gigantic work of building and endowing a Cathedral in the midst of a huge, crowded city. I have no doubt the work will ultimately be done; but it is vain to deny that it is a most formidable

undertaking, taxing heavily the energy and liberality even of Liverpool, and constituting a very grave difficulty in the face of a new See. In short, our Diocese is thoroughly under-manned and imperfectly equipped, and its first Protestant Bishop is in the position of a captain of some huge steamship who is suddenly called upon to start a voyage across the Atlantic with half the crew, and half the engineers, and half the coals that the ship requires.

Let no one misunderstand me. I do not say what I have said in a spirit of complaint. I find fault with no one. The state of things which I deplore has been chiefly caused by the commercial skill and prosperity of this part of Lancashire, and the marvellous growth of population which has consequently taken place in the last forty years. I admire the zeal, courage, and liberality of those well-known men who laid the foundation of the new Bishopric. I doubt whether Newcastle and Southwell would ever have been founded had it not been for the noble example set them by those who gallantly led the van in Lancashire. But I have mentioned certain facts because many people in England are entirely ignorant of them, and in their ignorance have expected far greater immediate results from the creation of the See of Liverpool than they had any right to expect. Many seem to have thought that, like the Roman general who boastfully said that he had only to stamp on the ground and an army would rise up, so likewise a Bishop had only to be sent to Liverpool, and in two or three years there would be nothing left defective in the Diocese. For myself, I never expected anything of the kind. I saw the difficulties before me, and came to my post prepared to face them, and to bear patiently the unkind remarks that would be made. Nor have I at this moment the slightest feeling of despondency. Give the Church of England time, and I believe she will yet do as great things in the West Derby Hundred, by the blessing of God, as any Diocese in the land.

One thing only I must publicly regret about the formation of our new See, and that is the omission, in the Act of Parliament which constituted the Bishopric, of any due provision of patronage for the Bishop. Here again I must gently complain that the position of the Bishop of Liverpool is most exceptional. For the relief of aged and infirm incumbents, and for rewarding young clergymen of 'light and leading,' he has only four livings to give away, and four others of which he has the alternate patronage with the Crown. There is not another Bishop on the bench who is in the same position. Even in the newly-formed Diocese of Newcastle, the Bishop has nineteen livings to give away, beside eleven alternately with the Crown. Some of these livings are of far greater value than any of the four which are in the patronage of Liverpool. The See of Chester, which, by the formation of the Bishopric of Liverpool, was relieved of two-thirds of its population and an immense amount of responsibility, at the dissolution of partnership transferred to our See only four livings, and retained the patronage of fifty! I make no comment on this. Pat-

ronage is at best an invidious possession. The mistake has been made, and cannot be retrieved except by a general Act of Parliament, which will probably never be obtained. But I do think it right to mention the subject in this public manner, because I wish my clergy to understand how little I am able to do for them.

I now turn with pleasure from the difficulties and black clouds of our Diocesan horizon to the blue sky of our position. We have some blue sky to turn to. Looking back over the last four years, and knowing far more of the ecclesiastical condition of the West Derby Hundred than I did when I first came here, I see many things for which I thank God, and take courage.

(1) First and foremost, I am deeply thankful for the *general courtesy and kindness* with which I have been received by the Churchmen of the Diocese, both clerical and lay. Wherever I have gone, north, south, east, or west, I have met with kindness, consideration, and readiness to assist me and meet my wishes. An English Bishop in the latter part of the 19th century, of course has his own views and opinions. No sensible man would wish him to be a mere figurehead, without any independent mind of his own, and an honorary member of all schools of thought. It is not desirable that he should be. It cannot, therefore, be expected that he will entirely approve everything that every one of his clergy says or does, or that every one of his clergy will entirely agree with him. The Established Church is eminently comprehensive, and allows all her members an immense liberty of thought, so long as they are loyal to her Articles and Prayer-Book. There will always be a considerable diversity of opinion and practice among her clergy, within certain limits. From this diversity the Diocese of Liverpool is not exempt any more than other Dioceses in the land. In fact, I think we have a very large share of free thought on theological subjects in the county of Lancaster, as well as on every other subject, and I do not regret it. But, this being the state of things, I must honestly say that I am very grateful for the small amount of friction and collision in our work which I have seen. We have got on much better than I dared to expect, and I trust that our harmonious action will continue and increase. With all our diversities, I believe we are knit together by a common desire to promote the interests of the Church of England, and as time goes on I trust we shall be still more welded together and united. Union is strength, and disunion a prime cause of weakness in a Church. I am very sensible of my own fallibility, and I always feel that all I do might be done far better. But I hope my clergy will believe that I try to do my duty.

(2) In the next place, I am thankful for the large amount of *solid good work* which is going on in a great proportion of the parishes in our Diocese. Of course there are parishes and parishes, and much more is done in some than in others. But when I look at the quantity of Christian machinery which is pa-

tiently, perseveringly, and habitually kept at work by many ill-paid incumbents of unwieldy, overgrown districts in many parts of this Diocese, I cannot help feeling that we have great cause to praise God, and I should be ungrateful if I did not publicly say so.

(3) In the next place, I am thankful for the *condition and equipment of the great majority of our places of worship* and the manner in which their services are conducted. I have a right to express an opinion about this. Within the last four years I have been enabled to stand in the pulpits of no less than 150 churches, out of the 187 in our Diocese, either for preaching or delivering Confirmation addresses. I speak, therefore, of what I have seen with my own eyes, and observed for myself. I do not hesitate to say that, although we have few grand churches in an architectural point of view, there are very few in which, through the laudable exertions of the clergy and churchwardens, there is anything of which we need be ashamed.

(4) In the next place, I am glad to say the work of *church-building*, in order to meet the crying wants of our huge overgrown parishes, is going on at a much greater rate than most people suppose. In the four years which have elapsed since the See was formed, I have consecrated nine entirely new churches, viz.: St. John the Evangelist, Walton; All Saints', Southport; St. Luke's, Southport; St. Athanasius, Kirkdale; St. Cyprian, Edge Hill; St. Andrew, Wigan; St. Elizabeth, Aspull; St. Ambrose, Widnes; and St. Gabriel, Toxteth Park; and two others which have been rebuilt, viz. St. Andrew's, Maghull, and St. Stephen's, Edge Hill; and three chancels added to existing churches, viz. Padgate, Great Sankey, and Upholland. I have also opened by licence three other large churches, viz.: All Saints', Princes Park; St. Mary, Waterloo; and St. Lawrence, Kirkdale; which will be consecrated as soon as the repair and endowment funds can be raised. Besides this, four other churches, St. Agnes, in Liverpool; Cowley Hill, at St. Helen's; St. Paul's, Widnes; and St. Philip's, Southport, are soon likely to be finished. St. Bede's, St. Polycarp, and St. Philip's, Liverpool; St. Benedict's, Everton; St. Dunstan's, Earl's Road; and a new church at Ince, are likely to be soon commenced. On the whole, I entertain a strong hope that, by the end of 1885, twenty-three entirely new churches will have been consecrated since our See was formed. Last, but not least, I may add that since I came to Liverpool as many as eighteen or twenty iron rooms,¹ schoolrooms, or mission rooms, have been opened by licence for divine worship and administration of the Lord's Supper in various parts of the Diocese, and not a few unlicensed rooms, of which I cannot speak particularly. The value of such rooms, I am convinced, is immense. They give an opportunity of gathering together hundreds who shrink from a large parish church, but are quite willing to attend a simple elementary service in a room. I

¹ [Church halls.]

take occasion to recommend, in the strongest way, to every clergyman of a large parish the erection of such a room, in order to attract and reach those who at present go to no place of worship. I am sure he will find it an invaluable auxiliary, and not least because it will enable him to secure the Sunday help of gifted laymen.

To sum up all, I see great cause for thankfulness in the material (or bricks and mortar) work which has been done and is doing during the last four years. Much, no doubt, remains undone. The state of things in particular at the North end of Liverpool is painfully unsatisfactory, and there is a pressing and immediate want of, at least, three new churches and parochial districts in the neighbourhood of the Alexandra docks, within the area of St. Paul's, North Shore, Bootle, and Seaforth. I have seen with my own eyes, in the last four years, acres of ground in this district covered over with new houses, while nothing has been done by our Church hitherto to supply their inhabitants with places of worship. I earnestly hope that this want may be taken into serious consideration by the clergy, the landed proprietors, and all connected with the shipping interest at the North end. There really is need of a great effort being made by the Church in that quarter, and before another triennial Visitation is held I hope that something will be done. Unless some energetic steps are taken, thousands of families will soon be lost to the Church of England, or absorbed by other denominations, or added to the roll of non-worshippers.

(5) The *Ordinations* which I have held since I became Bishop of Liverpool afford me much ground for thankfulness. It is a striking fact that, during the four years ending with Trinity Sunday, 1880, the number of deacons ordained for parishes in the West Derby Hundred, which forms our present Diocese, was only seventy-six. The number of deacons whom I have ordained down to the present day, forming another period of four years, has been one hundred and thirteen, showing the large and remarkable increase of 37 in the number of clergy brought to the service of the Church in this Diocese. To this let me add that there were only 131 curates in the Diocese when I came here in 1880, and now in 1884 there are 170. This again is an increase of 39. These facts, moreover, become even more noteworthy when it is remembered that we have only 187 incumbents, and that many of them are so miserably underpaid that they find great difficulty in providing any curate at all. I have repeatedly said, and I say it again today, that the first want in a large undermanned Diocese like ours is a great increase in the number of living agents. If any wealthy Churchman wishes to do good service to our Church in Liverpool, I believe he could not possibly do better than to say to some incumbent of a large poor parish, 'I will provide £150 a year for five years to endow a new district if you will form one, or to maintain a curate.' There is room for many more clergy in this great city, and for much work to be done.

I cannot leave the subject of ordination, however, without making two re-

marks, to which I request the special attention of my clergy. For one thing, I wish to say that I have not the least desire to lower the standard of requirements for the office of a deacon, and I cannot sympathize with those who press the Bishops to bring into the ministry men who know little or nothing of Latin, Greek, Church History, the story of the English Reformation, the Prayer-book, the Church Catechism, or the Evidences of Christianity, and, in short, are only godly men who know the Bible and can talk about the gospel. I think the office of the ministry demands men of a higher standard than this, if it is to command the respect of the laity, and I cannot see the wisdom of what is called an extended Diaconate. Although Ordination is not a sacrament, it is a very solemn thing; and orders ought not to be lightly conferred, whatever the needs of the Church may be. For my part I am entirely in favour of recognizing and calling forward an order of approved Readers, or lay agents. I think they may be a most useful class of men, and I heartily wish there were more of them. Indeed, if it was clearly legal, I would gladly permit such Readers to conduct short religious services in churches at any times when the church was not being used by the incumbent; provided, of course, that they did not administer the sacraments, and that they did nothing which was not fully approved by the incumbent and sanctioned by the Bishop. I have long been of opinion that we do not make sufficient use of our churches. To erect a huge ecclesiastical building at the cost of £7000 or £8000, and then only use it four or five hours on Sunday, and perhaps four or five more during the week, does not appear to me wise or sensible. I long to see our churches turned to account by a class of approved Lay Readers. But I do desire to maintain in this Diocese a well-trained and qualified class of ordained deacons, and of such men I am glad to say the supply at present is far greater than the demand. My other remark is, that I particularly request the incumbents who give titles to curates to remember that a deacon has to be ordained a priest, and not to require of him so much work during the year of his diaconate that he has no time for reading or preparation. It is a painful fact, which I and my chaplains have found out after four years' experience, that when a deacon comes up for priest's orders he seldom does so well and passes so good an examination as he did when he was ordained deacon, and has evidently not had time to keep up his reading.

(6) The *Confirmations* which I have been enabled to hold annually during the last four years have been on the whole very satisfactory. The number of candidates presented has steadily increased year by year. In the first year I confirmed 4719, in the second 5744, in the third 6310. In the present year about 5640 have been already confirmed, and my list is not yet completed. The whole result is that I have already administered the ordinance of Confirmation to more than 22,000 young persons since I became Bishop of a Diocese of only 187 parishes. I can find no words to express my deep sense of the value of Confirmation when it is preceded by proper preparation, and followed

by proper attention to the spiritual state of those who are confirmed. Though Confirmation is not a sacrament 'ordained by Christ Himself, and generally necessary to salvation,' it is one of the most important ordinances which the Church of England has provided for its members. It gives every clergyman a golden opportunity of becoming personally acquainted with the younger portion of his flock at the most critical period of their lives. It enables him to secure an interest in their affections and consciences, and, by God's blessing, to give a bias to the whole future course of their lives. It often secures for him a continual succession of communicants, Sunday-school teachers, and workers in his parish, to take the place of those who are removed by death or change of residence. Let me affectionately charge you, my reverend brethren, never to relax your efforts to make this important ordinance efficient, and to procure as many candidates as possible for its reception. I am quite certain that far more candidates might be presented every year in this Diocese, if the importance of the ordinance was realized in all parishes as much as it is in some. There are still some large parochial districts in which the number of candidates is most painfully small, and more than one, I am afraid, from which I have hardly ever had a single candidate. This ought not so to be. The clergyman who really wishes to strengthen the Church of England should remember that the right way to do it is to begin with the young, and one of the best ways of enlisting the young is to persuade them to come forward for Confirmation.

(7) I cannot leave this topic without saying a few words on the kindred subject of *Sunday schools*. I am very thankful for the interest taken about Sunday-school teaching in the Diocese at large. I earnestly hope that this interest may never languish, but annually strengthen and increase. I believe we have on the rolls of our Church Sunday schools at this moment, speaking roughly, about 40,000 scholars and 4000 teachers. I suspect those numbers might be easily increased by a little more exertion. There never was a time when it was so important to provide definite, thorough, dogmatic religious teaching for the children of the Church at least one day in the week. The State having formally refused to recognize or reward religious teaching in schools to which grants are given, the Church must see to it that the scriptural instruction of the young is never neglected in the day school, and that it receives special attention in the Sunday school. I solemnly charge every incumbent in my Diocese to bestow as much care as he possibly can upon his Sunday school, to do his utmost to procure efficient teachers, and to take care that the time at the Sunday school is well spent, and not frittered away by those well-meaning persons who are content to read weak little story-books, and make children smile. Bible and Prayer-book instruction should always come to the front, and clear teaching about the doctrines necessary to salvation should never be lost sight of.

(8) For the efforts made in the Diocese to *check intemperance, and to promote purity* in all the relations of the sexes, and to watch over the welfare

of young women, I am again deeply thankful. They are most valuable and healthy movements, and deserve every encouragement from every inhabitant within the district. Steadiness, trustworthiness, morality, regular habits of life, providence, and a high standard of honour, are the backbone of a nation's prosperity, and no nation ever prospers in which they are neglected. I am certain that the wealthy employers of Liverpool cannot do a wiser or more politic thing than to encourage by money and influence the existing organizations of the Diocese which promote the objects of which I have been speaking.

I cannot now leave the special subjects of our Diocese without mentioning *three points which cause me much anxiety*, and in respect of two of which, at any rate, I think there is great room for improvement.

(1) The first and most painful point is *the conspicuous absence of immense numbers of people in our Diocese from the public worship of Almighty God upon Sundays*. That this is the case in Liverpool has been publicly stated by Mr. Gladstone very recently in the House of Commons, and he said, 'that the state of things here was extremely disgraceful.' I am aware that he had Liverpool especially in view, but I am afraid that the state of Wigan, St. Helen's, and Warrington is pretty much the same. Now I need hardly say that it is rather unpleasant to have our deficiencies publicly exposed by the Prime Minister of the first country in the world, in the greatest national assembly in existence, and to consider that his words are reported and read in every quarter of the globe. But I will not complain of this. Intentionally or not, I think Mr. Gladstone may have done us good service by giving wide publicity to a startling fact. At any rate, I firmly believe that it is likely to set Liverpool thinking. I do not admit that the state of Liverpool is one bit worse than that of London, and other large towns that I could name, in the matter of attendance on public worship. But I frankly admit that things are not at all as they ought to be, and I have said so publicly and privately many a time ever since I became Bishop of this Diocese. There are certain subjects on which it is very hard to make people awake and open their eyes, and if Mr. Gladstone's words in the House of Commons help to awaken us in Liverpool, I shall be very much obliged to him. Let me, however, briefly point out what are the true causes of what the Premier calls 'our extremely disgraceful religious census,' and then point out what in my judgment are the true remedies.

Let me preface what I am going to say by observing that a census of public worshippers in any town on a given day is no fair test of the quantity of religion in the place. I will never concede for a moment that the Christianity of its inhabitants is to be gauged and measured by the number of heads within the walls of churches and chapels. I am convinced that at this moment there are thousands of the working classes of Liverpool, of both sexes, who are never to be found within the walls of any place of worship, and belong to no congrega-

tion, and yet are not destitute of all religion, and would be justly offended if you called them heathen. In some cases, from poverty, they have no good clothes, and have an honest feeling that it is not respectful to go amongst well-dressed worshippers until better times come. In other cases they really do not know what place of worship to attend, are never visited, never invited, and are immigrant strangers unacquainted with Liverpool, who could not tell you in what parochial district they live. Beside this, there are not a few who meet together in unlicensed rooms and out-of-the-way places, under the voluntary teaching of good men and women of a missionary spirit; and no census can take account of such assemblies. In considering the matter before us, I think these things ought not to be forgotten.

One primary cause of the small attendance at churches and chapels in Liverpool is the utter inadequacy of the provision made in the city for public worship. It is not too much to say that if all the inhabitants of some of the poorer parishes in Liverpool were to take it into their heads to go to church next Sunday, room could not be found for a tenth part of the worshippers. When the Established church of a Liverpool parish provides only one building for ten or twelve thousand people, and good Protestant Nonconformists provide perhaps only one or two more, the result is sure to be that thousands of people go nowhere upon Sunday, and stay at home. A religious census in parishes of this kind must of course present what Mr. Gladstone calls 'an extremely disgraceful result.' The plain truth is, that in the last two or three generations the Established Church has allowed many districts in Liverpool to slip completely out of its fingers, and a population has grown up of people who are practically no man's parishioners. I declare I know no more pitiable condition than that of a Liverpool incumbent at the north or south ends of our city, with eight or ten or twelve thousand working people under his charge, and an income of about £300 a year. Reason and common sense point out that it is perfectly impossible for such a man to reach the greater part of this population. He has only one head, one tongue, two eyes, and two feet, and with all the zeal in the world he cannot possibly reach or visit more than a very limited number of his parishioners. Numbers of them he will never see, and they live and die comparatively 'let alone,' without any fault of his. In such a parish as this who can wonder if hundreds never darken the door of any place of worship, and are practically without God in the world, and without Sunday worship? These are precisely the sort of parishes in which non-worshippers abound, and in which Mr. Gladstone says, with too much truth, 'the religious census is disgraceful.'

But if this state of things exists in a green tree, what may we expect to find in a dry? If the incumbent of a parish of eight or ten thousand people, sound in body, right in heart, and willing to work, must sorrowfully confess, after doing all that he can, that many of his parishioners go to no place of worship, what must be the state of a town parish where the conditions are entirely different?

What can we expect when the incumbent is old, or infirm, or a chronic invalid, or pressed down by poverty, and has no curate, and no staff of assistants of any kind ? What can we expect when this incumbent, however good or well-meaning, has no original fitness for a town parish, no popular gifts? That there are parishes of this description in our Diocese it is vain to deny. What, I say, can be reasonably expected but an empty parish church, and an immense number of parishioners who go to no place of worship at all upon Sunday? To blame such an unfortunate incumbent is unjust and unkind. With an income of about £300 a year you cannot expect him to resign under the Act, and retire on an income of £100 a year. The Church unhappily makes no provision for a superannuation fund for worn-out incumbents. You cannot expect him, out of his limited income, to pay others for doing what he cannot do himself. In short, in cases like these, the system of the Established Church seems entirely to break down, and the parishioners are like 'sheep without a shepherd.' It would be a miracle indeed if the religious census of such a parish as this was not most unsatisfactory and deplorable, or what Mr. Gladstone calls 'disgraceful to Liverpool.'

After all, whatever explanations we may offer, we must not shut our eyes to the fact that a town population, in which the majority never seem to worship God, is a most dangerous class, and demands the best attention, not only of all Churchmen, but of all Christians, all philanthropists, and all patriots. The man who supposes that human nature can be safely 'let alone' and not brought under religious and moral influences, must be a very ignorant person. Men and women who never go to a place of worship on Sunday, and are never reminded of God and a world to come, are precisely the class who are most likely to go wrong, and to be intemperate, improvident, quarrelsome, dishonest, a prey to every mob orator and sedition-monger, and a trouble to magistrates, municipal bodies, and Governments. They form the class too often of which Mr. Cowen, M.P. for Newcastle, has lately said: 'Society, ashamed and despairing, sweeps them like refuse into dismal receptacles, where, seething in their wretchedness, they constitute at once our weakness and reproach. How to sweeten these receptacles and help their forlorn occupants to help themselves is the problem of the hour. If society does not settle it, it will in time settle society'. The truth is, that men who are left in ignorance of their duty to God are not likely to do their duty to their neighbours. The Bible, whatever some are pleased to say, is the true friend of order, morality, and peace, and people who never hear the Bible read and taught in church or chapel, as I fear is the case with myriads in Liverpool, are the seed-plot for every kind of mischief, and demand the most serious attention of the upper ranks of society. It is cheap and easy work to say that they may be safely 'let alone,' that England is a 'free country,' and that if the working classes do not like to go to church or chapel we cannot help it, and must stand by with folded arms and let them do as they

please! I say, on the contrary, that the non-worshipping myriads of our great towns cannot be safely 'let alone,' and that it is not merely the duty, but the interest of the upper classes and employers to use every possible means to remedy the state of things which Mr. Gladstone calls 'disgraceful'.

But what can be done to meet the evils of which I have just been speaking? Let us honestly and humbly accept the facts, and look them in the face. What can be done to diminish the ranks of non-worshippers, and to make the religious census of this great city more creditable?

It is useless to suppose that we can at once double the number of our churches, by starting a great building fund, and cure the disease with bricks and mortar. There is not the slightest probability that money could be found for the purpose. You cannot build and equip a church in Liverpool, and provide for site, repair fund and a very moderate endowment, for less than £10,000. There have been noble-hearted men in Liverpool, who, after making their money in the place, have generously built a church without asking the public for a penny. But the number of such men will always be small. Moreover, it must never be forgotten that it is rather doubtful policy to begin by building churches before people are prepared to use them. To expect a working-man, who perhaps has never been inside a church for ten years, to value the excellent service of our Prayer-book, as soon as it is brought near him, is neither reason nor common sense. You might as well expect a man to begin reading a book, when he does not know A from B.

The true remedy for the state of things we deplore, as I have often said both before and since I became a Bishop, is the multiplication of living agents, and an organized system of aggressive evangelization. If we could only provide a territorial division of our large overgrown parishes into districts of about 3500 people in each, plant an active energetic clergyman in each of those districts, with a Scripture-reader and a Bible-woman to help him, and commission him to work his district in any way he liked, and in any room, providing only that he will use the most elementary means of grace, and not begin with an elaborate liturgical service—if such a man would only go to work as the Apostle St. Paul used to do, and visit house after house and room after room with the simple message of the Gospel, telling the story of the Cross, and approaching every one with love, sympathy, and sanctified common sense—if this could be done, I have not the smallest doubt that in five years there would be an immense change for the better in every part of Liverpool, and that our religious census would no longer be called 'disgraceful.' For I never will admit for a moment that the working classes in Lancashire are not to be won to Christ, if the proper means are used. It is false to say that naturally they are a bit more inclined to infidelity or immorality than other classes. They are all descended from the same parents, Adam and Eve, and are all born with the same hearts and consciences as the highest and noblest in the land.

But they are what they are, apparently Godless and non-worshippers, simply because they are 'let alone,' never visited, never spoken to, never dealt with lovingly, as Christ dealt with the Samaritan woman. They are a field which, if rightly cultivated, is capable of bearing a rich harvest to the glory of God, the advantage of the place in which they live, and the benefit of the whole nation.

I am entirely unable to see anything unpractical, Utopian, or Quixotic, in the remedial scheme which I have just sketched out, or anything calculated to interfere with the rights and privileges of the incumbents of the Church of England. The scheme has been tried with great success in the Dioceses of London and Rochester, and I fail to see that that which answers in Middlesex and Surrey should not answer in Lancashire. I should never attempt to carry out such a scheme without the aid of a council fairly and impartially chosen. I should never dream of interfering with the rights of any incumbent, or trying to force the scheme upon him. Many of you will remember that the idea was proposed at our second Diocesan Conference, and received no favour at all. But I have seen nothing whatever to alter my opinion since the date of that Conference. No one has attempted to suggest any better means of coping with the evils we deplore; and I repeat this day, if I stand alone in the matter, that I see no surer way to improve the religious census of this great city. One thing, at all events, is very certain. The expense of the plan would be far less than to attempt to build churches. A single new church in Liverpool, as I have already said, costs £10,000. A missionary curate to work up such a territorial district as I have described, with a Scripture-reader and a Bible-woman, could be obtained for £400 a year. And if we got missionary curates of the right sort, at the end of five years many districts would be self-supporting, after an expenditure of about £2000. I earnestly charge my clergy to look this matter honestly in the face. I can only declare for the last time my deliberate conviction that, without a multiplication of living agents of the right sort, and an organized system of aggressive evangelization, you will never see the religious census of Liverpool improved, or the great defects of our Diocese cured. And if unfriendly critics would remember that no Bishop on earth can make old incumbents young, or invalid incumbents strong, or poor incumbents rich, or provide pensions for worn-out incumbents, there would perhaps be fewer unfavourable remarks made about the position of the Church of England in Liverpool.

(2) I must now mention another point which causes me considerable anxiety. I refer to *the financial condition of our well-known Diocesan Institutions*. They are not receiving the support which they deserve at present, and are in a very languishing condition. Of course, I need not remind you of the purpose which five of these institutions are intended to serve. They are intended to be central fountains of support to which any one desiring to promote church-building, church aid, or education may apply, and obtain grants. The constitution of these institutions was framed with great care and most praiseworthy

pains. The committees which manage them, to the best of my belief, are fair, impartial, and well selected. But the subscriptions and contributions of the Diocese are far below what they ought to be, and are really unworthy of the district in which we live. I commend the subject to the attention of all my clergy. I cannot help thinking that more might be done, if each incumbent annually pressed the claims of the Institutions more earnestly upon his parishioners. But there is an evident unwillingness in many quarters to send money out of the parish for Diocesan purposes, and it is plain that we do not yet work together as a Diocese, but as a collection of independent congregations. At any rate, there is great room for improvement, and, as time goes on, I trust the balance-sheets of our various Diocesan Institutions will wear a very different aspect.

One thing, however, must be carefully remembered. The subscriptions and contributions to our Diocesan Societies must not be supposed to represent the total amount of money contributed by Churchmen to Church objects in the Diocese of Liverpool. It would be ridiculous to think so. Within the four years which have elapsed since the creation of the See of Liverpool, no less than 77 faculties have been granted in our Consistory Court, for the repair, alteration, improvement, or enlargement of old or existing churches, at a total cost of no less than £38,137. Beside this, it may surprise some to hear that during the three years which have elapsed since my first Visitation, the money expended in this Diocese on church building, church enlargement, schoolrooms, and mission rooms amounts to the large sum of £145,385; and during the same three years no less a sum than £98,770 has been contributed to Parochial Charities, Diocesan Institutions, and Home and Foreign Missions. And all this has been done in a Diocese of only 187 Incumbencies in three years!²

I think this ought to be known widely, because there is a vast amount of misrepresentation on the subject, and unfriendly critics are fond of saying that the Diocese of Liverpool has done nothing since the Bishopric was formed in 1880. Facts, however, are very stubborn things, and the fact which I have just mentioned is one which ought to be known. It speaks for itself. No doubt we do less than we might do, and less than we ought to do. But when the total amount raised for curates, Scripture-readers, and Bible-women, for the cause of temperance, purity, and education, for church building and school building, for charitable and philanthropic objects, for sailors, for orphans and for reformatories—I say, when the total amount is reckoned up, it will never do to say that the Diocese of Liverpool does nothing at all.

(3) The last subject of special Diocesan interest about which you will naturally expect me to say something, *is the proposed new Cathedral for Liverpool*, and I am sorry to say it is a rather thorny and troublesome topic. The subject, you will remember, has been formally taken up for two years. At our

² See appendix, chapter 3, pp. 370-1.

second Diocesan Conference, a resolution was almost unanimously passed to the effect that 'Liverpool must have a Cathedral.' Two years have passed away since the passing of that resolution, and, as the foundation stone of a cathedral has not yet been laid, the dwellers at a distance may possibly suppose that the matter has been let drop, and nothing has been done. Nothing could be farther from the truth than such a supposition. The subject has been taken up, discussed, and examined with the utmost care by a committee of leading Churchmen. How many times that committee has met, and how much anxious discussion has been devoted to the matter, I will not attempt to say. The outside public knows very little about it. Indeed, few persons appear to have grasped and realized the enormous difficulty which confronted the committee at the very outset of its labours. That difficulty consisted in the selection of a site. To find a proper position for a huge, new ecclesiastical building in a large city like Liverpool, is a problem which might well puzzle the cleverest body of men in the world, and no one has a right to be surprised at the delay which has occurred in coming to a conclusion. The value of land in the heart of Liverpool is so great, and the open spaces so few, that decision has been extremely hard. The plain truth is, that not a single site could be found which was not open to most serious objections; and the utmost the committee could hope to attain was to find the site which was least objectionable, and combined the greatest number of recommendations. The site which was finally decided upon by a majority of the committee, in St. John's Churchyard, behind St. George's Hall, is undoubtedly not a perfect site. It is easy to point out its defects. But where can a better site be found, except by an expenditure for buying up buildings and clearing ground, which it is frightful to contemplate? It is quite certain that no available site could be named which is so near the three railway stations, and therefore accessible from every part of the Diocese; no site which is so near to Dale Street, Castle Street, Bold Street, the Town Hall, the Exchange, the Clubs, the Hotels, and all the leading places of concourse; and no site which is so likely to be the centre of Liverpool for all time to come. As to the capabilities of the site for the erection of a building worthy of the second city of the empire, I shall not trust myself to give an opinion. I will only say that it has been declared to be such by one of the most experienced architects of the day.

In cases like this, it is utterly useless to expect everybody to be of one mind, however much we may wish it, and if we wait for entire agreement, the new Cathedral will never be built at all. At present I can only declare my belief, that the committee have honestly done the best they can in the face of much acrimonious criticism, and I believe the day will come when the public will do them justice. The delay no doubt may seem great, and some may point impatiently to the Cathedral of Truro, which appears on the title-page of so many almanacs this year. But really people appear to forget that there is not

the slightest parallelism between Truro and Liverpool, beyond the fact that each is the metropolitan city of a Diocese. The difficulties which are found at Liverpool do not exist at Truro, a small city which altogether does not contain so large a population as several of our greater parishes in Liverpool do, while the whole Diocese of Truro is so well provided with churches, that little new church building is required, and the entire attention of the See may be concentrated on the Cathedral.

What the cost of our new Cathedral will be it is impossible at present to say. There is not the slightest desire on the part of the committee to cramp competing architects by specifying any particular sum. I am certain that the one ruling desire of every member of the committee has been to obtain the best and handsomest Cathedral that could be designed. The anonymous charge, too often made, that either I or any of the committee intended to be content with nothing better than a commonplace large parish church, is so utterly baseless that I shall not condescend to notice it. We are distinctly assured by our experienced adviser that there is room enough in St. John's Churchyard to erect a Cathedral large enough for all practical purposes, and quite as large as some of the oldest and best in England. I presume that no one would wish to erect a Cathedral with a huge, useless Lady chapel at one end or a Galilee porch at the other, and as long as St. Paul's, York Minster, Lincoln, Winchester, or St. Alban's.

Whether the money which will be required to build and endow our new Cathedral will be forthcoming immediately, I do not pretend to say. There ought to be no difficulty about it. There are families who have realized so much wealth during the last fifty years in Liverpool, that they could easily put down £100,000, and hardly miss it. It would be a grand specimen of Christian liberality, and of fitting gratitude to the Giver of all wealth, if some Liverpool layman would come forward as Mr. Guinness did for St. Patrick's, and Mr. Roe for Christ Church, Dublin, and break the ice, and rouse emulation by some splendid contribution. But I am quite content to leave the whole affair in the hand of Him who has all hearts under His control. If we mean to have a Cathedral, our duty is to begin the work, and, if we do not live to see it completed, to believe that those who come after us will place the top stone upon it. For the present, if we have no very grand Cathedral, we have an excellent Cathedral service, and one of which the Diocese need not be ashamed. For this, I think it right and just to say, we are greatly indebted to the care and pains of the Rector of Liverpool. I only wish the Churchmen of the Diocese would understand that our Cathedral service is entirely dependent on voluntary contributions, and would subscribe more liberally to its support.

II. From subjects of purely Diocesan interest, I now turn to the far wider topic of the *general condition of the Church of England*. Our Diocese, we

must remember, is only one part of a great body, and it becomes every Churchman to take an interest in the general condition of the great body to which he belongs.

There are undoubtedly many things in the present state of the Church of England, for which we have reason to be most thankful. There is an immense amount of zeal, energy, activity, and work, which did not exist a hundred years ago. The fetters of black tape appear to be broken, and the Church is not in danger of 'dying of dignity,' or rusting out. The formation of new Dioceses, which is still going on; the general desire to meet the wants of all classes of our increasing population, both spiritual, moral, and sanitary; the widespread effort to introduce more elasticity into the arrangements of our services, the awakened readiness of clergy and laity to meet, confer, and discuss the best modes of meeting acknowledged evils; the immense amount of money contributed in the last forty years to the building and restoration of churches; the universal desire to strengthen the things which remain, and to supply the things that are wanting—all these things, I say, are unmistakable facts, and, however misdirected much of the energy may be, we ought to be thankful. Anything is better than idleness, lethargy, and sleep. Silence and immobility are the symptoms of death. With all her faults and shortcomings, our Church is comparatively awake.

In saying all this, I would not be mistaken. I frankly admit that there are many unsatisfactory points on the horizon of the Established Church in the present day, and *not a few black clouds*. I will briefly point out what I mean.

(1) One black cloud is the continued existence in our midst of a *body of Churchmen who appear determined, if words mean anything, to Romanize the Church of England*, to go back behind the Reformation, to reintroduce the Mass and the Confessional into our communion, and, in one word, to revolutionize our Church. I use the words 'appear determined' advisedly. I know well that the members of this body always deny that they have any such intentions as I have described. If this is the case, I can only say that they are most unfortunate in the use of the language continually employed by their organs in the press. That the movement I refer to will ever be successful I do not for a moment expect; I do not believe that the people of England will ever allow the Established Church to go back to Rome. But I do believe that, unless the Romanizing movement I speak of is checked by the active co-operation of moderate men of all loyal parties within our pale, it will ultimately be the cause of disruption and disestablishment. Above all, I believe that unless the laity can be made to understand that the points which have been disputed before the Law Courts are not mere petty questions about ornaments, dresses, music, and decorations, but attempts to subvert the Protestant principles of the Church, and to reintroduce some of the most dangerous doctrines of Romanism, they must not be surprised if, in a few years, the whole Church of England goes to

pieces. The apparent inability of the laity to realize the immense gravity of the questions in dispute, and the common disposition to trifle with them as mere questions of taste, is to my mind one of the most alarming symptoms of our times.

(2) Another black cloud is the growth and progress in our midst of *a party of Churchmen who seem anxious to throw overboard all creeds, articles, and fixed principles*, and, under the specious names of free ‘thought,’ ‘liberality,’ and ‘broader views of truth,’ to do away with the distinctive doctrines of Christianity. I believe the danger from this quarter to be very great. If the old dogmatic paths about inspiration, the atonement, the work of the Holy Ghost, and the world to come, are once forsaken, it is difficult to see what backbone, or nerve, or life, or power is left to the Gospel which our forefathers handed down to us. To the grand old doctrines I have just named we are undoubtedly indebted for any good which Christianity has done in the world, and I have yet to learn that the modern broad principles which are so loudly cried up in this day have ever done any evangelizing work either at home or abroad, or have produced any real, solid, good result in any town or country on earth. But it is vain to shut our eyes to the fact that the leaven of the Sadducees is silently working among us, as well as the leaven of the Pharisees, and that we all need to be on our guard.

I have seen a picture of American Broad Church Theology of such a graphic kind, in an extract from a Chicago paper, that I think it worthwhile to copy it in the form of question and answer.

1. *What are the Holy Scriptures?*—A useful book to be read discriminat-ingly—an authority when it accords with our reason—to be believed when it pleases us.
2. *What is man?*—A creature whose antecedents are somewhat doubtful, who perhaps descended from Adam and perhaps not.
3. *What is human depravity?*—Something in man to be got rid of, but nothing serious.
4. *What is the Atonement?*—A moral influence that makes us think less horribly of God than we otherwise would, and that gives us the highest idea of self-abnegation and self-sacrificing love.
5. *What is the future life?*—A state after death in which every man can have another chance.

Such is American Broad Church Theology! I wish I could believe there was nothing like it on this side of the Atlantic.

(3) One more black cloud is the continued *effort of well-meaning but mistaken Liberationists to effect the disestablishment and disendowment of the Church of England*. This is a movement which I always regard with great pain. I believe the promoters of it are utterly ignorant of the little cause they have to complain of the existing state of things, and of the certain disappoint-

ment which would be the result of their success. There are no people who are so entirely free from disabilities, and enjoy such a large measure of freedom, as English Nonconformists. They have a perfect plethora of liberty; they may build where they please, preach what they please, worship God in any way that they please, without anyone interfering. There is hardly an avenue to distinction in any profession, or to the highest offices under the Crown, which is not open to them as well as to Churchmen. What more would they have? They tell us in reply that they want perfect religious equality! It is truly surprising that they cannot see that, so long as the immense majority of landed proprietors and men of wealth are Churchmen, so long the 'religious equality' they speak of cannot possibly be obtained. A dissolution of the union of Church and State would certainly not procure it. If disestablishment were to come tomorrow, the Episcopal Church, though separated from the State, would still be by far the largest and most influential body in the country, and as such its members would always take a certain precedence in Parliament, in business, in the learned professions, and in every department of social life. However, I suppose it is useless to dwell on this. It is a painful subject, and I gladly leave it alone. But I leave it with the expression of my deliberate conviction, that while disestablishment would not injure the Church of England in our great towns, it would tend to paganize our rural districts; and while it would confer no advantage on Nonconformity, it would be most displeasing to that Almighty Being by whom kings reign, and on whom our national prosperity depends.

In spite, however, of the three black clouds which I have just mentioned, I must again repeat my conviction that we have very much to be thankful for in the present condition of the Church of England. When we look over the land from north to south and east to west, we must be blind if we do not see many things for which we ought to be very thankful. We have only to look back a hundred years, and compare the England of 1784 with the England of the present day, and the gloomiest pessimist must confess that in many respects there is a vast improvement. It is no longer thought a fine, manly, honourable, and gentlemanlike thing to swear, or to get drunk, or to fight duels, or to break the seventh commandment. The clergy are no longer content to have one service a Sunday, and the Lord's Supper once a quarter, or to preach sermons which are mere moral essays, and in which Christ and the Holy Ghost are not even named. The lower orders are no longer sunk in barbarous ignorance, unable to read or write, and knowing no recreations much better than bear-baiting, bull-baiting, cock-fighting, and the like. Without controversy and beyond doubt, the whole moral standard of the nation is greatly raised, and we ought to be deeply thankful for it. Of course much remains which is most unsatisfactory, both among rich and poor, and there is great room for amendment. Enormous luxury, extravagance, self-indulgence, mammon-worship, gambling, betting,

intemperance, and a perfect idolatry of dress and outdoor amusements, are sorrowful marks of our times. But, after all, the state of the nation must be judged by comparison. Our condition, compared with that of a hundred years ago, affords much ground for thankfulness, and among many improvements in the last century I am bold to say that not the least has been the improvement of the Church of England.

There are, however, three points to which I feel it my duty, as your Bishop, to call your attention. For want of a better name, I must call them *tendencies* or proclivities among the clergy, from one end of our Church to the other, which appear to me to demand very serious attention, because they contain in themselves the germs of much mischief. They are tendencies, you will distinctly understand, not peculiar to our own Diocese, but forcing themselves on the notice of observing persons in every Diocese in the land. On each of them I propose now to make a few remarks.

(1) In the first place, I think there is a disposition throughout the Church to *expect too much from legislation about ecclesiastical discipline*. We all remember that a Royal Commission was appointed more than three years ago in order to examine the whole question of our existing Ecclesiastical Courts, and to offer suggestions for their improvement. That Commission devoted itself to its work in a most praiseworthy manner, and presented a very elaborate Report, containing many recommendations, more than two years ago. I am afraid, however, that a large body of Churchmen expected more from the Commission than they had any right to do. Some appear to have thought that it would settle all the disputed points about what is commonly called Ritualism, which have been the subject of so much angry litigation for many years. Some appear to have indulged in the pleasing dream that we were about to have an authoritative interpretation of the famous Ornaments Rubric, and that not a few of the decisions of the Committee of Privy Council were about to be reversed or modified. I need hardly say that there was nothing to justify these expectations, and that the Commission most properly left disputed points entirely untouched, as being *ultra vires*, and confined itself strictly to the inquiry for which it was appointed. In short, the notorious disputed points are exactly where they were, and I fear that many people have been bitterly disappointed.

But unhappily this is not all the measure of disappointment. Even the recommendations of the Committee for the reform and reconstruction of our Ecclesiastical Courts have not found universal acceptance. However learned and carefully drawn up, they have met with a great deal of unfavourable criticism. Nothing has yet been done to carry out the plans and suggestions of the Commission by an Act of Parliament, and at the end of two years we are pretty much where we were. Of course I do not mean to say that legislation on the lines recommended by the Commission will not be attempted, and I think it

not unlikely that a Bill will be brought into Parliament in order to obtain an Act. But will that Bill be carried? This is a very serious question, and he would be a very bold man who would give an affirmative reply with confidence. Nothing can be done in this day without the consent of the House of Commons, and not everything without the House of Lords. The zealous advocates of church independence may not like this, but so long as the Church of England is an Established Church, they must accept the condition of things, and make the best of it.

Now, will the suggestions of the Commission pass the fiery ordeal of the House of Commons, a House which is proverbially jealous of ecclesiastics, and regards any movement which gives the Church more power with great suspicion? Will the House of Commons allow the Bishops to have a veto on proceedings against any criminous clerk? Will the House of Commons entrust a large amount of judicial power to Bishops, who notoriously have their own private opinions on all the disputed points of the day, and can hardly be called impartial judges? Will the lawyers in both Houses of Parliament ever admit that retired Lord Chancellors and learned Judges are not just as competent to decide what the written formularies of the Church meant her clergy to be, to do, and to hold, as any Bishop on the bench? All these are awkward questions, and I marvel at the offhand coolness with which some Churchmen answer them. They seem to me to forget that we are living in the 19th and not in the 17th century, in the reign of Queen Victoria and not under Tudors and Stuarts. We have to deal with a reformed House of Commons, and composed of very heterogeneous elements. We live in days when clerical heads are no longer thought to possess a monopoly of learning and wisdom, and no sovereign would ever dream of making a prelate Lord Keeper of the Seals. The days are past when the laity had an unhesitating confidence in the judgment of bishops and clergy. In short, it is my own firm impression that if a Bill is brought into Parliament drawn up on the lines of the Commissioners' Report, it will probably be very roughly handled, and may possibly lead to very disastrous results. I should not be surprised if, like the Public Worship Act, it went into Parliament in one shape and came out in quite another, or else was so completely altered that the promoters would feel obliged to drop it altogether. As a general rule, the less our Church goes to Parliament for help the better.

In the meantime, where are we? And what is our position? A well-known layman told the Reading Congress last year that the Report of the Commissioners had slain and destroyed the Clergy Discipline Act, and the Public Worship Act; and I presume he meant that those two Acts were laid on the shelf and would never be used again. I can see nothing to justify the assertion. On the contrary, at the beginning of this very year the famous Miles Platting

decision³ supplied unanswerable proof that the verdicts of the existing Courts are regarded by judges as binding on the Church, that a Presbyterian who notoriously disobeys the laws laid down by the present final Court of Appeal may lawfully be refused institution by a Bishop, and, in one word, that the old Courts are not dead, but alive! From that Miles Platting decision, we must remember, there has been no appeal.

One thing is very certain: if the present Courts are 'dead,' of which there is not the slightest proof, we are in a state of complete anarchy, and how long this anarchy is to last no man can possibly say. Some persons, I know, are pleased to call the existing state of things 'a period of truce,' and tell us that we have only to sit still and wait, and that everything is in a way to come right at last. I confess that I am unable to see what they are waiting for, and what there is to justify their serene expectations. It is admitted on all hands that nothing whatever can be done to solve our ecclesiastical problems except by an Act of Parliament, and I can only repeat my deliberate conviction that an appeal to Parliament for relief may produce very awkward results. Perhaps I am mistaken, but this, at any rate, is my present opinion.

My advice to all Churchmen at this critical juncture is to give up expecting much from Parliament, and to try to make the best of our present position. Order is Heaven's first law. The way of patience is surely better than the way of disobedience and threats of secession. The decisions on Ritualism which have been given of late years, and which the Judges evidently regard as binding on the Church at present, may not be perfect, and a day may possibly come when

³ Miles Platting is a suburb of Manchester. In June, 1869, Sir Perceval Heywood, patron of the living, appointed as incumbent the Rev. Sidney F. Green. Six months later the Rev. James Fraser was appointed Bishop of Manchester. In 1871 it was reported to the Bishop that Mr. Green was introducing ritualistic practices into his parish and the Bishop wrote to admonish him. In 1874 the Bishop refused to accept as a candidate for holy orders a Mr. Cowgill (nominated by Mr. Green to the curacy of Miles Platting) because he seemed inclined to sit loose to Church law. In 1877 the Bishop again wrote to Mr. Green concerning ritualistic practices which were still being introduced at Miles Platting, and the dispute between the two carried on into 1878 when the Church Association also entered the fray. As Mr. Green persistently refused to give way, the matter went to an Ecclesiastical Court over which Lord Penzance presided. The decision went against Mr. Green who eventually, in March, 1881, was committed to Lancaster gaol, not for his use of ritual, but for contempt of Court, for he had stated his determination not to submit to Parliamentary law in matters ecclesiastical. In November, 1882, on the motion of the Bishop, he was released, Mr. Green having decided to resign his living. The patron of the living now presented to it Mr. Cowgill whom Bishop Fraser had formerly refused to institute as curate, but he refused to constitute him as incumbent on the ground that he declined to undertake not to continue Mr. Green's ritualistic practices. The patron then commenced an action against the Bishop, but in December, 1883, judgment was given in the Bishop's favour, after which he proceeded to present and institute a non-ritualistic candidate for the office. The contest now ended. The whole dispute was of profound interest to Bishop Ryle. On this see *The Lancashire Life of Bishop Fraser*, J. W. Diggle, 1889: pp. 397-426.

greater liberty may be allowed to clergymen on some ceremonial points, so long as they are honestly loyal to the Articles to which they declare their assent at their institution. But the day has not come yet, and till it does come I cannot see the propriety of disobeying judgments, merely because we do not like them or the Courts which pronounce them. Until it does come it is the plain duty of the Bishops to require obedience to the Queen's Courts, and it is not reasonable, just, fair, or kind, to expect them to sanction disobedience.

No doubt it is easy work for some liberal-minded laymen to say that the Church of England is comprehensive, and that every earnest clergyman ought to be allowed to do exactly as he likes without interference. But surely every wise and thoughtful layman must admit that there are limits to comprehensiveness, and that no corporate body can possibly continue in a healthy state in which the first conditions of membership are habitually broken and trampled underfoot. It would be an immense blessing to our beloved Church if all her clergy would cease to indulge in vain expectations, and to strain after sanction for novelties in the administration of the Lord's Supper which do not affect the validity of the sacrament and are not necessary to salvation, and if they would be content to walk in the old paths which satisfied such men as Jewel, Hooker, Andrews, Davenant, and Hall. As for those clergymen who habitually persist in doing things which the Queen's Courts have distinctly condemned, I fail to see how their conduct can be justified, and I wonder how any sensible layman can support them. They place their Bishop in a most painful and awkward dilemma. He must either sanction illegality, and pour contempt on his Sovereign's judicial advisers, or else he must sanction the prosecution of some popular clergyman, and at once be branded and denounced as a persecutor by a public which is always ready to support a defendant. What is a Bishop to do? It is a state of things which is gradually becoming intolerable, and unless remedied threatens to throw the whole Church into confusion.

(2) The second thing which I regard as a dangerous tendency in these times is a *disposition throughout the Church to attach an exaggerated importance to the externals of public worship*. This is a very delicate subject, and it is extremely difficult to handle it without giving offence, and exposing myself to misunderstanding and misrepresentation. But I dare not turn away from it, and I ask your best attention while I try to lay it fully before you.

No intelligent Englishman of common observation can fail to observe that there has been an immense improvement during the last half century in the conduct of public worship in the Church of England. Dirty, slovenly churches; careless, ill-managed ceremonial; neglect of outward decorum; are no longer tolerated in the Establishment, and are seldom to be found except in out-of-the-way corners. Millions of money have been spent within the last forty years in restoring and beautifying old parish churches. Music and singing receive much more attention than they did in the days of our grandfathers. The organ-

ist, the choir, and the hymn-book are more thought of than they used to be. The Lord's Supper is administered more frequently than it once was, and not at intervals few and far between. For all this, I for one am sincerely thankful. If the scaffolding of religion is carelessly constructed, it is vain to expect that the building will be carried on in a workmanlike manner.

But now come some very serious questions which I want to have seriously examined. With all this outward show of religion, is there any proportionate increase of internal reality? With all this immense growth of external Christianity, is there any corresponding growth of vital godliness? Is there more faith, repentance, and holiness among the worshippers in our churches? Is there more of that saving faith without which it is impossible to please God, more of that repentance unto salvation without which a man must perish, and more of that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord? Is our Lord Jesus Christ more known and trusted and loved and obeyed? Is the inward work of the Holy Ghost more realized and experienced among our people? Are the grand verities of justification, conversion, sanctification, more thoroughly grasped and rightly esteemed by our congregations? Is there more private Bible reading, private prayer, private self-denial, private mortification of the flesh, private exhibition of meekness, gentleness, and unselfishness? In a word, is there more private religion at home in all the relations of life? These are very serious questions, and I wish they could receive very satisfactory answers. I sometimes fear that there is an enormous amount of hollowness and unreality in much of the Church religion of the present day, and that, if weighed in God's balances, it would be found terribly wanting.

For after all we must remember that it is written, 'Man looketh at the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh at the heart.' The great Head of the Church has said, 'This people draweth near to me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.' He has also said, 'The true worshippers shall worship in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him.' If there is one thing more clearly taught than another in the Word of God, it is the utter uselessness of formal outward worship, however beautifully conducted, when the hearts of the worshippers are not right in the sight of God. I suspect that the Temple worship in the days when our Lord Jesus Christ was upon earth was as perfectly and beautifully performed as possible. I have little doubt that the music, the singing, the prayers, the dress of the priests, the gestures, the postures, the regularity and punctuality of the ceremonial observances, the keeping of the feasts and fasts, were all perfection itself, and there was nothing faulty or defective. But where was true saving religion in those days? What was the inward godliness of men like Annas and Caiaphas and their companions? What was the general standard of living among the fierce zealots of the law of Moses who crucified the Lord of Glory? You all know as well as I do. There is only one answer. The whole Jewish

Church, with all its magnificent ritual, was nothing but a great whited sepulchre, beautiful without, but utterly rotten and corrupt within. In short, the Jewish Church was intended by God to be a beacon to all Christendom, and I am certain that these are days in which its lessons ought not to be forgotten.

We must not be content with what men call 'bright and hearty' services, and frequent administrations of the Lord's Supper. We must remember that these things do not constitute the whole of religion, and that no Christianity is valuable in the sight of God which does not influence the hearts, the consciences, and the lives of those who profess it. It is not always the church and congregation in which there is the best music and singing, and from which young people return saying, 'How beautiful it was,' in which God takes most pleasure. It is the church in which there is most of the presence of Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost, and the congregation in which there are most 'broken hearts and contrite spirits.' If our eyes were only opened to see invisible things, like the eyes of Elisha's servant, we might discover to our amazement that there is more presence of the King of kings, and consequently more blessing, in some humble unadorned mission room where the Gospel is faithfully preached, than in some of the grandest churches in the land.

There is nothing like testing systems by their results. Let us ask quietly whether there has been any increase of Christian liberality and spiritual-mindedness in the land, in proportion to the enormous increase of attention to external worship. I am afraid the reply will be found very unsatisfactory. In many cases, the money given by a congregation to help missions at home and abroad, and to promote direct work for the salvation of souls in any way, would be found absurdly out of proportion to the money expended on organist, choir, ferns, flowers, and general decoration. Can this be right? And is this a healthy state of things? Does the annual contribution of money for religious purposes throughout England and Wales, in these days of enormously increasing wealth, bear any proportion to the gigantic expenditure on racing, hunting, shooting, yachting, monster entertainments, dressing, dancing, and the general round of recreation? Yet all this goes on in the face of an immense increase of external religion. I cannot think this a symptom of a healthy condition. I shall never forget what an American clergyman said to me not long ago, when I asked him what he thought of the state of Church religion on revisiting England after an absence of some ten years. He told me in reply that while he saw a great increase of music, singing, and ceremonial religion in our public worship, he could not see the slightest increase, but rather a decrease, of true religion among our worshippers. I have a sorrowful suspicion that the American was not far wrong.

I commend the whole subject to the close attention of all my clergy. I am convinced that it demands the notice of the whole Church of England. I leave it with a few words of explanatory caution, which in a day of abounding mis-

representation I wish emphatically to use. If any one supposes that I want to return to the old-fashioned dry and dull worship of former days, he is totally mistaken. Nothing of the kind! God forbid that we should ever go back to the ancient parson and clerk duet, the miserable singing of a bad version of David's Psalms, and the wretched, tasteless music which satisfied most, if not all, of our ancestors. So far from this, I contend that our services are not 'bright and hearty' enough; for I call no service thoroughly 'bright and hearty' until every worshipper repeats all the responses, and takes part in all the praise, and refuses to leave these things to the choir. But what I do long and desire to see is a just proportion of attention to every part of church worship. And I contend that there is never a just proportion until the pulpit receives as much attention from the minister as the reading-desk and the choir, and until the sermon is just as powerful and 'bright and hearty' as the singing.

The preaching of the pure Word of God is declared by our Articles to be the first mark of a healthy Church. It is sound doctrine taught and preached, and not ritual, which in every age the Holy Ghost has used for awakening sleeping human consciences, building up the cause of Christ, and saving souls. The dens and caves and upper rooms in which the primitive Christians used to meet were doubtless very rough and unadorned. They had no carved wood or stone, no stained glass, no costly vestments, no organs, and no surpliced choirs. But these primitive worshippers were the men who 'turned the world upside down,' and I doubt not that their places of worship were far more honourable in God's sight than in after ages was St. Sophia at Constantinople or St. Peter's at Rome. It was well and truly said that in those ancient days 'the Church had wooden communion vessels, but golden ministers,' and it was this which gave the primitive Church its power. And when religion began to decay, it was said that the conditions were reversed; the ministers became wooden and the communion plate golden. But I want everything in the English Church in the 19th century to be golden. I long to have everywhere golden ministers, golden worship, golden preaching, golden praying, and golden praise. I want everything in the service of God to be done as perfectly as possible, and no part of it to be scamped, slurred over, done carelessly, and left out in the cold. I charge you affectionately, my reverend brethren, to make this your aim in the Diocese of Liverpool. Let the best, brightest, and heartiest services be always accompanied by the best and ablest sermons that your minds can produce and your tongues deliver. Let your sermons be addresses in which Christ's blood, mediation, and intercession; Christ's love, power, and willingness to save; the real work of the Holy Ghost, repentance, faith, and holiness; are never wanting—sermons full of life, and fire, and power; sermons which set hearers thinking, and make them go home to pray. Then, and then only will the Church of England have its just influence in every Diocese, and God will open the windows of heaven and give us a blessing. The very best and most elabo-

rate services are only means to an end, and that end should be the salvation of souls. All is not done when people have heard beautiful music and singing, and seen the most ornamental ceremonial. Are their hearts and consciences better? Is sin more hateful? Is Christ more precious? Is holiness more desired? Are they becoming more ready for death, judgment, and eternity every week that they live? These are the grand ends which every clergyman should set before him in every service which he conducts. He should strive to conduct it with an abiding recollection of the eye of God, the sound of the last trumpet, the resurrection of the dead, and the judgment-seat of Christ, and not with the petty thought, 'Is my service bright, hearty, and well done?' That these may be more and more the aims of every clergyman of the Church of England in the present day is my earnest prayer.

(3) The last tendency of the times which appears to me to require watching is as follows. I think there is a growing disposition throughout the land, among the clergy, to devote *an exaggerated amount of attention to what I must call the public work of the ministry*, and to give comparatively too little attention to pastoral visitation and personal dealing with individual souls. It is a tendency which I regard with much apprehension, and the more so, because I believe it is a snare to many excellent and well-meaning clergymen, and calculated insensibly to mar their usefulness. I wish therefore to say a few words about it.

There is no doubt that there are far more doors of public work open to an English clergyman in the present day than there were in the days that are past. Weekly lectures, weekly Bible-classes, prayer-meetings, communicants' meetings, Sunday school teachers' meetings, young men's meetings, young women's meetings, children's meetings, temperance meetings, purity meetings, committee meetings, mutual improvement meetings, are all multiplied enormously within the last twenty years. It sometimes almost takes my breath away to hear the programme of weekly work which some excellent clergymen announce upon a Sunday from their reading-desks, as the parochial bill of fare for the next six days. As I have listened, I have wondered how any one man, with only one body, can keep so many irons hot, and get through such an amount of work, and do every part of it well. And when I hear, as I do occasionally with sorrow, that such excellent men break down in health, I hear it without surprise. I admire their zeal extremely, but I could wish it was tempered with discretion, and I feel doubts rising in my own mind whether they are using their talents with prudence and proper economy. In short, I suspect there are some who would do more if they would do less, and would do a few things with tenfold efficiency if they would not attempt to do more than flesh and blood can possibly grasp. Three powerful, heavy, crushing blows, making everything go down before them, are surely better than six, feebly and faintly delivered.

But the serious point to which I want to direct your attention is this. There

are but 'twelve hours in the day', and it is clearly impossible for any clergyman to fill up his time with public work in addressing, or operating upon, large bodies of people in large parishes, and at the same time to keep up the old-fashioned habit of efficient house-to-house, family, and personal pastoral visitation. And I must earnestly and affectionately entreat my clergy to lay this matter to heart, to review carefully their own systems of employing their time, and to take heed that they make time every week for a due proportion of systematic house-to-house visitation.

To secure the sympathy and personal affection of parishioners is one great secret of ministerial usefulness. Thousands of people care little for eloquent sermons and powerful addresses, addressed to large crowds in which they form nothing better than an insignificant unit. The way to their hearts is to be found by going to their houses, sitting down by their side, taking them by the hand, dealing with them individually as friends, and exhibiting a brotherly interest in their sorrows and their joys, their crosses and their cares, their difficulties and their troubles, and the births, marriages, and deaths of their families. The man whose minister treats him in that way will hear his minister with tenfold attention upon Sunday, and will say to himself, as the sermon goes on, 'This is the kind-hearted person who visited and talked with me last week, and I am ready and glad to hear what he has got to say.' What 'the masses,' as they are called in the present day, want, and value when they get it, is sympathy and brotherly kindness from those that are above them. I firmly believe that one reason why many of the working classes in our large overgrown parishes never go to church, is the want of pastoral visitation which the unfortunate clergyman, with all the demands of a myriad of people upon him, cannot possibly find time to give. If every working man in a great city like Liverpool could be regularly visited at his own home once a month, and talked to by a friendly, loving, wise clergyman, it is impossible to conceive what an immense amount of good would be done. It was a true saying of that wise man, Dr. Chalmers, that 'a housegoing minister makes a churchgoing people.'

I must plainly say that I want to see a return to the old paths. We have gone far enough in the direction of public work. We shall do well to go back to the system of our forefathers. They certainly did less public work than we do, but I suspect they did far more in private. Let us not be ashamed to follow their example. Of one thing I am very certain, and I say it with the experience of forty-three years of ministerial life, and after careful observation of the results of work done by others, both in town and country parishes. It is my settled and deliberate conviction that a clergyman of comparatively moderate gifts, who preaches the gospel and gives a large quantity of his time to pastoral visitation and personal dealing with souls, will be found at the last day to have done more for the cause of Christ than a clergyman of far superior gifts, who, although he preaches the same gospel most faithfully, is only seen in the pul-

pit, and in the lecture room, and on the platform, but is never seen in the houses of his people.

Let me now wind up this over-long Charge with an earnest request that you will all continue instant in prayer for the Church of England at large, and for your own Diocese in particular. Let us all pray that year after year there may be more charity and brotherly love among the members of our communion. Let us not be always looking at the things wherein we differ, but at those wherein we agree. Let High Churchmen try to believe that most Low Churchmen are not necessarily anxious to become Dissenters, and really love the Church and the Prayer-book quite as much as they do. Let Low Churchmen try to believe that High Churchmen are not necessarily half Papists, and have no desire to go over to Rome. Let Broad Churchmen try to believe that men of other schools may be just as friendly to free inquiry, and science, and the exercise of reason, as they are themselves. Above all, let us all give up the habit of thinking every one is party-spirited who does not agree with us, or of flattering ourselves that we are the only persons who hold no party views. The best of us know everything very imperfectly. Half our controversies are mere logomachies, and arise from the different sense we put on words. No school among us has any monopoly of theological light and knowledge. But if we do disagree, let us disagree pleasantly and without bitterness. If we cannot all be of one mind, and see everything alike, and support the same Societies, and work exactly on the same lines, at any rate let it be a settled principle with us to make the best we can of one another, and to work with one another as much as we can. While there is much to deplore and to humble us in this part of the Lord's vineyard, there is yet much for which we ought to be thankful. When I remember Liverpool forty-five years ago, and call to mind how few clergymen there were in this part of England at that date who made any mark on the public mind, and then consider how many there are among the 187 incumbents of this new Diocese who are doing good work which will stand the fire, I do thank God most heartily. I rejoice, and I will rejoice.

I am thoroughly convinced that there never was a time when there was such an immense door of usefulness open to the Church of England in every direction as there is at the present day, and not least in Lancashire. If every incumbent in the land was faithful to the principles of his own Church, and always, like Sir Henry Lawrence, 'trying to do his duty'; if every incumbent within the three loyal schools of our comprehensive Church was awake, and alive and stirring in the pulpit, the reading-desk, and the parish, and armed with love in his heart and truth on his tongue; if this was the state of things, I believe the Church of England might safely smile at the attacks of all her foes, and shake the nation for good to its very centre. At present too many Churchmen are but half awake, and do not realize how much there is to be done, and

how much they might do if they would go to work in the right way. Our forefathers in the 17th and 18th centuries had no such advantages as we have, no such open doors both at home and abroad, no such help from the press and the steam-engine, no such complete liberty of action. But as for us, we stand on vantage-ground, and countless fields are white for the harvest, while, alas! the labourers are few. May I not conclude all by saying, 'Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth labourers,' and grant us a true revival. Let us often use that well-known Collect, 'Stir up, O Lord, the wills of Thy faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may of Thee be plenteously rewarded.'