

ART. VI.—DANGERS AND DUTIES.

THE SUBSTANCE OF AN ADDRESS DELIVERED TO A MEETING
OF THE CLERGY AT LEEDS.

IN considering our position with regard both to the Church and nation, there is one fact which in all our difficulties is a constant encouragement to us. It is this: that our principles are indisputably those of the Reformation. The aggressive party in the Church no longer conceal their dislike to the Prayer-Book. They have issued proposals for altering the Prayer-Book in order that it should agree with the ancient mediæval Use of Sarum. They do not conceal their dislike to the Reformers. This is a very strong evidence that a mediæval interpretation of the Prayer-Book in the sense of Newman's Tract No. 90 is forced, unnatural, and unhistorical. We agree with the acute Archbishop Whately when he said: "I know not how anyone can escape the imputation of very low notions of morality who continues to retain his position in our Church, and speaks with bitterness of those not in communion with it, while he opposes the principles and even vilifies the character of our Reformers. To me it does appear that without attributing to those Reformers an infallibility which they expressly disclaimed, we may justly give them credit for such sound views and such resolute adherence to evangelical truth, combined with such moderation and discretion as were, considering the difficult circumstances they were placed in, truly wonderful."¹

Secondly, we are strong in the fact that we express the genuine, natural, historical sense of our formularies. Why is it that the second half of the words of administration are so often omitted or mumbled? Why is it that the Articles are so constantly disparaged or ridiculed? or that Newman, in order to maintain his position as a mediæval Anglican, was compelled to shock the moral sense of English Christianity by writing Tract No. 90? I quote from a recent useful writer, Mr. Dyson Hague: "The first practice generally to be introduced by the aspirants of this party is the elevation of the elements in the administration of the Eucharist. The first practice to be forbidden in the liturgical reformation of the Church of England was this same elevation of the chalice in the act of consecration. The crucial doctrines to be taught with more or less boldness as occasions permit are the doctrines of sacramental absolution, auricular confession, sacramental justification, and the sacrificial character (I mean in the

¹ "Kingdom of Christ Delineated," pp. 220, 221.

Roman sense) of the Supper of the Lord. The doctrines to be clearly impugned both by the silence and the clearness of the Prayer-Book are these same doctrines. In the first Prayer-Book of 1549 they obtained but slight countenance; and the subsequent revisions show they were thoroughly disallowed. If the doctrines of the Reformers in the reigns of Edward VI. and Elizabeth had been the doctrines of Pusey and the Tractarian party, the Prayer-Book would never have been cast in its present form. This is an unquestionable fact; and it is a thought of cardinal importance for English Churchmen. Let them grasp it and hold it fast. It is silent when, from their standpoint, it should be most expressive; it is found wanting where, had they compiled it, it would have been most explicit."¹

In the third place, we know that we have the laity with us. If they once obtained the notion that after all the agony of the Reformation they were again to be controlled by a corporation of priests, once more they would rise and sweep priestcraft away from the Church and people. The population within the National Church is reckoned at over 15,000,000; the adherents of the English Church Union are not more than some 30,000. The Church Missionary Society still raises £282,000 a year. The income of the Religious Tract Society is £86,000 a year. That of the Church Pastoral Aid Society £70,000 a year. The philanthropic enterprises of the friends of the Reformation flourish every year more abundantly and cover the country with beneficent institutions. The laity are sometimes perplexed at the growth of Sacerdotalism, but their general attitude is that such matters are the affair of the bishops and clergy, and that, while leaving these things to them, they will support them as far as they can in all good works. The religion of most Englishmen is the religion of the Bible.

Another strong point in the present position is to be found in the fact that the policy of prosecution has been dropped. Although, within the last few years, the Ecclesiastical Law Courts of England have pronounced no fewer than sixty ceremonies, vestments, and ornaments sought to be introduced by Ritualists to be illegal, and contrary to the doctrine and usages of the Church of England, there can be no doubt that these law-suits were not popular, and that wherever a ritualistic clergyman was condemned and opposed the execution of the sentence, he was regarded as a martyr. Much sympathy was alienated from the side of the Reformation by this policy.

¹ "Protestantism of the Prayer-Book," p. xviii.

“In the fifth place, as these costly prosecutions have been abandoned, the resources of the friends of the Reformation will now be available for missionary efforts at home, such as training-colleges for the clergy, middle-class schools for boys, new churches, the purchase of advowsons, the maintenance in every quarter of living agents, and the promotion and distribution of wholesome theological literature.

On the other hand, there are dangers in the situation which must not fail to be recognised. There is no doubt the counter-Reformation has achieved a very large amount of popularity, especially amongst fashionable people. Its use of music and decoration and stately ceremonial has brought to its side the votaries of art and æstheticism. Like all new and vigorous religious movements, it has attracted to itself, as the prevailing current of the hour, much of the zeal and ability amongst religious-minded young men seeking for orders. And apart from the religious, it has the quality of being a very easy system for the worldly and superficial. Time is easily spent at an elaborate musical ceremonial, and a devout manner in Church easily acquired. Non-communicating attendance at the Sacrifice of the Mass puts no very severe strain upon devotion or conduct. Again, the power of the ritualistic press is enormous. The movement has some of the ablest and most popular journals of the day, and Church of England writers in other journals are frequently of this type.

Another danger lies in the fact that the mediæval unreformed style of service is now so established in the National Church, that the first scandal and shock have ceased. More than a thousand churches have adopted the Eucharistic vestments, and the number seems likely to increase. Again, the very respectfulness of laymen to constituted authorities, whether in parishes or dioceses, makes them to some degree indifferent to these matters. If they do not like a church, it is very easy for them to cease attendance. It must also be observed that the movement has practically captured what is called “society.” The vast majority of fashionable ladies have taken it up, and ladies, as everybody knows, are extremely successful in promoting any cause in which they delight. Further, it should be noticed that the policy of many of the rulers of the Church is, in all these matters, either decidedly favourable or latitudinarian. The old truths are seldom proclaimed in charges, pastorals, or sermons. The favourite policy of the present day is obviously that of the prayer, “Give peace in our time, O Lord.” Thus the promoters and adherents of the movement find it easy to get themselves accepted as the true representatives of the Reformed Church of England. Another

fact which gives grave cause for anxiety is that the open demand of the president of the English Church Union and his friends for the alteration of the Prayer-Book, so as to undo what was distinctive about the Reformation, has, so far, met with little surprise. Perhaps the demand may seem so remote from fulfilment that it is not worth while taking notice of; but in the meantime the movement is creeping on and increasing in numbers amongst the clergy. Liberalism and a tolerant indifference may go too far when dealing with the sacred interests of truth. Then, again, there is the hovering spectre of Disestablishment; and the not unnatural desire to keep the Church together suggests that the terms of peace should be dictated by the aggressive and disturbing element. Lastly, the danger must be faced, that for twelve or thirteen hundred years, little as the ritualistic view accords with the teaching of Scripture, it was the prevalent influence throughout the whole Catholic Church. Of course this was a not at all improbable result of the fact that the Bible was in manuscript and little known; but the difficulty created is considerable in dealing with those who prefer the continuous practice of the Church, however ignorant, from an early date, to the obvious teaching of Holy Scripture.

There are certain fallacies about the friends of the Reformation which it is desirable that we should realize and correct. The first is that they are declining in numbers. Now the probability is that there never were so many Evangelical clergymen in the Church before as at the present day, nor so many supporters amongst the laymen. The list of subscribers to the Church Missionary Society alone is sufficient to show this. It is true that they have received little official patronage during the last twenty or five-and-twenty years, but that is an accident arising from the fact that the dispensers of patronage have been chiefly on the other side. The enthusiasm of the annual Church Missionary gathering at Exeter Hall, the zeal of the annual meeting at Islington, and the great growth of Evangelical religious and philanthropic associations, are quite enough to prove this.

The second fallacy is that they have been accused of having no theory of the Church. Their theory is very plain and simple, and they have adhered to it without deviation or hesitation. It is that the true Church of Christ is, as Hooker shows, invisible, and that the visible Churches are congregations of faithful men, where the pure Word of God is preached and the Sacraments duly administered. The word Catholic, like the word Holy, is an ideal description as applied to a visible Church. It is a quality much to be desired, but not

yet absolutely complete in fact. The Episcopal form of government is a historical truth, but there is nothing to show that it is a doctrinal necessity. There are defective Churches, and Churches more or less complete in truth and practice. The Church of Rome, while complete in organization and continuity, is defective in orthodoxy, truth and purity. The Greek Church is defective in purity of doctrine, in learning and in conduct. The Presbyterian Churches are, through difficulties at the Reformation, defective in the historical form of government. It would be desirable, indeed, that all Churches should agree in the truth of God's Holy Word and in holiness of life, but the dissensions between Rome, Greece, England, and other reformed Churches and bodies, render this impossible. While waiting for fuller terms of communion, it is best to treat those who agree with us most nearly with the greatest confidence and friendship.

A third fallacy is that the really hard-working, self-denying people are the ritualistic clergy, and that the Evangelicals are less strenuous and more self-seeking. Never was misrepresentation more unfounded or more wanton. In my vast archdeaconry I have clergymen and churches of every conceivable type, and it would be in the highest degree absurd to draw distinctions in this particular. Some of the very best parish work is done by Evangelicals old and young; and, on the other hand, although ritualism has had the advantage of novelty and excitement, some of the most dismal failures have been in ritualistic enterprises once of the greatest promise. The probability is that there is less to say about old-fashioned methods of work than about those that are new; but in all cases, he who has the blessing of God is the one who devotes himself with the most affectionate zeal to the good of his people.

A fourth fallacy must be noticed. It was even repeated by Canon Liddon in his "Life of Dr. Pusey." It is that the Evangelicals preach only, or mainly, on two chapters of the Epistle to the Romans. I need only mention the seven volumes of Melville's sermons, who is rated by many at even a higher level than Canon Liddon himself; the numerous and extremely various volumes of the sermons of Dr. Vaughan; upwards of twenty volumes of outlines of sermons by the famous Simeon on every conceivable topic throughout the whole Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, containing 2,536 discourses; the fifteen volumes of magnificent orations by Dr. Chalmers, besides a whole school of Scotch preachers; the celebrated sermons of Bradley and Edward Bickersteth; and, in more modern times, the powerful and weighty contributions to English homiletical literature of Archbishop Thomson and

Archbishop Magee, Bishop Boyd Carpenter and Archdeacon Farrar; the sermons of the two latter are amongst the most eloquent and notable of any of the present day, and both of them, as is well known, heartily on the side of the Reformation.

I now come to the question, What, under the circumstances, is our own duty?

1. To be perfectly clear and definite in understanding our own principles. Do not let it be said that the principles of the Reformation are merely those that were mediæval, with a little Evangelical water. They are most distinct; and as they have the authority of our Lord and the Apostles, they are far more glorious. For the most recent and careful exposition of them, I should refer to Boulton's "Thirty-nine Articles," Moule's "Outline of Christian Doctrine," Odom's "Church of England," and Hague's "Protestantism of the Prayer-Book."

2. We must pay far more attention than ever before to the training of candidates for Orders. Besides Ridley, Wycliffe, Highbury, and St. Bees, there appears to be no college which is not more or less in accord with the mediæval movement, or, at any rate, neutral in the matter. What is wanted is a great institution at Aston, or somewhere near Birmingham, which would provide for graduates of Oxford or Cambridge before they take Orders. Our young men must be taught at length to compose sermons and to read aloud, two of their most important duties. It is also cruel to launch them, as we do at present, into vast parishes, without any previous acquaintance with the thoughts, habits, and ways of the working classes.

3. The offer of the Church Pastoral Aid Society to be a pioneer in all home mission work, as the Church Missionary Society is for all work abroad, must be heartily welcomed and accepted. It desires to take up the question of middle-class education, buy advowsons from indifferent and impecunious laymen; in fact, all the desirable objects which I mentioned in an earlier part of this address in connection with work at home, it proposes in a most intelligent manner to pursue.

4. One part of this programme is so important that it needs separate mention. It is that of literature. If the friends of the Reformation wish their principles to be understood by the people at large, they must have manuals and catechisms such as Staley's "Catholic Religion," the catechisms of the Church Extension Society, and the well-known manuals of Sadler. Strange to say, there is little of the kind at present available.

5. A grand opportunity awaits the wealthy friends of the Reformation in the building of churches. According to primitive custom, he who builds and endows a church retains

the right of presentation. The diocese of London alone requires forty or fifty new churches at the present moment. The town of Birmingham is in a like condition ; and with our vast increase of population, many towns must be in the same case.

6. There is no more important motto for the friends of the Reformation at the present time than "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works." In all social improvements, in all movements of real progress, in every philanthropic enterprise, the friends of the Reformation must be prompt and vigorous in showing the influence of their principles, and in proving by their conduct how necessarily all that is salutary and useful springs out of their principles.

7. Much can be done in the character of the Church services. It is not necessary that all types should be alike ; the important thing is, to find out what is best suited to the congregation. In all churches, except those which are of cathedral rank, or frequented by fashionable and wealthy congregations, the aim should be to make the whole services thoroughly popular and such as all can join in them. With regard to intoning, if the choir do not sing the responses, and sing them well, it is infinitely preferable that they should be silent, and that the responding should be left to the congregation rather than that there should be a thin and poor, or rough and loud monotoning on the part of those who have not the skill or experience to make their utterance musical or devotional.

8. It does not seem that the friends of the Reformation have been sufficiently to the front in maintaining their principles in public conferences. In no single diocese, or town, or village, should the principles of the Reformation be allowed to go by default.

9. Controversy is, in our present circumstances, the very life-breath of truth ; but controversy has often been acrimonious and personal. There is not the least reason why it should not be perfectly good-tempered, when it is temperate, reasonable, well-informed, and begun and ended in prayer. The victory sought must be for truth, and not for self.

10. All personal ambition must, of course, be set aside in a cause which is to prosper. If men are continually thinking what effect their words will have on their promotion, they cannot be said to be carrying the banner of Christ at all. The Church of England contains many prizes of high rank, influence, and wealth. There are good reasons for them, which need not now be discussed ; but to take these into consideration in proclaiming and defending the truth would deserve immediate and despicable failure.

11. It is very important to encourage the younger clergy ;

to treat them as brothers and colleagues, and not as mere employés. To rejoice in their success, to spare no pains in their training; to introduce them to the fullest privileges of the social life of the congregation, to improve their education and reading, and at the right time to labour heartily for their promotion to an independent sphere.

12. Much strength has been wasted, and cohesion lost, by exaggerating trifles instead of sticking to principles. There are multitudes of unimportant matters about which men may reasonably differ. The discreet man will do his utmost to avoid all unnecessary shibboleths.

13. The friends of the Reformation cannot be accused of the wisdom of the serpent in the matter of cohesion and mutual support. There has certainly been too much tendency to multiply eccentricities and to cultivate individualism; far too little of the spirit of preferring one another in all points of honour and advantage.

14. It is highly important that the true representatives of apostolical Christianity should show a wholesome and striking example of obedience to the rulers of the Church, of respect for their office, and affection for their characters. They should make their Bishops feel that nowhere are they more welcome than in their churches and parsonages; that nowhere are they received with more intelligent sympathy and genuine regard. It is very foolish indeed to act, even unconsciously, as if the Bishop must necessarily belong to the movement which makes so strong a point of Apostolical Succession. So high and responsible an officer should always be received with honour and gratitude, and his visit made in every possible way impressive to the people of the parish.

15. Few people realize how much of the life of the present age depends on the press. The press, on the whole, is wonderfully friendly to the Church; but it may be pardoned for paying most attention to those who give them most to talk about. The press in all its sections is pleased to receive information of what affects the interests of the different communities. Nothing is, of course, worse than self-advertisement and puffing; but a prudent provision of information by some lay member of the congregation is nothing but a mark of grateful recognition for useful work performed.

16. Questions relating to social matters and labour interests are amongst the most important in our age. Any section of the clergy or laity who shut their ears to these matters deserve to lose all influence in the life of the nation. Our attitude towards them must be patient, sympathetic, and desirous of trustworthy information and experience.

17. The fact must be recognised that the vast majority of

the working classes prefer worshipping in mission halls to the somewhat ceremonious worship of the Prayer-Book. In all populous parishes such mission halls should be provided, where earnest laymen can exercise their gifts without restriction. These will gradually be feeders to the parish church, and certainly will not interfere with the numbers of those who can appreciate the consummate beauty of the services provided for us by the Reformers.

18. It need hardly be added that there is no means by which the clergy can more extend their influence or more properly commend themselves to the laity than by exhibiting throughout their daily life a true, primitive earnestness, zeal, faith, and self-devotion. Never was it more necessary than in the present day to lay aside all worldliness and mere worldly enjoyments. What is probably the natural life for the squire and his family, would often be very unfitting indeed in the preacher of the Gospel, whose whole life is consecrated to promoting the kingdom of Christ on earth, and who finds that life too short for the discharge of his tremendous responsibilities.

I have offered these suggestions in response to a most kind invitation, not from any superior experience of my own, but frankly and freely as an impartial observer, and in accordance with the unrivalled opportunities of survey afforded me by the central position of my office.

WILLIAM SINCLAIR.

Short Notices.

The Ancient and Modern Library. Published at 1s., grey boards ; 1s. 6d., scarlet cloth. Griffith, Farran and Co.

No. 1, "Confessions of St. Augustine." Pp. 227. Messrs. Griffith and Farran are much to be congratulated on their enterprise in publishing, in excellent type and in a very readable form, some of the most classical theological works in Christendom, and it is to be hoped they will be encouraged by a large sale. The first of the series is, of course, one of the most touching and inspiring results of human piety and genius.

Nos. 2, 3, and 4 have not been received.

No. 5 is William Wilberforce's celebrated and thoughtful work, "The Five Empires," written from the point of view of Divine providence in evolving the Church of Christ. It contains 214 pages.

No. 6 has not been received.

No. 7 it is needless to praise. It is Jeremy Taylor's immortal work "Holy Living." Pp. 295.