

would be a great relief to many. They do not mean that any portion of the Church's prescribed Service should be omitted, but only that the period of its taking place may be altered. For instance, in Churches where there were three Services on the Sunday, the Morning Service might consist of the Morning Prayer with the Litany or Communion Office; the Afternoon Service of the Litany or Communion Office, whichever was omitted in the morning, or of both, should it be considered desirable to repeat either of them a second time; and the Evening Service might consist of the Evening Prayer, and occasionally the Communion Office also. Your Committee do not believe that, by such an arrangement, any rule of the Church whatever would be infringed, whilst by it the extreme length of the present Morning Service would be avoided, an Afternoon Service peculiarly suitable for children and servants would be provided, and the occasional administration of the Lord's Supper in the after part of the day would allow many of the working classes, who now are virtually debarred from that Ordinance, to approach the Table of the Lord.

"Your Committee, however, in making this, and other recommendations of a like nature, would distinctly state that they are for laying down no rule on the subject, nor for interfering in any way with the mode of conducting Divine Service, when the Clergy and their congregations are indisposed to affect any change. But it may be well, with respect to authorities, to state that Wheatly is strongly for the separation of the Services which are now used altogether in the morning, and that Bishop Sparrow is still stronger on the same point, whilst, as regards present sanction, they cannot doubt that the allowance and the approval of such a change by our own Diocesan would carry with it all the support and encouragement that are required; and, though the change might be opposed at first, on the mere ground of dislike to any alteration in what had been long the established usage, yet remembering, as your Committee well do, the strong resistance that was made when Evening Services were proposed, and seeing the wonderful results which have followed that adaptation of the Church's ministrations to the requirements of the age, they confidently trust that a great and happy effect would be produced by this concession also, and that by means of it many aliens would be brought within the House of Prayer.

"WEEK-DAY SERVICES.

"2 Contingent upon this change your Committee conceive that a Service much required might be framed for week-day evenings. The Service here alluded to would consist of the Litany, with psalm or hymn singing, to be followed by a portion of Scripture, expounded in a plain and familiar manner; and in this way, following in the track of some of the most eminent Fathers of the Church, as well as of others in latter days, the parochial Minister might go through a Gospel, or an Epistle, or a consecutive portion from the Old or New Testament History, much to the instruction and edification of many, especially of the working classes, who might be induced to attend a Service so short and so suitable.

OPEN-AIR PREACHING.

"3. The subject of open air preaching is one at present occupying much attention. Your Committee are aware that it is open to much objection on the ground of inconvenience and irregularity, and that qualified for the work; yet they are of opinion that, under due regulation, such ministrations might be attempted with much advantage. Your Committee cannot but remember the effects produced by the sermons preached at St. Paul's Cross, which were among the main instruments for establishing the reformation of religion in this country three hundred years ago; and they have a strong conviction that, if men properly qualified were selected for this duty, they might, with the consent of the Incumbent having the cure of souls, preach in places sufficiently public to call the attention of the multitude, and yet sufficiently retired to avoid disturbance, and thus, by going into the highways and hedges, and compelling men to come in, render essential service to the cause of religion, and extend the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

"SPECIAL SERVICES.

"But another mode of attracting the attention of the indifferent, and arousing the careless and slothful, has been brought under the notice of your Committee. It has been suggested to them that Special Services continued on consecutive days, and at hours most likely to be attended by the poorer classes, and in Churches situated in populous localities, when a series of Sermons should be preached, powerfully urging and illustrating necessity and efficacy of repentance and conversion, might be a great means of awakening a spirit of religious interest and inquiry. With this proposition your Committee feel disposed fully to concur, and would further suggest that Advent and Lent would be suitable seasons for such Special Services and appeals, and that in the supplying such extra duties, the Clergy should be ready to lend their assistance to each other.

"In noticing and recommending these new modes of operation, your Committee would not pass without remark the great good which has been already produced by cottage lectures, communicant classes, and classes for the instruction and preparation of young persons for confirmation. On all these the Divine blessing has evidently rested, and they have been highly instrumental in keeping up the knowledge and spirit of piety amongst those for whose especial benefit they were projected.

"5 It has struck your Committee, in connection with those last mentioned ministrations, that there is a great need of closer intercourse than yet exists with the younger members of the Church, after their Confirmation. At that period they peculiarly require pastoral watching and influence, and amply repay any extra care and culture bestowed upon them.

"Your Committee would suggest that the young people in a congregation, who have been confirmed, should be enrolled and be met periodically, perhaps once a month, when they should be encouraged to bring before their pastor the relation of various difficulties and hindrances they experience in their Christian course, and receive from him such counsel and instruction as their respective cases may require. The young females might be met by the Clergyman's wife, or some experienced and duly qualified lady, and the pastor's assistance only called in when more especially needed. This organisation would have peculiar reference, on the part of those under it, to their attendance at the Lord's Table.

We have certainly a strong feeling that it would be inexpedient to alter the usual course of the Sunday Morning Service, especially in rural districts; but separate, shorter services, such as those indicated above, have long since been suggested in our columns. (Vide "Prayer and Praise, a Practical Bond of Union;" reprinted as a Tract.)

CHARGE OF THE BISHOP OF OXFORD.

COMMON PRAYER.

He had endeavoured to join them in several services at their own churches, and he would beg to express how his heart had been cheered in those services by the welcome they had given him in their several parishes. In those three years, besides confirming in 164 parishes, he had joined in the services at 99 of their churches, and he trusted to be enabled to extend that circle more widely hereafter. Those parochial visitations had impressed forcibly on his mind the conviction how far they had fallen short in yet attaining to the due standard of common prayer. They followed a time of great neglect in that matter. Alas! in some of their churches, it would be hardly too much to say there was hardly any common prayer at all; for that great institution and choice blessing of the Church of Christ implied the agreement of many separate souls in the harmony of united confession, prayer, and praise; whereas, instead of that, the service in too many churches had sunk so low that it was nothing more than stated prayer read by the clergyman, responded to by the clerk and listened to by the people. The position of the clergyman and the clerk, placed close to each other for the convenient recitation of their several parts in the service, had a dangerous tendency to lead the people to think that the prayers, like the sermon, were addressed to them, and were merely intended to be listened to by them, instead of suggesting that that practice was adopted with the view of leading the devotions in which they were to join. The natural consequence followed. The congregations, in too many instances, sat listening or slumbering in their several pews, and there was no joining by the whole body of the worshippers in any of the responses. Nothing could be colder or deader than such a common prayer as that. Much had been done in several of their parishes to restore its congregational character to their worship, but much remained to be done; and there were few objects more worthy their attention, for inattentive worship must be offensive to God, and most surely destructive to the souls of the people. They should then labour to cultivate a temper of devotion among their people, by awakening in them a sense of its importance, and by endeavouring to form their habits to it by such instruction as might make them understand our own form of prayer, and feel a part in it by removing out of their way all external hindrances, and supplying all external aids which could assist them. The application of that principle ought to direct the liberty which the Church gave them as to chanting parts of the service or simply reading them. Their question must be, not what did they like best, but what did they absolutely and most conscientiously believe would most promote the general joining of their people with an intelligent devotion in their public prayers. The answer to that might be different in different places, but in all the principle must be the same. Whatever tended to make the service unintelligible or offensive to their people should be absolutely avoided. To read God's word, or to say any part of the prayers at a rate which the congregation at large could not easily follow or comprehend, or in a tone which was not easily intelligible to them, was a sinful violation of their highest duty. To adopt such practices from any notion of ecclesiastical propriety was to sacrifice souls to a fancy. The words to be read in a loud voice, plainly meant that God's word ought to be read so distinctly and deliberately that every one, even the most ignorant of their people, might know that which, through the blessing of God, would make them wise unto salvation. Moreover, they should provide all that was needful for devout worship. They should not only teach their congregations to kneel meekly during prayer, by setting them the example of devout reverence by bodily action, but should give them every facility for enabling them to follow that example. That was a matter of especial moment with regard to the children of the Sunday schools; for bringing them to church in a body, as a school, was of itself an evil. It was far better, where it was possible that they should worship with their parents in church, for that kept alive family affection, and care, and a sense of responsibility, and it preserved children from the inevitable disturbances which beset them where a number of their own restless age were gathered around them. But, if that was impossible, they should at least be saved from all needless aggravation of their difficulties. The difficulties were greatly increased when they were placed in situations where they could not kneel down, or could not well hear, or where they were out of immediate observation. On the same principle, where the church had become blocked up with pews and galleries which made united worship almost impossible, or where the natural process of decay, or as long continuance of mean repairs had destroyed the comeliness or the beauty which of old belonged to almost every one of our parish churches—they should endeavour to lead their parishioners on to engage in the good work of church restoration; and in those various endeavours, his brethren of the laity, and especially the churchwardens, should give to their clergymen their utmost aid, setting their fellow parishioners an example of devout behaviour in worship, by aiding their clergyman in removing from the church all that might assist in the common worship of all. It was of great moment that there should be as much uniformity as possible throughout their services, and that especially in all matters where the variety of custom might indicate and increase a diversity of opinion. Disobedience to the rules laid down to guide them was not only an offence in themselves, but it threw difficulties in the way of their more obedient brethren. For instance, if all obeyed the plain and express commands of the Rubric, that children should be baptised after the reading of the second lesson, the offence now given in some cases, by a conscientious obedience to that rule, as if it were a private fancy of the minister's, would soon cease; while the children baptised would have the great benefit of the united prayers of the faithful, and all men would be reminded of their own baptism, with its obligations and its blessings. But, above all, they must watch themselves, if they would have their people devout. If they merely read the prayers to them instead of praying with them; if whilst they ministered before God their souls were not filled with the awful sense of His majesty, it was impossible but that their want of reverence should re-produce itself in them, so that there as everywhere the reason and truth of the order of the Apostolic Church was manifest, "Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine." But to be really devout in their public ministrations they must be men of prayer, living continually in secret communion with God, often prostrate in the hidden darkness of the own chamber before Christ, casting down at the foot of His cross their own burdens, and hearing from His gracious mouth words of pardon and strength. If that were their life, they would go to

His house as their joy, and their love would be kindled as they prayed; and since the spirit of God spread devotion from one to another of His servants, they of His grace would scatter a devout influence among those with whom they mingled, until their churches should be filled with earnest suppliants, and should resound with one voice of acceptable prayer.

ADVICE TO THE YOUNGER CLERGY—THEOLOGICAL COLLEGES.

Seek earnestly to gain the habit of devotion. This the Bishop especially impressed upon his younger brethren, and to get that habit in the earlier days of their ministry. It is a sore difficulty to men, even those who are in earnest in the endeavour to break off habits once formed of carelessness and inattention, while, on the other hand, the formation of habits of devotion must be regarded as among the first of blessings. It is in this point of view that he urged the completion of the diocesan training institution, where candidates for the ministry might spend the year previous to their ordination. Meantime the Bishop cordially rejoiced that so many candidates avail themselves of similar institutions elsewhere. He had of late received several from the institution at Wells, and none had he sent forth with more faith in their future usefulness. In close connection with this subject, he pressed upon them the duty of strict conscientiousness in subscribing the testimonials of candidates for holy orders. Easily and readily to sign such testimonials produced much evil in the Church, and accumulated guilt on the head of those who signed them.

EDUCATION NECESSARY.

After alluding to local effort in the diocese, the Bishop urged the necessity of raising the standard of parochial education. The education which a schoolmaster can give must be limited by the education which he has received. A half-educated master can only turn out half educated pupils. A shallow self-conceited teacher will produce shallow self-conceited pupils. Those who, failing in other occupations, turn to the work of teaching as the means of earning a subsistence, will not meet the Church's exigencies in training up her little ones to the work of discharging their duty to their brethren and to God. Those who see in much of the education that is given in our national and other schools a tendency to puff up the pupils with notions above their condition, but not to make them better servants, better labourers, or better artisans, will do wisely in supporting the proposed diocesan training institution at Culham, which, instead of producing teachers who will only puff up the minds of the pupils with notions of self-conceit, will train them to be really useful. His Lordship suggested that for the year before the pupil teacher goes into the training school the clergy should observe the youthful candidates with close attention, with the special view of moulding their hearts and souls into the Christian form. Some might even receive the pupil teachers into the benefit of their constant care, and in such a case they would furnish youth really fitted to pass at once into the training college, and then it would be found that they would train their pupils up, not to notions of self-conceit, but to be useful, humble, diligent and pious members of society, such as all would desire to see in peasants, labourers, and servants. The question is not now to be argued whether education is a good thing or not. Good or bad, education must now be had. If not provided according to the Church of England training, and with all those, he said, not now the higher blessings, but the sobering influence which she furnishes, then all those evils which they dread who fear education without those contented habits and feelings which, under God's help, they hoped by their training to impart, would come upon them. All that had passed within these three years tended to enforce this view.

THE GORHAM JUDGMENT.

Amongst the most important public events of the last three years was the judgment which had been delivered in the case of Gorham v the Bishop of Exeter. Upon that he had given them publicly his view, in answer to their addresses at the time, and since then he had seen no reason for altering or qualifying what he then expressed. One thing, however, he would add, let not any one suppose that they who could not acquiesce in the wisdom of that judgment, or on the reasoning on which it was founded, therefore of necessity desired to narrow the existing limits of the Church, or to drive out those of their brethren whose views differed from their own, provided only that they heartily subscribed to the Book of Common Prayer, and taught nothing plainly and directly repugnant to its language. The statement which they condemned did, as they believed, transgress those limits. Those statements, as they understood them, absolutely denied the possibility of regeneration being conveyed in baptism, and lowered down that blessed sacrament to an empty sign. They did not believe that such a view was common among their brethren who had yet spoken of that judgment as if it had sheltered them. They did not believe that the condemnation which they thought should have been pronounced ought to have affected the position of those of their brethren in the Church, and surely they were right in that view. The Church of England has left to her sons a large liberty of thought, and deep would be the injury done to her if that liberty, on either side, were lessened so as to affect any who could with faithfulness and truth subscribe to all her formularies, taken in their natural sense. The success of any such attempt, from whichever side it came, would be fatal to her usefulness. God grant that, instead of suspecting one another, or seeking to find each other out, they might, with loving hearts, bear with, and endeavour, by their growth in light and love, to lessen all their differences. For himself, in his office, the rule he had ever laid down was simple, and he trusted that, through the help of God, his observance of it would be complete—it was to hold, of course inflexibly, and to state to them, always with all freedom, his own views of truth; but, as to all the points on which good men within our Church might lawfully differ, to be, as their Bishop, of no party—but, whether he agreed entirely with them or not, to honour all who, in their several parishes, were striving in love and self devotion to do the work of Christ, and to give them, whatever were the shade of their opinions, heartily and ungrudgingly, every support and aid which they could gather from his office, without abridging their just liberties, or compromising his own views. He was well aware that such a course must expose a Bishop to the reproach of his enemies, and that reproach which it was hardest for flesh and blood to bear—the reproach of insincerity; but he trusted to be made able to bear even that, if need were, without shrinking, that if God would, by thus becoming, in its truest sense, "all things to all men," he might, by strengthening their several ministries, through the grace of God save some. As to the various questions involved in the special case to which he had referred, he would not then re-open them, but simply suggest one or two

considerations, which might minister thoughts of comfort to those who had been disgusted by that judgment. The first was, that it was not the book the doctrine of which had been impugned, but the statement of doctrine drawn by the judges out of that book, which was declared not to contradict the dogmatic teaching of the Church; and that, whether that statement fairly represented the teaching so impugned or not (though a question gravely concerning the judges who so drew it out), was one which in no way compromised the Church. Further, he would call their attention to an argument, advanced by no mean legal authority, which averred that no direct judgment or doctrine had been pronounced in that case. The argument was this:—On the refusal of the Diocesan to institute a clerk, an appeal laid, by process called *duplex querela*, to the Metropolitan, to whom the exercise of any jurisdiction which any of his provincials refused to exercise, passed by law. In that case the question before the Court of Arches was, whether the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Exeter had so lapsed to the Archbishop; and the decision was, that the clerk had failed to show that there had been a wrong refusal to exercise any jurisdiction, and that the Metropolitan, therefore, must refuse to assume it. The refused clerk appealed to the Crown, not to declare the orthodoxy of his teaching, but to call on the Archbishop to exercise the jurisdiction which had lapsed to him. The decision on that simple question was, that the Archbishop ought to have exercised that jurisdiction; and, therefore, the sentence of the court below was reversed, and the matter referred to the Archbishop—to do what? Not to institute the clerk, for that was not ordered; but to see that right was done in the case; that was, that the Archbishop was required to examine whether the clerk was fit for institution, and if so, to institute him. He was not called upon to proceed to institute upon the sentence of orthodoxy pronounced by the Privy Council. The consequence of that was not unimportant, for it followed that if any wrong had been done, it was only the individual error of legislative authority—an evil to which the Church was at all times necessarily exposed. But though that might be true, it undoubtedly remained, that, as the law now stood, any direct question of doctrine might be brought by appeal before the same tribunal, and by it determined for the Church. To that fact he begged to call their unprejudiced attention. Whatever might be their points of difference, he asked them to look calmly and dispassionately at this state of things for a single moment. It was most unfortunate, in his judgment, that this grave and important question had become mixed up with the result of one particular case; and he would beseech them on both sides to view it wholly irrespective of that case. Many of them would remember how anxiously, at the annual gathering of the rural deans at Cuddesdon, he had sought for an alteration of the law two years before that judgment was given. It must have been manifest to all that the issue of that trial would not remedy any evil inherent in the constitution of the Court. It surely could not be contended with our 20th Article that the Church had received her highest interpretation of her faith from a Court which had no necessary connexion whatever with herself, but which might at any time consist of the avowed deniers of her creed. They had, he was perfectly convinced, only to cast aside their mutual jealousies to obtain some alteration of the law which created so anomalous a tribunal, recent in its institution, clothed with that power, he might say, almost by accident, and publicly declared by that member of the Legislature who proposed and carried it through, to be altogether incompetent to treat of what had thus fallen into its hands. They might believe him that that was no unimportant and no one-sided question. The power which expounded the law, did, for all practical purposes, make the law; and questions touching the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, and other kindred subjects, might not improbably, ere long, be brought before a body to whose decision none of them could conscientiously submit.

CONVOCATION.

Upon this grave and difficult subject he should be most unwilling to dogmatise, but they had a right to know his opinions, and as they had not been lightly formed, he could not hesitate to lay them before them. He was then far from saying that the past suspension of those functions might not have been allowed by the good Providence of God to save their Church from dangers which in no other way could have been avoided. Who could say how far they should have preserved our present formularies unchanged had there been in some past periods of her history an opportunity of change? That peril, he thanked God, was now past, and he was bound now to say, that upon a full consideration of all the difficulties of this complicated subject as he had been able to give to it, he saw no other solution for the many practical difficulties pressing upon them than the restoration of the Church's legislative power. Firstly, he believed it to afford the only solution for any practical question which, until so settled, would continue, alas! to weaken and divide them. No other power than that of the Church could alter or suspend one of her own written laws. Now, those written laws were confessedly some of them imperfect, some perhaps contradictory, some of them unsuited to the present time, but the existence of such rules must occasion exactly the present evil of diversity of practice, threatening and asperating difference of opinion. Here, then, was the practical work of the greatest moment, which could only thus be achieved. Again, such an action was required if the Church were ever, at home or abroad, to adapt the framework of her institutions to the great and existing needs around her; to introduce, for instance, that ancient and most useful order of Scripture readers, or in any such way to provide for the growing spiritual necessities of our country. The laws of the party were so tyrannous in England as to force the head of a government, which might be formed upon the basis of opposition to the Church of England, to use his power for its support rather than for the education of the Church, whenever these two objects were opposed; and since Dissenters from her communion, of every shade of opinion, who professed any form of Christianity, formed now a large proportion of the House of Commons, few would maintain seriously that that house could fitly perform the Church's legislation. Here, then, was a twofold necessity for adapting old institutions to existing circumstances, which could not be done safely without the Church's intervention. He would suggest but one other consideration connected with this last. When questions concerning the Church's welfare were now debated in the House of Commons, self-constituted, and sometimes well-meaning, representatives of her opinion claimed to speak as the exponents of the feelings of her laity, and were listened to with a deference which occasioned their ignorance