

she ought not to exclude any from her membership whom Christ Himself would have admitted. Within the Church of England, then, there ought to be, and there is far more liberty of opinion than is to be found in any other Church or sect in Christendom. A similar wide margin of liberty is allowed to her clergy, but for this very reason it is all the more necessary that the limits of toleration should be clearly marked and loyally observed. There are many different parties to be found within her ranks, but so long as each party can, at all events with some appearance of plausibility, claim support from her authorized Articles and Formularies, so long can they be allowed to hold office and appointment within her. It is upon this ground that extreme High Churchmen, liberal Broad Churchmen, and ultra Low Churchmen are retained in her ministry. They at all events profess, and who will deny their claim, to be loyal law-abiding members of the Church.

This was the standpoint of the Oxford movement of 65 years ago. The Tractarians appealed throughout to the Prayer Book and Formularies and endeavoured to show that these were not contrary to the doctrines which they taught. Whether they succeeded in this attempt is open to question, but that was the ground which they took. The earlier Tracts lamented "the insubordination permitted in all ranks of the Church." They did not think it fair "to suffer our Bishops to stand the brunt of the battle without doing our part to support them,"—they reprinted Bishop Cosin's refutation of Transubstantiation, and his condemnation of the council of Trent.

Even in the later Tracts, though the writers have grown bolder in their utterances, the position is still unchanged. The appeal is to the authorized Formularies of the Church of England, and the attempt is made to reconcile their teachings with doctrines generally associated with Rome. They do not accept but argue against the Tridentine decrees. They quote from the writings of English post-Reformation divines to establish their points. And even when they in reality agree with the decrees of Trent, they do not openly say so, but assuming a position of seemingly hostile criticism, manage to urge doctrines which they are apparently condemning. Even Newman in the famous Tract 90, and in his defence of it, never appeals to the Council of Trent.