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sure, so ready to hear them. We stand in another way upon a very important part of the history of the Church. I hope I shall not be thought fanciful if I try to put it into words. It is almost too difficult for me to put it into words. But it is this insufficiency of the work of the Church up to this moment in one important matter,—the most important and final matter of all. The work of about 40 years in the Church was a great Evangelical work which brought the souls of individuals into close relation to their Christ and their God. For 40 years at least that went on, that seemed to be the main end of the Christian religion—to make the soul draw nearer to God. For another 40 years, perhaps, speaking roughly, there dominated us another great idea—that of making the individual feel his position in the Church. We have been making churchmen these 40 years continually more intelligent and more practical churchmen, and now there is a next step. That is not the end of religion. To make the soul draw still closer to God is, indeed, religion; to make men feel their places in the Church is, indeed, religion: but it is to gather in one fold all the children who are scattered abroad that the Church herself exists—and the work of the next 40 years is to make the Church feel her position with regard to society, to all society, exactly as the individual soul has been made to feel its position with regard to its Christ and its Church. And when I speak of the Church taking its place to act upon society, to mould all society, I mean not only society in England, though that is what we have to begin with. And here I would say that we never shall make the Church take her place in acting upon society as long as we allow it to be possible for one part of society to distrust and condemn another, if either we leave the lower classes to believe that in the highest classes resides all luxury and corruption, or the highest to believe that in the lower classes there is everything that is to be feared. We have a great work to do, but if we are content to leave it so the work will never be done. We must make our own classes trust each other. That is first an influence upon society here. But then let us lift up our eyes, and look, like Abraham, to the east and the west, the south and the north, and we see that by society we mean the world—the world's society. There is no continent, no shore, no island in which England is not at work, and therefore in which the leaven of the Church of England must not be at work also; and while, from the corruptions of society within, we are introducing intemperance to the most horrible extent, and all manner of other evils, among the native races, the Church's business is to reverse all that, and to make the advent of an English ship a blessing and not a curse to the islanders—as it heaves in sight. And, now, if the soul to Christ, man to his Church, and the Church to the world are plainly the line upon which God's Spirit is leading us, there is one central good to us, and that is that men of the Church should know their Christ to be a present power. We can have nothing not to say, the whole Church must be

quite clear of that, to any interpretation which makes the Lord Christ to have been anything but simple man, anything but true God. God did live in man in order that His Spirit might dwell in man for ever, and we must not think any of those passages in the Bible about Christ being with us for ever and abiding with us for ever are to be taken in a metaphorical sense. If we do not feel, if we do not know and realize this, it is our fault, and until we purge our own passions and purify our own hearts, we shall not know it; and when we all know it, the Church will know it, and when the Church knows it, the world will know it.

PRIESTLY SINS AND FAILINGS.

It may be good for us to review those sins and failings, to which as priests, and especially as Anglican priests, we are most liable.

And here I would say at the outset, that in enumerating these, I feel as if I were, to a great extent, making before you, my reverend brethren, a public acknowledgment of the sins of my own ministerial life.

As foremost, perhaps amongst our Anglican failings, we should reflect upon the tendency that there is amongst us to what may be termed secularity. We are too apt to forget that we are priests, too ready to fancy that nothing more is required of us as ministers of Christ, than is required of every lay member of His Mystical Body. Surely if we recall the solemn day of our ordination we can hardly think thus. We were then exhorted to remember unto how high a dignity, and to how weighty an office and charge we were called, as messengers, watchmen, and stewards of the Lord. Next, having declared before God and the church our conviction that we were truly called according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ to the order and ministry of the priesthood, we promised not only to devote ourselves to prayer and to the Word of God, but also to lay aside the study of the world and of the flesh, or, as was more fully expressed in the exhortation that went before, as far as possible to forsake all worldly cares and studies. Surely all this points to that very marked difference between the clergy and the Christian laity, which the Church in all ages has required, and has emphasized by numberless canons and rules of discipline, and which the pious instincts of the flock have ever looked for in their pastors.

And yet are we not sadly prone to forget this distinction? Are there not too many amongst us of those, who having taken upon them the solemn vows of the priesthood, are nevertheless, in life and conversation, utterly secular! Does not this secularity manifest itself, not only in the cruel neglect of pastoral duties, but in that wilful form of disobedience involved by the omission of the two daily offices, but also even in such minor matters as dress, manner, and general behaviour?

Depend upon it, my reverend brethren, if our office is to be revered by our people, we must set the example of reverencing it ourselves. The more humbly we are enabled, through the light of the Holy Spirit, to think

of ourselves as miserable sinners, the more highly we should reverence our office as priests. And that reverence will show itself, not only in great matters, but also in those smaller incidents of daily life to which I have already alluded. God grant that we may escape from that prevailing tendency of secularity, which, through a relaxed discipline, has so often been a prevailing temptation throughout the ranks of our clergy.

Then another great evil, which we have to lament, is the prevalent ignorance of theology as a science that exists amongst us. That the Anglican communion has produced and does produce great divines, and though more rarely, great preachers, is a matter very generally acknowledged. But that our average acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures and with the Fathers is far below the standard to be looked for in those who claim the privilege of teaching the faith, is only too apparent. Were it not for the forbearance of some of our people, and the indifference of others, I think we should more often have this fact brought home to us.

Now what are the causes of our present low standard of theological learning? They are, seemingly, twofold, and they relate to our past as well as our present lives, as individuals. Looking back to the past, can we not, many of us, remember that a somewhat superficial acquaintance with Holy Scripture and dogmatic theology was required of us before we were ordained, and that even to this we did not fully attain? Then with regard to the present, is it not a fact that the systematic study of divinity, over and above the mere preparation of sermons, is too little recognised as a solemn duty, and as the best act of reparation that we can now make for past neglect?

The Bishops of the Church are, at the present time, raising the standard required of candidates for Ordination. Let us, who have been ordained, raise our own standard of reading. Let us make theological study an essential part of each day's work, and recognise this as a duty that cannot wilfully be set aside without sin. Even those of the clergy, who, in large towns, exempt themselves from private reading on account of the greatness of their pastoral labors, are, probably, in the long run, defrauding those to whom they have to preach.

What shall we say, then, of priests in country parishes who do the same?

And here I would venture to add that it is an important matter what we read. It is hardly a satisfactory matter to choose for ourselves, out of the ephemeral religious literature of the present day, just such works as happen to commend themselves to our fancy. It is far safer, and more consistent with that prudent humility which we should cultivate, to study mainly those writings of the Fathers, or of our own Divines, which, by the consent of many generations of Christians, have been reckoned as faithful expositions of Catholic theology.

Till we are better read theologians, it is to be feared that our average Anglican preaching will remain what, alas! it is at present, and that we shall be tempted to give to our flocks, instead of well-established verities, crude