

chief qualifications after that, it seems to me, should be that they are able to read well.

2nd. The want of this Office being a familiar recognized thing with us. Its not being an "Institution," as observed before. Its being looked upon as an exceptional, abnormal affair, instead of part of our system.

3rd. The natural diffidence of our people to assume any such office. And why is this? I would say from the want of custom. It is a comparatively rare and untried thing, this Lay Reading. And, unfortunately, not only do persons hesitate to undertake the duty, but as a general rule the very congregations are averse to being led in their devotions by one of themselves. And this brings us to the

4th and most serious cause of our difficulties; viz.: The intense and extreme "Conservatism" of most of our people. They were brought up in the old country, and want to import into this, every minute particular which they learnt at home; and, though their experience in their fatherland might have been very limited—perhaps confined to some little Village Church—yet each one wants to reproduce in his place of worship *here*, all the little accessories, the deficiencies, and even the incongruities or deformities which might have prevailed in his own little Parish Church. Have we not all had to combat these various prejudices of "Conservatism"? Have we not had oftentimes to hear the mutterings of some "aggrieved parishioner," because the pulpit in the new Church was not quite so large as the one in *his* Church in the old country, or was of a different shape, or the choir were differently seated, or something equally serious? Now this "Conservatism" is, I conceive, our greatest hindrance in the matter in question. There is an undercurrent of distrust about it. People look upon it as something new, and therefore necessarily bad; an "innovation" which for all they know, may some day land them in Rome! This spirit of ultra-Conservatism makes it extremely difficult for any individual Clergyman to inaugurate a movement of this kind.

Let us now consider the remedy for this difficulty. How