

England permits in the interpretation of that controverted point. This judgment was confirmed by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

I adduce this fact simply to show how unreasonable and unjust it is to say that persons, asserting a real presence of Christ in His Holy Supper, are thinking and teaching what the Church of England condemns; and how unjustifiable it is to try to wrest from any a liberty which the Church so wisely and charitably concedes. Where the Church is thus tolerant in her judgments, it becomes her individual members to adopt her fair and impartial example.

This is, to no small extent, overlooked. I am persuaded, from the misunderstanding amongst Churchmen of the real and honest opinions of one another on important points of doctrine. By comparing and discussing such opinions in a temperate and reverential manner, more substantial agreement is often found to exist than had previously been thought possible. It would be wise and useful, then, to provide opportunities, if possible, for friendly conference on Church topics, in which both the Laity and Clergy could join. It has occurred to me to remark that, in contracting the extent of this Diocese, there must be some corresponding diminution of the fiscal and mere secular operations of its Synod. And, in contemplation of this, the idea has strongly presented itself to my mind that everything the Synod has to do in that capacity could be accomplished at biennial meetings. Committees appointed for two years could just as satisfactorily perform their work as when nominated for one year; and nothing really essential to the financial and secular interest of the Diocese could suffer through holding the Synod in alternate years only. And it appears to me that if there were, in the intervening year, a gathering of the members of the Synod only for the more special consideration of subjects of practical interest of a spiritual complexion, incalculable benefits would ensue. These meetings would have much the character of the Church Congresses in the Mother Country. Papers might be prepared and read on subjects of practical and spiritual interest, avoiding as much as possible the salient and sharper points of controversy; and on these papers short, friendly discussions might follow.

The Clergy and Laity would thus have an opportunity of a fraternal and kindly interchange of opinion; and, through such amicable Christian conference, many misconceptions and prejudices would be removed, and many valuable counsels and suggestions offered—on missionary work, on Sunday-school extension, and on the means of enkindling and maintaining in individuals a spiritual life and holiness. This would lead to a better understanding, and, we may trust, better appreciation one of another. Difference of opinion on doctrine and ritual would thus come to be more charitably considered; a more tolerant spirit would be begotten; and the result, we may hope, would be a more hearty concert in the real work of the Church—a more united effort for the welfare of souls.

It would be a calming of needless agitations, as well as a provoking to love and good works; it would be an effectual help, we must believe, to the maintenance of religious peace and a spiritual growth. People no doubt are often stirred to action by excitement, and the lethargic roused to energy; but this is not a healthy process for a genuine growth of the spiritual life. For a true edification, for a stable building up, there must be peace. If war at any time be necessary, it is that peace on a stronger and more durable basis may follow. This has been for some time with me a cherished thought, though it is expressed with diffidence. Although suddenly obtruded, it may nevertheless meet with consideration from the Synod. My belief is, that the plan proposed would, to some extent at least, restrain, if not entirely suppress, the mode now too generally adopted for giving utterance to criticisms, mingled too often with reprobation of sentiments to which objections are felt—I mean through the public press. Valuable as this is, and powerful as its agency has proved for the correction of wrong and hurtful opinions and practices, it is not just the medium through which to express differing convictions on the sacred and delicate points of theology. In resorting to this channel for the discussion of sublime and holy topics, there is likely to be less care and discretion in the use of words, less desire to respect the honest persuasions and sensibilities of others. In the very isolation of the litigants there is a temptation to be acrimonious; and language is too frequently indulged in which goads, it may be to unseemly recrimination, those who are constitutionally averse to other than a gentle and courteous expostulation.