

St. John's Church Record, And Parish Notes.

EDITED BY THE RECTOR, ASSISTED BY MEMBERS OF THE
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THE BISHOP OF RIPON UPON THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

Our readers will not repine if we give the foremost place this month to the recent utterance of an English Bishop, with whom the editor enjoyed a happy period of companionship when Curate of Christ Church, Lancaster Gate, in the years 1883-4. Dr. Boyd Carpenter, then a chaplain to the Queen, and Canon of Windsor, as well as vicar of one of the most influential churches in London, was very much more than a famous popular preacher. He had taken mathematical honours at Cambridge, and had made his mark in the ministry by his admirable energy while Vicar of the large parish of St. James's, Holloway. It was from this sphere that his university called him first as Select Preacher, then as Hulsean Lecturer in 1879. In 1883, having accepted the parish of Christ Church, he invited the editor, who was then professor of history at Queen's College, to become his assistant, the duty being mainly that of occupying the pulpit during the Vicar's absence.

It was indeed an embarrassing ordeal for a young man to ascend the pulpit before a vast congregation gathered to hear Canon Boyd Carpenter, very conscious that nearly two thousand people were feeling acutely disappointed; and it was with very mixed feelings that he was wont to hear of a special summons, no infrequent occurrence, for the Canon to go to Windsor or Osborne, in order to preach before the Queen.

Canon Boyd Carpenter was then, as he is now, a man essentially outside parties. The *Record* might include him, and be proud to do so, among Evangelicals, and he was Evangelical and Protestant, in the true sense of these necessary attributes of Christianity. Others called him a "Broad Churchman," because of his wide sympathies, and his fondness for practical rather than metaphysical topics. But his soul was and is too big for parties, and their miserable accompaniments of narrowness, jealousy, exaggeration, and petty spite. To his pulpit, an able High Churchman like Robert Eyton was as welcome as Phillips Brooks, a valued friend and frequent visitor, or as Edward Bickersteth, editor of our hymnal, then the Vicar of Hampstead, and now Bishop of Exeter. There could hardly be conceived a more ideal rendering of the grand service of the Church of England (outside St. Paul's and the Abbey,) than that of Christ Church in those days. A magnificent organ, with four manuals, built upon the design and specification of the eminent organist Dr. Gladstone; a large choir of nearly forty men and boys, the prayers simply read, but with earnest devotional feeling, and then the sturdy

figure of the Vicar was seen passing to the pulpit, the collect uttered in a whisper, but audible to the extremest end of the large church, and then an outpouring of true eloquence, — manly sense and logic, sound scriptural interpretation, burning zeal and gentle sympathy, — that was a morning service as the writer recollects it in those never to be forgotten days.

When Mr. Gladstone pressed the See of Ripon upon Dr. Boyd Carpenter, it was felt that no successor could fill the place adequately. And so it was. The present Vicar, Dr. Ridgeway, a capable and energetic clergyman, indeed draws a large congregation from that wealthy neighbourhood. But it is a very different sight from the wonderful crowd of peers and judges, members of parliament and literary men, who filled church and aisles and the vestry sometimes itself, in those by gone days.

We extract the Bishop's remarks upon the present state of the Church of England, from the report of his recent Diocesan Conference. He was referring at the outset to the circumstances and results of the "Lincoln judgment," and especially to the eager excitement of the rival parties who viewed it either as a lamentable defeat, or a glorious victory.

"The subjects in debate involved, as they honestly believed, serious and grave issues. Principles were at stake, and side issues of momentous importance hung in peril. Some were uneasy because the Final Court of Appeal had had a place in the judgment. Every act of a secular court seemed to their mind an invasion of the independence of the Church. He would not deal with the question of the validity of the decisions of this court or that, or the methods by which the procedure in such matters might be improved; but he would remind them that under no circumstances could they or any other body of men hope to escape entirely the jurisdiction of the Court of Appeal. Disestablishment, the desperate remedy of impatience, would not help them. Had it not been a stock argument in Church defence that the non-established communities were under the protection and jurisdiction of English law? In the well-known Huddersfield case the secular court had to consider the question whether the teaching of the minister was or was not in accordance with the trust deed of the chapel. Wherever pecuniary interest or personal rights were at stake no English tribunal would refuse the hearing of any man who appealed for protection. This right was the right of English citizens, and he did not see how it would be possible or wise to contrive an arrangement which would invalidate that right, and as long as it existed cases which involved religious and theological matters must be liable to the jurisdiction of the court. The State, which it was now the fashion to abuse to-day as impotent and to-morrow as interfering, but which was after all the will of the nation embodied in the Statute-book as represented in Parliament, could not without self-stultification abdicate its right or abandon its function, or refuse its protection to those who complained of wrong and invoked its aid. He spoke of this not because he thought an improvement in the method of judicial affairs connected with Church matters was desirable, but because he thought some had forgotten that there were limits beyond which it was neither prudent nor possible to go. But again, the judgment had stirred