

6. These two principles are his key to resolve the difficulty. Let us now see how he applies them.

First, he calls upon each party to give the other a full recognition, as equally with themselves, the accepted servants of Christ. They had all an equal right, no one more, and no one less, to that standing and all that it involved. Whether upon the matters in controversy a man's principles were erroneous or sound could not affect the fact that the Lord had received him into His Household just as he was, and by so doing had declared that to hold those principles was within his Christian liberty. His brethren had no right to judge him. "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own Master he standeth or falleth." He reproaches them, not for differing from one another in their religious views, but for allowing such differences to alienate them from one another in love and confidence. One thing, he says, is essential, not to hold the same views, but to "be of the same mind one toward another;" not agreement in opinion, but union in love and trust; "that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father, of our Lord Jesus Christ."

And next he requires each party to bear in mind that their brethren of the other party, in holding fast by their convictions, acted upon the same sacred motives as themselves, namely, loyalty to conscience. If the Jewish party observed days and refused certain meats, they did so from loyalty to the Lord and to conscience as his voice. "He that regardeth the day regardeth it to the Lord." Again, when the Gentiles refused to give any countenance to these distinctions of days and meats, they did so from the same principle of loyalty to the Lord and to conscience. "He that disregardeth the day, to the Lord he doth disregard it."

The moment you touch conscience, he

says, you touch something infinitely sacred which at all hazards must be obeyed. Even if your brother's conscience is only doubtful, and you overbear the doubt, and lead him to act against it, you do him the greatest wrong,—for "whatsoever is done with a doubting conscience is sin."

7. Now, how far will all this apply to the internal divisions in our own Anglican branch of the Church to-day? It will, I am bold to say, if fairly carried out, not merely mitigate them, it will heal them altogether.

I do not mean that it will bring everyone to be of the same view upon every disputed question of religious truth or religious duty—I do not know that that is desirable—I am sure it is not possible. But, the narrow limits of points really fundamental being once settled, it will compel everyone to recognize the right of everyone else to freedom of thought and freedom of prophesying upon every question that lies beyond those limits; and it will do for us what is beyond everything else needed in the interest of peace,—it will, by the very fact of that freedom being secured, bring us to that "likemindedness one toward another," on which the Apostle insists,—that trust in one another's loyalty to the truth and honesty of purpose, which will enable us, however widely we may be in principle divided, "with one mind and one mouth to glorify God."

8. For here we have reached the real difficulty. It is not being accused of holding wrong views that wounds an honest soul, or of adopting observances that symbolize wrong views. It is the imputing of bad motives, dishonesty, intrigue conscious disloyalty, professing one thing and aiming at another. These miserable slanders it is which fill the honest soul with indignation and render all unity and peace impossible.

But when the right to differ is recognized, then, however widely we may be