

too, there is one great advantage, as it appears to me, of having such an order of men is, that it would supply the means to men of education and high standing, if God should so dispose their hearts, of exercising, especially with regard to their own dependents, subject to the superintendence of the parochial incumbent, some of the functions of the ministry. It is not to be expected, perhaps it is not to be desired, that men of that class should often enter into holy orders for this purpose, for this reason—that we all have our own proper avocations and our own duties, and it is not in all cases the duty of a man to exempt himself from the fulfilment of those duties to which he is called. If a man, being of the rank of a country gentleman, or of a higher rank than that, enters into holy orders, he cannot with consistency take a leading part in the business of the country, he cannot fill some of the highest offices in the State, he cannot sit in Parliament, he cannot be sheriff of his county. Things of that sort would be a hindrance to his taking this office. There are few men, therefore, who could be expected to undertake that office, however much they might desire it, and however gladly they might undertake the inferior ministry which would not take them out of the order of laymen. I know, indeed, that there are some instances, and one of those instances I mention with gratitude—I do not feel entitled to mention his name, but I know of one gentleman of fortune in the north of England who, having on his estate large collieries, and being grieved at heart to see the spiritual destitution among his workmen, had disregarded all those objections, had sought from the Bishop ordination to the order of the ministry, and without any endowment whatever, and with no other object than the souls of his dependents, is now working among them as their clergyman. I have no doubt that such a man will meet the fruits of his great self-sacrifice in God's blessing upon him, and, indeed, I have reason to know he already reaps the fruits of his self-denial, in the abundant love and gratitude of those for whose sakes he has undertaken the office. We cannot expect many instances of that kind, but there are other cases of men of the highest class who would be only too happy to be allowed in some official way to undertake such offices as those we might commit to them. I will trouble you with one more quotation as to the canons of the Council of Carthage, which gives directions as to the mode of appointing a person to an office of this kind. The canon directs that the Bishop—

"Spectante plebe, tradat ei codicem de quo legeris ut, dicens: Accipe et esto Lector verbi Dei, habens, si fideliter et utiliter impleveris officium, partem cum eis qui verbum Dei ministraverunt."

That seems to me to be precisely the mode according to which we should desire that such an office should be committed to such persons by our own bishops in the present day—to put the Bible into their hands, and to give them by word of mouth of the bishop without imposition of hands the authority required. That would seem, according to the canon of the Council of Carthage, to be the primitive practice—to put the Bible into their hands, with the blessed promise that if they fulfil the office well they shall have a place with the faithful ministers of the Word of God. Perhaps one word might be said concerning the name. In favour of the name of Reader there is the authority of our own Reformers—of our reformatory bishops at the beginning of the reign of Queen Elizabeth—Archbishop Parker and his great associates. That I think is a very strong ground; and then we have the same name in the primitive church, in the instances which I have given. But if any prefer another name, if the

bishops themselves should prefer to give them the title of Sub-Deacons, it will be all the same. Provided you get the thing, we need not concern ourselves about the name. Then, being in the office, what are they to do? Of course, one part of their office will be to seek out the poor, the sick, and to minister to them under the direction of the superior minister—to seek out the ignorant, to bring back the wandering to the fold of Christ if they can, by the influence of their own position, being many of them in a condition of life more nearly approaching to those poor lost wanderers for whose souls we crave, and therefore in some respects more likely to get to know what are their precise feelings, more able to get them to express what are their wants and their trials and temptations; and to bring them by these means, if it may be so, to the knowledge of the superior minister under whom they minister. Then, surely, it could not be objected that they should hold some certain service in some place apart from the church, out of the ordinary time of divine worship. That is what we see ourselves now in all directions. We hold our cottage lectures, we hold our meetings in our school-rooms, and, further, all the missionaries, and almost all our missionary bishops, adopt that very system to the utmost possible extent. If we read the reports of our missionary societies, we find mention made of services in all directions, from which it appears that the missionary himself is an agent around whom sub-agents exist in the whole of his district. He has his catechist, and that might be another name which the bishops might give them if they so pleased. In each village the missionary has his catechist who holds meetings and reads prayers to the converts twice a day, the missionary and the bishops visiting them from time to time. Surely that which the necessity of the case has imposed upon them, that which the bishops in the colonies have again and again sanctioned in such cases, need not be forbidden by ourselves. Is the necessity less here at home, with the enormous population that we now have? Many of our population have forgotten their baptism; many, too many, are not even baptised. Are the wants at home less than those of the heathen? But that is not all. Not only do the missionary bishops sanction the employment of these catechists, but there are some missionary bishops who have established already in a definite form this order of readers for which I now venture to plead. I have not with me, I regret to say, the rules of the Bishop of Newfoundland for the appointment of his readers; but I am able to mention, on the authority of one who, though he be a bishop, I have the honour and the privilege to call my friend, that he has established a definite form for the appointment of persons of this class to the office of readers, that he gives them a nomination to that office during his good pleasure, and he appoints them to fulfil the very office which I have imperfectly endeavoured to sketch, subject to the clergyman under whom they minister. Again, one whom we can hardly say that we have lost from among ourselves, for he has gone to a sphere where his energies and his virtues will be conspicuous and are conspicuous, in the cause of the Church of God—I mean the Bishop of British Columbia—in his statement of the resources by which he contemplates bringing the influence of the church to bear upon the vast and growing population of his diocese, proposes the establishment of this order of readers. I believe also that there are other Colonial Bishops who have done the same. But can we do any thing further?—can such a class of men, besides looking for and finding out and reading to the sick, the ignorant, and the infirm, besides holding cottage lectures, or reading prayers in school-rooms and other places of that kind—can they be admitted

to take any inferior part with us in our ministrations in our churches? I believe they might. I believe they might be admitted to assist us in reading the Holy Scriptures, and in reading the earlier part of the Litany. Further than that I think they should not go. By the rules prescribed by the Bishop of Newfoundland they are never to be admitted within the communion-rails. We must make the distinction between them and those who are ordained ministers of the church. We could not admit them to the service of the Communion, but we might employ them to read the Holy Scriptures in the church. Laymen are often so employed. It is a common practice for the clergyman to be assisted in reading the lessons in church either by the school-master or some person of that class, and therefore that of itself furnishes some presumption that it is not illegal. But further, there is strong ground to believe that the rubric with respect to the reading of the Lessons was altered at the last review for the express purpose of enabling laymen so to read, and that is a point which it seems to me is well worthy of consideration. In *The Laws and Usages of the Church and the Clergy*, by the Rev. W. H. Pinnock, I find this passage:—"The former rubric was, 'The minister that readeth the Lesson standing and turning him so as he may best be heard of all such as be present. And before each Lesson the minister shall say thus:—'The first, second, &c.' That was the old rubric as it existed in the Prayer-book of 1549, 1552, 1559, and 1604. The rubric, therefore, up to that time required that the minister should himself read two Lessons. We find the same thing in Keeling's *Liturgica Britannica*. In the Prayer-book of 1549, 1552, and 1559 the words are, 'Then shall he read the Lessons, &c, the minister that readeth standing and turning himself, &c, and before every Lesson the minister shall say.' In the Prayer-book of 1604 the words are, 'Then shall be read two Lessons, the minister that readeth standing and turning himself, &c.' That was the form until the last review, but at the last review it was altered to the form in which it now stands—'He who readeth, so standing and turning himself towards the' &c. Pinnock expresses the opinion that it must have been employed for the purpose of allowing the lay reader to read the lessons. As I have said, the practice has continued to the present day of allowing laymen to read the Bible in churches, and moreover the practice has continued to the present day in our cathedrals in respect to the earlier part of the litany. And why should we suppose that one should be allowed and not another? I am well aware that I have against me the authority of Wheatley, and that he complains of these things being done. Nevertheless I must say, for my own part, that whenever I have to attend divine service in the cathedral to which I belong, I rejoice that the practice has continued there, because I believe it is the continuance of a right and a privilege which belongs to the laity, though I quite admit that it has been continued from the time when those lay vicars held, in fact, some subordinate ministry in the church. But as to the legality of it, you will observe that the rubric says at the beginning of the litany, 'Then shall be said or sung the litany,' and precisely in accordance with the practice we at Lincoln allow the lay vicars to sing the litany in the centre of the choir as far as the place where the rubric says, 'Then the priest shall say.' There the priest takes up the prayers and proceeds with them to the end. I contend, therefore, that the practice has not been continued for no purpose—that it is a legal practice, and was known to be a legal practice from the first; and I need hardly remind the house that the cathedrals were the