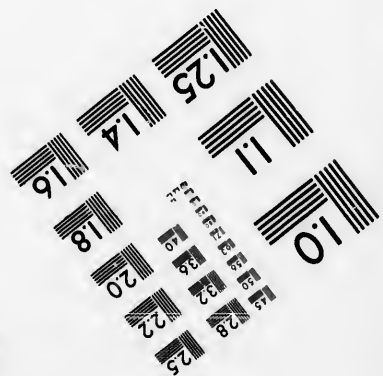
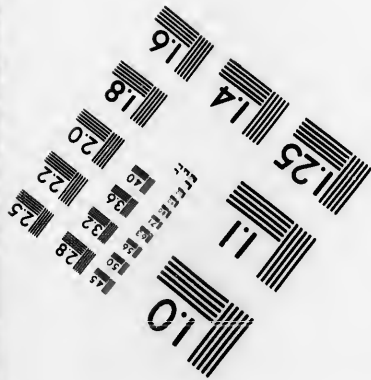
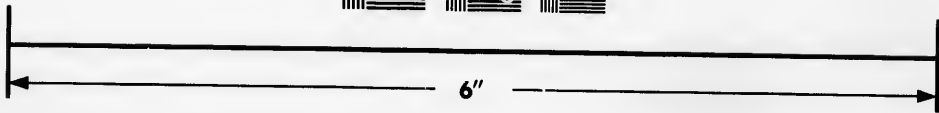
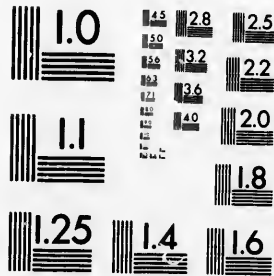


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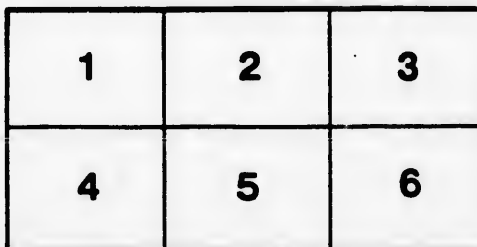
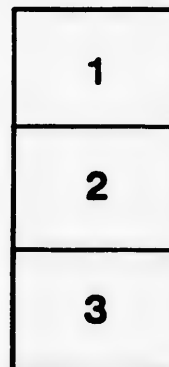
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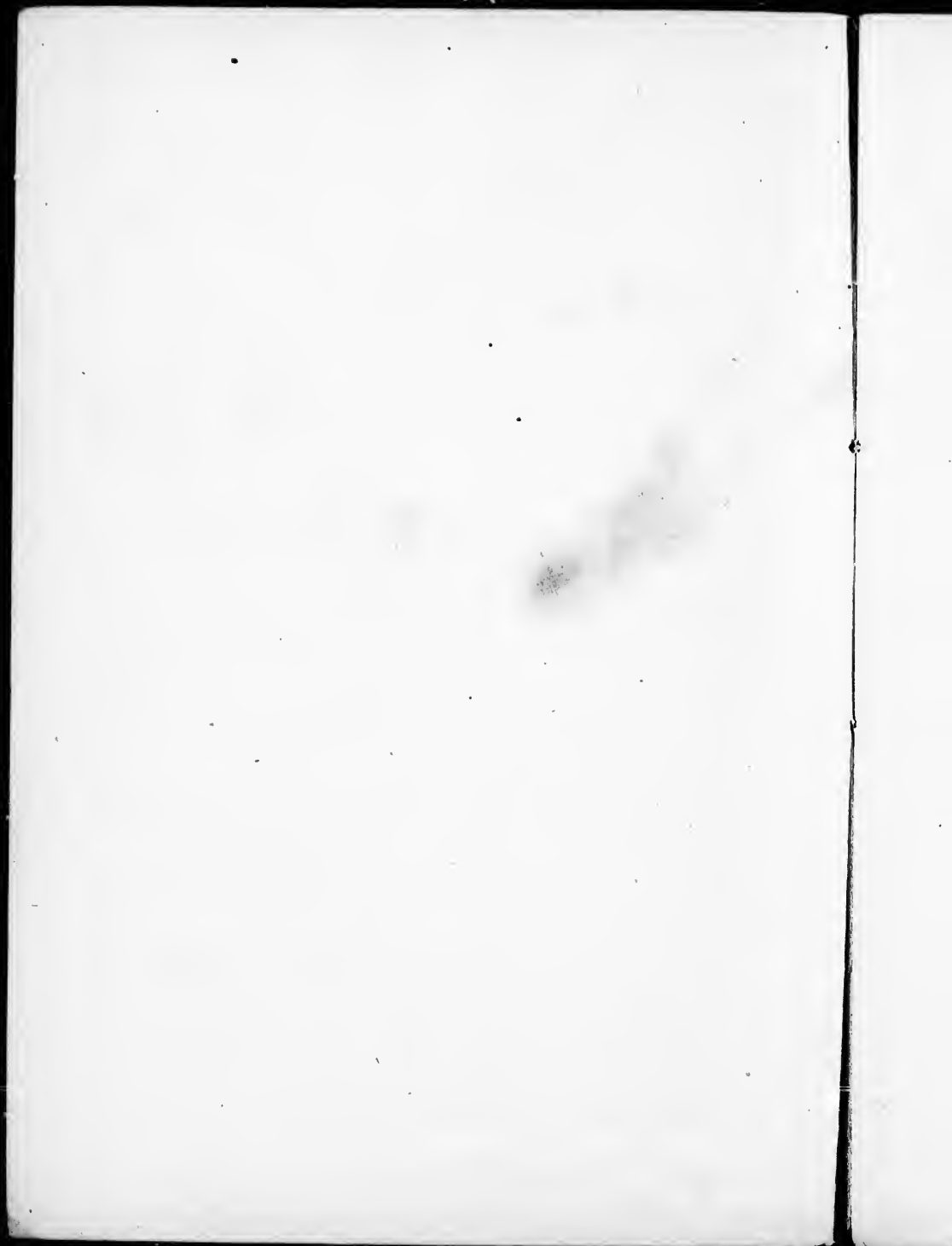
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THE
RESOLUTIONS
OF THE
PROVINCIAL SYNOD
AGAINST OBEDIENCE TO
THE ORNAMENTS RUBRIC.

BY
A TRUE AND LOYAL CHURCH OF ENGLAND MAN.

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T H E
Resolutions of the Provincial Synod

AGAINST OBEDIENCE TO

"THE ORNAMENTS RUBRIC."

Those who took any interest in Church matters in 1867 and 1868, will readily recall the agitation which was at that time awakened in the minds of sincere but ill-informed Churchmen, on the subject of Ritualism. An organized campaign was inaugurated among the Low Churchmen of the Diocese of Huron, supported by their sympathizers elsewhere. The clergy who were not in accord with this movement will be able clearly to recall the feelings of annoyance they experienced at finding their parishes flooded (often by a secret agency which they could not always detect), with untrue, exaggerated, and inflammatory papers, containing the most alarming statements of the treacherous and dangerous designs of the High Church clergy. Every effort was made to secure in the various Dioceses such a representation in the Provincial Synod, which was to meet in Sept., 1868, as would secure the adoption of some such legislation as would put a check upon their supposed intention to Romanize the Church.

The Churchmen of Toronto, who were perfectly aware of the nature and objects of the attack which was to be made upon them at the Provincial Synod, resolved to meet it in a generous spirit, and endeavour to disarm the approaching

conflict of anything like bitterness. They knew quite well that the Toronto delegation was in their own hands, and that they could send as their representatives whomsoever they pleased. With a magnanimity, more generous perhaps than wise, they placed the present Dean of Toronto where he has never stood before or since—high on the list of clerical delegates. They sent Dr. Fuller (now Bishop of Niagara), the late excellent Mr. Givens and others who they were quite aware were pledged to the anti-ritual agitation. When the time arrived for the meeting of the Synod, the discussion, which every thoughtful person regarded as sure to be productive of harm, seemed likely to be postponed. The alarming illness of the Metropolitan, Bishop Fulford, filled all minds with anxiety, and his death a few days afterwards, cast for the moment an awe and solemnity over the members of the Synod, in common with the whole community. Still, the minds of all were filled with the thought of the exciting topic which was to be brought under discussion, and which apparently no consideration of feeling or propriety could postpone.

The strength of the excitement may be measured by the fact, that as soon as the body of the Metropolitan had been consigned to the grave, one so full of love and gentleness as the late revered Saltern Givens, should have precipitated the debate.

How that debate raged for days, it would be as painful as it is unnecessary, to tell. It was marked by very strong feeling, and the journal affords humiliating proof of the incompetency of the Provincial Synod of that day to deal under such circumstances with the subject.

This retrospect is necessary to show the animus out of which its ultimate proceedings grew, and to afford additional proof of the worthlessness of its final decision.

We shall now proceed to examine the character and weigh the binding force of that decision itself.

1. The Provincial Synod has repeatedly declared that the Church in Canada is an integral part of the Church of England. If the Provincial Synod is prepared to abide by that declaration, it must be content to accept its consequences.

It is one only, out of a considerable number of "Provinces," which make up the Anglican Communion, and one which can hardly be regarded as a very important part of so great a body, whether we consider the number of its clergy or the extent of their theological and ecclesiastical learning, or the wealth, social influence, opportunity of observation or spiritual attainments of its laity, who occupy so powerful a position in her Synods, yet if the anti-ritual resolution of 1868 is to be regarded as binding on the consciences of the clergy, it is clear, that the effect of the rough and ready action of this insignificant "part," is, to repeal the law and usage of the "whole," a law and usage which have existed from time immemorial; and though for a time the usage was allowed to become obsolete, yet the law itself, after all the struggles of the Reformation, still exists, and in "perfectly unambiguous language," stands to-day in the very fore-front of every copy of the Prayer Book of the English Church. When the Legislature of a colony, is acknowledged to have by its own assumption, the power of freeing its inhabitants from the obligation of obeying an Imperial Statute binding upon the whole Empire, then we may be disposed to consider the power of the Synod of a single Province—and that of no very distinguished character—to abrogate the Ornaments Rubric, which has been accepted by the whole Church, and thus alter the Prayer Book.

2. From this general consideration we now pass on to

examine briefly the principles of the Provincial Synod itself, as set forward with great solemnity at its first formation, and since continually repeated in its authorized Reports. "We acknowledge the Book of Common Prayer and Sacraments, with the 39 Articles of Religion, to be a *true* and *faithful* declaration of the doctrines contained in Holy Scripture;" and this declaration (as set out in the Prayer Book) the Synod with great emphasis asserts that it will transmit to posterity—and then, for unsound reasons, supported by inconclusive arguments, and glaring misquotations, which are the fruit not of dishonesty but ignorance, the said Synod with a most wondrous inconsistency proceeds in a hurry and panic to *alter* in very important particulars the very Prayer Book which it had just declared to contain a true and faithful declaration of the doctrines contained in Holy Scripture, to every letter of which, every clerical member had declared, *ex animo*, his unfeigned assent and consent, and which they had just asserted their firm and unanimous resolution to transmit to their posterity. It would be simple dishonesty to try to escape from this ludicrous dilemma by saying that the Resolution was against ritual and not against doctrine because, by the confession of all parties, the struggles of late years derive all their importance from the fact that ritual symbolizes and expresses doctrine.

3. But we are not yet finished with the "Declaration." Surely no one ought to understand its proper duties and functions, together with the limits of its power, as well as the Synod itself. Here then are its own views on these points: "It is our earnest desire and *determination* to confine our deliberations to matters of discipline, to the temporalities of the Church, and to such regulations of order and modes of operation as may tend to her efficiency and ex-

tension." And then it proceeds to act in a way which plainly contradicts this "desire and determination," by proceeding to pass resolutions on a subject entirely beyond the limits to which, according to its own statement it resolved to confine itself, thus adding a second self-contradiction to the first, and practically proceeding to alter that which it proposed to hand down to posterity intact and unchanged. It is difficult to conceive that inconsistency could go much further.

4. Having been driven by a senseless panic, to meddle with and practically change what it had professed its unanimous resolution to preserve unaltered—and moreover, having been led to deal with matters far beyond the limit to which it had expressly determined to restrict itself, the examination of the resolutions and amendments brought into discussion shows its own marvellous incompetency to deal, in such circumstances, and under the exciting influences which then prevailed, with a subject so important.

The Report brought in by the Committee, to whom the memorials and petitions against "ritualistic practices" had been referred, was marked by common sense, and had it been adopted would have done much to save the reputation of the Synod. But a not very wise amendment to a canon, which had nothing to do with the subject, containing very absurd statements, which it is not worth while to criticise, precipitated a debate which did not tend to raise the character of the Synod, either for wisdom or charity. To allay the excitement—which was running very high—the Upper House sent down from its calmer atmosphere a resolution which is worthy of some consideration. It is to be found on page 47 of the Journal of 1868.

This resolution, regarded in the light which has since been thrown upon it, is a remarkable document. At the

beginning, the Synod is cautioned against legislating on any of those things which are legalized by the Ornaments Rubric, lest they abolish not only a law of the Prayer Book but a Statute of Upper Canada, which many believe to be yet in force, and yet at the end the Bishops wish the Lower House to unite in their Lordships' unanimous agreement to express disapprobation of what many believe both Church and State enjoin, and their determination by every *lawful* means to prevent the use of that which the *law* itself distinctly legalizes. The next point to be observed in the "unanimous" opinion of the Upper House, is their effort to commit the Church in Canada to the most utter Erastianism. Although, in Canada, free from all obligation to obey the judgments in matters ecclesiastical of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, we are exhorted to await their decision on such subjects as lights and vestments, and rule ourselves accordingly. Their Lordships had either forgotten, or were unhappily ignorant of the struggles of the greatest of modern Bishops—the Metropolitan of Capetown—with that miserable Committee, and of his formula which has received such wonderful and disastrous justification since: "We must destroy the Privy Council or the Privy Council will destroy the Church of England." They endeavored to use the spiritual authority of the Provincial Synod for the purpose of enslaving us to the secular authority of a court, which for the purpose of conciliating public opinion, has garbled documents, has transposed dates, has made assertions which are only saved from falsehood by the more charitable theory of ignorance; whose decisions, according to Sir J. T. Coleridge, are "a gross miscarriage of justice," whose judgments, according to Sir Fitzroy Kelly, "are judgments of policy and not of justice," and whose interpretations of plain rubrics are so hopelessly contradic-

tory, that Lord Cairns himself in his speech in the House of Lords said, that not a laymen only but even a lawyer would find it so impossible to reconcile them, that though professedly final, they could not in reality be so. After they might have known and ought to have known Bishop Gray's struggles with this most unhappy Court of final Appeal, whose blunders and crimes have at last compelled the issue of a Royal Commission, they nevertheless unanimously agreed to urge the Synod which was, and is (thank God) free from its jurisdiction, to place itself under the domination of this most unhappy and incompetent tribunal.

But even this does not exhaust the proof of the imminent peril of allowing hasty legislation on exciting matters, even by the House of Bishops. If we had not the certified report before us, it would be impossible to credit the blunders which were made. Leaving the guidance of "Her Majesty's Highest Courts," and the questions before the Privy Council, the Bishops venture to propose a resolution of their own motion, and at the very first step plunge headlong into an inconceivable mistake. They actually base their resolution on a plain and undeniable misquotation of the Prayer Book, in which mistake they "unanimously agree." Their exact words are as follows: "Whereas, the Rubric at the end of the Communion Office *enacts* that the bread shall be such as is usual to be eaten, the use of wafer bread is hereby forbidden."

Of course, any one who can read his Prayer Book and understands plain English, can see in a moment that **THEY** failed to do one or else the other. The Rubric at the end of the Communion Office makes no such enactment as their Lordships assert it to do. It says, that in the want of something better, "*it shall suffice* that the bread shall be such as is usual to be eaten." That did not mean adulterated

baker's bread, for it was "bread prepared for the communion," and Archbishop Parker enjoined it to be made in the form of wafers. The Bishops were at that time manifestly unaware that there is incontestible evidence to show that such bread "during the first portion of the Reformation century, was the *rule* of our Church, and during the remainder of it a recognized custom." (Beresford Hope's *Worship in the Church of England*, p. 240.) When on its "unanimous adoption" by the Bishops, this marvellous resolution was sent down for the concurrence of the Lower House, the same persistent blunder was embodied in the amendments of (the then) Archdeacon Fuller, Dr. Balch, and Rev. Mr. Bleasdel, a proof that some of the leaders there were not much better prepared than the Bishops had shown themselves to be, to deal in such an off-hand manner with subjects of such great importance. It is somewhat amusing to observe that, between the 15th September and the 18th, during which the debate was going on, the Bishops discovered the mistake which they had "unanimously" made, and came to the most lame and impotent conclusion, that because the Church of England says that the bread which is usual to be eaten—as long as it is the best and purest that conveniently can be gotten—*shall suffice*, therefore every other kind is henceforth to be forbidden. O ! marvellous. *Non sequitur.*

5. The Resolution, therefore, in the form into which it was finally thrown by the late Dr. Balch, passed, and remains a very painful and humiliating monument of three things :—i. The inconsistency of the Provincial Synod, with its solemn declaration of principles. ii. Its transgression of the limits of action which it had distinctly laid down for itself; and iii. : Of its entire incompetency, under circumstances of agitation and excitement to discharge wisely

and well the task which was forced upon it by a few agitators. Its panic-stricken action has never been considered or consented to by four Dioceses out of the nine which constitute the Province, and therefore, can never bind them to accept its decision. Therefore to regard it as law, would land us in the absurd conclusion that observances which are perfectly legal in one Diocese, would involve us in criminality, if carried out in another Diocese of the self-same ecclesiastical Province.

6. There can be little doubt that there is a latent feeling in many minds that the whole transaction was something of which the Provincial Synod has very good reason to be ashamed. The proof of this is to be found in the fact that no one at any subsequent session has ever in the most distant way alluded to the subject, or ventured to bring it up for confirmation. If the alteration of a mere local canon requires to be confirmed before acquiring force, (see Art. 25 of Constitution) no one can well deny that the alteration of a Rubric of the Prayer Book of the whole English Church, and what is certainly an Act of Parliament in England, and is thought by many—the Bishops say—to be an Act of Parliament here, must at least require the observance of the same form before we can be called to submit to it.

7. This Resolution was of course a mere device to escape a difficulty arising from a culpable and wholly unwarranted agitation. Had it been capable of confirmation, it would still be powerless to bind the conscience or influence the action of the clergy, because they bind themselves to submit not to any mere "resolutions" of the Provincial Synod but only to formally enacted "canons," passed in accordance with its declaration of principles, within the sphere of its legitimate authority and in accordance with its laws. This is no canon at all. It is a mere unconfirmed "resolution"

contradicting the principles, exceeding the powers, contravening the rules of order, vitiating the Constitution of the Provincial Synod, and casting discredit on its competency. It would have been a needless work to have broken such a worthless fly on the wheel of common sense and consecutive argument, had it not been sought to invoke the supposed sanction of the Synod to support the mere deductions of private judgment, and neutralize the law of the Prayer Book by that which is no law.

The attempt to enforce such an unconstitutional proceeding on the part of the Synod would be to sound its death knell. Men, who had any regard for the safety of the Church, the maintenance of her rights and liberties, and the preservation of their own self-respect, would refuse to attend its meetings, or to recognize its authority. And when "a part," even though claiming to be an "integral part," attempts as in this case, to usurp the powers and functions of "the whole," it will find that in grasping at the shadow of an illegitimate authority it lost the substance of what it might justly claim.

It took the Church of England exactly 110 years to arrange her reformed system of faith and worship. It took three days for four Canadian Bishops, a few Canadian and American Priests, aided by the recondite, theological, and ecclesiastical lore of sundry merchants, lawyers, editors, civil engineers, railroad and bank directors, to make an attempt, apparently satisfactory to themselves, to repeal what had endured for more than three centuries since the Reformation, and centuries before.

