

DIOCESAN SYNODS
AND
DIOCESAN CONFERENCES;

THEIR DISTINCT CHARACTER AND DIFFERENT USES:

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED IN THE

DIOCESAN SYNOD,

HELD IN

THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF LINCOLN,

ON

WEDNESDAY, *SEPTEMBER 20, 1871,*

BY

CHR. WORDSWORTH, D.D.,

Bishop of Lincoln;

TOGETHER WITH

THE FORM AND ORDER OF HOLDING THE SYNOD.

1871.

LINCOLN: JAMES WILLIAMSON.

AND TO BE HAD OF

MESSRS. RIVINGTON: LONDON, OXFORD, & CAMBRIDGE.



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MY REVEREND BRETHEREN,

We are met together to-day in a holy place, for a holy purpose. We have joined in prayer for the presence and guidance of the Holy Ghost, and we are about to partake in the Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ. Great reason therefore have we to cherish within us a spirit of peace; and good ground we also have for believing, that if that spirit is in us, God will bless us, and unite us more closely to one another in brotherly love.

Suffer me also to remind you that you yourselves have given a pledge, that all things here to-day will be done in charity. This Diocesan Synod is your own work. More than 430 among you have subscribed your names to a memorial requesting me to convene it. That memorial has been duly considered in a Conference of many of the elder Clergy of this Diocese, and the result is, that you have been called together to meet in Synod to-day in this Cathedral Church. You will therefore, I am persuaded, do all that in you lies that your own work may not be marred, but that, with the blessing of God, this compliance with your desire may conduce to His Glory, to the good of this Diocese, and to the edification of His Church.

Your Memorial has led me to examine carefully the history of Diocesan Synods in the Church Universal and in the Church of England; and it is my purpose, with God's help, now to lay before you the results of that enquiry.

Here let me first exhort you, to divest yourselves of prepossessions derived from what we sometimes see or hear of Diocesan Synods in modern times. This is very requisite. It would indeed ill become any one to animadvert here on what may be done elsewhere. But we ourselves have a duty to perform. We must take good heed as to the manner in

which the work before us is done. Our wisdom will be to “seek and ask for the old paths where is the good way, and walk therein.”¹

We need not hesitate to affirm that no one is duly qualified to deal with this subject,—involving as it does, important results with regard to Christian Doctrine and Discipline, and affecting the eternal interests of immortal souls, and touching very nearly the fundamental principles and vital elements of the Christian Church,—unless he has devoted himself diligently and conscientiously to the study of the constitution and history of Diocesan Synods from primitive times.

Happily for the Christian Student some learned treatises have been written on Diocesan Synods, which will much lighten his labour, and give him clear views with respect to them. I refer specially to the works of Lambertini,² Gavanti,³ Thomassinus,⁴ Van Espen,⁵ Martene,⁶ La Luzerne,⁷ and others; and especially in our own country, the chapters on Diocesan Synods in the *Reformatio Legum*, drawn up by Abp. Cranmer and his associates in the reign of King Edward VI.,⁸ and in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the writings of Dr. Field,⁹ Archbishop Wake,¹⁰ Bishop Kennett, and the great work of Wilkins,¹¹ containing the acts of Diocesan and

¹ Jer. vi. 16.

² *De Synodo Diocesana libri tredecim*, 2 Vols., 4to. Ferrar. 1760. This work may also be found in *Migne's Theologicæ Cursus Completus*, Tom. xxv., p. 801. Paris. 1840.

³ *Gavanti B. Praxis exactissima Diocesane Synodi; Aug. Vind.* 1763, in his *Thesaurus Sacrorum Rituum*, Tom. III. This is the most complete work on the constitution and proceedings of Diocesan Synods.

⁴ *Thomassinus, Vetus et Nova Eccl. Disciplina*, Pars. II., Lib. III., Cap. LXIII., Vol. VI., p. 555, ed. Mogunt. 1787.

⁵ *Van Espen, Jus Ecclcs.* Pars. I., Tit. XVIII., p. 105, ed. Colon, 1748.

⁶ *Marténé, de Antiquis Ecclesie Ritibus*, Lib. III., Cap. I.; Tom. II., p. 311.

⁷ *De la Luzerne, Droits et Devoirs des Evêques et des Prêtres.* Paris, 1844.

⁸ See note A at the end of this address, “The work and words were mainly Crammers’s own.”—*Strype's Cranmer*, p. 134.

⁹ *Dean Field on the Church*, p. 508.

¹⁰ See note B at the end of this address.

¹¹ *Concilium Magnæ Britannicæ*, 4 Vols., folio. London, 1737. See note C at the end of this Address.

other Synods in England from the earliest times; to which may be added some excellent Treatises,¹² on this subject, which have appeared in our own time.

It will be evident from the examination of such works as these, that Diocesan Synods were among the earliest¹³ Councils of the Christian Church. They were more ancient than Provincial Synods. A Diocese is prior to a Province, which is a group of Dioceses. Some have recognised an image of a Diocesan Synod in the Acts of the Apostles,¹⁴ where we see St. James, the Bishop of Jerusalem, and all the Elders with him, offering their fraternal counsel to St. Paul. For many centuries Diocesan Synods rendered great service to Christendom. In the Latin Church, as Roman Catholics writers themselves deplore,¹⁵ they have been paralyzed by various influences,—especially by the growth of the Roman Papacy. The Roman Pontiff aspires to be the Universal Bishop, and claims the World for his Diocese; and now that the attribute of personal Infallibility has been ascribed to him,¹⁵ it may well be asked,—what can be the use of a Diocesan Council, or any other, to advise with him, or to give authority to his Decrees?

¹² Particularly the learned work entitled *England's Sacred Synods*, by the Rev. James Wayland Joyce. Lond., 1855. See chap. 11. of that volume; and the same writer's Letter on Diocesan and Provincial Synods to the Bishop of Derry. Dublin, 1869. Also the Letter of my dear friend and fellow labourer—especially in the work of the present Synod—the Rev. Chancellor Massingberd (Letter to the Bishop of Lincoln on a Diocesan Synod, 1869), and a Paper by a Layman (J. W. L.) in the *Union Review*, Jan., 1871, pp. 32–54, and the Paper on Diocesan Synods, by a person to whom the Synod of this Province, and the Church of England, owe a deep debt of gratitude,—the Ven. Edward Bickersteth, D.D., Prolocutor of the Convocation of Canterbury, and Arch-deacon of Buckingham. Lond. 1867.

¹³ *Lambertini*, i., p. 7; *Thomassini*, vi., p. 522.; *Bishop Kennett, Eccl. Synods*, 11., 254.

¹⁴ Acts xxi., 18; *Lambertini*, i., p. 6.

¹⁵ *Gavanti*, p. 2. Although by the Council of Trent (Sess. 24, Cap. 2) Bishops are required to hold Synods annually, “quod heu! negligitur” says Gavanti.

¹⁶ In the Vatican Council, on July 18, 1870

In our own Church, Diocesan Synods have not been held in modern times.¹⁶

It is unnecessary to dwell on the causes which have led to their disuse. One of these was, that the Capitular¹⁷ Bodies of our Cathedrals were regarded as the representatives of the Clergy, and the Councils of the Bishop; and this being the case, the summoning of the Clergy from the various parts of the Diocese did not seem requisite. Suffice it now to say, that no one can have duly studied the tendencies of our own age, without coming to the conclusion, that, if the Church of England is to hold that position which for the sake of the Nation and of Christianity, it is her duty to endeavour to maintain, she must do all in her power to strengthen, consolidate, and extend those things which, under Him, are the true elements of her power for good,—namely, her Parochial System, and her Diocesan Organization.

In her endeavour to accomplish this work, the revival of Diocesan Synods will, with the Divine Blessing, prove very effectual.

Let us now proceed to enquire into the constitution of a Diocesan Synod.

¹⁶ With the exception of the Synod held at Exeter, on June 25 and 26, 1851, which, as it consisted merely of delegates, could hardly be called a Diocesan Synod in the proper sense of the term, as will hereafter appear. See below p. 7.

Its proceedings are described in the *Ecclesiastical Gazette* for July, 1851, p. 14. In the same volume, p. 62, may be seen a legal opinion condemning them: but if any one imagines that Bishops are estopped by the Act of Submission, 23 Henry VIII., c. 10, which relates to *Provincial Convocations*, from holding Diocesan Synods without the Royal Writ, he may refer to subsequent Acts—28 Henry VIII., c. 10, sect. 4; 31 Henry VIII., c. 14; 2 & 3 Edw. VI., c. 1.—where Diocesan Synods are supposed to be held; and the Canons of 1603, Can. cxix., and to the Chapters in the *Reformatio Legum*, framed in Henry VIII.'s reign, prescribing Diocesan Synods to be held yearly. See below Note A at the end of this Address. The whole question is well treated by Mr. Joyce in his *Sacred Synods*, p. 40. See also Archdeacon Bickersteth, p. 8, and Chancellor Massingberd's Letter, p. 15, and *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, Vol. cxvi., 3rd Series, pp. 419—425, where Lord Russell, then Prime Minister, expressed the same opinion, viz., that the Act of Submission did not relate to Diocesan Synods, which have never at any time been convened by the King's Writ, but were always called together by the Bishop. Diocesan Synods have been summoned and held by English Bishops since the Reformation, and Canons been promulged in them. See Note D at end of this Address.

¹⁷ *Thomassinus*, p. 525.

Who are the persons that have a right to be convened to it?

To this question it may be replied that all Priests and Deacons¹⁸ exercising Ministerial functions in a Diocese are entitled to a place in a Diocesan Synod.¹⁹ This is a fundamental principle. Let nothing be done without the Bishop,²⁰ was a maxim of the primitive Church. But let not the Bishop act without his Presbyters, was a rule of equal authority.²¹ The beautiful simile of one of St. John's Disciples,—St. Ignatius, the Bishop and Martyr of Antioch,—happily combines these precepts in one; “Let the Presbyters be joined together with the Bishop as the chords of a harp, to make sweet music to God.”²²

It is true that in some cases, on account of penalties levied on Presbyters for not appearing at a Diocesan Synod, they claimed a right to send proxies;²³ but it is a principle laid down by the best writers on the subject, that a Council formed by a process of delegation cannot rightly be called a Diocesan Synod. If a Diocese is so large and contains so many Presbyters that they cannot conveniently meet together in one Synod, this may be a just reason for dividing the Diocese, but not for depriving the Clergy of their rights. Whatever inconveniences therefore might arise from bringing together the Presbyters of this extensive Diocese,—the second in size among the Dioceses of England, and containing more Clergy than any other Diocese but one,—I did not

¹⁸ As to the presence of Deacons, see *Thomassinus*, p. 515; *Martencé*, Lib. III., Cap. I., pp. 312—314. They remained standing while the Bishop and Priests sat. Not all Deacons, but some who were specially chosen, were admitted. *Thomassinus*, p. 522.

¹⁹ See *Van Espen*, p. 106; *Thomassinus*, pp. 517—519; *Lambertini*, pp. 81—100; *Garanti*, pp. 3, 4; and below Note B.

²⁰ *S. Ignat. ad Magnes.*, c. 4 & c. 7; *Trull.*, c. 2 & c. 7; *Smyrn.*, c. 8 & c. 9; *Phil.* c. 8.

²¹ *Op. S. Ignat. Eph.*, c. 4 & c. 5; *Trull.*, c. 7.

²² *S. Ignat. ad Eph.*, c. 4.

²³ *Van Espen*, p. 105; *Garanti*, p. 23.

feel myself at liberty on that account to dispense with my own obligations, or to impair the privileges of the Clergy, and have therefore invited all the beneficed and licensed Priests and Deacons of the Diocese to the present Diocesan Synod.

With regard to the Laity, it appears that they also were invited to Diocesan Synods, which had a judicial as well as deliberative character, and were Ecclesiastical Courts, as well as Church Councils. The purpose for which the Laity were called, was that they might state grievances, or in modern Ecclesiastical language, "make presentments" of those things which required amendment in their Parishes.²⁴ We may recognize a remnant of this usage in the word "Sidesmen," or "Synodsmen," the ancient "testes Synodales," and in the functions which these lay officers of the Church may lawfully perform in Episcopal and Archidiaconal Visitations; which still preserve some vestiges of ancient Diocesan Synods.

But our lay brethren, we are persuaded, will not resent an assertion derived from one whom the Apostle St. Paul calls his own fellow-labourer, whose "name is in the Book of Life,"²⁵ the Apostolic Father S. Clement. "The priests [of the Church,] he says, "have their own appointed places and duties, and the layman of the Church is subject to lay precepts."²⁶ They will not set at nought the words of S. Gregory Nazianzen, "Let not the sheep of Christ's flock be shepherds of their own Pastors; for God is not the Author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the Churches of the Saints."²⁷ And if such authorities should have little weight, they will not disdain the words of the Holy Ghost saying by

²² *S. Greg. Nazian. Orat.*, XIX., Tom. I., p. 369. Ed. Paris, 1778.

²⁴ *Gavanti*, pp. 8—11; *Van Espen*, p. 106. When the Synod lasted three days the "querelæ laicorum" were listened to on the second day. Cp. *Lambertini*, pp. 113—117; and *Dean Field on the Church*, p. 508; and *Wilkins' Concilia*, IV., p. 784; below Note C, and below Note B at end of this Address.

²⁵ Phil. IV. 3.

²⁶ *S. Clement, Epist.*, c. 40.

the Prophet Malachi, "The priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth;"²⁸ and of the Apostle, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls as they that must give account."²⁹

We maintain with Richard Hooker³⁰ that "all that are of the Church cannot in all things jointly and equally work, and that the first thing in polity required is a difference of persons in the Church, without which difference those functions cannot in orderly sort be executed. We hold that God's Clergy are a state which hath been and will be, as long as there is a Church upon earth, necessary by the plain Word of God Himself; a state whereunto the rest of God's people must be subject as touching things that appertain to their soul's health."

These, brethren, are the things which are the proper matters to be treated of in Diocesan Synods,³¹ in their *deliberative* character. The sacredness of the subjects appointed for their consideration was indicated by the name given to the Synod, which was called a sacred assembly: and by the place in which the Synod was held,—usually the Cathedral Church,—and even by the attire of those who were assembled in it.³² And it would be an idle and unseemly thing, arguing no small ignorance of the history and laws of Christ's Church, and it would be almost a mockery of our lay brethren, to require the presence of busy, practical men, whose time is precious, at Ecclesiastical Councils, in which the matters to be treated of and agreed upon are not within their legitimate

²⁸ Matt. ii. 7; Cp. Deut. xvii. 9, xxiv. 8; Lev. x. 11.

²⁹ Heb. xiii. 17; Cp. Phil. ii. 29; 1 Thess. v. 12; 1 Tim. v. 17.

³⁰ *Hooker E. P.*, iii. xi. 18.

³¹ "Diocesana Synodus est congregatio legitima, quam facit Episcopus cum clericis sibi subditis, in sua Diocesi, de iisque in eâ tractat, quæ curæ suæ pastorali incumbunt."—*Gavanti*, p. 1.

³² The Bishop was to be in his Episcopal dress; the Clergy in surplices.—*Gavanti*, pp. 19, 23, 25; *Thomassinus*, p. 524; *Lambertini*, i., pp. 124—128.

province, and where, according to ancient practice and precedent for 1500 years after Christ, they would have no active functions to perform.

The proper place of the Laity is in other Church Councils, not less useful, but of a different kind, namely, Diocesan Conferences; of which we shall speak hereafter. Let Diocesan Synods be kept distinct from Diocesan Conferences;³³ let there be no confusion between them; let the Clergy do their proper work, and the Laity theirs; then we shall tread safely in the ancient paths, while at the same time we adjust ourselves to the requirements of modern times.

These conclusions will appear still more reasonable when we proceed to examine more closely the proper mode of proceeding in Diocesan Synods, and the peculiar functions to be performed by them.

The holding of a Diocesan Synod was a holy work. It was a solemn act of religious worship, performed by the Bishop and Clergy of the Diocese in the Church of God. In it they joined in the profession of the same faith,—in the Nicene Creed; in it they sang praises to God, in the “Te Deum;” and in certain Psalms appointed for the purpose;³⁴ in it they invoked the aid of the Holy Ghost, in the “Veni Creator;” in it they were united together in the Holy Communion.

One of the duties of a Diocesan Synod was to make known and promulge Canons and Constitutions which had been already agreed upon in the Provincial Council.³⁵ Accordingly one of the functions of our own Diocesan Synod to-day

³³ The words of *Thomassinus de Synodo Diocesanâ* (p. 520) deserve careful attention, “Plures habes conventus ab Episcopis convocatos” (Diocesan Conferences) “in quibus et laicis locus erat, potissimum verò nobilibus, quo et hi conventus *distabant a Synodis*,” where (he adds) the Laity did not take a deliberative part.

³⁴ Psalms 33, 67, 68, 84, 87, 133; *Gavanti*, p. 25.

³⁵ *Van Espen*, p. 106; and see below Note B, and Note C, at end of this Address.

will be to publish resolutions adopted in the Convocation of this Province of Canterbury.³⁶

Another use of a Diocesan Synod was to give authoritative utterance and public assent to what, after the Bishop had previously taken counsel with elder and graver Presbyters of the Diocese,³⁷ especially with the Capitular Body,—the “*Senatus Episcopi*,”—had approved itself to his judgment.

These being the principal functions of a Diocesan Synod, it may readily be supposed, that in the first sixteen centuries after Christ it never was the custom to bring questions before the Synod for the purpose of eager debate and controversy, and with a view to divisions of the Clergy into majorities and minorities. And therefore, though Diocesan Synods sometimes numbered as many as nine hundred presbyters, assembled together, yet there was no discord or confusion in them.

No, my reverend brethren, the truth must be spoken, however displeasing it may be to some men’s ears in modern times. During sixteen hundred years after Christ, a Diocesan Synod was called the Synod of the Bishop.³⁸ The canons and constitutions published therein were said to be promulgated by the Bishop. It never occurred to the mind of ancient Christendom, that the Bishops of Christ’s Church, seated in their Cathedral Churches, would enter into the lists of controversy with the Clergy of their Dioceses, divided into opposite camps.³⁹ This was not their view of Episcopacy. In their eyes the Bishop was a Father in God; and while on

³⁶ See below in the “*Form and Order of holding the Synod*.”

³⁷ *Lambertini*, i. 227.

³⁸ See *Van Espen*, p. 106; *Gavant*, pp. 19, 20; *Thomassinus*, p. 519; *Lambertini*, p. 134; ii. 203, 210, 213.

³⁹ *Lambertini*, ii. p. 196; *Thomassinus*, p. 517.

A distinguished American layman and lawyer (Mr. Murray Hoffmann), in his elaborate work on the Laws of the Church, has stated this matter in stronger language than the hierarchy itself would venture to use. See Note E at end of this Address.

the one hand it was presumed that the Clergy would treat their spiritual father with filial reverence, it was anticipated on the other, that he would endeavour to rule with parental love, and that he would not obtrude his own private opinions on a reluctant clergy,⁴⁰ but that he would pray fervently to God for grace and guidance, and give himself to diligent study and devout meditation, and would seek to lead the Clergy by wise counsels and gentle persuasion to right conclusions; and with their help would embody and concentrate those conclusions in Synodical utterances, which would have great force and weight by reason of previous consultation and general subsequent assent.

Surely this is a wiser course of proceeding than that into which many have been beguiled in modern times.

And here it may deserve consideration, whether our Visitations might not receive some benefit from an imitation of ancient usages. As was before observed, an Episcopal Visitation still preserves many vestiges of a Diocesan Synod. One of these may be seen in the Episcopal *Charge*, delivered at the Visitation. The Bishop, in his *Charge*, pronounces *ex cathedrâ* his own judgment on various questions which affect the interests of religion and the Church. This is a remnant of the practice according to which the Bishop delivered a Synodical Address,—an “Admonitio Episcopalis,” as it was called,—and promulged canons and constitutions on such matters in the Diocesan Synod. Episcopal Charges are a consequence of the disuse of Diocesan Synods. There is no example, I believe, of an Episcopal Charge published with that name, before the close of the seventeenth century.⁴¹

⁴⁰ *Thomassinus*, p. 522.

⁴¹ The first examples of Episcopal *Charges* published with that name are, I believe, those of Bishop Compton of London, A.D. 1696, and Bishop Stillingfleet, 1698. In the see of Lincoln, Bishop Gardiner, A.D. 1697, published *Advice* to the Clergy; Bishop Wake (1706 and 1709), and Bishop Gibson (1717) delivered and published *Charges*. The Bishop of Rochester (1696) delivered and published a “*Discourse* to the Clergy of his Diocese at his Visitation”; and the Bishop of Ely in 1692, 1698, 1701, 1704, published four *Discourses* to his Clergy at four Visitations.

Perhaps a return to ancient practice in this respect might not be undesirable. However sound the judgments may be that are pronounced by the Bishop in the Charge delivered at the Visitation, it is probable that they are regarded by many as merely the utterances of the individual Bishop, and that they even provoke unmerited opposition by the semblance of independent and arbitrary dogmatism with which they are supposed to be invested; and it may be said with truth, that while the Clergy need the advice of the Bishop and ought to pay reverence to his authority, the Bishop also needs the previous counsel and subsequent assent of the Clergy. It would be well, therefore, if the Charge—or “Admonitio Episcopalis,”—were followed (as in ancient Synods) by some Synodal acts, in which the Clergy had their part, giving their assent to the recommendations of the Bishop. In a modern Visitation, Episcopal authority seems too much to resemble an inverted pyramid, trembling on its apex; in an ancient Diocesan Synod it reposed quietly on its base.

But perhaps it may be alleged, by some among ourselves, that Diocesan Synods will be tame and lifeless things, unless they are animated by the quick sallies and lively repartees of eager and excited debate; and if nothing is to be promulged by them without the authority of the Bishop.

Brethren, such an objection as this ought to have been considered, and I trust was considered, by you, before you desired me to convene the present Diocesan Synod. You have asked for a Diocesan Synod, and I should have been unworthy of your confidence if I had endeavoured to palm upon you a counterfeit assembly instead of presenting to you a genuine and authentic Synod, constituted upon those principles, and regulated by those laws, which were universally received by the Christian Church for 1600 years, and which were specially prescribed for our observance by those holy

men, to whom, under God, we owe the inestimable blessing of the English Reformation.

Brethren, it is the glory of the Church of England that she appeals to primitive Christian Antiquity on behalf of her doctrine and discipline; and it is one of our strongest arguments against the Church of Rome, that while she lays claim to Antiquity she enforces novelties in faith and regimen. What a triumph therefore should we give to her, if in this important matter of Diocesan Synods we were to abandon the principles and practice of the Christian Church from Apostolic times to the sixteenth century, and were to adopt some modern devices of our own in their stead!

In the present Diocesan Synod assembled to-day by the good providence of God in this Cathedral Church, I have endeavoured to follow as strictly as possible the precedents of Christian Antiquity, and to conform to the rules—grounded on Christian Antiquity—which were laid down for such assemblies by Archbishop Cranmer and his associates in the reign of King Edward VI.,⁴² and by one of my own predecessors in the see of Lincoln, whose profound learning in all Synodical questions will not be disputed,—Archbishop Wake.⁴³

But Brethren, we need not be afraid to encounter the aforesaid objection on its own merits. Believe me, there is something better in the Church of God than oratorical harangues: there is a sound more joyful and blessed than the triumphant acclamations of victorious majorities. And what is that? The calm voice of unity, and peace, and brotherly love. It was well said by one of the wisest and holiest of men that this Church and Realm of England ever produced,⁴⁴ “There will come a time, when three words uttered with charity and meekness shall receive a far more blessed reward than three

⁴² See Note A at end of this Address.

⁴³ See Note B at end of this Address.

⁴⁴ Richard Hooker, E. P. Preface, II. 10.

thousand volumes written with disdainful sharpness of wit." Few things, we doubt not, are more pleasing to the Holy Angels and to the God of Angels, than to see the Clergy of a Diocese joined together with the Bishop in prayer, and praise, and Holy Communion, in the mother church of the Diocese; and,—if it may be by God's grace,—in the unanimous adoption of such measures as may tend to promote His glory and the eternal salvation of His people.

May this blessed vision be realized among us to-day!

Such harmonious action as this, will, by its very quietness, have great power. It will shew the Clergy to the world as an united body, and as strong by union. It will have the blessed effect of rescuing the matters agreed upon from the vitiated atmosphere of party, and of placing them in the calmer light of general consent. Whenever the Clergy of a Diocese agree together on the course of action to be taken in any given matter, there is no longer any room for those invidious comparisons between one class of Clergy and another, which engender so many heart-burnings and bickerings, and cause so much distraction and weakness, and expose the Church to the derision of her enemies, as a house divided against itself, at a time when the storm is rolling around us, and when we need, if we are to stand, to be firmly built together upon a rock.

Let me now proceed to lay before you a summary of those matters which are proposed to be treated of, and agreed upon, in the present Diocesan Synod.

1. In the mystical Body of Christ, "when one member suffers, the other members suffer with it." We cannot but view with deep interest the present condition of Christendom, especially on the continent of Europe, distracted by two opposite forces acting and re-acting on each other, and stimulating one another to more violent excesses, religious and political. And who among us can contemplate without

sympathy and admiration those energetic and courageous endeavours, which are now being made by wise, learned, and pious men, in Germany, France, and Italy, to rescue society from infidelity and anarchy, by protesting against the proud pretensions of the Roman Papacy, which are driving many into unbelief; and to accomplish an internal reformation of the Church to which they belong, by an appeal to the infallible Word of God, and to the judgment and practice of the primitive Church?

Such sentiments as these have found an utterance in both Houses of Convocation in this Province of Canterbury, and I would propose that in this Diocesan Synod, held in a Church adorned for 800 years⁴⁵ by illustrious names of holy and learned men, such as St. Hugh of Burgundy, Henry of Huntingdon, Robert Grossetête, William of Wickham, William Alwick, Matthew Parker, John Whitgift, George Herbert, Herbert Thorndike, Robert Sanderson, and others of later times, we should adopt the declaration upon this subject which was put forth with the unanimous consent of the Upper House of Convocation of this Province,⁴⁶ and has also received the assent of the Lower House. And I would suggest that we should add to that declaration an expression of earnest hope and fervent prayer, that it may please God to bless the efforts of those who are labouring to drive away dangerous error, and to maintain saving truth, so that we may be joined together with them and they with us in the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace.

2. Secondly, the Convocation of this Province has also dealt with another question which concerns us all, my reverend brethren, in the exercise of our sacred ministry in the House of God. The Convocation has approved the new Table of Lessons which was framed by the Ritual Commissioners; and that Table of Lessons has now received the

⁴⁵ The foundations of Lincoln Cathedral were laid in A. D. 1073.

⁴⁶ June 16, 1871. A similar Declaration was adopted by the Lower House Feb. 15, 1871.

sanction of the Legislature. This new Table of Lessons is to be inserted in all the copies of the Book of Common Prayer printed and published after the 1st of October in this year. It *may be* legally used by us in the public service of the Church on the 1st of January in next year, but it is not imperative till Jan. the 1st, in the year 1879. Inasmuch, however, as Uniformity in liturgical matters in the same Diocese is desirable, and as our congregations would be perplexed by diversities of usage in this respect, let me suggest that we should begin the use of the new Lectionary with the new year.

The new Lectionary introduces into the public services of our Church some portions of Holy Scripture which hitherto have been excluded from it, such as the Books of Chronicles; or are scantily supplied in it, such as the Book of Ezekiel and the Revelation of St. John. It will also produce more uniformity in the length of our daily Lessons; and it has the advantage of supplying a third set of Lessons for use on Sundays in the *evening* when there has been already a service in the *afternoon*.

There is another matter of interest in which we may derive much benefit from the recent concurrent action of Convocation and the Legislature in this matter. I refer to the means it affords us for the additional provision of *special Psalms* and *special Lessons* for *special Occasions*.

It is very desirable that our congregations should be taught by our services to make a Christian use of the Psalter, and to recognize the glorious Form of Christ our Lord and Saviour, and the blessings of His everlasting Gospel, foreshadowed in that divine Book. It is therefore a happy thing that appropriate Psalms may now be sung or said, not merely on some of the great Festivals and Holy Days of the Church, but on all. Hitherto we have sometimes been constrained to use joyful Psalms on mournful occasions, or mournful Psalms on joyful ones; but now, by the joint action of

Convocation⁴⁷ and of Parliament,⁴⁸ it has been provided that "upon occasions to be approved by the Ordinary, other Psalms may, with his consent, be substituted for those appointed in the Psalter," and this power may be exercised by him on all occasions whereon "he shall judge that such alteration will conduce to edification."

It is obviously very desirable that suitable Psalms should be provided for the first Sunday in Advent, and also for the Festival of the Circumcision of Christ, which is also the first day of a new year. It will also tend to edification that those noble and heart-stirring Psalms which foretell the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles and the triumphs of Christian Missions, should be sung on the Festival of the Epiphany. It will surely be a happy thing that on the Festival of the Annunciation, the Church should lift up her voice, and should salute with appropriate melodies, thrilling from the harp of the divine Psalmist, the mystery of the Incarnation, in which the nature of God was joined for ever with the nature of man in the Person of Christ. It will also tend to edification that some plaintive and pensive strains, derived from those solemn Psalms which speak of the valley of the shadow of death cheered by the light of the Gospel, and reveal to us the Sabbath of the Grave hallowed by the burial of Christ, and which cast a ray of faith and hope and joy on the death-bed of the Christian, should be heard on Easter-Even. It is also much to be desired that all hearts in every congregation of a Diocese should be attuned to a triumphant strain of praise and jubilee on the great and crowning Festival of Trinity Sunday.

This may now be done. Let us thank God for it.

It is also desirable that a distinct series of Psalms, no less than of Lessons, should be provided for the use of those who

⁴⁷ See the Report of the Proceedings of Convocation of Canterbury, on July 5 and July 6, in the Chronicle of Convocation for 1870, pp. 451 and 530.

⁴⁸ In the "Table of Lessons" Act, 34 & 35 Vict., chap. 37.

have three services in their churches on Sundays. This also is now within our reach.

The Ordinary is also authorized to permit the substitution on special occasions, such as Harvest Festivals and Church Openings, appropriate Lessons in lieu of those specified in the Calendar.

You will, I am persuaded, my reverend Brethren, concur with me in the opinion, that it is my duty to lose no time in exercising the authority given to me as Ordinary in this behalf. After having taken counsel with persons well versed in Liturgical learning, I purpose to lay before you to-day a Table of Special Psalms for use on special occasions, and also a series of Psalms⁴⁹ for a third service on Sundays and Holy Days, together with an indication of Special Lessons which may be used on certain occasions.

Let me commend these Tables to your consideration and use for the next ensuing three years, at the expiration of which they may be revised, if thought necessary.

3. There is another subject connected with our sacred services in which I trust we may be unanimous. I rejoice to find by the returns made by you to my Pastoral Letter, that the Festival of our Blessed Lord's Ascension was celebrated with divine service in 615 parish churches in this Diocese in the present year, and that the Holy Communion was also administered in 431 churches. In some churches there were three services on that day. This cheering fact encourages me to believe that we shall rejoice to join together to-day in an united resolve, with the help of God, to celebrate next year, and in future years, that glorious Festival with prayer and praise and Holy Communion, in all the Churches of the Diocese; and thus shew forth with one heart and one voice, our faith and love toward our adorable Redeemer, Who is gone to heaven to pray for us and to bless us, and to

⁴⁹ This portion of the Tables is due to the labours of a Committee of the Lower House of Convocation.

prepare a place for us ; and is enthroned in His glorious Majesty at God's Right Hand, and is worshipped by the holy Angels as King of kings and Lord of lords, and Whom we ourselves hope to behold and worship for ever and ever in the Church glorified in heaven.

4. There are some other matters which, if time allows, will be treated of in this Synod. Among these may be specified the further restraint of clerical non-residence ; the use of the weekly Offertory ; the constitution of Parochial Councils ; collections for works of piety and charity ; the means to be adopted for the maintenance of the sanctity and peace of our Churchyards ; the religious teaching and inspection of Parochial Schools ; the restoration of our non-conformist brethren to the unity of the Church.

5. On these topics, however, I will not now dilate, but hasten to specify in the last place a subject of primary importance, in which your co-operation is earnestly desired.

I have already stated the principles on which a Diocesan Synod, properly so called, is constituted, and the laws by which it is regulated, and the benefits which may be derived from it.

But in addition to the DIOCESAN SYNOD we need a DIOCESAN CONFERENCE, in which our lay brethren may be associated with us, and in which they may deliberate with us, not on controverted questions of Theology, or on the settled Articles of our Faith, but on various topics which arise from time to time, and vitally affect the interests of religion and the Church.

A Diocesan Synod (as I have already said) has its own peculiar duties to perform ; and a Diocesan Conference has its characteristic functions also. The one is distinct from the other, but each may assist the other. Every well constructed balance has two distinct attributes, stability and sensibility. In our Diocesan constitution, the Synod may be compared

to the one,—the Conference to the other. The subjects proposed for consideration in them are very different. The matters for the Synod are those which relate to the doctrine, the discipline, and the sacred offices and worship of the Church. The questions for the Conference are of a more mixed character ;—such as concern the relation of the Church to the State, the tendency of legislative measures affecting the Church ; the endowments of the Church ; the maintenance of the Christian ministry ; the sustentation of our sacred fabrics and their services ; the building, and maintenance, and efficiency of our Schools ; the support of Home and Foreign Missions. A Diocesan Conference, by its composite character and its stirring debates,⁵⁰ may ventilate many subjects of interest like these, and by open and animated discussion may prepare matters for Diocesan action.

In order to serve such purposes as these, the Diocesan Conference must be a representative body composed of Clergy and Laity.

My reverend Brethren, you have been invited here to-day in order to settle the constitution of a representative body of the Clergy by delegation, to be associated and to deliberate with a representative body of the Laity to be chosen by the Laity,—in a Diocesan Conference.

Such a representative body of the Clergy authorized and empowered to act as your delegates, could not be constituted without the presence and consent of all the Clergy whose delegates they are to be. If there were, therefore, no other

⁵⁰ The *Diocesan Synod* (which is a sacred assembly for sacred purposes) has its proper place for meeting in the Cathedral Church ; but I would venture to submit for consideration, whether a *Diocesan Conference*, which bears more resemblance to a public meeting of a secular kind, would not be more fitly gathered together in a secular building. It excites a painful feeling to hear of "Applause" given to speeches, and of marks of disapprobation, and of eager repartees, and of divisions into majorities and minorities, and other accessories of "public meetings," in the sanctuaries of our Cathedral Churches.

reason for calling this Synod of all the Clergy of the Diocese, this of itself would have sufficed.

A plan for the election of representatives of the Clergy will be laid before you to-day. The principles upon which it is based are these.

It cannot, I think, be desirable that one Clergyman should be put up as a rival Candidate against another Clergyman, dwelling near him in the narrow precincts of the same rural deanery. Such a process of competition, multiplied throughout the Diocese, would engender endless heart-burnings and animosities, and instead of promoting unity and efficiency, would distract and weaken us.

Besides, there is a great disparity in the extent and population of the fifty rural deaneries into which this Diocese is divided; and it would be difficult to adjust their relative claims with regard to the number of Clerical representatives which each of these deaneries should send to the Conference.

It is proposed, therefore, that the entire Diocese should be taken as the basis of the representation, according to a scheme which will be laid before you.

In addition to the elected Representatives, it is proposed that some of the Clergy of the Diocese should be Members of the Conference *ex officio*. The Convocation of the Province consists partly of *ex officio* Members, and partly of elected ones; and it is probable that the Lay Element of our Diocesan Conference would be constituted on this principle.

The mode in which the Lay Representatives in the Diocesan Conference should be chosen, must be left to be decided by the Laity themselves. We possess already a valuable body of Laymen, the Lay-Consultees, which has rendered much service to the Church,—especially by the foundation of the Association for the Improvement of the Incomes of Poor

Benefices in this County. The constitution of that body will shortly come under revision, according to the terms on which it was originally formed. No one, I am persuaded, would desire to disturb it, as long as that time lasts, and it may reasonably be hoped that, with its help, arrangements may soon be made for the election of Lay Representatives to be associated with the Representatives of the Clergy in a **DIOCESAN CONFERENCE**.

Thus, by the blessing of God, this Diocese will possess two distinct Institutions, differing indeed in constitution, and also in their modes of proceeding, but mutually helping one another; the one derived from the earliest ages of Christendom, and consecrated by the venerable prescription of eighteen centuries, and by the time-honoured traditions and historical associations of the Universal Church and of the Church of England,—the **DIOCESAN SYNOD**;—the other, springing up from the free life of popular Institutions and Representative Government,—the **DIOCESAN CONFERENCE**. By means of both we may hope to invigorate the old with what is new, and to consolidate the new by what is old; and thus, by not cutting off the entail of the past, but by gladly welcoming the present, and hopefully looking forward to the future, we may combine all ages together, and join them in a cordial embrace of Christian Truth and Christian Peace.

And now, my beloved Brethren in Christ, let us hallow our work by joining together in the holy festival of Christian Love, the Communion of the Body and Blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: and may God of His infinite mercy grant that those solemn words which were uttered by Him Who instituted it, and on the day in which He instituted it, may be fulfilled this day in us; “Sanctify them, Holy Father, through Thy Truth; Thy Word is Truth. I pray for them that they all may be one, as Thou Father art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us, I in them,

and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the World may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me.”⁵⁰

⁵⁰ St. John XVII. 20—23.

NOTE A.

FROM THE “REFORMATIO LEGUM” (ed. Lond., 1640, p. 103).

Cap. 19. *De Ecclesiâ ; de Synodo cujuslibet Episcopi in suâ diœcesi.*

QUILIBET Episcopus in suâ diœcesi habeat synodum, in quâ cum suis presbyteris, parochis, vicariis et clericis, de his agat rebus quæ pro tempore vel constituendæ sunt vel emendandæ. Etenim aptissima profecto medicina synodus est ad castigandam negligentiam, et tollendos errores, qui subinde in ecclesiis per diabolum et malos homines disseminantur; fietque ut per hujusmodi synodos conjunctio et charitas inter Episcopum et clerum augeatur et servetur. Nam ille suos clericos propius cognoscet et alloquetur; atque illi vicissim coram eum audient, et quando rei natura postulabit interrogabunt.

Cap. 20. *De tempore et loco synodi Episcopalis.*

Singulo quoque anno synodus ab Episcopo indicatur, curetque diem conductam omnibus pastoribus qui sunt in agro, per decanos ruri sparsos, indicari; suâ vero in civitate per concionatorem Ecclesiæ Cathedralis, et schedas foribus affixas, diem hujusmodi pervulgari mandabit, toto mense priusquam synodum instituat. Liberum verò ei sit quemcumque diem voluerit ad id accipere post dominicam secundam quadragesimæ. Locum vero in sua diœcesi deliget sibi Episcopus quem omnibus, qui accessuri sunt, judicaverit esse commodissimum. A synodo vero nulli ex clericis abesse licebit, nisi ejus excusationem Episcopus ipse approbaverit. Et ipse cum primis præsens adesto Episcopus, et (quemadmodum par est) synodo præsit: quem si gravissima causa fortassis abesse coegerit, ejus loco synodo præsit Archidiaconus.

Cap. 21. *De formâ habendæ synodi.*

Ad locum quem Episcopus assignaverit die conductâ clerus adsit, et mane horâ septimâ ad templum conveniat, primumque in medio templo preces, quæ Litanæ vocantur, solemniter decantabuntur. Deinde Archidiaconus, vel Episcopus ipse, si adsit, concionabitur, idque linguâ materna, nisi aliter causa legitima suaserit; concione vero absolutâ, Communio celebrabitur; quâ peractâ, Episcopus ad locum aliquem interiorem cum toto clero migrabit, exclusis omnibus laicis, iis exceptis quos ipse manere jusserit, omnibusque ordine consistentibus, maximâ cum gravitate summâque pace de his agatur, quæ maximè necessaria visa fuerint.

Cap. 22. *De rebus in synodo Episcopali tractandis.*

Si qua corruptio veræ doctrinæ obrepserit, coarguatur. De Scripturis quæ cum animarum offensione perperam exponuntur, juxta fidei orthodoxæ convenientiam explicentur; et quæ fortassis non intellecta conscientias perturbant, fideliter exeutiantur et declarentur. Ceremoniæ impiæ et superstitiosæ, si quæ illapsæ sint, auferantur. Ecclesiasticæ querelæ atque



controversiæ audiantur, et quantum tempus ferat, definiantur. Et inquiratur quàm diligentissimè an ritus omnium sacrorum officiorum, juxta formam a nostris legibus præscriptam, in ecclesiis instituantur. Et in summâ, quæcumque ad utilitatem populi Dei visa fuerint pertinere, integrâ fide ac singulari diligentâ tractentur. Ibi de quæstionibus rerum controversarum interrogabuntur singuli presbyteri. Episcopus vero doctiorum sententias patienter colliget, neque dicentes, quoad finem fecerint, ab ullo assidentium sinat temerè inturbari: nam (ut inquit Apostolus), “Deus non est confusionis Deus, sed pacis.” (1 Cor. xiv. 33).

Cap. 23. *De synodo concludendâ.*

Non permittat Episcopus ad multos dies perferri synodum, sed illi, quàm primùm fieri possit, finem imponat; quia neque pastoribus neque gregibus conducit ut a se diu utrinque disjungantur. Sententiam itaque feret de litibus et querelis, quæ illo brevi spatio temporis definiri poterunt: alias, quæ cognitione longiori opus habent, aut alio tempore ad suum tribunal judicabit, aut per Archidiaconum cum Septembri mense ad visitandum diocesim proficiscatur, quid decreverit, significabit. De quæstionibus quæ ad doctrinam et ceremonias spectant, canones partim tunc publicè proponet, partim Archidiacono visitaturo publicè proponendos committet. Decreta verò illius et sententias, vel in Synodo per ipsum, vel per Archidiaconum in visitatione divulgatas, inferiores ministri ut validas et firmas retinebunt. Quod si quid in eis vel injustum vel absurdum contineri arbitrati fuerint, id ad Archiepiscopum deferant, cujus erit, ab Episcopo constitutum decretum aut sententiam vel confirmare vel emendare, ita tamen ut quâ parte illa non correxerit Archiepiscopus, vigorem suum et robur retineant. Episcopus itaque, in synodo suis promulgatis decretis atque sententiis, ad curam et sollicitudinem commissi gregis clerum adhortabitur, et cum pace et Spiritu Domini eorum quemque ad suas ecclesias reverti jubebit.

NOTE B.

ARCHBISHOP WAKE “ON THE STATE OF THE CHURCH.” London, 1703 : pp. 23—24.

“THE Diocesan Synods of the Bishops and Clergy, of every Diocess, who by their joynt counsel and authority (committed to them by Christ) order'd the affairs of their respective Diocesses, before any other Councils were settled, or assembled in the Church.—

That the Bishop of every Diocess has, by Divine Commission, a power to govern the Church of Christ, over which he is placed; and in order thereunto, to call together the Presbyters which minister under him, was the constant sense of all the ancient Councils and Fathers of the Church. They have not only allow'd of this power, but have directed the exercise of it, and commanded the Bishop, from time to time, to put it in execution.

How often every Bishop was obliged to assemble his Diocesan Synod, the Canons of the Church inform us:* which generally ordained that these Councils should be held at least once every year, and obliged the Clergy, under the severest penalties, to appear at them. In the ancient formulary for holding of these Synods† among us, the order is, that they should be convened twice in the year; and this seems to have then been the ancient measure of them. The Synod of Caleyth‡ settled it betimes here; and if we may rely upon the Worcester copy of the Synod of Winchester, anno 1076,§ we must look upon this to have there again had a public determination. 'Tis true in the Cotton MS. the decree is more general; that every Bishop should hold a Synod every year, and yet, above 200 years after, in the Constitutions of the Bishop of Durham,|| anno 1312, the proportion of two yearly Synods was not only

* See *Spelman Concil.*, Vol. II. p. 1.

† *Concil. Antissiod.*, Ann. 578, Can. 7.

‡ *Spelm. Conc.*, Tom. I. p. 293, Can. 3, Ann. 787.

§ Apud *Spelm.*, Ib. p. 12.

|| *Spelm. Concil.*, Vol. 2, p. 436, Cap. 3.

established as a rule for that Bishoprick, but was said to have been established according to the Canonial Sanctions, which therefore seem to have yet continued in a general force among us. But the common direction of the Canon Law¶ was to have such Synods held once in the year; and this Lynwood** seems to deliver as the rule of our Church too; and there is this reason to believe that by this time it was become so, that when the Reformation was made of the Ecclesiastical Canons, then in force in this Church,†† this was the Proportion which we find was intended to have been continued by those, to whom the review of those Canons was committed.

To this Synod all the Clergy who had any Benefice within the Diocess, were obliged to come :‡‡ and so were the Regulars too, as well Abbots as Monks; excepting only those who, in process of time, were exempted from the Episcopal Jurisdiction. And even those,§§ if they had any Benefices, by reason whereof they became subject to the Authority of the Bishop, were obliged upon the account of such their Benefices to come likewise. In the Constitutions of the Bishop of Durham,||| the Members of these Synods are thus computed: Abbots, Priors, Archdeacons, Provosts, Vicars, and Parochial Chaplains: and that this was nothing peculiar to that Diocess, the Reformation of our Ecclesiastical Law¶¶ shews, which was gathered out of the Canon Laws, then in practice among us; and (omitting only the Regulars, who were now suppress'd) enumerates the rest much after the same manner, the Bishop with his Presbyters, Parochial Ministers, Vicars and Clerks.

The first thing that was usually done on these occasions, was for the Bishop to make his Synodical Enquiries;* of which the ancient forms still remain to us. Then the Synodical causes were heard. Every one who had any proper complaint to make, was permitted to speak; and for this end, not only the Clergy, but the Laity too, were suffered to be present at these Synods, and to speak in them.

In these Synods, the Bishop was wont to declare to his Clergy what had been decreed in the Larger Synods of the Province :† In these, he was directed to charge his Clergy to have a care of their Ministry, and to lay before them the main branches of that Duty, which was incumbent upon them in their respective places to fulfil.

And lastly, in these Synods, the Bishop published his own Diocesan Constitutions :§ which being read, and agreed to by the Synod, were from thenceforth of force within the Diocess; provided they were not contrary to what had been decreed in some superiour Council of the Province. Of these we have several collections already published in the volumes of our Councils, and many more there are still remaining in the Registers of our Churches, which witness the same to us.

How they proceeded in the celebration of these Synods, the ancient Orders framed for the holding of them, inform us. The Clergy in solemn Procession came to the Church where they were to meet, at the day and hour appointed by the Bishop, and sate according to the time of their Ordination.¶ Then the

¶ *Dist. 18, c. 16, 18, q. 2, c. Abbates Concil. Arelat., vi., can. 4.*

** *Provincial, Lib. 1, Tit. 14, de Maj. and Ob. Cap. Item. Statuimus, Voce Synodis.*

†† *Reformat. Leg. Eccles. De Eccles. & Ministr. Ejus, Cap. 20.*

‡‡ *Capitul. Vol. 1, col. 171, Synod Vernens. cap. 8, Lynwood, 1 c., Voce Synodis.*

§§ *Concil. Antissiod, can. vii., Synod. Mogunt., 1, can. xiv.*

||| *Ubi. Supr., Cap. 3.*

¶¶ *Loc. Sup. cit., Cap. 10.*

* *Vid. Not. Baluz. in Reg., p. 531, 532. Reform. legg. Eccl. 1, c., Cap. 22. Vid. Ord. Rom. Bibl. P.P. To. 13, p. 742, 743. Spelm. Concil., Vol. II., p. 1, 2, &c. Ord. MS. in Bibl. Cott. Tiberius, c. 1.*

† *Dist. xviii., Epist. Bonifac. ad Cuthbert. Arch. apud Spelm. T. 1, p. 238. Lynwood de Consuet., Lib. 1, Tit. 3, Cap. Hujus autem, p. 18, b. Ord. Rom. loc. Supr. Cit. Baluz. in Reg., p. 532. Ord. Spelm., Tom. 2, p. 1, Ord. MS. Supr.*

§ *Leo IV. Epist. ad Episc. Britannie apud Labb. Concil., Tom. 8, col. 31. Ord. Rom. in Pontificali, lib. III., fol. 189. Edit. Venet., An. 1561. Lynwood de Appell. I., 1, 2, Tit. 7, cap. In Consilio, verb. statutum, Francisc. Leo prax. for. Eccl., par. 2, cap. 9, sect. 15.*

¶ *Vid. Ord. MSS. Bibl. Cotton. supr. cit.*