

a portion of
 We, the Members and Communicants of St. John's Parish, Kingston, N.Y., would respectfully set forth to your Reverend Body, our objections to certain innovations our Rector, Reverend Lewis T. Wattson, has introduced in the form of public worship at St. John's, which have deeply grieved and offended a large portion of the congregation .

Our Rector maintains that the several points of ritual are necessary adjuncts to the proper worship of Almighty God . We believe them to be not essential, and think they ought not to be practiced, if the result should be to cause a division in the Church, or in any way to impair her influence for good in the community .

The most serious objection is to the ceremonial in the administration of the Holy Communion, or, as our Rector terms it, " The Mass", and also distinguishes it as " High Mass ", " Pontifical High Mass " and " Requiem Mass " .

In the service called High Mass he has introduced the " Sanctus Bell " , which is used in the prayer of Consecration . We think the service an adaptation from the

ceremonial of the Roman Catholic Church, and is also contrary to Article XIX.

The claim made by Mr. Wattson as to his power to work miracles, and the doctrine of Extreme Unction as taught by him, is not believed by the congregation, and we think not authorized by the Prayer Book .

We think it proper and important to submit for attention the statement embodied in the following excerpt from a report of the services in St. John's Church on Advent Sunday, 1894, published in the New York Times under date of December 2nd :

" Father Wattson spoke of the power priests have been given from above of forgiving and retaining sins, and startled his hearers by saying that he believed it was still the will of the Master to heal bodily as well as spiritual ailments through His priests . ' There is a man in Chicago,' he continued, ' who is now doing miracles as great as the Christ did on earth . I have seen this realized and firmly believe it .'

These words have caused even more of a sensation than the offering of incense . Father Wattson expects his people to attend confession, and advocates the keeping of Friday as a fast day ."

That the foregoing is substantially an accurate statement of fact, can be attested by those who were present and listened to such remarkable declarations . It was startling and offensive to those who had been communicants and attendants at St. John's Church under the ministration of Reverend Doctor George Waters and his successors, during which long period the Church had prospered spiritually and materially advanced until it had attained a high position within this Diocese, the Rectors commanding the reverence and respect of its communicants and of the whole community, for learning, sincerity and Christian character, and the service as conducted by them was one " worthy of God " . The implication to the contrary we declare to be unwarranted by fact and extravagant in form, and to be unjust to the several Rectors preceding the present one in charge of this Church .

The pretension set forth as to the " power of priests " given from above of forgiving and retaining sins ", is submitted as not within the limits of sound discretion, but on the contrary it is an assertion of faith deemed indefensible within the Church .

What follows this surprising pretension, we submit for your consideration without remarks .

There are other matters on which different members of the church do not agree with the Rector, but all practically agree in objecting to the following :

First,- Auricular Confession .

Our Rector preaches in the Church and teaches in the Sunday School that it is required and is in fact necessary that the people before coming to the Lord's Table, should first go to the Priest, and make confession, receiving from him absolution, and making them, as he says, more worthy to partake of the Sacrament . That those who refuse cannot, in his judgment, receive the full benefit of the Sacrament . This he has taught, specially in the Sunday

School and to candidates for confirmation .

Second, - The use of Incense .

We object to the use of incense because it is offensive to a large majority of the people, and is not authorized in the book of Common Prayer .

The Rector stated to the congregation that the vestry of the Church had voted in favor of its use . We claim on the contrary, that a majority of the vestry were and are now opposed to it . That the meeting at which the Rector stated they voted in favor of incense was not properly a vestry meeting, as certain members were not notified .

Our Rector says "The use of incense in the public worship of God, is by Divine command and authority, and those who oppose its use are verily fighting against God ."

The use of incense was commenced at the Mission Chapel of the Holy Cross on Christmas Day, 1893 . It gave offense to so many that Mr. Wattson promised in a letter written to one of the trustees, that he would discontinue its use, and until it could be used without giving offense or causing anyone to withdraw from the Church, its use would

never be resumed .

We submit a copy of the letter, which is as follows :

" St. John's Rectory,

Kingston, N.Y.,

December 29, 1893.

Dear Mr. Mason,-

It is not likely I shall see you before Sunday, and therefore write what I would otherwise say by word of mouth.

I am glad I called to see you on Christmas night before I had read your letter to me -- the conversation we then had took much of the sting away, especially from the last sentence, " I never want to see you again ." Even as I read it on Tuesday morning, it wounded to the quick , but I don't believe you feel so now .

You must not give up the Holy Cross on my account . CHRIST said " he that offendeth one of these little ones it were better for him that a mill stone were hanged about his neck and he drowned in the depth of the sea ", and God forbid that I by my self-will should drive a man of

your character and devotion from his Church home .

Firmly as I believe incense to be of divine appointment in Christian Worship and its use to be well pleasing to the Most High, it certainly was never intended to drive honest, faithful people out of Church and as long as you and others feel as you do, viz: that it is a "mummery" and a "sacrilege" there will be no more incense burnt in the Holy Cross . Some day, I trust, under the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit, you will come to regard the use of incense in a very different light, but should you continue unaltered in your opposition, I promise to respect your conscientious convictions to the end .

I make this sacrifice of my own preference freely, willingly and gladly, and if on Sunday I see you in your accustomed place and assuming your accustomed duties, I with all the others will be very happy, and we will remember the service of Christmas Day only as a dream, ~~whom~~ one awaketh .

God bless you and your wife, and forgive me if I have intentionally wronged or wounded you, whom I truly love and esteem in the fellowship of JESUS , our Holy and compassionate Redeemer .

Yours in our Blessed LORD,

Lewis T. Wattson . "

We claim that he has disregarded his promise and forced its use upon us, against the expressed objections of the congregation .

Third, - We object to innovations the Rector has introduced in the order of administering the Holy Communion by adopting, as we think, largely the ritual and ceremonial of the Roman Catholic Church in its celebration of the Mass .

His teaching of the real presence of Christ in the Sacrament, and the lifting up and worshipping of the Host, as is practiced in St. John's Church at every celebration, appears to us practically the doctrine of transsubstantiation under a different name, and we believe it to be contrary to Article XXVII.

The Rector was appealed to by one of the wardens in regard to this matter, and afterwards, at a Sunday morning service, publicly promised to discontinue the practice of elevating the Sacrament, but after the lapse of three or four weeks, the custom was resumed .

We think the course pursued by our Rector has resulted in great injury to the Church . A number of our best and oldest members have felt it impossible to attend a service so largely made up of the spectacular and that which is alike offensive to their conscience and reason . Parents have taken their children from the Sunday School . Others who still attend the services will not partake at the celebration of the Lord's Supper . We believe if the present state of affairs continue, many will leave the Church, and the good work of the past will be largely undone .

The attendance at the different services is largely composed of people brought there by curiosity . Without these we think that the attendance by the members is small.

In order to settle the present trouble in our Parish, we can name only one thing which in our judgment will be effectual, and that is the resignation of Mr. Wattson .

We think matters have reached a point where it would be impossible to resume the cordial relations which should exist between priest and people .

We come to this conclusion with deep regret . Our Rector has had in the past our hearty support and sincere friendship .

We assure your Committee that nothing of a personal nature has entered into this trouble . Nothing but a sincere desire for the good of this Parish and love for Our Church, has caused us to take this action .

In support of the allegations hereinbefore set forth,
we file herewith , as exhibits, the following papers,
to-wit:

1.- As indicating the doctrines believed in and
taught by Mr. Wattson, as well as his views on ceremonies
in service, a complete file of a parish paper and sent by
him to all or nearly all the members of the congregation,
called " The Pulpit of the Cross " .

2.- The catechism introduced in and taught in the
Sunday School until discontinued, after criticism by one
of the Wardens .

3.- Two schedules of services at the Church of the
Holy Cross .

4.- Petitions and statements signed by a large number
of communicants and members of the parish, with memoranda
concerning the signers .

*5th Statement containing names of members
of the Parish who have already withdrawn
their pledges for the support of the Church*

*J. H. [unclear]
E. H. [unclear]
E. H. [unclear]
A. Hayce*