

**A GUIDE TO THE  
PARISH  
CHURCH, PP. 1-213**

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A Guide to the Parish Church, pp. 1-213 by Harvey Goodwin

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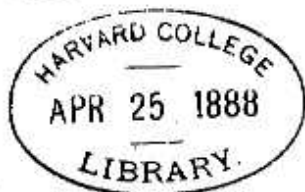
BY  
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*John Harvey Treat.*

"I have loved Thy assemblies: I have mourned for the divisions of Thy Church: I have delighted in the brightness of Thy Sanctuary. This vine which Thy right hand hath planted in this nation I have ever prayed unto Thee, that it might have the first and the latter rain; and that it might stretch her branches to the seas and to the floods....Thy creatures have been my books, but Thy Scriptures much more. I have sought Thee in the courts, fields, and gardens, but I have found Thee in Thy temples."

BACON.

## PREFACE.

THE first Edition of this little book was published nearly twenty-four years ago ; and as more than ten thousand copies of it have been sold, I do not think it necessary, in sending out this revised and rewritten Edition, to explain the reasons which moved me in the first instance to undertake the composition of the work.

It is however necessary to give some account of the difference between the book as it now appears and the book as it has hitherto been printed.

Many changes have taken place since as a Parish Priest I undertook the task of supplying to those who desired such help a humble Guide to the Parish Church. The average tone and character of Parish Church worship is undeniably different from what it was then. *Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis.* But my little book being printed, indeed for some

years past stereotyped, did not change with the times; and I could not but feel as I sometimes looked over my own pages, that remarks founded upon the condition of things existing when I wrote my book, and which I could justify by reference to my own experience and observation, were gradually becoming unsuitable in consequence of the practical reforms, or at all events the changes, which had taken place.

It is difficult to determine the precise moment at which the remodelling of a book in extensive circulation ought to take place; and I might perhaps have granted to my little volume, antiquated as it might possibly be regarded in some points, a longer undisturbed existence had it not been for a cause which I will briefly explain.

In the Guide to the Parish Church I had naturally devoted a section to the consideration of the Vestures used in divine service. In that section I wrote as follows :

“This rule,” that is the Ornaments’ Rubric, “if carried out, would involve the use of several vestures of which the greater number of attendants at the Parish Church have never heard,



such as the vestment, the cope, the tunicle, the albe; some of these are even now used upon very special occasions, and strictly speaking they ought to be used in all Parish Churches, for this is one of those things which each branch of Christ's Church may fairly regulate according to its own discretion, and in our own case the rule quoted above has been deliberately made and has never yet been repealed. Nevertheless it is manifest that any attempt on the part of individual ministers to alter that form of vesture, which has become usual in the English Church, would be most mischievous and useless; in a matter of this kind it signifies little how things have come into their present state; if the state in which they are be not absolutely bad, injurious to the character of public worship, destructive to Christian devotion, then rubrics must give way to custom, at all events until the whole question can be carefully reviewed by proper authority and order taken thereupon."

Since these words were written a violent vestiarian controversy has raged, and the Ornaments' Rubric has been examined both by Courts of Law and in divers other ways, so as it never was examined before. The result has

been that the highest judicial authorities have declared that the interpretation of the Ornaments' Rubric as above given is incorrect, and that when properly understood it only authorises the Surplice in Parish Churches with the use of a Cope in Cathedrals. But besides this, my own examination of the subject has guided me to the conclusion, that the interpretation which the Courts have put upon the Ornaments' Rubric is most probably the true one. I say *most probably*, because the Rubric when carefully studied in its historical connection is undoubtedly obscure, and the interpretation must necessarily rest upon a balance of probabilities.

The view given by me of the Ornaments' Rubric did not appear to myself as having any very important practical bearing, partly because I could not expect my little plain uncontroversial book to be ever quoted as an authority upon such a matter, partly because I had expressed myself so strongly against the introduction of obsolete vestures, even though they might claim the sanction of the written law of the Church of England. I found however not long since, that my opinion and authority were solemnly claimed in favour of the legality

of the Edwardian vestures, as they are sometimes called; and when this took place it seemed to me that the time was come, when the suppression of an opinion which I no longer held became imperatively necessary.

I do not think that I ought to trouble the reader of such a book as this Guide to the Parish Church with arguments concerning the interpretation of a document, which has given rise to so much controversy. He will find when he comes to the chapter on vestures, that I have omitted the passage, quoted above from the first Edition, but that I have substituted no other interpretation, confining myself simply to remarks arising out of the ordinary usage of the Church of England, and so preserving that practical tone which I have ever desired to make a characteristic of the Guide to the Parish Church.

Having determined to recall the book as it had previously existed, I further determined entirely to rewrite and recast the book. It seemed to me that in this way I could best deal with the general change of feeling and practice with regard to public worship, to which I have already referred, and avoid the danger of pro-