

GENEVA AND OXFORD:

AN ADDRESS

TO THE

PROFESSORS AND STUDENTS OF THE THEOLOGICAL
SCHOOL, GENEVA,

AT THE OPENING OF THE SESSION, OCT. 3, 1842.

BY THE PRESIDENT,

J. H. MERLE D'AUBIGNE,

AUTHOR OF THE "HISTORY OF THE GREAT REFORMATION," ETC.

"Two schemes of doctrine, the Genevan and the Catholic, are, probably for the last time, struggling within our Church."—*Dr Pusey's Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury.*

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

FOURTH THOUSAND.

EDINBURGH:

JOHN JOHNSTONE, HUNTER SQUARE;

R. GROOMBRIDGE, LONDON.

MDCCCXLIII.

PREFATORY NOTE.

THE Theological School of Geneva, founded by the Evangelical Society, to teach the orthodox tenets of Christianity, was opened for the present year on Monday, the 3d of October. Besides the Professors and Students, there were present many friends to the cause of truth, and among others several clergymen and members of the Church of England. After prayer had been offered, and a portion of the Word of God read (2d Tim. iii. to iv. 8), by M. La Harpe, Professor of Biblical Criticism, the President of the School, M. Merle D'Aubigné, delivered the subjoined Address. There has already appeared a translation of it, with an Introductory Note by the Rev. Mr Bickersteth; but as that translation is not a complete one, and is published at a price which must necessarily limit its circulation, it has been thought expedient to make another, and to give it to the world on such terms, as will ensure for M. D'Aubigné's eloquent and able exposition of the principles of Puseyism, that publicity it so well merits. The present Address, with Mr Bickersteth's own Sermon, named "The Divine Warning," and Dr Candlish's Sermon on "The Right of Private Judgment," are fine specimens of preaching to the times, and, by the blessing of God, will prove effectual antidotes to the fast and far spreading Oxford heresy.

January 1843.

GENEVA AND OXFORD.

GENTLEMEN,

It has been my practice, at the opening of our course, to draw your attention to some subject more peculiarly applicable to the necessities and circumstances of the times. Several might now present themselves to our notice. And, first, I might allude to a theme of quite perennial moment, I mean the nature and genius of our school—an establishment which, possessed of none of those mundane sources of prosperity, wealth, and power, that foster the generality of institutions, can exist only as a plant of God, and can thrive only if the Spirit of God, as its life-sap, circulate incessantly through its trunk and branches, and cover the tree all over with leaves, and flowers, and fruits. Gentlemen, teachers, and students, we are these branches. God grant we be not found barren and sapless!

There is another subject which is now beginning to engage some of the highest spirits,—it is the question, whether the Church ought to be under the control of the State,* or ought to have a separate and independent government; holding, immediately, only of Christ and his Word. Without here entering upon this important subject, I shall notice two opposite movements which we see now simultaneously taking place in the world,—one in theory, the other in practice. On one side, an admirable work, by one of the most distinguished men of our age, M. Vinet,† leads the graver minds to the acknowledgment of the inherent right of self-government in the Church; and on the other, many are affected with a new zeal for established institutions; so that there are around us opinions and actions which appear to carry our cotemporaries along in two opposite currents. Thus, a student of Geneva has just apprised us, that the refusal to extend to him that exemption from the militia, which the law provides in favour of theological students, obliged him to leave our school. We always show respect to the authorities; but that shall not hinder us to observe, that if, as all parties assure us, a radical revolution has this year taken place in Geneva, that revolution has not had the effect of securing to us liberty and equal rights in religion, without which, all other liberty is but a vain, if not a dangerous mockery. But it is especially in France that this movement is working. A French student writes us, with touching expressions of regret, that he has again joined the Established Church. When young men, after having pursued in our preparatory school those first studies which present so great difficulties, shall desire by some expedient to make sure of a less laborious future course, or shall leave our institution to take their place in a school connected with the Established Church,‡ from which Unitarian and Rationalist doctrines are excluded, it will be our satisfaction to reflect that in part we have been able, with the aid of God our Saviour,

* [dependre des Gouvernements Civils.]

† Essai sur la Manifestation des Convictions Religieuses. Paris, 1842.

‡ [faculté Gouvernementale.]

to prepare them for the work of the ministry, and we shall follow them in their future career with our wonted affection, and, we hope, with our wonted prayers. But, for ourselves, Gentlemen, we shall not resort to earthly governments; we believe that our help is with the government in the heavens; and knowing the faithfulness of Christ towards those who seek only his glory, assured that he has a place for all whom he calls, we will ask him to strengthen the confidence which, whether masters or pupils, we ought to have in his love, and to grant "that we may all walk by faith, and not by sight."

The circumstances of the Church, too, in our own country, might engage our attention. We have, alas! during the last year, played the part of Cassandra. In vain have we brought forward, as well as we could, the great principles of Church government,—in vain, especially, have we shown that the elders of the Church ought to be chosen by the parishioners, met in the churches with their pastors, after prayer, and not by municipal councils and presiding provosts: our remonstrances, listened to for a moment, have, in the end, been to no purpose. There has been seen among us a strange spectacle. Some of the clergy, although, unquestionably, men of learning and talent, appear afraid of their parishioners, and use their powerful influence to have the governors of the Church chosen, not by the Church, but by the magistrates who have the superintendence of the public roads and buildings. And what is said, now that the election is made? Do we hear any expressions of astonishment? There are expressions of wonder and complaint heard, that the political bodies, whom it was resolved, at all hazard, to intrust with the ecclesiastical elections, have made political elections; the fall of the Church is predicted; those are already talked of *who are infallibly to divide the spoil*;* and nothing equals the anxiety shown to obtain this institution, unless it be the disappointment manifested, whenever the inevitable results are discovered to be what we anticipated. This, Gentlemen, is the consequence of ignorance of the first principles of Church government on the part of those who have its administration, however enlightened, moral, and patriotic they may be in other respects.

If we look abroad, beyond this school and this city, upon the evangelical world, there are other subjects which claim our notice. Thus, we see men of piety, led astray by strange errors (not unmixed certainly with much truth), receive a system which had its origin in an English town,† according to which there is no Church, although our Lord promised (Matt. xvi.) "that the gates of hell should not prevail against it;" and there should be no pastors and teachers, although Scripture declares "that Christ himself has given pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." (Eph. iv. 11, 12.)

But there is another error, and one which is found at the other extremity of the theological line, to which I would to-day direct your attention. In the bosom of one of the English universities, Oxford, an ecclesiastical system has become developed, which justly attracts the eyes and excites the alarm of all Christendom. Some lay friends, for whom I feel respect and affection, requested me sometime ago to write against this dangerous

* *Courrier de Geneve*, 24th September 1842.

† Plymouth.

error. My answer was, that I had neither time, nor abilities, nor all the necessary documents. But, if unable to compose a treatise, I can at least in a few words indicate my method of viewing the subject; it is even my duty to do so, since Christians whom I honour have required me, and therefore have I made choice of this subject for our consideration on this occasion.

But, Gentlemen, let us distinctly understand the position which the theology of evangelical Christianity occupies.

At the era of the Reformation there were, if I may so speak, three distinct epochs of the Church already past.

1st, Evangelical Christianity, which, having its central light in the times of the Apostles, diffused its rays over the first and second centuries of the Church.

2dly, Ecclesiastical Catholicism, which, having its birth about the third century, bore sway until the seventh.

3dly, The Popery of Rome, which ruled from the seventh to the fifteenth century.

Such were the three grand epochs of the Church; and we shall point out the essential characteristic of each. In the first period, the revealed Word of God was the acknowledged authority; in the second, according to some, the Church, as represented by its bishops; in the third, the Pope.

We willingly acknowledge the second of these systems to be much superior to the third; but we feel its inferiority to the first.

In truth, in the first of these systems it is God who rules; in the second, it is man; in the third, to use the words of the apostle, it is "that power of Satan which manifests itself with all signs and lying wonders."—2 Thess. ii. 9.

The Reformation, in leaving Popery, had the option of returning to the second of these systems, that of ecclesiastical Catholicism; or to the first, that of evangelical Christianity.

In returning to the second, it would have gone not more than about half way. Ecclesiastical Catholicism is, in fact, a *via media*, as it is well called in a lately published sermon of one of the Oxford divines. On one side it approaches to the very confines of Popery, for it contains already the germ of all papal errors. On the other side it recedes, by rejecting the Papacy itself.

The Reformation was no system of real, or rather pretended middle course; it went the whole way, and, springing with the energy which God gives, it alighted, as by a single bound, in the evangelical Christianity of the Apostles.

But there is now, Gentlemen, in England a numerous and powerful party, having even the support of several bishops (whose recent charges have astonished and distressed us), which, according to its adversaries, would quit the ground of evangelical Christianity to plant itself again on that of ecclesiastical Catholicism, with a marked tendency to Popery; or which, according to its own professions, would maintain itself faithfully on that hierarchic and semi-Roman ground which is, in its esteem, the *true, native, and legitimate* foundation of the Church of England. This is the movement named, after one of its leaders, *Puseyism*.

“The aim of the true children of the Catholic Church,” says the British Critic (one of the organs of the Oxford party), “is to *unprotestantize* the National Church.” “It is necessary,” says one of these authors,* “entirely to reject and anathematize the principle of Protestantism, as being that of a heresy, with all its forms, sects, and denominations.” “I hate,” says another,† in his posthumous writings, “the Reformation and the Reformers more and more.” In thus detaching the Church from the Reformation, the professed desire of this party is not to restore it to Popery, but to keep it in the middle place of ecclesiastical Catholicism. They do not, at the same time, disguise, that if obliged to choose between what they regard as two evils, they would greatly prefer Rome to the Reformation.

Among these theologians are found some whose acquirements, talents, and moral character, entitle them to respect; and—let us acknowledge it—the fundamental want which seems to have urged this movement is a legitimate want. There has been felt in England, amid the billows which now upheave and agitate the Church, the need of *antiquity*;—a firm and unshaken rock has been sought on which to plant her foot. This longing has its foundation in human nature, and is justified by the social and religious features of these times. I myself, too, thirst for antiquity. But do these Doctors of Oxford, for themselves and for others, indeed supply this want of the age? I am convinced of the contrary. How youthful is the antiquity before which these distinguished men would bow themselves! It is the young and inexperienced Christianity of the first ages that they call ancient; it is to man in his childhood that they give the authority of age. If the question is one of human antiquity, assuredly we are older than the Fathers, by fifteen or eighteen centuries; it is we who have the light of experience, and the maturity of grey hairs.

But no; in the things of God, an antiquity like this is not what we seek. The sole antiquity of which we would hold is, that of “the Ancient of days” (Dan. vii. 13),—“of Him, who before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and the world were formed, is from everlasting to everlasting God.” It is He who is “our dwelling-place in all generations” (Ps. xc. 1, 2). The document of real antiquity, to which we appeal, is that word which “for ever is settled in heaven” (Ps. cxix. 89), and “which standeth for ever” (Isa. xl. 8). Here, my friends, is our antiquity. Alas! what most grieves us in these learned Divines is, that while the people about them are hungering and thirsting for antiquity, they, instead of guiding them to the primeval testimony of the “Ancient of days,” lead them only to puerile novelties. Such novelties, in sooth, such insipid novelties, are this *purgatory*, *absolution*,—these *images*, *relics*, *invocation of saints*,—which they would restore to the Church.‡ How measureless and monstrous an innovation is that of Rome, to which they would bring us back!

Who, I ask, are the innovators;—those who, like ourselves, say with the eternal Word,—“God hath begotten us of his own will, with the word of truth” (Jas. i. 18); or those who say, as these Tracts for the Times,—“Rome is our mother; it was by her that we were born to Christ:” those who say, as we do, with the living and abiding Word,—“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief,

* Mr Palmer.

† Froude's Memoirs.

‡ Tracts for the Times, No. 99, Art. 6.

in departing from the living God" (Heb. iii. 12); or those who say, like these Doctors,—“In lacking visible union with the See of Rome, we forego a great privilege?”*

Truly they are the innovators, these Oxford Doctors. The adherents of Rome—that great innovation in Christianity—are not deceived while they hail these new teachers as the partizans of Romish novelties. The famous Dr Wiseman, of the Roman College, writes to Lord Shrewsbury,—“We may depend upon a willing, an able, and a most zealous co-operation with any effort which we may make towards bringing her (the Anglican Church) into the rightful position in catholic unity with the Holy See and the churches of its obedience.”—“It seems to me impossible to read the works of the Oxford divines, and especially to follow them chronologically, without discovering a daily approach towards our holy Church, both in doctrine and affectionate feeling. Our saints, our popes, have become dear to them by little and little; our rites and ceremonies, our offices, nay, our very rubrics, are precious in their eyes, far alas! beyond what many of us consider them.” And these Oxford authors, for all their protestations, have they not the same view when they say,—“The tendency to Romanism is, as a whole, but a fruit of the deep yearning of the stirred Church to be again what her Saviour left her—*one*.”†

Such, Gentlemen, is the movement which so many devout men, and so many Christian writings exhibit clearly as now working in the Church of England. Dr Pusey might well say, in his Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury,—“On the issue of the present struggle hangs the destiny of our Church.” And it is worth our while to stop for a little and inquire what part we ought to take, as members of an ancient continental Church, and what we have to do in this momentous and solemn crisis.

My friends, it becomes us openly to avow that we have no attachment either to Popery or to the *via media* of ecclesiastical Catholicism, and to stand firm on the ground of evangelical Christianity.

In what, then, is Christianity seen to consist, when brought into contrast with the two other systems which we reject? There are some things essential to it, and some merely accidental; it is only of what forms its essence, of what is its very principle, that I would here speak.

There are, then, three principles which compose its essence,—the first of which may be called the *formal* principle, because it is the means by which this system is formed, is constructed; the second may be called the *material* principle, because it is the great doctrine on which this religious system is built; the third, I shall call the *personal* or *moral* principle, because it regards the application of Christianity to the soul of each individual.

The *formal* principle of Christianity may be expressed in these words:—the Word of God alone. That is to say, that the Christian receives the truth only on the Word of God, and admits no other source of religious knowledge.

The *material* principle of Christianity may be as shortly expressed:—The grace of Christ alone. That is, that the Christian becomes possessed of salvation only by the free grace of Christ, and acknowledges no other meritorious cause of eternal life.

* British Critic.

† Dr Pusey's Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The *personal* principle of Christianity, indicated by the simplest terms, is:—The work of the Spirit alone. That is, that in every soul redeemed there must be a moral and personal work of regeneration wrought by the Spirit of God, and not by mere admission to the Church and the magic influence of ceremonies.

Let these three simple truths, my friends, be always present to your minds:—

The Word of God, alone ;
The grace of Christ, alone ;
The work of the Spirit alone ;

and they will truly be “a lamp to your feet and a light to all your paths.”

These are the three great signal-lights which the Holy Spirit has set up in the Church. Their radiance ought to be diffused from end to end of the world. In as far as these shine, the Church walks in light; no sooner are these extinguished, or even obscured, but Egyptian darkness will envelope Christianity. Now these are just the three fundamental principles of evangelical Christianity, which are attacked and subverted by the novel system of ecclesiastical Catholicism. For it is no point of mere detail, no secondary doctrine, that the Oxford divines assail,—it is that which forms the very essence of Christianity and the Reformation,—truths so important, that, as Luther said, “With them the Church stands; without them the Church falls.” Let us then consider them.

I.—The *formal* principle of Christianity is this:—

THE WORD OF GOD, ALONE.

Whoever would know and lay hold of saving truth, must seek it in that revelation of God which is made in the Holy Scriptures, and must reject all that man has added,—all that, as man’s work, is justly suspected, and certainly bears the impress of a deplorable mixture of error. There is one only fountain at which the Christian quenches his thirst,—it is that fountain of pure, transparent, and limpid waters, which springs from the throne of God. He turns away his lips from every other stream, though it seem to flow parallel, and profess to mingle its waters with the first; knowing that, because of their source, the waters of these second streams are turbid, unwholesome,—perhaps deadly.

The one ancient, eternal source is God; the other sources,—but of yesterday, ephemeral, soon exhausted—are *man*; and we would quench our thirst in God alone. In our eyes, God is so clothed in sovereign majesty that we would deem it insulting, and even impious, to put any thing whatever on a level with His Word. But the leading advocates of the Oxford novelties do this. “Scripture,” they say, in the “Tracts for the Times,” “it is plain, is not, on Anglican principles, the Rule of Faith.”* “The gospel doctrine or message is but indirectly and covertly recorded in Scripture, under the surface.”† “Catholic tradition,” writes one of the chief teachers of this school,‡ “is a divine informant in religious matters; it is the unwritten Word. Scripture and tradition taken together are the joint Rule of Faith. Catholic tradition is a divine source of knowledge in all matters of faith. Scripture is only the document of appeal,—

* Tract 90.

† Tract 85.

‡ Newman’s Lectures on Romanism.

Catholic tradition is the authoritative teacher." "Tradition is infallible," says another.* "God's unwritten Word must necessarily demand from us the same respect as his written Word, and precisely for the same reason,—because it is his Word." "We must demand the teaching of the whole body of catholic tradition," says a third. †

Here, my friends, is one of the saddest errors that could pervade the Church. From whence does it come to Rome and to Oxford? The respect we feel for the undoubted acquirements of these Divines shall not hinder us to answer the question. This error can come from no other source, but the natural aversion of the heart of fallen man to all the lessons of the Bible. It can only be a depraved will which sets aside the Holy Scriptures. Thus the fountain of living waters is forsaken, and men hew out for themselves, here and there, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. This is a truth taught by the history of the whole Church, in its successive lapses and errors, as well as by the history of each individual soul. The Oxford theologians have only followed the way of all flesh.

Here, then, Gentlemen, are two authorities set up side by side,—the *Bible* and *Tradition*. We do not hesitate what to do. "To the law and to the testimony." We subscribe with the prophet, that "if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. Behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish; and they shall be driven to darkness."—(Isa. viii. 20–22.)

We reject this tradition as a species of *Rationalism*, in as much as it only substitutes, for the human reason of the present day, the human reason of past ages, as a rule of Christian doctrine. We declare, with the Churches of the Reformation in their standards, that "Scripture is the only judge, the only rule of faith; that it is to it, as a touchstone, that all doctrines must be brought; that it is by it they are to be pronounced good or bad, true or false." ‡

Without doubt there was originally a pure oral tradition, which was the instruction given by the apostles themselves, before the existence of the Scriptures of the New Testament. But even then, the apostles and evangelists, Peter and Barnabas (Gal. ii. 13), were permitted to err in their walk, and, consequently, to err in their words. The Scripture, given by inspiration of God, is alone infallible; the Word of the Lord alone endureth for ever. But, however pure this oral instruction was at first, from the time the apostles were taken from the earth, this tradition was necessarily exposed, in this world of sin, to be by degrees polluted—corrupted—defaced; and therefore the Gospel Church adores with humble gratitude the blessed will of our Lord, through which this primitive type, this original apostolic tradition, in all its purity, has been written down in our Scriptures, by the very Spirit of God, for all future time; and she finds, as we have observed, in these writings, a touchstone by which to test all human traditions. She does not, then, as do these Oxford writers and the Council of Trent, deem *written* and *oral* traditions to be co-ordinate; but she esteems the last to be distinctly subordinate to the first,—aware that it is impossible to be certain that this oral tradition is exclusively and truly the apostolic tradition, as it existed in its primitive purity. The knowledge of true Christianity, says the Protestant Church, is to be drawn from

* Keble's Sermons.

† Palmer's Aids to Reflection.

‡ Formule de Concorde.

a single source—the Holy Scriptures; or, if you will, apostolic tradition, such as we find it inscribed in the pages of the New Testament.

The Apostles of Jesus Christ,—Peter, Paul, John, Matthew, and James,—to this day discharge their office in the Church. No one has need, no one has right, to usurp their place. They officiate at Geneva, at Corinth, at Berlin, at Paris; they bear witness in Oxford, and even in Rome. Till the end of the world they preach repentance and the forgiveness of sins in the name of the Lord; they proclaim to every creature the resurrection of Him who was crucified; they remit and they retain sins; they lay the foundation, and build up the house of God; they educate missionaries and ministers; they rule the order of the Church, and preside in synods which profess to be Christian. They do all this by the *written Word*, which they have bequeathed to us; or rather Christ,—Christ himself does this by it, since it is rather the Word of Christ than of Paul, or Peter, or James. “Go and teach all nations; and lo! I am with you alway, even to the end of the world.”—(Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.)

The Apostles undoubtedly, if the number of the words be reckoned, spoke more than they have written; but in substance they have taught nothing other, nothing more than they have left us in their divine works. And if their oral teaching had been different from, or more explicit than is their written testimony, still no one would at this day be in a condition to give us any certain knowledge of one single syllable of these lessons. If it has not pleased God to preserve them in his Bible, no one may come to his aid, and do that which God has not been pleased to do, and has not done. If in the writings—more or less uncertain—of the cotemporaries of the Apostles, or of those Fathers who are called Apostolical, were found some doctrine of the Apostles, it must be then put to the test of comparison with the undoubted lessons of the Apostles, that is, with the canon of Scripture.

So much for the tradition of the Apostles. Let us now pass from the times in which they lived to those which succeeded; let us come to the tradition of the Fathers of the first centuries. This tradition is unquestionably of great value to us; but in as much as it is Presbyterian, Episcopal, or Synodical, it is no longer Apostolic. And suppose (which is not the case) that this tradition were not self-contradictory, that one father did not overturn what another had established (which is the fact, as has been already proved by Abelard in his famous work, “*Le Sic et le Non*,” the publication of which we owe to the labours of a French philosopher);* suppose that, in a single point, this tradition of the Fathers of the Church might be brought into harmony, like that of Apostolic tradition, the canon which would be thus obtained could be by no means co-ordinate with the canon of the Apostles.† We confess, that without doubt the statements of the Christian Fathers deserve our attention, if it is the Holy Spirit which speaks in them, for that Spirit ever lives and works in the Church. But we shall not—most assuredly we shall not—suffer ourselves to be bound by any thing in that tradition, and in these teachers, which is no more than the work of man. And how shall we discern what is of God, and what of man, otherwise than by the Holy Scripture? “It remains,” says

* Ouvrages inédits, d’Abélard publiés par M. Victor Cousin.

† Nitzsch, Protestantische Theses.

St Augustine, "that I judge myself by the law of that only Master, at whose judgment-seat I desire to stand acquitted."* The statements of the Fathers of the Church are only so many testimonies to the faith which these great men have reposed in the doctrines of Scripture. They show how these doctrines were received by them; they may, doubtless, be instructive and edifying to us, but there is no authority in them obligatory upon us. All teachers,—Greek, Latin, French, Swiss, German, British, American,—when placed in the presence of the Word of God, are but so many scholars receiving instruction. Whether we be of the earliest or the latest times, we all alike occupy the forms of this divine school; and the chair of instruction, round which we are met in humility, appears occupied only by the infallible Word of God. Among this vast audience I am able to descry Calvin, Luther, Cranmer, Augustine, Chrysostom, Athanasius, Cyprian, seated beside our cotemporaries. We are not "*disciples of Cyprian and Ignatius*," as these Oxford Tractarians call themselves,† but of Jesus Christ. "We do not contemn the writings of the Fathers;" we may say with Calvin, "on the contrary, we use them, bearing in mind that 'all things are ours' (1 Cor. iii. 22), that they must be our helpers, not have dominion over us, and that 'we,—we are Christ's' (1 Cor. iii. 23), to whom in all things, and without exception, we owe obedience."‡

The Fathers of the early centuries are the first to say this; they claim for themselves no authority, and their desire is, that the Word which has taught them should teach us. "Even now that I am old," writes Augustine, in his *Retractations*, "I cannot expect to be perfect, never stumbling in my speech; how much less so when in my youth I first began to write."§ "Take care," he says again, "that you are not submissive to my writings, as if they were canonical Scriptures."|| "Let us not esteem," he says elsewhere, "the works of Catholic and venerated men as the canon of Scripture. We may, without at all prejudicing the respect justly due them, reject whatever in their writings we find contrary to truth. I regard the writings of others as I should wish my readers to regard mine."¶ "All that has been said since the Apostles," says Jerome, "ought to be held as of no authority. However holy, however learned be any one who has come after the Apostles, still he has no authority."**

"Neither antiquity nor custom," says the Confession of the Reformed Church of France, "may be opposed to the Holy Scripture; on the contrary, by this ought every thing to be tried, regulated, and reformed."

And even the Anglican Confession, notwithstanding these Oxford Tractarians, teaches—"Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."

Thus the Evangelical Teachers of our day give their hand to the Reformers, the Reformers to the Fathers, the Fathers to the Apostles; and so forming, as it were, a golden chain, the whole Church of all ages and

* *Retract.* in Prolog.

§ *Ibid.*

† Newman on Romanism.

|| In Prolog. de Trinitate.

** *Ibid.*

‡ Calvin's *Inst.* Reg. Chr.

¶ *Ad Fortunatianum.*

all nations, pours forth, with a single voice, this hymn to the *God of truth* :—*

Parle seul à mon cœur, et qu' aucune prudence,
Qu' aucun autre Docteur ne m'explique tes lois ;
Que toute créature en ta sainte présence,
S' impose le silence,
Et laisse agir ta voix !

And what in the end is tradition ? It is historical testimony. There is an historical testimony to the facts of the Christian history, as to those of every other. We allow this testimony ; we only claim the right to discuss and examine it like every other. The heresy of Rome and of Oxford, and what distinguishes them from us, is, that they attribute to that testimony the infallibility which belongs to the Scriptures. While we receive the testimony of history, where its witness is true, for example in regard to the collection of the Apostles' writings, it by no means follows that we ought to receive it where that witness is false, as in reference to the adoration of the Virgin, and the celibacy of the clergy. The Bible is the holy faith of the child of God,—it is of real weight and antiquity : human tradition is the fruit of a love of novelty, and is the faith of ignorance, superstition, and a childish credulity.

How sad, yet how instructive it is to see the ministers of a Church, which was called to the glorious liberty of the children of God, and which held directly of God and his Word, submit themselves to the miserable bondage of the commandments of men, and how loudly does this example warn us :—“ Stand fast in the liberty with which Christ has made you free, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage.”—(Gal. v. 1.)

All the errors against which we are contending arise from misapprehended truths. We, too, believe in the attributes of the Church of which so much is said, but we believe according to God's meaning ; our opponents according to man's. Yes, there is *one holy* Catholic Church, but it is, in the words of the Apostle, “ the General Assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven.”—(Heb. xii. 23.) It is to the invisible Church that *unity* as well as *holiness* appertains. Doubtless the Church is required to advance daily in the possession of these heavenly attributes ; but neither absolute unity nor universal holiness are essential to her integrity—a *sine qua non*. To say that the visible Church must be composed exclusively of saints, is the error of the Donatists, and of fanatics in all ages ; and, in the same way, to say that the visible Church must of necessity be externally *one*, is the corresponding error of Rome, of Oxford, and of formalists in every period of time. Let us beware of preferring that external hierarchy, which consists in sundry human observances, to that internal hierarchy, which is the very kingdom of God. Let us not suffer the form, which is of no permanence, to determine the essence of the Church ; but, on the contrary, let us maintain that the essence of the Church, the Christian life, which emanates from the Word and Spirit, remodels and renews its form. *The form has destroyed the substance* ; so teaches the whole history of Popery and false Catholicism. *The substance has quickened the form*,—witness the whole history of evangelical Christianity, and of the true Catholic Church of Jesus Christ.

I allow that the Church is a judge of controversies—*judex controversiarum*. But what constitutes the Church? It is not the clergy, it is not councils, it is still less the pope. It is the Christian people,—it is believers. “Prove all things, hold fast that which is good” (1 Thess. v. 21), is the precept addressed to the children of God, not to any council or bishop; and it is they who are thus, by God, appointed judges in controversies. If even the lower animals are taught, by instinct, not to eat what might be noxious to them, surely it is not too much to allow the Christian to be possessed of this instinct, or rather this intelligence, resulting from the agency of the Holy Spirit? Each Christian, Scripture teaches us, is called to reject “every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.”—(1 John iv. 1–5.) This is substantially what we are to understand by the Church being *judge of controversies*.

Yes, I believe and confess it, there is an authority in the Church,—without authority the Church could not subsist. But where is it found? Does each obtain it at ordination, whether or no he be possessed of theological gifts, whether he have or have not saving grace and justification? Rome herself does not yet pretend that orders save and sanctify. Must, then, the children of God ask the decision of matters of faith, in many instances, at the hands of the children of the world? What! shall a bishop, from the moment of his consecration, although perhaps without knowledge, without the Spirit of God, and with the world and hell in his heart (as had a Borgia, and so many other bishops), possess authority in the assembly of the saints, and from his lips shall there always flow the words of wisdom and truth, needful to the Church? No, my friends, the idea that there can be a knowledge of God, true and yet unsanctified, is one of gross extravagance. “Sanctify them through thy truth,” were the words of Jesus.—(John xvii. 17.) There is an authority in the Church, but that authority resides only in the Word of God. It is no man, no minister, no bishop, be he descended from Gregory, Chrysostom, Augustine, Irenæus, who has authority over the souls of men. It is not with so pitiful an energy as that which proceeds from such men, that, as God’s ministers, we can make progress in the world; we must look elsewhere than to that Episcopal succession, for what will give authority to our ministry, and validity to our sacraments. Rejecting, then, these sad innovations, our appeal is to the primeval, sovereign, and divine authority of the Word of God. The question which we put to any one who asks concerning the things of eternity is, that which our Lord himself has taught us: “What is written in the law, and how readest thou?”—(Luke x. 26.) To rebellious spirits we address the words which Abraham, in heaven, addressed to Lazarus: “You have Moses and the prophets, hear them.”—(Luke xvi. 29.) What we require of all, is the same conduct as that of the Jews at Berea, “who searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were so.” (Acts xvii. 11.) We must obey God rather than man,—than even the most excellent of men. Such is the true authority, the true priesthood, the true economy. The churches of man have man’s authority; it is natural that it should be so. But the Church of God has the authority of God, and will submit to no other.

II. Such is the formal principle of Christianity, and we now come to its

material principle,—to that which forms the very substance of religion ; we have already stated it in these terms :

THE GRACE OF CHRIST, ALONE.

“ By grace are ye saved through faith,” says Scripture, “ and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God ; not of works, lest any man should boast.”—(Eph. ii. 8.) Evangelical Christianity not only seeks salvation all in Christ, but seeks it in Christ alone, thus excluding, as a cause of salvation, every work of self, all merit, all co-operation of man, or of the Church. There is nothing, absolutely nothing, upon which we can build the hope of salvation, but the “ free grace and gift of God,” which is given us *in Christ*, and made ours by faith.

But this second great fundamental principle of evangelical Christianity is, equally with the first, overturned by modern ecclesiastical Catholicism.

In Tract, No. 90, which I now have in my hand, there is an attempt to explain the Confession of Faith of the Church of England in a papistical sense. Article 11 of this Confession says, “ That we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine.” Listen to the commentary of the new Oxford school: “ An assent to the doctrine that faith alone justifies, does not at all preclude the doctrine of works justifying also. If, indeed, it were said that works justify *in the same sense* as faith alone justifies, this would be a contradiction in terms ; but faith only may justify in one sense,—good works in another ; and this is all that is here maintained, as then Christ justifies in the sense in which he justifies alone, yet faith also justifies in its own sense ; so works, whether moral or ritual, may justify in their own respective senses.”

“ There are,” says the British Critic, “ catholic truths, which are printed on the surface of Scripture, as well as enveloped in its profound sense, such as the doctrine of justification by works.” “ The preaching of justification by faith,” says another disciple of this school, “ ought to be addressed to the heathen by the *propagators* of Christianity ; its *promoters* ought to preach to the baptized justification by works.” Works—yes ; but justification by them—never !

Justification is not, according to these theologians, that *judicial act* by which God, because of the expiatory death of Christ, declares us to be accounted righteous : * by them, as by Rome, it is confounded with the *work of the Holy Spirit*. “ Justification,” says another of their leading writers, “ is a continual work ; it must be the Spirit’s work, not Christ’s.” “ The distinction between deliverance from guilt, and deliverance from sin, is not scriptural.” †

The British Critic denounces the system of justification by grace through faith, as “ radically and fundamentally monstrous, immoral, heretical, and anti-christian.” “ The prevailing notion,” they say again, “ of bringing forward the atonement *explicitly* and *prominently* on all occasions, is evidently quite opposed to what we consider as the teaching of Scripture.” ‡ And they condemn those who make “ justification consist in an act by which the soul reposes on the merits of Christ alone.” §

I am aware that the Oxford Tractarians profess to have found a term

* Newman on Justification.

‡ Tract, No. 80.

† [declare nous tenir pour juste.]

§ Newman on Justification.

midway between the evangelical and the Romish doctrine. "It is not," they say, "sanctification which justifies us, but the presence of God within us, from which this sanctification proceeds. Our justification is the possession of this presence." Still, the doctrine of Oxford is fundamentally the same as that of Rome. The Bible tells us of two great works of Christ:—CHRIST FOR US, and CHRIST IN US. By which of these two works are we justified? The Church of Christ answers, By the first; Rome and Oxford answer, By the second. In saying this, all is said.

And these Tractarians make no secret of it. They tell us that this is the system against which they are resolved to struggle. They declare that it is against the belief that when the sinner "has by faith laid hold of the saving merits of Christ, his sins are done away, are covered, they can appear no more: the handwriting is blotted out; he has no more to do with them than to thank Christ that he has been delivered from them." "My Lord," writes Dr Pusey to the Bishop of Oxford, "it was against this system that I spoke!" Oh, stop! Gainsay not these glad tidings, which have been and shall be to all ages the sinner's only comfort!

My friends, if the effect of the first principle of this new school is to rob the Church of all light, the result of the second principle is to rob it of all salvation. "If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain. Oh, foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth. Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"

It has been felt by eminently pious souls to be the very spring of the Christian life, the very foundation of the Church, which is thus attacked. "There is reason," says the excellent Bishop of Winchester, who, as well as some other bishops, and especially those of Chester and Calcutta, has raised his voice against these errors, "there is reason for fearing injury to the distinctive principles of our Church, if a cloud be raised again around that great doctrine which involves the mode in which we are 'accounted righteous before God;' if it be even called in question whether 'the Protestant doctrine of justification' be 'a fundamental of faith;' if, instead of the satisfaction of Christ, singly and alone, as the ground of acceptance, a certain inherent meetness of sanctification be so connected with the qualification, *ab extra*, as to confound the operation within with the work of Christ without." The Oxford school maintains, with Rome and the Council of Trent, "that justification is the habitation in us of God the Father, and of the Word incarnate through the Holy Ghost," and that the two acts distinguished by the Bible and by our theologians form in truth only one.* How so?

First, God grants the sinner the remission of the punishment of his sins; He absolves him; He pardons him. *Secondly*, He delivers him from sin; He renews him; He sanctifies him. Are not these two distinct things? Would the pardon of sin by God be nothing in itself? Would it be only a form of sanctification? Or would it be said that the pardon which comes by faith, and which produces in the heart the sense of reconciliation, adoption, and peace, is something too external by far to be taken into account? "The Lutheran system," says the British Critic, "is immoral, because it distinguishes these two works." Doubtless it distinguishes them, but it does not sever them. "The end for which we

* Letter of Dr Pusey to the Bishop of Oxford.

are justified," writes Melancthon, in his Defence of the Confession of Augsburg, "is, that as righteous we may do righteously, and begin to obey the law of God; the end for which we are born again, and receive the Holy Spirit, is that the new life may produce in us new works and new affections."

How often has the Reformation declared that justifying faith is not a knowledge, "historical, dead, vain," but a living agency, a willing, a receiving, a work of the Holy Ghost, the true worship of God, obedience to God in the most critical of all moments. Yes, it is a living, efficacious faith which justifies. And this term, *efficacious faith*, which is found in all our Confessions, is meant to declare, that undoubtedly faith *alone* is efficient in the work of justification,*—that *alone* it undoubtedly justifies, but that for that very reason it abides not *alone*, that is, without its effects and its fruits. In this is the great difference between us and the Oxford school. We believe in sanctification by means of justification, but the Oxford school believe in justification by means of sanctification. According to us, justification is the cause, and sanctification the effect. According to them, on the contrary, sanctification is the cause, and justification the effect. These are no unimportant matters,—no vain distinctions. Here is the difference between *sic* and *non*,—yes and no. While our belief establishes, in all their integrity, these two works (justification and sanctification), the creed of Oxford compromises and destroys them both.

Justification has no longer existence if it depend on man's sanctification, and not on God's grace,—“for the heavens,” says the Scripture, “are not clean in his sight” (Job xv. 15), and “He is of purer eyes than to behold evil” (Hab. i. 13); and on the other hand, even sanctification cannot be accomplished,—for how can you expect the effect to follow, if you begin by removing the cause? It is herein that love consists, are the words of John, “not that we loved God, but that He loved us:” “We love Him because He first loved us.”—(1 John iv. 10, 19.) If I might venture to use a homely phrase, I should say that Oxford puts the cart before the horse, † in putting sanctification before justification. In this way, neither the cart nor the horse goes forward. That the work may proceed, that which draws must be before that which is drawn. There is, then, no system more adverse than is this to real sanctification, and, to use the expression of the British Critic, no system is consequently more monstrous and immoral. What! Your justification is not to depend on the work which Christ finished on the Cross, but on that which is wrought in your heart! It is not to Christ, to his grace, that you must look for justification, but to yourselves, to the righteousness which is in you, to your spiritual gifts! . . .

Two great evils will flow from this. Either you will deceive yourselves, in the belief that there is in you a work fair enough to justify you before the throne of God; and then you will be inflated with pride, with that “pride” which, says Scripture, “goeth before destruction;” or, possibly, you will not be thus deluded; you will see yourselves to be “poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked;” and then you will fall into despair. The heights of *pride*, or the depths of *despair*, is the alternative given by the doctrine of Oxford and Rome. The Christian doctrine, on the con-

* [est en cause dans l'œuvre de la justification.]

† [met la charrue devant les bœufs.]

trary, puts man in a position of perfect humility, for it is by another that he is justified; and yet it gives him perfect peace, for his justification, the fruit of "the righteousness of God" (2 Cor. v. 21), is complete, sure, eternal.

III. *Lastly*, Let us point out the personal or moral principle of Christianity. We have stated it in these words :

THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT, ALONE.

Christianity is an individual work; one by one are souls converted by the grace of God; each soul is a world, in which a creation peculiarly its own must be accomplished. The Church is but the congregation of all the souls in which this work has been wrought, and among which there is now unity, because they have "one Spirit, one Lord, one Father."

What, then, is the nature of this work? It is essentially moral. Christianity acts upon, and renews man's will. Conversion proceeds from the operation of the Spirit of God, and not from the magic agency of so many ceremonies, which, apart from the exercise of individual faith, have power, by their innate virtue, to effect a change on man. "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."—(Gal. vi. 15.) "If ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."—(Rom. viii. 13.) But these Oxford Divines, although on this, as on some other points, there is much difference among them, and although some go farther than others, throw immense obstacles in the way of individual regeneration. Nothing excites their opposition more than Christian individuality. Their procedure is by synthesis, not by analysis. They do not start from the principle laid down by the Lord, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" but they start from this quite opposite principle, "All who have partaken of Church ordinances are born again." And while, in all his discourses, our Lord stimulates the efforts of each individual man, saying, "Seek, ask, knock, strive to enter by the strait gate; the violent take it by force;" the Oxford school say, on the contrary, "The notion of getting religious truth ourselves, and by our private inquiry, whether by reading, or meditation, or the study of the Scriptures, or any other books . . . is contained in none of the precepts of Scripture. The grand question which ought to be put before our private judgment is this, What is to be considered as the voice of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church?"*

And how shall this individual regeneration by the Holy Ghost be accomplished, when the first object of Puseyism is to tell every man that it is already done, that all the baptized are become participants of the divine nature, and that it is false doctrine to preach to them conversion, as a work not yet entered on? "Baptism, and not faith," writes one of this school, "is the primary instrument of justification;"† and we know that, according to them, conversion and justification are the same thing. What better means, to hinder some unhappy wretches to escape from their miserable state, than to persuade a poor man that his wealth is great,—an igno-

* British Critic.

† Newman on Justification.

rant, that he has much learning,—a sick, that he is in perfect health? Satan himself could devise no likelier wile to lure men from conversion, than this notion, that all who are baptized with water are born of the Spirit.

What is more, the Tractarians attribute this magic virtue to the sacrament of the Supper.

“We have almost embraced the doctrine,” they say, “that God conveys grace only through the instrumentality of the mental energies, that is, through faith, prayer, active spiritual contemplations, or (what is called) communion with God, in contradiction to the primitive view, according to which, the Church and her sacraments are the ordained and direct visible means of conveying to the soul what is in itself supernatural and unseen. For example, would not most men maintain, on the first view of the subject, that to administer the Lord’s Supper to infants, or to the dying and insensible [apparently insensible, 2d edit.], however consistently pious and believing in their past lives [under all circumstances, and in every conceivable case, 2d edit.], was a superstition? And yet both practices have the sanction of primitive usage. Indeed this may even be set down as the essence of the sectarian doctrine [however its mischief may be restrained or compensated in the case of individuals], to consider faith, and not the sacraments, as the instrument [the proper instrument, 2d edit.] of justification and other gospel gifts.”*

What! an unreasoning infant which knows no speech,—a sick man, whom the approach of death has bereft of intelligence and consciousness, will receive grace by the mere external application of the sacraments,—the will, the affections need not be touched to effect sanctification! What a debasement of man, and of the religion of Jesus! Is there any great difference between such rites, and the mummeries or charms of the corrupt Hindus, or the rude Africans?

If the first Oxford error robbed the Church of light; if the second robbed it of salvation; the third will deprive it of all real sanctification. We believe, undoubtedly, that the sacraments are means of grace; but they are so only when faith accompanies the receiving of them. To put faith and the sacraments in antagonism, as do these Oxford divines, is to annihilate the efficacy of these very sacraments.

The Church will rise up against these so fatal errors.

There is, in a word, a thorough work of renewal to be effected in man. It is a personal work,—an individual work; and it is wrought of God. “I will give you,” says the Lord, “a new heart, and a new spirit will I put within you.”—(Ezek. xxxvi. 26.) By what right is the Church put here in the place of God, and the clergy set up as the dispensers of divine life? Then it will matter little that the life be ungodly, and the heart chained to sin, and to the world, if the participation in the sacraments suffice for the possession of grace. We are told that already the sad consequences are apparent in the lives of many of these Oxford sectaries. The tendency of Puseyism is to set asleep the conscience, by the observance of external rites; the tendency of the Gospel system is to awaken it incessantly. The work of the Spirit, which is one of the great principles of evangelical Christianity, consists not merely in regeneration; it consists,

* Tract for the Times. Advert. vol. ii.

too, in a radical and universal sanctification. If, instead of being let languish in human ordinances, we have indeed within us *the Spirit of Christ*, we cannot then suffer the smallest inconsistency to remain between the divine law on the one side, and our dispositions and conduct on the other. It will not satisfy us to abstain from sin in its grosser forms; we shall desire that the very germ of evil be uprooted from our hearts. We shall love the truth, and with disgust shall we throw away from us that deplorable hypocrisy, which at times pollutes the sanctuary. We shall not practise, in the communication of our religious convictions, that reserve which Puseyism prescribes. "What we have heard in the ear shall we preach on the house-tops."—(Mark x. 27.) We shall not remain in a communion, the holiest truths of which we trample under foot; we shall not eat its bread, and raise our hand to smite it. The moment we ascertain a doctrine to be opposed to the Word of God, neither dangers nor sacrifices shall deter us to cast it far from us. The Spirit's work will shed light on the most secret recesses of our hearts;—"The King's daughter is all glorious within."—(Ps. xlv. 13.) The King, whose servants we are, has told us, "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."—(John viii. 12.)

Before concluding, I must again repeat to you the three great principles of Christianity:—

The Word of God, alone.
The grace of Christ, alone.
The work of the Spirit, alone.

What I have this day to require of you is, that more and more you apply these principles, and make them reign supreme over your heart and life. And wherefore so, my friends? Because every thing that puts our souls in direct communication with God, tends to their health, and every thing that is interposed between God and our souls, is hurtful and deadly. If a dark cloud pass between you and the sun, you are insensible to his beneficent warmth, and perhaps you feel a chill. Put tradition and the authority of the Church between you and the Word of God, and you rest no longer on the Word of God,—that is, on an instrument divine, and therefore potent and perfect, but on the word of man,—an instrument feeble and defective, because human. That energy which brings darkness to light, will be there no longer.

Or, again, place between your souls and the grace of Christ, the ordinances of the Church, the Episcopal priesthood, the dispositions of the heart, and works,—then "*Grace will be no more grace*," as St Paul says,—the instrument of God has been broken, and it can be no longer said that "*charity proceedeth from faith unfeigned*" (1 Tim. i. 5),—that "*faith worketh by love*,"—that "*our souls are purified in obeying the truth*" (1 Pet. i. 22),—that "*Christ dwells in our hearts by faith*" (Eph. iii. 17).

Man's endeavour is always in some way to return to human salvation; this is the source of the Romish and Oxford innovations. The essential characteristic of these systems is the substitution of the Church in the place of Christ. It is no longer Christ who enlightens,—Christ who saves,—Christ who pardons,—Christ who commands,—Christ who judges; it is the Church—always the Church,—that is, an assembly of weak and

sinful men, liable to error like ourselves. "*They have taken away the Lord, and we know not where they have laid him.*"

The errors which we have described, are, then, practical errors, destructive of true piety in the soul,—a removal of God, and a restitution of the flesh, although under a form having some "show of wisdom in will-worship and humility."—(Col. ii. 23.) If they become dominant in the Church, Christianity will be no longer a new, holy, spiritual and heavenly life. It will become an external matter of ordinances, rites, and ceremonies. This has been foreseen by that servant of God, whom we have already quoted. "*Lastly,*" says the Bishop of Winchester,* "I cannot but fear the consequences for the character, the efficiency, and the very truth of our Church, if a system of teaching should become extensively popular, which dwells upon the external and ritual parts of religious service, whilst it loses sight of their inner meaning and spiritual life; which defaces the brightest glory of the Church by forgetting the continual presence of her Lord, seeming in effect to depose him from his rightful pre-eminence; which tends to substitute, at least in unholy minds, for the worship in spirit and in truth, the observance of 'days and months, and times and years,'—for the cheerful obedience of filial love, an aspect of hesitation, and trouble, and doubt,—for the freedom of the Gospel, a spirit of bondage; which works out salvation, indeed, with fear and trembling, but without any foretaste of the rest that remaineth for the people of God, and without joy in believing."

The whole Church of Christ joys to hear such words. She sees, with thankfulness to her Divine Head, the firmness with which, in England, some of the bishops, pastors, and laymen have set themselves to oppose this evil, which has made such inroads in that land. But is this enough? Is it enough to poise on the very edge of the precipice a Church and people, which have been hitherto dear to every disciple of the Gospel?

Oxford leads to Rome; so it has been shown by Mr Sibthorp and others. The march of Puseyism, steadily converging, tract after tract, towards the system of Popery, indicates plainly enough the mark at which it aims. And even should it never effect a total conversion to Popery, what matters it, since Puseyism is only Popery, in its essential features, transported into England? It is needless that the Thames bear to Rome the tribute of its waters; the Tiber flows in Oxford. And yet England owes her all to the Reformation. What was her condition before the revival of her Church? Servilely subjected to the Tudors, she had nothing, ecclesiastically or politically, but effete forms without spirit or vitality; so that, exposed to destructive elements, it was true of England as of nearly the whole of Europe, in the words of a Christian statesman,† that "Despotism seemed the only protection against dissolution." It was the Reformation that so wonderfully developed that Christian spirit, that liberty, that fear of God, that firm loyalty, that patriotism, those generous sacrifices, that genius, those energies, that activity, to which England owes her prosperity and her glory. At the era of the Reformation, Catholic Spain, glutted with the blood of the children of God, fell, overthrown by

* Charge, 1841.

† Archives de la Maison d'Orange Nassau, publiés a la Hage; par M. Groen Van Prinsterer, Conseiller d'Etat.

the arm of the Eternal; and Reformed England was seated in her stead, on the throne of the seas, which has been well called the throne of the world. The tempest which overwhelmed the Armada, brought up from the deep this new empire. The country of Philip the Second, stricken to the heart because she had stricken the people of the Lord, let fall from her hands the sceptre of Ocean; and the country of Elizabeth, nerved by the Word of God, found it floating on the waves, snatched it, and bore it off,—summoned to use it in bringing the nations of earth into subjection to the King of heaven. It is the Gospel which has given to England the soil of our antipodes.* All that she has, the God of the Gospel has given her. And if in these far-famed isles, the Gospel shall give way under the blows which an united Romanism and Puseyism are now inflicting, then must be written on her long triumphant banner this inscription,—“*Ichabod, Ichabod*,—the glory of the Lord is departed.”

God has given the empire of the seas to nations who bear with them to every clime the Gospel of his Son. But if, in place of these glad tidings of salvation, it is another religion—human and priestly—that she carries to the heathen, God will withdraw from England the dominion he has given her. The evil is already great. Already are the Puseyite missionaries in India satisfied to teach the natives the observance of the external rites of Christianity, without giving themselves any anxiety that there be spiritual conversion,—thus following the Romish fashion. Already are they setting themselves in antagonism to the Evangelical missionaries, and troubling the weak consciences of the natives, saying, That those are no ministers who have not received Episcopal ordination.

Let England be unfaithful to the Gospel, and God will humble her in those isles where she has set her throne, and in those distant lands to which her empire extends. Is there not already a hollow murmur which justifies these sad forebodings? The mother-country sees her difficulties thicken;—unheard-of disasters fill with dismay the banks of the Indus;—the state chariot of this people is crashing, and its wheels are locked, because guilty hands are eagerly striving to shift its axles.† When England shall abandon the faith of the Bible, that instant shall the crown fall from her head. Ah! we too, the Christians of the Continent and of the whole world, shall clothe us in mourning, if this empire be brought low. We love her for the sake of Christ Jesus—for his sake we pray for her; but, if the apostasy already begun shall work itself out, we shall have nothing left for her but wailing, and sighs, and tears.

What are the Bishops doing? What is the Church doing? This is the universal inquiry. If the Church of England were rightly organized, she would place in her offices teachers who are subject to the Word of God, in conformity with the Thirty-Nine Articles; and she would bring down from them those who violate her laws, poison her youth, trouble the souls of her people, and who would subvert the Gospel of Jesus Christ. A few Bishops' Charges are not enough. We believe, undoubtedly, that no power can take from the Christian the right he has to “search the Scriptures,” and to “try the spirits whether they be of God.” But we do not believe in the omnipotence of ministers; we believe not that the servants of a Church may proclaim in it doctrines which subvert it. Did it

* New Zealand.

† [s'efforcent d'en changer la cheville ouvrière.]

not seem good to "the Apostles and Elders, with the whole Church," to put to silence those at Antioch, who would substitute, as now at Oxford, the ordinances of man for the grace of Christ? (Acts xv. 22.) Since what time is it that a well-constituted Church lets nothing be heard from her but isolated voices? Shall the annual convocations of England's Church continue for ever a vain usage and an unmeaning ceremony? If its nature cannot be changed, must not extraordinary evils be met by extraordinary remedies? Will there not be a movement of the Church in England, as in early times in Jerusalem? Will not the elders and "the whole Church" compose a council which, as was done in other days (if a story of it be credible) by the Nicene, will display the Word of God on an exalted throne, in token that to it alone does authority belong, and condemning and suppressing these fatal errors, yield to Jesus Christ and his Word that sovereign authority of which usurping hands are on the point of robbing it?

If the Church shall still keep silence—if she shall suffer that, in her universities, her holiest foundations be subverted—then (we say it with the liveliest grief) shall a voice, like that of the prophet, be lifted up, and cry, "Woe to the Church! Woe to the nation! Woe to England!"

There are two ways of destroying Christianity,—one of these is to deny it; the other is to displace it. To put the Church above Christianity—the priesthood above the Word of God,—to ask a man, not whether he has received the Holy Spirit, but whether he has received baptism at the hands of the so-called successors of the Apostles, and their delegates,—all this, doubtless, flatters the pride and lust of power in man's nature; but is radically opposed to the Bible, and deals a deadly blow to the religion of Jesus Christ. Had it been God's will that Christianity should be, mainly, an ecclesiastical, priestly, hierarchic system, as was the Mosaic, He would have organized and regulated it in the New Testament, as He did the other in the Old. But there is nothing analogous in the New Covenant. All the declarations of the Lord and of his Apostles are designed to teach us, that the new religion given to the world is essentially *spirit and life*, and not a new system of priesthood and ordinances. "The kingdom of God," says Jesus, "cometh not with observation: neither shall it be said, Lo! here; or, Lo! there; for the kingdom of God is within you."—(Luke xvii. 20, 21.) "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

We ascribe, then, a divine origin and a divine authority to the essence of the Church, but never to its *form*. There is, undoubtedly, a ministry of the Word, and there are sacraments; that is, there are general forms appointed by God for the Church universal; but to put the *precise* forms to which each section belongs above the Christian element, is a narrow bigotry, inevitably followed by death. This evil has been long dominant in the Eastern Church, and has made it barren. It is the very essence of the Church of Rome, and has been its ruin. It has a tendency to find its way into every Church. England shows it in Anglicanism; Germany, in Lutheranism; and it may be seen, too, in the Reformed Presbyterian Church. This is that mystery of iniquity which was already beginning to appear in the apostle's time. (2 Thess. ii. 7.)

Let us reject and resist this principle of death wherever it is found.

Our character as men has precedence of our character as Swiss, or French, or English, or German ; let us recollect, too, that our character as Christians takes precedence of our character as Anglicans, or Lutherans, or Presbyterians, or Dissenters. These different forms of the Church are like the various costumes, the various figures, and most of all, the various characters of nations. The essence of man consists not in all these. It consists in that throbbing heart,—that conscience which there sits as judge, that glowing intelligence, that creative will. If the Church be put above Christianity, the form above the life, what was sown will infallibly be gathered, and there will soon be, for a Church, a company of robed skeletons ; splendid, perhaps,—arranged, I allow, in admirable order,—imposing to the flesh,—but frozen and motionless, like a legion of pale corpses. Should Puseyism (and, unhappily, some of the doctrines it proclaims are not, in England, confined to this school),—should Puseyism gain ground in the English Church, in a few years it will have dried up all the sources of her life. The feverish excitement which has caused the disease will soon give place to languor,—the blood will congeal, the muscles will stiffen, and that Church be nothing but a dead body,—a prey to the eagles, which will be gathered to batten on it. The value and authority of all forms, whether Papal, Patriarchal, Consistorial, or Presbyterian, is only human. Let us not count the bark more vital than the sap ; let us not set the body above the soul,—the form above the life,—the visible Church above the invisible,—the priest above the Holy Ghost. Let us hate every sectarian spirit, Ecclesiastic, Established or Dissenting ; but let us love Jesus Christ in every sect, Ecclesiastic, Established or Dissenting. The true catholicity which we have lost, and which we must recover, is love in the truth. A restoration of the Church is necessary,—I know it, I confess it, I pray for it from the bottom of my heart ; only let us seek it where it is to be found. The form, the ecclesiastical constitution, the organization of the society, have their importance, and that importance is great ; but let us “ Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto us.”—(Matt. vi. 33.)

Let us, then, be decided and stedfast in the truth ; and even while we love those who go astray, let us advance boldly against error. Let us plant our feet on the everlasting Rock of Ages, the Word of God, and allow all these vain notions, all these foolish innovations, which continually are born and die in the world, to throw themselves, in wild tumult, into the abyss below.

“ Two schemes of doctrine,” says Dr Pusey, “ the Genevan and the Catholic, are probably for the last time, struggling within our Church.” We accept the definition. One of those who most resolutely oppose these errors, Mr Goode, seems to understand, that by the “ Genevan system,” Dr Pusey would signify that system—Unitarian, Pelagian, Latitudinarian,—sad fruit of the eighteenth century, which has desolated the Church, not only in Geneva, but in nearly the whole of Christendom. “ According to the well known Romish tactics,” writes Mr Goode, “ the opponents of the Tractators are all classed together under that name, which, it is believed, will bring upon them the greatest odium ; they belong, it is said, to the Genevan school.”*

* “ The Case as it is.”

And if, indeed, it were the Unitarian school of Geneva and England, which had to struggle with the semi-popish school of Oxford, there would be good cause to fear the issue. But these divines will, in England, in Scotland, in Ireland, over all the continent, and, if necessary, even in our humble little Geneva, meet with far other adversaries. Yes! let it be so, it is the Catholic system, and the system of Geneva, which are now fighting for the mastery; but it is the system of old Geneva,—the system of Calvin and Beza,—the system of the Reformation, and of the Gospel. What they have tried to affix on us as a stigma, we accept as an honour. Three centuries ago Geneva rose up against Rome; let Geneva now rise up against Oxford. “I would,” says one of these divines,* “see the Patriarch of Constantinople, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, go bare-foot to Rome, throw themselves on the neck of the Pope, kiss him, and not let him go until they should have persuaded him to be reasonable,” that is, doubtless, till he should have ceased to proclaim them heretics and schismatics, and should stretch out to them the hand of reconciliation.

Evangelical Christians of Geneva, of England, and of the world! it is a far other pilgrimage that you have to make; it is not to Rome that you have to journey, “to those seven mountains on which is seated the woman clothed in purple and scarlet, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations” (Rev. xvii.), but it is to that “excellent and perfect tabernacle not made with hands” (Heb. ix.), to that throne of grace, where is to be obtained “grace to help in every time of need.”—(Heb. iv.)

It is not on the neck of the Man of Sin that you have to throw yourselves, covering it with kisses and tears; but it is on the neck of that Man of Righteousness, “with whom Jacob wrestled before the breaking of the day” (Gen. xxxii.); of Him “who is seated on the right hand of God in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.”—(Eph. i.)

Oh that the children of God from East to West would arouse themselves, that, reading aright the signs of the times, and foreseeing that, on the issue of the present struggles—so manifold, so various, so earnest—does the destiny of the Church indeed depend, they would form a true brotherhood, a holy and mighty Catholicity, and would cry out with one heart and one soul, like Moses in the desert, at the setting forward of the ark, “Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered, and let them that hate thee flee before thee!”

* “Aids to Reflection,” by Mr Palmer, 1841. This work relates some curious conversations which the author had in 1836 with some of the Professors and ministers of Geneva. *July 26.*—“The public Professor of Dogmatic Theology told me, when I asked what was the precise doctrine of the Company of pastors at that time on the subject of the Trinity, ‘Perhaps no two had exactly the same shade of opinion; that the great majority would deny the doctrine in the scholastic sense.’ *August 4.*—A pastor of the Company told me, that, of thirty-four members, he thinks there are only four who would admit the doctrine of the Trinity.” The author is about as little pleased with the Evangelical as with the Unitarian ministers. He relates that one of the first said to him, on *August 12*, “You are lost in the study of outward forms, mere worldly vanities; *you are a baby, a mere baby*, he said, in English.”

