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Presented
to Charlotte Hamm Smith
by her affectionate Husband
Rev. Isaac Smith.
Jan. 1st 1842.

THE COMPREHENSIVE CHURCH.

"O GOD, THE CREATOR AND PRESERVER OF ALL MANKIND, MORE ESPECIALLY WE PRAY FOR THY HOLY CHURCH UNIVERSAL; THAT IT MAY BE SO GUIDED AND GOVERNED BY THY GOOD SPIRIT, THAT ALL, WHO PROFESS AND CALL THEMSELVES CHRISTIANS, MAY BE LED INTO THE WAY OF TRUTH, AND HOLD THE FAITH IN UNITY OF SPIRIT, IN THE BOND OF PEACE, AND IN RIGHTEOUSNESS OF LIFE. AND THIS WE BEG FOR JESUS CHRIST'S SAKE. AMEN."

Book of Common Prayer;
Daily Morning and Evening Collect.

THE

COMPREHENSIVE CHURCH:

OR

CHRISTIAN UNITY

AND

ECCLESIASTICAL UNION.

BY THE REV. THOMAS H. VAIL, A. M.

"There is one Body." Ephesians iv: 4.

"Sola igitur catholica ecclesia est, quæ verum cultum retinet. Hic est fons veritatis, hoc domicilium fidei, hoc templum Dei. . . . Neminem sibi oportet pertinaci concertatione blandiri; agitur enim de vita et salute. . . . Sed tamen, singuli quique cœtus se potissimum Christianos, et suam esse catholicam ecclesiam putant."

Lactantius. Inst. Div. L. iv. ad fin.

HARTFORD.

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THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY.

PREFACE.

Much has been said and published, of late years, on the subject of Christian Union—not enough to accomplish it, but enough to shew that the minds of Christians are open to the inconveniences and dangers of sectarian divisions, and that their hearts are longing for some closer and happier communion than is allowed by the present divided state of the Christian Church. The many proofs presented daily, that Christians desire to be united, are encouraging to our hopes, while, at the same time, there is discouragement in the fact, that the public mind seems to have settled down despondingly under the impression, that no feasible plan can be proposed for the accomplishment of its desire.

The writer thinks, that a capital mistake has been committed in the course of enquiry which has been generally pursued on this subject. He thinks, that instead of endeavoring to strike out an entirely new system of ecclesiastical unity, the proper and only feasible course is to select, for the purpose of uniting within it, some system already established, and which realizes most nearly the idea of a Compre-

hensive Church, and if it be not in every respect perfect, to improve it, if it will allow improvement, into perfection. It may be, there is such a system amongst us—a system, whose structure is capable of any modification, and in whose organization are instrumentalities by which it may be shaped into any form which the majority of the Christians in our country may desire. We believe there is such a system amongst us.

The writer, as will be perceived, is a Protestant Episcopalian, and the prayer of his heart is: "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." Yet he believes, that, in our day, there is a very manifest and sad departure from scriptural unity, and that it is the duty of those who "love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," to return, if possible, to a consistency with the scriptural precepts. We all realize the dissensions of Christ's Church, and suffer from them. If we can, let us remedy them.

After an examination of the ecclesiastical systems of various denominations, and a careful investigation of the theory of his own Church, with a particular reference to the practicability of Christian and ecclesiastical unity, the writer ventures to suggest the remedy alluded to. He does so with a confidence in the sympathies of his Christian brethren; for they will approve his design. There ought to be more confidence between the members of the Lord's family, more of mutual and unreserved

enquiry on the mode of effecting unity. The large deliberative bodies, which represent the intellectual and moral strength of the different denominations, ought to confer, and to correspond with each other on this subject, which respects certainly one of the most important present duties of the Church. The writer would be glad to see the highest Conventions of his own Church exhibiting first this example of Christian confidence, and even addressing memorials on the subject to the members and the representative assemblies of other denominations.

It has been the lot of the writer to mingle much with intelligent Christians of different and opposing names, and from his intercourse with them, as well as with the members of his own Church, he believes there is a prevailing misconception of the principles of unity, and that, if the principle herein advanced shall be generally understood, there will be a great progress towards a United Church. The common conception is too contracted. If he is not very much mistaken, the principles herein exhibited are familiar to comparatively few, and will to most minds suggest a train of reflections altogether unusual.

It had been well, if the writer could have backed his reasonings by the influence of some personal authority or reputation. But, if he lacks that advantage, his reasonings will have a fairer opportunity to test their force. He comes as a Christian man to communicate to his brethren something for

their mutual benefit, something which, he hopes, they will cordially and frankly receive. He commends this outline of thought to the patient and matured examination of the Christian public, and he will be glad, if some abler hand shall fill it up more elaborately. He can say, with good Bishop Burnet, in the preface to his "Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles," although he applies to himself with diffidence the language of so distinguished a man: "I had no other design in this work, but first to find out the truth myself, and then to help others to find it out. If I succeed to any degree in this design, I will bless God for it; and if I fail in it, I will bear it with the humility and patience that becomes me. But as soon as I see a better work of this kind, I shall be among the first of those who shall recommend that, and disparage this."

A few words are due to his Episcopalian brethren particularly. Ever since he has been in the discharge of his calling, both as a missionary and as a parochial minister, he has felt almost daily the need of some such book as this. He has been sometimes greatly surprised at the extreme misapprehensions prevalent in the community with regard to the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, when the means of better knowledge have so long been spread before the public. His familiarity with these misapprehensions has blunted the sense of surprize, while it has nourished a sense of continual regret and sadness. He has hoped to find his want

supplied, and has finally undertaken the task for himself, since the need is great, and it is hard to wait patiently for an uncertainty.

There is, besides the members of the community at large, a class, and a numerous one—that of theological students, or candidates for orders—who might, as the writer's former observation and personal experience has demonstrated, be much benefitted by some such work as this. It is required, indeed, by a general canon, that "the last examination" of every candidate, prior to his ordination as deacon, must be "on Church history, ecclesiastical polity, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Constitution and Canons of the Church, and of the diocese for which he is to be ordained." Now, on Church history, ecclesiastical polity, and the Book of Common Prayer, especially the two former, the student may be very well informed, and his examination satisfactory. But on the Constitution and Canons of the Church, his information is ordinarily slight, and his examination (if attended to) unsatisfactory, for this good reason, that he cannot study them except at disadvantage, because they are no where so arranged that he can associate them with the system of principles which they illustrate. Hence it is true, that most of our candidates for orders, even at their first ordinations, although they may be excellent scholars in the Scriptural, and what we may call the historical doctrines of their Church, do not have clear and accurate and defen-

sible views of their Church, *as it is--as a practical and working system in the present day and in our own country.* A treatise, like this volume, and especially its sixth chapter, might be a useful manual to the class of students referred to, and a convenient aid to those who have the charge of their education in the department of ecclesiastical studies.

Many excellent books have been written on many points in the system of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and illustrative of its peculiar doctrines and customs, with very great profit. But, after all, there is no work, which, in a plain, didactic style, developes the system of the Protestant Episcopal Church as it is, which shows out the whole Church as an existing and operating system. There is no work which illustrates distinctly the comprehensiveness of the Protestant Episcopal Church, with regard to its adaptation to the purposes of Christian and Ecclesiastical Unity. These blanks the writer has endeavored to fill; or rather, he has endeavored to exemplify, by short precedents, how these blanks may be filled. It is his impression, that a book, upon a plan similar to this, and better executed, might be useful in all our parishes, and might be very generally circulated with much advantage, not only to the Protestant Episcopal Church, but also to the great object of Christian and Ecclesiastical Unity, which all true disciples of our Lord have so much at heart.

It is necessary to take this practical view of our

subject, because, after all, it is the most important. In the history and institutions of a Church, whose track has marked the course of nearly two thousand years, there must be much to deeply interest the student; and such an one, in proportion as he enlarges his acquisitions, will learn more and more of the minute causes of those institutions, and their connexion with the history of man, and the gradual development of the philosophy of the human mind. But the man of every-day life has often not the time nor the taste for such investigations. Besides, all his habits are practical, and concerned with his common and pressing interests; and the question from him is: *What is the system?* He cares not for its history nor for its remote causes. He wants to know only this—that the system is now practical, that it will work well for him, that it does now suit his wishes and wants. Bishop Brownell, in the course of a recent address delivered by him to the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of Connecticut, (holden in June, 1840,) has well expressed this prevailing sentiment, when he says, (and the emphasis is his own): "We love the Church *as it is*,"—we love it as a practical system, working in and for our own day, working by and for ourselves. It is this view, practical and the most important to us, which we would present to our readers.

The writer anticipates the possibility, that in some things he may not please all his brethren; he

may not express precisely the sentiments of all. Some are for keeping their Church aloof and disunited from all others, and will have it, that there are in it no points of natural contact with other denominations. Some, of an opposite habit of mind, are for assimilating their Church as far as possible with one or another particular denomination which commands their sympathies. While others still have selected some particular denomination against which it is their hobby to oppose their Church. Now all these are more or less sectarian in their spirit. Certainly, they have no just perceptions of the comprehensiveness of their Church. We commend to them all our subject.

Of one thing the writer is assured—he has asserted no facts which he does not prove; he has advanced no principle, which is not simple, and well-nigh demonstrable.

Finally, he accommodates, with humility, to this place, the closing words of the preface of the Book of Common Prayer, which he prefers to the reader as expressive of his own hopes: "And now this work being brought to a conclusion, it is hoped the whole will be received and examined by every true member of our Church, and every sincere Christian, with a meek, candid, and charitable frame of mind; without prejudice or prepossession; seriously considering what Christianity is, and what the truths of the Gospel are; and earnestly beseeching Almighty God to accompany with his blessing

every endeavor for promulgating them to mankind in the clearest, plainest, most affecting and majestic manner, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our blessed Lord and Saviour."

Note. The only errata affecting the sense, which have been noticed, are on pages 30, 32, and 33, where, in several places, the reader is requested, instead of *Van Dyck*, to read *Van Dyck*, and on page 60, in the *sixteenth* line from the top, instead of *paternal*, to read *fraternal*.

"ALMIGHTY AND EVER-LIVING GOD, WE BESEECH THEE TO INSPIRE CONTINUALLY THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH WITH THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH, UNITY, AND CONCORD: AND GRANT THAT ALL THOSE, WHO DO CONFESS THY HOLY NAME, MAY AGREE IN THE TRUTH OF THY HOLY WORD, AND LIVE IN UNITY AND GODLY LOVE. GRANT THIS, O FATHER, FOR JESUS CHRIST'S SAKE OUR ONLY MEDIATOR AND ADVOCATE. AMEN."

Book of Common Prayer.

Prayer in the Order for the Holy Communion.

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CHRISTIAN UNITY

AND

ECCLESIASTICAL UNION.

"I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH;
I BELIEVE IN THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS."

Book of Common Prayer.

The Apostles' Creed.

THE

COMPREHENSIVE CHURCH.

CHAPTER I.

No Christian union without ecclesiastical unity—a Comprehensive Church apparently impracticable—desired by all—one to be proposed in this volume—principles of unity in the apostolical and primitive Church—Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches all consolidated, not comprehensive—ought to return to primitive principles—a bad habit of the public mind—the true idea of a Church.

THE little work here addressed to the Christian public, proposes a plan of union to the various denominations of Christians in our country. The writer is convinced that Christian union can never be effected except upon some plan of ecclesiastical unity—some system of a Church broad enough to allow all sincere and humble-hearted disciples of our Lord to unite upon it, a comprehensive system, which shall combine naturally and harmoniously the chief peculiarities of the various denominations in our land.

At first sight, it seems impossible, that a model of a Church can be proposed, which shall bring together into one the systems which now conflict—the very "distinctive peculiarities" which have hitherto separated sects. If however a model like this referred to

can be found, it will commend itself, of course, to the consideration and approval of all Christian people; for we are fain to believe, none are desirous to perpetuate the unhappy dissensions of the religious community, and all would be glad to further any plan which warrants a reasonable expectation of unity. Such a model will, in due time, be proposed in this volume.

The grand principles upon which the apostolical and primitive Church was organized, seem to have been all embodied in that familiar but noble maxim: "In necessariis unitas; in non necessariis libertas; in omnibus caritas—unity in essentials; liberty in non-essentials; love in every thing." As far as we can learn from the history of the New Testament, and from the topics discussed in the writings of the earliest fathers, and from the few historical records of the first centuries, this maxim appears to have been very fully and beautifully illustrated.

But the desire of power so natural to man, began directly to manifest itself, and the principles embodied in that maxim were soon departed from, and the long history of the Christian Church, from a very early period, has proved the folly and the danger of leaving the true principles of its organization. From that period to the present, there has been a valuable lesson taught to them who will receive it. Would that the lesson may be profitably learned! It is, that there must be a unity in the Christian Church, and this must be unity in essentials; and that to attempt to go beyond this and accomplish unity in non-essentials, is inevitably to destroy the purity and the glory of the Church, and to introduce the most lamentable evils.

The lesson has been exemplified most clearly, although differently in the two great epochs of ecclesiastical history—that which preceded the Protestant Reformation, and that which has followed the Reformation, it has been exemplified first in the history of the Roman Catholic Church, and next in that of Protestant Christendom, as we will briefly elucidate.

It is evidently a scriptural truth, that the Church must be "one body," both in respect of its external unity, and of its internal unity; and this truth has been acknowledged as a practical and necessary principle, by Christians of every name and in every age, the present as well as the past. But the fault, in the case of Protestants and Roman Catholics, alike, has been, that their idea of unity has been erroneous and excessive; that they all have aimed at too much unity; that in their conceptions they have substituted consolidation for unity; and instead of striving to form simply an united Church, that they have been continually striving to make a consolidated Church. Thus if the mind of Christendom had always adhered to its first principles, and had never forgotten that, in order to have 'unity in essentials,' there must always be allowed 'liberty in non-essentials,' the monstrous and long continued scheme connected with the Papacy, would never have been originated, or if it had been possibly originated, it could never have been consummated. The whole scheme of the Roman Catholic Church was a legitimate creation, a gradual result, of the false conception of unity. The Roman Catholic Church was not an united, but a consolidated Church. So, too, if Protestants (at least in the second genera-

tion after the reformation) had gone back to primitive principles, and had never persisted in their attempts, each to compel the others into an exact agreement with itself, upon points not indispensable to the great end of the Church—the preservation and extension of gospel truth, and the conforming of Christ's disciples to his image—there never would have been the divisions which have sullied the lustre of Protestantism. The countless and conflicting sects of an age in other respects free, are the immediate products of the same false conception of unity. Each sect is not an united, but a consolidated Church.

Is it too late to return to first principles? Is there no wisdom in the history of the past, which we may apply to the benefit of the present age? Ought not the effort at consolidating the Church to be immediately and forever abandoned, when the experience of of ten centuries of Papal supremacy, and that of three centuries of Protestant dissension have given their common and conclusive testimony, that the effort is not only abortive, but ruinous? Cannot the Church once more have true unity, and, in its future experience, be ever warned to its safety by the two fold teachings of the past?

In the view of the writer there is a fundamental difficulty, which, it would seem, needs only to be exposed in order to be removed; and it is, that the idea of a Comprehensive Church, is, in our day, a new idea. We have been so much in the habit of looking at Churches through the medium of sectarian prepossessions, that the idea seems complicate and difficult of apprehension. The habit of the whole communi-

ty, through the influences of sectarian education, is invariably to associate contractedness with the mention of a Church, to suppose that there can be no such thing as an ecclesiastical organization, except it be exclusive and arbitrary. This is a bad habit; and it is not one of the least evils of sectarism, that it has wrought such a mistake upon the public mind. We wish our readers to lift themselves above this habit, to form in their minds clearly the thought that there can be a Comprehensive Church.

What is a Church? It is an association of all the true disciples of Christ, acknowledging His gospel for their rule of faith and practice, of every variety of personal opinion and talent and temperament and condition. To our mind the very name of a Church suggests the most comprehensive idea. But the habit of the great community is different, and we lament the fact. The object of a Church is the continuing and extending of the worship and service of God, according to the Gospel; and when this, the only object of an ecclesiastical system is effected, all other things should be left in the liberty of nature. A Church founded upon these principles, is the only one, we confess, which commends itself to our sympathies; and we cannot acknowledge one which rests upon a narrower foundation, as illustrating the true idea of a Christian Church. We believe there is truth as well as beauty in the pious philosophy (partially quoted on our title page) of the eloquent Lactantius, where he writes: "The only Catholic or universal Church is that which retains the true cultus. This is the foun-

tain of truth, this is the home of faith, this is the temple of God.

But since there are many associations of separatists who all think that themselves are especially Christians, and each of whom thinks that his own is the Catholic Church, let it be known, that only that is the true Church, in which are confession and penitence, and which is able to cure the manifold sins and sufferings to which the imbecility of the flesh is subject."

One mark of a true Church must always be its comprehensiveness; and for this characteristic, which qualifies it for the accomplishment of Christian unity, we love the ecclesiastical system to which the patient attention of the reader will be presently solicited.

CHAPTER II.

The Church described in the New Testament as one—proved by Ephesians 4: 4,—notice of Van Dyek's "Christian Union."

It is proper to remind the reader, in the very beginning of our reasonings, that there is but one Church recognized in the scriptures, and that, in the apostolic age, there was no such person known as a Christian, who was not a member of this one Church; the terms were then synonymous. When at the very first, the doctrines of Christ were preached, and men became converts to his faith, we learn, that "the Lord added

to *the Church* daily such as should be saved," (Acts 2: 47,) and, at the close of his long and laborious life, St. Paul writes to the Christian believers : "We are *all* baptized into *one body*," (1 Cor., 12: 13,) and he tells us, in many passages of his epistles, that "*the Church is the body of Christ*," (Eph., 1: 23. Coloss., 1: 24. 1 Cor., 12: 27.)

To dwell upon only a single passage, which is decisive, and is enough, as the word of God, to compel our assent, we refer to that which is our motto : "*There is one body.*" (Eph. 4: 4.) St. Paul was exhorting the Ephesian disciples to Christian unity : "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you, that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." This exhortation he enforces by several powerful considerations : "there is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling ; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." There are no less than seven reasons, supposed to be familiar and admitted, for the enforcement of Christian unity. At the head of these stands our motto, "*there is one body.*"

There was then, but one Church recognized by these Ephesian disciples, and in this fact was a constraining motive to unity. The phrase "*one body*," has reference to the external organization of the Church, its outward union and discipline; for the word "*body*" is never employed in reference to any

internal emotion or affection; and besides, it is followed by the assertion: "there is one spirit," as a separate and independent idea. For still another reason it cannot mean "one body" *in respect of affection*, because the fact of there being "one body" is adduced for the very purpose of recommending an unity of affection, and there would be no argument at all, if the apostle is supposed to say: "Be ye all united in affection, because ye are all united in affection." St. Paul was never so weak, so inconsistent, as this. The phrase refers to the external unity of the Church, and thus the argument has great force: "There is one body, that is, one Church—Christ intends to have only one body, and his disciples must therefore keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, and not divide or rend the one body by dissensions, and thus thwart the purpose of Him who is the one Head over all things to this Church which is the body." Thus this passage is unanswerable evidence that in the inspiration of St. Paul there is not, and ought not to be, but one outward visible Church.*

* The writer has supposed that the principle maintained in this chapter will be generally acknowledged; and accordingly, although the principle is fundamental, he has deemed it unnecessary to occupy any considerable space, in the body of his treatise, with its further elucidation. If any of his readers are desirous to test the principle farther, or have doubts as to its propriety, they are requested to peruse an elaborate and demonstrative argument upon it, in the appendix, No. A. The extract is from an interesting and valuable work on "Christian Union," by the late Abraham Van Dyek, counsellor at law, of Coxsackie, New York.

It seems to us, that the work here alluded to, has never elicited that attention from the Christian public which its high merit demands. We would call attention to it and recommend its perusal. The writer is not informed as to the denomination with which Mr. Van Dyek was connected. He is represented, in a brief "sketch of his life" prefixed to his volume, as "decidedly what is commonly called a Calvinist, though he was by no means bigoted—he was eminently a Bible Christian." He seems to have been a devoted friend of Christ and the Church; and the remark that "he was emi-

Reminding the reader, that the sacred scriptures recognize but one Comprehensive Church, and that what the inspired apostles and founders of the Church maintained as great principles of duty, have lost none of their force, by the lapse of time or by the prevalence of discords (for "heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word" says the Lord, "shall not pass away,") we invite him still to accompany us in the further course of our reflections.

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nently a Bible Christian" is fully proved by his volume. The leading principles maintained in his volume are purely Catholic, and are established unanswerably.

Perhaps the reason why his work has not been more effective, is a defect in its plan, which is stated and accounted for in the following passages— (pp. 198, 203:) "as has been already intimated, we have not enumerated all the means which we believe adapted to accomplish the reunion of the friends of Christ. We have specified what may rather be called the incipient measures to prepare the minds of Christians to adopt those of a more decisive and effective character, bearing more directly upon the final result. Possibly a form of government may be adopted for the united Church different from any that now exists in any of the denominations. The time surely has not now come, to attempt to settle this and the matter of rituals." In this view we think he was mistaken. We do not think that any progress can be made towards Christian union except upon the basis of an united Church. We believe that the community is already prepared and waiting for a discussion of the question: what shall be the form or the model of this united Church? And we agree with the lamented author most unhesitatingly, where (at pp. 205—207,) he writes with so much of force and persuasiveness; "The point of duty, we repeat, is exceedingly clear. The state of the Church is wrong. She is divided, but ought to be united. She was one as originally constituted, she will be one in heaven,—and Christians of every denomination believe that she will be one again on earth. Whenever that shall take place, the difficulties in the way of her reunion will have been previously removed, in the providence of God, we admit, but not by the exercise of his miraculous powers. This is not expected by any. The work will have been done by human instrumentality. It must be done by Christians. It is moreover a present duty. How can we allege that we may lie still until the more formidable obstacles are removed, when it is our duty to remove them ourselves without delay, and when we have no authority to command another to remove them for us? Nothing can be gained by postponing the commencement of the work; for the evil is meanwhile increasing, and the difficulties are multiplying. The time to set about the correction of an evil, is when you become sensible of its existence."

CHAPTER III.

Definition of Sectarism—what it is not—what it is—essentially hostile—not realized.

The word of God declares that there is not, and ought not to be, but one Church. We propose to shew that only one Church is necessary; and indeed, that more than this one, or rather that divisions of this one, prevent entirely the fulfilment of the objects of the Church. We propose then to shew, what would otherwise have been appropriate in this place, the principles upon which the one outward and visible body of Christ—the one Comprehensive Church, must be organized.

In the mean time, we wish to illustrate in the present chapter, that which is the opposite of the one Christian Church, to define what is meant by sectarism.

What is sectarism?

It is not diversity of religious opinions. This may co-exist with unity.

It is not diversity of religious customs. This may co-exist with unity.

It is not the association of "elective affinities"—i. e. the intimate communion of persons of similar habits and feelings and characters. This may co-exist with unity.

It is simply a departure from the unity of Christ's

one Church, a forming of a new fellowship of believers separate from the united fellowship of the previously existing body of believers, the establishment of a new model of a Church.

No body of men can be called sectaries in any reprehensible sense, until they have proceeded beyond protestation and even beyond non-communion, to the overt act of constructing a new Church. In this is the essence of sectarism; the rending or dividing of the "one body" of Christ, by the formation of another and (not only separate but in its nature necessarily) opposing ecclesiastical organization.

Sectarism originates in a most gross and grievous misapplication and abuse of the scriptural principle, and the natural desire of unity. It looks for absolute unity, in disregard of the causes which limit the operation of the social principle. It tends to continual separation, to allow the most exact assimilation. It looks for agreement in all things; and when carried out in theory, as it is carried out in fact, it would make each man the single representative of his own sect, whose unity would be an unit.

Contrariety or opposition, hostility, destructiveness towards others, are included in the very nature of sectarism, as may be easily proved. For, there is but "one body." The sect is the model of this one body. The sect is the perfect model; for if any other had been perfect, there had been no occasion for it. All other Churches are defective, unfit to accomplish the legitimate objects of the Church of Christ; so much so, that all the inconveniences and dangers of an universal change are to be encountered in order

to supply the deficiency. All others, being so defective, should be abandoned for the perfect model—should be destroyed.

It may be denied, that hostility, as we have represented it, is implied in the very nature of a sect. It may be said, that sects are not opposed to each other, but exist harmoniously, one being adapted to one class of human opinion and character, and others to other classes. But all this adaptation of circumstances to the varieties of human opinion and personal character may be found in unity; so that for it, sects are not necessary. And why must there be a new ministry, and new sacraments, and a new Church, and new terms of admission into it, and of communion with it? And why may not a man join one, without being obliged to abandon the others? And why may he not be a member, in regular standing, of two or more sects at the same time, as he is of all separate local societies or Churches of his own sect? Because sects have no reciprocal sympathies with each other, although Christians have. Because although Christians desire to love each other, the sects, which hold them captive, are hostile.

This, as we have described it, is sectarism, and these its consequences. Yet we do really believe, that the great majority of the Christian people of our land have never troubled themselves to analyze the matter, and have not realized the consequences implied in their sectarian divisions.

CHAPTER IV.

No necessity of divisions in our day—apology for the Continental Reformers—reply to several alleged advantages of divisions, and objections to unity—the word of God decisive.

THERE is no necessity, either of duty or of circumstances, in our age, and in our country, for sectarian divisions. There is no reason why there should be more than one Comprehensive Church, at this time, in the United States.

We do not intend, in these pages, to dispute the point, whether there ever has been a necessity for divisions in times past; although we are willing to state our opinion, that, if the full scope of the duties of Christian forbearance and of faith in the providence and promises of God be considered, divisions can in no case be excused. But God forbid that we should blame the Continental Reformers! They were Christian heroes and had glorious hearts. They were men who felt that they had a great work to do; and they were willing, for its accomplishment, to "jeopard their lives unto the death." No wonder, if in their agonizing impatience for the triumph of truth and liberty, they did sometimes err. They were men, who, like "the three mighty" of David, were willing to dare thick hosts alone, for the Captain of their salvation; and if, in a single case, like those valiant ones, these purchased a blessing too dearly, we must remember

for their justification, that these also had heard the voice of their Captain saying sorrowfully: "O that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem!"

But granting for the occasion, that in the Reformation there was a necessity, in the instances referred to, for a departure from the unity of the Church (and only on this plea of an absolute and unavoidable necessity did the Continental Reformers excuse their proceedings,) we assert that, in our age and country, there is no sufficient cause nor apology for perpetuating the divisions which are rending the body of Christ. The word of God commands unity, and there can be no possible good to counterbalance the evil of disobedience.

Not to enlarge, however, upon the authority, (one, be it remembered, of tremendous significance, and decisive upon the topic,) it will be in order to allude to the position, that various good effects are incidentally accomplished by the diversities of sects. We can conceive of none which shall warrant the violation of a divine command.

Besides, there is abundant reason to believe, that these incidental advantages of schism, which are so much boasted of, may after all be accomplished to a much greater extent in a state of unity.

Thus, for an illustration, the preservation of the integrity of the scriptures, which, some think, is aided by the opposition and watchful jealousy of sects, might be equally secured by unity; for in a state of sectarian controversy there are multiplied temptations to pervert and corrupt the scriptures. The zealous

sectarian, who should discover some ancient and rare manuscript, might destroy it or change it to suit his purpose—a circumstance which would not be so likely to happen in a state of unity. Indeed biblical scholars, who are familiar with the collation of the various readings of the New Testament manuscripts, know that the chief difficulties in settling the sacred text have been occasioned as often by the corruptions of sectaries as by the emendations of critics, or the negligence of scribes.

Thus, to take another illustration, the zeal which is said to be the product of divisions, is often perverted into extravagance and superstition, and still oftener overmatched by the coldness and scepticism which are another product of the same divisions; while the history of the first three centuries shows that the most active and heroic zeal is perfectly compatible with the unity of the Church.

Thus, too, the tyranny, which is said to be the effect of unity, is much more the effect of divisions. Over our whole country are the mournful proofs. The tendency of sects is to imprison men within the most straitened limits of the most straitened party; while the unity of an universal Church requires that it be based on certain grand and comprehensive principles which shall include all varieties and classes of men, and of course allow necessarily great liberty of conscience and action.

We have not time to consider all the objections which have been made to ecclesiastical unity.* We

* We wish to remind the reader as we pass along, that wherever we have spoken of an united Church or of ecclesiastical unity, we use the terms in

have touched upon the chief of them. We would, however, shut up all objections to it, and comprise all arguments for it, within the broad statement of the word of God: "there is one body."

CHAPTER V.

Evils of Sectarism—it disobeys a divine command—involves the consequences charged upon unity—produces a false idea of the Church—extends and perpetuates error—wastes the energies of the Church—prevents the conversion of the world—is the most efficient obstacle to Christian union.

THE proposition, that there can never be Christian union except upon the basis of ecclesiastical unity, may be best illustrated by a brief statement of some of the evils of sectarism.

The evils of sectarism (it being what we have defined in our third chapter,) are manifold and appalling. We will notice some of the most manifest and indisputable.

It is disobedience (as was shown in our second chapter,) to the command of God.

It involves, (as was seen in our fourth chapter, the last,) the very consequences which have been charged upon a state of unity, corruption, and spiritual cold-

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contradistinction from a consolidated Church, we refer to a Church organized upon the primitive principles alluded to in our first Chapter. The principles upon which the Comprehensive Church must be organized will be stated more distinctly in our sixth chapter.

ness, as well as extravagant notions and habits, and scepticism as well as superstition, and tyranny. We need not repeat nor extend our observations upon these points.

It produces upon the public mind (as was hinted at in our first chapter,) a mistaken and most injurious conception of the nature and design of the Christian Church.

These evils are each of vast magnitude, and might be illustrated even in volumes. But others are to be mentioned.

It extends and perpetuates error; and this naturally and fatally. Differences of opinion, on a thousand matters of philosophy or custom, which in themselves are of no consequence whatsoever, are yet in the minds of narrow or ignorant, or domineering men, made the occasions of new sects. Each sect is put forward as a new model for the Church of Christ, of course, to be perpetual and universal. The very fact of separation, which shuts in the adherents of a doctrine to their own system, and excludes all the natural and tentative influences of extraneous circumstances, upon them, gives an artificial and compulsory durability to the system. So that, even if it be a glaring and dangerous delusion, which, under natural and tentative influences, would have died out in a night, the peculiar point of distinction, on which the sect is founded, is thenceforth perpetuated to the injury of the truth, and the damage of souls. The history of sects demonstrates our assertion. There are the sad and soul-sickening proofs before the eyes of us all.

It wastes the energies of the Church. These might

otherwise be concentrated upon the noble support of religious institutions at home, and the spread of the gospel abroad. Now they are squandered in the maintenance of domestic strifes. If all the Christians of our land were in an united Church, and all the ministers of the various denominations were its ministers, we should then have ministers enough already for all the portions of our land of which many are now so destitute, and we should have scores, perhaps hundreds, left for the heathen. If all the money, which is paid by the various denominations in the support of their domestic clergy and peculiar institutions, were collected into one sum, there would be enough for the liberal support of all those ministers of that united Church, and thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, of dollars left for the heathen. If all the time and talent and personal effort which are expended by the members of the various denominations for objects solely sectarian, were applied directly to the improvement of society, and the moral renovation of the careless and sinful, there would be glorious results, how glorious, God only can reveal.

It not only delays, it irremediably prevents the conversion of the world. The prayer of our Redeemer to the Father, for his members, was, "that they all may be *one*, *that the world may believe* that thou has sent me." And when Christianity is presented to the unbeliever, whether he be a speculative or only a practical unbeliever, and even if he have been educated in a Christian land, as a scheme of divisions and controversies, he is confounded, or excuses himself by the ready reply, "God is not the author of confusion,

but of unity." The heathen, too, believe that in religion, as in all the works of God, there must be a manifest uniformity, and their systems, although filled with corruptions, yet have breadth and singleness, and when Christianity is presented to them under the direction of conflicting sects, can it appear as any thing better than a scheme of disputatious philosophy, or perhaps a weak superstition, more miserable than their own?

It is the most efficient obstacle to Christian union, that is, the union of Christian hearts, affections, sympathies, and efforts. Herein is the deepest, the most insidious, the most far-reaching evil. Hereby it "wounds the Lord Christ in the house of his friends." It is impossible that there ever can be such a thing as a spiritual unity, a confidential sympathy, a free and undoubting and nought-withholding trust, a pure and perfect love, and a healthy and vigorous co-operation, among those who are all contending that their own peculiar points of difference are sufficiently important for the establishment of a new and separate Church; and that the views of others are so defective, as to render their ecclesiastical organizations unworthy of being considered proper Churches—for all this is implied (as was shown in our third chapter,) in the separate existence and organization of every peculiar sect. Every sect, in the very fact of its existence, unchurches every other sect as well as the unity from which it separated; for each sect is the model of the one Church, and the very idea of the Church is universality. It is evident, therefore, from what we know of the philosophy of the mind, the laws which regu-

late the affections of men, and which define absolutely the mode in which those affections shall be developed, and which point with unerring precision to the causes which check the free exercise of human sympathies, it is evident, in other words, from what we know of the moral nature of man, that Christians can never be united in heart and effort, while they hold their ecclesiastical connexion with separate sects, each, certainly in the estimation of its partizans, the only proper model of the universal Church.

And, we ask, does not experience every where in our land confirm the teachings of philosophy? Christians are not united; they are very far from unity. Why? There is no reason under heaven but sect. There is no reason why the Christians in my township and neighborhood, and in your township and neighborhood, my Christian brother, are not now united, except sect. We are all prepared for union, and longing for it, and we are only waiting for the demolition of these artificial and cruel barriers of merely human, not to say diabolical, erection. How long shall we sit down in sadness by the strange waters of our captivity, and hang the harps of Zion upon its willows, and sigh for "the peace of Jerusalem"—that city which is "at unity in itself?" O, that scattered Israel would return in bands once more to the quiet home of their fathers, bringing with them the riches of wisdom which have been gathered in their wanderings; and rebuild and beautify the one temple; and realize again the fulfilment of prophecy: "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts;

and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of Hosts!"

Philosophers are looking for a millenium of knowledge and social happiness, and Christians connect with it, in their anticipations, a millenium of holiness. But one thing is sure, that there never can be a millenium of holiness, a glorious spiritual reign of the Lord Jesus, while sectarism continues. Christians of pure hearts, who strive to live at unity, if such there be, are already prepared for that millenium, and all who bear the name of Christ, might now be enjoying its blessedness, if it were not for their divisions. While they continue divided, they cannot have perfect confidence in each other, which is necessary to perfect love. If the most pious out of all the denominations should be thrown together, however much they might respect the religious principle of each other, and desire to be unreservedly affectionate towards each other, still there would be the thought in each mind, that the denominational interests of his brethren were entirely opposed to his own; that his brethren regarded him as in a great error; that he himself regarded them as in an equally great error; that each was practically intolerant, demanding the entire submission of the others to his own terms; that as sectarians, (or members of different Churches, each the model of the one Church, and therefore unchurching the others,) they could not have fellowship with each other, or even consistently say so much as "God speed," to each other; and this thought of their separation, the distance between them, the contrariety of their ecclesiastical systems to which each was consci-

entiously attached, and whose extension he was seeking and loving and praying for—this thought, I say, would come and pass smooth and cold, like a flake of ice, between their hearts, and prevent their assimilation into one brotherhood. While their religious interests are in such important respects hostile, Christians cannot be all, in the highest sense, brethren. So that, if the gospel banner were hung out upon every sky, and every man and woman and child on the face of the earth, acknowledged the truth of the Bible, and the claims of Christ, just as the very best of Christians now do, and all were communicants, trained and professing, yet in a diversity of sects, as Christians now are, after all, there would be no millenium forever; for there could be no Christian union, and without that there can be no glorious reign of our Redeemer.

We can conceive of a class of readers in our large cities, who will not appreciate the *full* force of these last remarks. We grant, that in our large and growing cities, the most repulsive features of sectarism are not fully developed. There great masses of population are collected. As fast as churches are built and congregations formed, men are found to fill and to sustain them. Denominational interests do not conflict, and rivalry is not selfish and deceitful and mean and wicked. But when all the varieties of the vast metropolis are transferred to a country district, which is barely able to support one church, the state of things is changed. Our distinction is manifest; we need not dilate upon it. Our own observation and experience have discovered more of actual evil than

we should presume to declare, if we were only theorizing. Now the world is made up of the country. Large cities are but small spots scattered occasionally upon its surface. And we want a Christian union which is practicable for the whole world.

We have dwelt longer upon the concluding proposition in the present chapter because it is more immediately connected with the direct course of our reasonings. We wish to present distinctly to the mind of the reader what is so manifest to our own, the principle—that Christian union can never be effected except upon the basis of ecclesiastical unity.

CHAPTER VI.

There must be a Comprehensive Church—its fundamental principles—determined by the nature and objects of the Church—Universality and unity—liberty and law—compromise and conformity—contrast between the Comprehensive Church and sectarism.

THERE must, we have concluded, be one Comprehensive Church, in which all Christian people may be united, and Christian union be realized. On what fundamental principles shall it be organized?

These principles must be determined by the nature and objects of a Church. The Church is the body of Christ, to be filled with His dispositions, and to be guided and governed by His Spirit. It is the representative of Christ on earth. It is to receive and deal with men, precisely as the Lord Jesus himself would

do, if he were on earth. It must welcome to its bosom, all who are willing to be taught of Jesus, and to bear His cross, all who have come to him and acknowledge Him as the master. It is to demean itself towards men with all the gentleness and forbearance, with all the persuasiveness and love, which distinguished its Head, while He was upon the earth. It must forgive the penitent, and discriminate sincerity, and put up with human ignorance and infirmity, just as He did. It must never repel any whom Christ would not have repelled. It must even tolerate prejudices and error, if they be harmless, or not essentially in the way of human holiness and salvation.* Such a Church need not be divided; for its work is simple, and its rule of duty is broad—its work is the propagation of the truth of Christ, and its rule of duty is the example of Christ.

There are two characteristics, to be somewhat more minute, which must always appertain to the body, which illustrates the true idea of the Church. The one is universality; that is, the Church must be so constituted, that it may take in, on equal terms, and the easiest terms possible in the case, all true disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. The other principle is unity; because being free to all disciples of Christ, it excludes none, and leaves no necessity nor

* As illustrations of this duty of the Church even to bear with error if it be not essentially injurious to holiness and salvation—the great ends of the Church—we refer to the decree of the college or council of apostles, elders, and brethren, recorded in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts; also to the vow of St. Paul, and the circumcision of Timothy. Also we quote the principle (1 Corinthians 8: 9 passim:) "take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours becomes a stumbling-block to them that are weak. . . . . When ye wound the weak conscience of the brethren, ye sin against Christ."

provocation for division. This principle, too, is necessary, because the master has enjoined it upon his disciples, who constitute his Church, and because only by it can the new and great Christian commandment be enforced: "Love one another."*

It appears, moreover, from the fact that the Church is a *society of men* for a particular purpose, that it must have law; while, from the same fact of its embracing such extensive varieties of mental and personal character in its members, it must also allow great liberty of opinion and action. The least law needed to secure its objects, and the greatest liberty in all things which do not interfere with those objects, are also cardinal principles to be applied in the formation of a Church which shall correspond to its true idea.

In attempting to settle the system of such a Church, we see, at the outset, that there must be compromise in a thousand comparatively unimportant particulars; we mean, particulars for which individual Christians may have preference, but which are not really and indispensably important to the grand objects of the Church; while, as immediately correspondent with this, there must be *conformity* by all upon those points which are generally held important to the character and constitution of the Church. The basis,

* As the Church is composed of *men*, whose relative circumstances in different civil communities must affect their external ecclesiastical relations, there are natural and physical limits to the application of these principles—the limits of national or civil boundaries. Yet even an actual universality and unity for the whole world might be attained *were it possible to realize* the beautiful conception of the ancient Church—*a continual succession of General Councils which should accurately represent the sense of the majority of all the clergy and laity of the Christian world.*

upon which the settlement of the system shall proceed, must be—compromise in matters acknowledged by all to be relatively non-essentials, conformity in matters received by each to be essential. Thus both liberty and law can be secured, and universality and unity together be effected.

We have not time for detail in showing the working of these principles towards promoting the perfection of the Church. We state the principles, that our reader may test their propriety in his thoughts.

We cannot dismiss this topic, however, without occupying one moment in contrasting this, as we believe it to be, the true idea of the Church of Christ with the true idea of sectarism. The reader is requested to keep in mind the definition of sectarism in our third chapter.

The Church is founded upon unity *and* universality.

Sectarism is founded upon unity *without* universality.

The Church is founded upon law *and* liberty.

Sectarism is founded upon law *without* liberty.

The Church is founded upon conformity *and* compromise.

Sectarism is founded upon conformity *without* compromise.

The Church, in its practical operation produces forbearance.

Sectarism, in its practical operation, produces intolerance.

The Church requires practically, from all its mem-

bers, (and Christ's disciples must have "a cross daily,") some self-denial.

Sectarism allows practically to all its members the utmost self-indulgence.

As we aim at brevity, our readers are requested to try for themselves these points of contrast, and see if they are not correctly stated. We wish them also to recollect, that we are discussing principles, and desire to do so candidly and thoroughly, and withal, we would not be supposed to intend disrespect towards any existing denominations in our land.

CHAPTER VII.

Notice of certain Denominational peculiarities—a Comprehensive Church for our age and country practicable—Digression—importance of considering the subject—a state of Division a state of sin—indifference the cause of its continuance—Christians should be in earnest to do their duty—Return from digression—no existing Christian denomination should be excluded from the Comprehensive Church, neither dissenters nor Protestant Episcopalians—a question for pious Dissenters.

We have noticed the principles upon which the Comprehensive Church must be organized. And we enquire: Is the construction of such a Church in the nineteenth century, and in the United States, impracticable? Is there any natural impossibility or hindrance to prevent the formation of such a Church which may unite the various and now opposing denominations of Christians in our country. We think not. Such a church may be constructed upon the

principles which have been just laid down, even if none such does now, as we believe such does, exist.

To illustrate our view:—One denomination holds that the apostolical and regular ministry of the Church is in three orders—Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons. Others are of the opinion that any particular arrangement of the ministry is unimportant, so long as the essential idea of a ministry—or as with some, of a ministry of Presbyters—is preserved. The same denomination holds, that on certain occasions the public use of a precomposed Liturgy is necessary to stability, and edification, and harmony of the Church. Others have never been habituated to the use of a Liturgy on any occasions; and some lay great stress upon the advantages of extemporaneous prayers, and of various social meetings for religious improvement. A second denomination thinks that the government of the Church should be mainly in the hands of the clergy; a third, that it should be mainly in the hands of the laity. A fourth contends that only adults should be baptized, and then by immersion; while others think that infants also may be baptized, and that sprinkling or affusion of water is equally justifiable with immersion. Some contend that no creeds should be required of men to admit them to the benefit of the Christian Sacraments. Others suppose that creeds are important in the arrangements of a well ordered Church. Not to extend the illustration, it will be perceived, that there are a great many points upon which the various denominations are agreed, and that the distinctive idea in each sect is a

prominence of some *one* particular point of ecclesiastical belief or discipline.

Now may not all these denominations slide into one Church—in which each man, while he is indulged with his own favorite system, shall allow to his brother a similar indulgence—in which all, while they agree to differ in many things, shall yet agree to be alike in a few things? We think that we can be so united.

If union be possible, to digress a moment, nothing should be allowed to restrain us from its accomplishment; for one thing is certain—that every Christian, while he is out of the unity of Christ's Church (wheresoever that unity be) is, it may be ignorantly, in a state of sin, he is violating a first principle and a first precept of the New Testament. It becomes, then, an interesting question, nay, it is a question of the most serious moral responsibility: How shall the unity of Christ's Church be restored? We ought not to rest, until the question is satisfactorily answered. Alas! there is an amazing indifference upon the public mind as to this duty of unity—*a duty as explicitly enjoined as that of personal holiness—a duty, indeed, whose fulfilment is one test of holiness, one mark of a true Christian character.*

The chief cause of this indifference is in the fact, that the subject is not enough discussed. The very guides—the watchmen and examples of Christ's flock have been themselves indifferent; they have had so much to do in discussing other questions—perhaps abstruse and only in the philosophy of religion—that the great practical duty of uniting and "gathering

into one fold Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad, and his children who are in the midst of this naughty world" has been overlooked.

Our desire is to call up this question for discussion —not a little narrow question of sectarianism, but the great question of scriptural unity. It is time to propose a plan of ecclesiastical unity; it is time to discuss the plan directly and fully. We have been discussing for years all around this great question: What shall be the plan? as if we were afraid of it. We have been lamenting over our discords. Now let us go to work in earnest at the great final and decisive question. The world will then give us credit for sincerity. And if we are really in earnest we shall soon have a scheme that will suit us all.

Returning from our digression, and reminding the reader of the conclusion to which we had arrived—that it is possible to unite all the existing Christian denominations of our country into one Church, we wish to lead his mind to the same conclusion by yet another short path—by suggesting the question: Shall any of the existing Christian denominations of our country be excluded from the Comprehensive Church?

Shall any one of the denominations of dissenters* be excluded?

Of course, they will, in answering each for themselves, say, they ought not, any of them to be exclu-

* For the sake of avoiding a tedious and lengthy circumlocution, the various denominations of Christians, which differ from the Protestant Episcopal Church, are alluded to occasionally in this volume under the general name of dissenters—a title of familiar and appropriate use, and which, we wish it to be understood, we employ most respectfully; for we think sincerely, as did the late venerable Bishop White, that "there appears respectability in the plea of conscientious refusal."

ded. And we, as a Protestant Episcopalian, say, they have answered rightly; they ought not to be excluded —for every disciple of Christ (according to the theory of the P. E. Church) should be welcome to all the privileges of his Church.

Shall the Protestant Episcopal Church be excluded?

We suppose that Protestant Episcopalians are to be included in any plan of Christian unity; for they are Christians and Protestants; and, if so, their peculiar traits must be found in the united Church. They are willing to compromise, if need be, in a thousand matters comparatively unimportant. But they wish to be considered, and expect to be indulged in what they hold to be essential to the constitution of a regular Christian Church. And they ought, upon the fair principles of Union, to be so considered and indulged, certainly when others believe their ministry to be essentially sound, or at least look upon their peculiarities as among the matters of indifference. This inference, that in the united Church there must be a recognition of their main peculiarities, is unavoidable, if they are to be included in the plan of union. And shall they be excluded? Shall a body of protestant Christians, so extensive, and having in it so much of intelligence, and learning, and piety, as is acknowledged in their case, be excluded from the plan of unity, be unchurched by the brethren, not more intelligent nor more learned nor more pious, simply because they are conscientiously persuaded that a ministry of three orders is apostolical and scriptural, and that the use of a Liturgy on certain public occasions is primitive and reasonable, while all the time, too,

their brethren look upon these matters of their conscience as non-essentials? Surely, they must be included in the plan of unity.

The reader will recollect that it was stated, in our sixth chapter, and illustrated in a note, by several scriptural examples, to be the duty of the Church of Christ even to tolerate prejudices and error, if they be harmless, or not essentially in the way of human holiness and salvation. To apply this principle, as supported by the examples there adduced, to the unity of the Church, we argue—that if any are very strenuous, conscientiously persuaded, on some point not deemed essential by others, then it is the duty of the free to bear with the weakness or error of their brethren, and indulge them. Thus, if Protestant Episcopalians are conscientiously persuaded of the necessity of three orders to a regular ministry (and in fact, this is the only point to be pressed, the use of a Liturgy not being held, even by Episcopalians, to be essential in the theory of an Episcopal Church,) and if others recognize in their orders the essential idea of a ministry, but hold its three-fold character unimportant, would not the scriptural principle and precedents here referred to, warrant and indispensably require the retention of the three orders in the united Church? *Would not the Church thus be adapted to more minds*, we further urge, *without losing any thing essential to its objects?* These questions are worth the consideration of all Christians. They admit but one answer.

There is another question for pious dissenters: Since Protestant Episcopalians have never set up a

new Church, but have always continued in the unity of the old, improving and adapting it to the wants of society, and since they are willing to be at one with all Christian people, if there be no effort to form an united Church, in which their conscientious peculiarities shall be considered and incorporated, who will be responsible for the sin of continuing the divisions of the body of Christ?

We conclude, that all the existing Christian denominations of our country may be and ought to be united into one Comprehensive Church.

CHAPTER VIII.

Is there now in the United States a Comprehensive Church, combining into one harmonious system the "distinctive peculiarities" of all the denominations?—Is it any Church of dissenters?—Is it the Protestant Episcopal Church?—A plan of Unity proposed—the writer's apology for his proposition—the existing system of the P. E. Church proposed as a basis of Christian and ecclesiastical unity—may appear strange—a candid judgment solicited.

GRANTING, now, for the purpose of our argument, that all the denominational Churches in our country stand upon exactly the same level, as regards the vexed question of divine right, and touching simply the question of their expediency, or rather of their practicability for the particular object of uniting the divided Church, we ask; Is there any Church now existing amongst us, which shall supply to our hands the instrumentalities we need;—any, capable of receiv-

ing us all liberally, and without subjecting any of us to unnecessary humiliation, and capable of being itself reformed, or changed, or improved into just such a system as we all shall be willing to sustain? Which of all the denominational Churches is best qualified for the purposes of unity? Which is the Comprehensive Church?

Is it any one of the various ecclesiastical systems of dissenters?

We think not; because as appears to us, they are none of them founded upon the principles which have been laid down, in our sixth chapter, as necessary to such a Church; because they are in many respects organized so as to be essentially in distinct contrariety to each other; and especially, because they all, without any exception, have made no provision for such an arrangement of the ministry as Protestant Episcopalians think to be essential to the regular constitution of a Christian Church. We are stating our view frankly; yet we would not, on any account, be rash nor unkind. If our views are erroneous, we shall be glad to see them disproved.

Is it the Protestant Episcopal Church?

We think it is; *because, in its system, those points which its own members hold essential, and which are not provided for in any other system, are distinctly recognized; and because those points which are held essential by the various other denominations are also distinctly recognized and amply provided for, in its system.* These remarks will be illustrated at length in our next chapter.

To speak plainly at once, the writer believes, that

in the existing system of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, there is comprehensiveness enough for the purposes of an universal Christian and ecclesiastical unity in our country.

So peculiar has been the influence of circumstances, that few, if any out of the Protestant Episcopal Church, have ever viewed it in this character as furnishing a basis or platform upon which Christians may unite. And it is feared, that few even of Episcopalians have clear views of the comprehensiveness of their own Church.

The writer, as appears from the title-page, is a communicant and a minister of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and in this fact he finds his warrant for engaging in his present task; for he thinks, that a member of his Church has (for the reasons just hinted at, and which will presently be expanded) an advantage in proposing and discussing the plan of unity over the members of other denominations. He would not be understood to say, that the members of his Church have generally more enlarged views of this subject than other Christians. It is too true, that there are many, who, in the midst of divisions have nourished a sectarian spirit. Yet such, he does not hesitate to say have not imbibed the spirit of their own system, which has no sympathy with any thing that is narrowing or exclusive or despotic. We should be most unhappy, if we thought ourselves in a Church, from which any true disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ is excluded, if we did not know, that in its very organization every other true disciple of our Master is welcome to all our privileges, however he may differ from

us in opinion or talent or temperament or condition; nay more, if he were not welcome to demean himself as he may please, (always of course being a Christian) free in his diversity.

For the sake of furthering the great duty and the great blessing of Christian unity, our design, in this little book, is to exhibit the Protestant Episcopal Church *as it is*. We shall not open the volumes of the Fathers, we shall not search antiquity, we shall not argue for the apostolical succession of Bishops nor for the primitive establishment of Liturgies; we do not intend to rake open the ashes of buried controversies, nor to add another brand to any fire of contention which is now raging. We simply invite the Christians of our country, who long for unity and for a pure paternal sympathy among brethren, to forget, for a moment, that they have ever been at variance, and to lay aside the unfavorable and prejudicial associations of past disagreements, and to examine with a candid spirit, the system which we propose. We assert distinctly, that *in the system of the Protestant Episcopal Church, as it is, there are instrumentalities, diversified and expansive, for the union of all Christian people in "one body and one spirit; that it is broad enough to maintain, in one fellowship, both external and internal, all true disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.* We assert, that in the Protestant Episcopal Church are the elements of the most exact uniformity, as, also, of the most extensive variety.

Our assertion may sound strangely, but those, who will favor our book with a candid perusal, shall find it sustained. All we ask is, that our system shall be

fairly and liberally examined. If it be not what we represent it, we shall be happy to be rightly informed. Our aim is unity. We propose a plan for its accomplishment, and desire to elicit the whole truth which concerns it. We are grieved and wearied with the consequences of division. On every side are brethren, who might be one with us and with each other, but we are all separated by artificial walls—barriers never appointed of God, barriers of merely human construction, barriers always and even laboriously kept high and strong, but for whose existence and perpetuity there is not the least reason in the world. True it is, that Christians mourn over their divisions; we should all rejoice, our land would resound with hallelujahs, if we could all wake on the morrow, and find ourselves united indeed in one Comprehensive Church. But alas! our divisions exist; and how shall we be made one?

Where is the Comprehensive Church?

Let us examine, without prejudices for or against it, the system of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States *as it is*. If it be feasible as a plan of unity, let it be embraced. If not, let its faults be shewn, and let a better be substituted.

CHAPTER IX.

EXAMINATION OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH, AS IT IS.

The Protestant Episcopal Church proposed as the Comprehensive Church—proposition explicit—to be sustained by facts—Christian and ecclesiastical unity a solemn subject—the truth sought—all love the truth—the partizan in religion the enemy of God and man—the reader invited to look at the outlines of the system of the Protestant Episcopal Church as a system for Christian and ecclesiastical unity—examination to be distributed through twenty-one Sections.

We propose the system of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, *as it is*, for a basis of Christian and ecclesiastical unity to all the Christian people in our country. We propose it to their approval as the Comprehensive Church.

Our proposition is broadly and explicitly stated; and, if we fail in sustaining it by good reasons, our imprudence will be signally manifest. But we know the ground we stand upon, and feel no necessity for speaking cautiously or with qualification. Furthermore, our proposition is to be sustained by facts, and not merely by abstract disquisition, so that we cannot be sophistical if we would.

On such a subject, however, as this which has occasioned our little book, we feel that there is too much of solemnity to allow any thing but frankness, too much of responsibility to make any thing else safe. We desire, as an accountable witness, and bound by

as high as a judicial oath, to tell "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." We wish our statements to be deliberately weighed; and if there be other evidence, which may rebut or modify or disprove them, we hope that it will be produced.

We presume, that our readers love the truth, and will be rejoiced to find it, even if it be discovered in a strange place, and by a stranger. Indeed, there is but one supreme interest to us all, although the inferior and sectarian do continually make us forget it; and it is—to know the truth; and he, who by any act of unfairness, would delay or prevent the triumph of the truth, is trifling with both the present and the everlasting happiness of his fellows, and is endangering his own soul. God forbid we should any of us be partizans in religion! To be a partizan in religion, that is, to hold any favorite tenet or custom with a tenacity of self-love, or in a manner which may be possibly inconsistent with the freest elucidation of truth —it is to have the thoughtless heart of idiocy, or the reckless heart of madness, or rather, it is to have no heart at all. It is the most heartless insensibility to the blessedness of God's truth, by which alone man can be made happy and God be glorified. It is to be dead to all the willing condescension of the Lord Jesus, and to all the voluntary humility of the Holy Spirit,—the precious and untold sacrifices of the Godhead—that we might have the truth. The partizan in religion is the great co-worker with the powers of darkness, the enemy of God and man.

Presuming that these sentiments are, as they ought

to be, reciprocated by the reader, we proceed to an examination of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States *for one special purpose—to discover whether it be not a system capable of uniting the separated denominations of Christians into one Church.*

In conducting this examination, we shall not advance the private theories or speculations of any individuals who are or have been connected with the Protestant Episcopal Church. Individuals alone are responsible for their peculiar views. Neither shall we exhibit all the minute details of the system; for a treatise so extensive would be inconsistent with our design and our limits.

We shall look at the outlines of the system. We shall mark its main proportions, with which all the minute arrangements must harmonize.

After giving, 1st, a Definition of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, we shall develope the fundamental principles of its organization, under the several following sections: 2. Members, 3. Territorial Divisions, 4. Laws, 5. Government, 6. Ordination and Duties of Ministers, 7. Rights of the Bishops and Clergy, 8. Admission to the Sacraments, 9. Creeds, 10. Doctrine, 11. Discipline, 12. Public Worship, 13. Rights of the Laity, 14. Baptism, 15. Confirmation, the sequel or complement of Infant Baptism, 16. The Supper of the Lord, 17. Literary, Educational, Benevolent, and Missionary Associations, 18. Liberty. 19. Adaptiveness, 20. Religious Devotion and Action, 21. Comprehensive Traits.

SECTION I.

DEFINITION OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES.

It is not the Church of Rome—it is not the Church of England—it is a Christian and Protestant American Church—at Unity with the ancient and universal Church of Christ.

WHAT is the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States?

I. It is not the church of Rome, nor does it hold any connexion or communion with that Church. Its standards of prayer and its articles of faith are all framed with a direct reference to a protest against the errors and anti-catholic claims of the Church of Rome.

For our educated readers, and others who have been at all acquainted with the Protestant Episcopal Church, the above assertion is sufficient; but as many persons, otherwise intelligent, who have never been familiar with the Protestant Episcopal Church, have a vague idea of something papistical about it, we are induced, for the benefit of such to explain a little further.

The 19th Article of Religion of the Protestant Episcopal Church reads, in its latter clause, thus: "As the Church of Hierusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch, have erred; so also the Church of Rome hath erred, not only in their living and manner of ceremonies, but also in matters of faith."

The name of "the *Protestant* Episcopal Church" should be sufficient to absolve it from all suspicions of

being inclined to the peculiarities of the Church of Rome.

In the Homilies, which by the 35th Article, are "declared to be an explication of Christian doctrine, and instructive in piety and morals," there are frequent rebukes of the various errors of the Church of Rome, and sometimes in terms which the "ears polite" of a modern audience could not tolerate.*

It is well to remind the reader that Cranmer, and Latimer, and Ridley, and Hooper, and Farrar, and

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* To select a passage not so harsh as some others, yet decisive upon the point, we quote from the 28th Homily—the 16th of the 2nd Book:

"It is needful to teach you, first, what the true Church of Christ is; and then to confer the Church of Rome therewith, to discern how well they agree together.

The true Church is an universal congregation or fellowship of God's faithful and elect people, built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the Head Corner Stone. And it hath always three notes or marks, whereby it is known: Pure and sound doctrine; the sacraments ministered according to Christ's holy institution; and the right use of ecclesiastical discipline. This description of the Church is agreeable both to the scriptures of God, and also to the doctrine of the ancient Fathers; so that none may justly find fault therewith.

Now if you will compare this with the Church of Rome—not as it was in the beginning, but as it is at present, and hath been for the space of nine hundred years and odd—you shall well perceive the state thereof to be so far wide from the nature of the true Church that nothing can be more. For neither are they built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, retaining the sound and pure doctrine of Christ Jesus; neither yet do they order the sacraments, or else the ecclesiastical keys (discipline,) in such sort as he did first institute and ordain them .... (proofs of the three charges are urged) .... which thing being true, as all they which have any light of God's word must needs confess, we may well conclude, according to the rule of Augustine (contra Petilian. Donatist. Ep. Cap. 4.) that the Bishops of Rome and their adherents *are not the true Church of Christ*, much less then to be taken as chief heads and rulers of the same. Whosoever, saith he, do dissent from the scriptures concerning the head, although they be found in all places where the Church is appointed, yet are they not in the Church: a plain place, concluding directly against the Church of Rome."

other distinguished martyrs, were Protestant Episcopal Bishops; and that John Rogers of famous memory, and Lawrence Saunders, and Bradford, and Taylor, as well as others who gave their testimony to Protestantism in the midst of the flames, were ministers of a lower grade (Presbyters) of the Protestant Episcopal Church; and that the most distinguished writers against the Roman Catholic scheme, including, with these just mentioned, such men as Barrow, and Chillingworth, and Hooker, and Jeremy Taylor, and Leslie, and Jewell, and of our own day, Mr. Faber, have been ministers likewise of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

It has become very much a fashion now-a-days to designate the Church of Rome as *the Catholic Church*, and to call its members and its dogmas by the name of *Catholic;* and uninformed persons are therefore frequently surprised, while attending on the worship of Protestant Episcopalians to hear them declare as one of the articles of their belief or Creed: "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church." Now, in this phrase the Protestant Episcopal Church expresses a belief in the Holy Catholic (i. e. universal) Church, or, as it is elsewhere expressed in her daily prayers, "the Holy Church universal—all who profess and call themselves Christians;" and not in the narrow and exclusive scheme of the Roman Catholic Church. Indeed in the use of this phrase the Episcopal Church, which carries the name of *Protestant* as a part of its very title, unequivocally denies to the Church of Rome (against whose errors the protest is made) all right to

the name of Catholic, and by implication attributes to it a character directly opposite to that of the Holy Catholic Church in which a belief is professed. It is to be regretted, that language is employed so loosely, and that by men who ought to know better, and who do know better, as not only to convey a false meaning, and to corrupt our language, and to injure the reputation of a distinguished Protestant Church in the opinions of the uninformed, but even to extend and to perpetuate grievous error of opinion in the community.*

We may further state, that a grand principle of the Protestant Episcopal Church is—the primitive and absolute *co-equality* of Bishops; and hence this Church can never have any sympathy with the Church of Rome, which seeks to elevate one Bishop to a vast height above all others. It may be affirmed, without fear of disproof, that Protestant Diocesan Episcopacy is the strongest barrier, that can be reared, against the principle of the Papacy; for, in all other systems

* It may not be generally known, that the Roman Catholics found an argument, very effective among the ignorant, for their claim of being the infallible and true Church, upon this very fact, that even Protestants call them "*Catholic.*" Bishop Burnet, on the 19th Article, referring to Cardinal Bellarmine's assertions, writes thus: "The last way they (the Roman Catholics) take to find out this (true and infallible) Church by, is from some notes, that they pretend are peculiar to her, such as the name *Catholic*, &c., together with the confession of their adversaries." In answering this argument, the Bishop proceeds: "Can it be thought that the assuming *a name* can be a mark? Why is not the name *Christian* as solemn as *Catholic*? Might not the *Philosophers* have concluded from hence against the first Christians, that they were, *by the confession of all men, the true lovers of wisdom*; since they were called *Philosophers* much *more unanimously* than the Church of Rome was called *Catholic*?" If the good Bishop had lived in our day and country, he could not thus have replied to the argument of the Romanist.

the natural tendency of things is to ecclesiastical monarchy—a supreme and controlling influence and power to be exercised, most absolutely because not defined by law, by the most crafty or the most talented, or the most experienced, or the best.

Our remarks might be extended to great length on this topic, but, we trust, enough has been said to illustrate even to the uninformed, the entire independence of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States from the Church of Rome.

II. It is not the Church of England. It has no connexion in any respect with England, nor with any other country whatsoever besides the United States, excepting the connexion, such as it is, of the sincere and earnest Christian sympathy it feels for the English Protestant Church (which is a very different thing from the English Government or the English *Establishment* of Church and State) and its connexion, through its missionary undertakings, with countries ignorant of pure Christianity.

To be sure, and we acknowledge the fact with gratitude, it was originated by members of the Church of England, but it is now an independent Church, just as the Congregational Churches of this country are independent of the Congregational Churches of England from which they originated.

To be sure it loves the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ in England—its sister Church—the Church as separate from the State. But it has none of the incumbrances and heavy drawbacks and chains upon it

which the English State has forced, by the strong arm of secular power, upon the English Church.

It is on terms of the most friendly Christian and ecclesiastical communion with the English Church. But it has no definite or dependent or confederate connexion with the English Church whatsoever.

A quotation from the Preface to the American "Book of Common Prayer" will illustrate the foregoing remarks: "The Protestant Episcopal Church in these States is indebted, under God, to the Church of England for her first foundation and a long continuance of nursing care and protection. . . . But when, in the course of Divine Providence, these American States became independent with respect to civil government, their ecclesiastical independence was necessarily included; and the different religious denominations of Christians in these States were left at full and equal liberty to model and organize their respective Churches, and forms of worship, and discipline, in such manner as they might judge most convenient for their future prosperity; consistently with the constitution and laws of their country."*

* It will not be amiss to add another authorative declaration to the same effect with that above quoted. It is a resolution of both houses of the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, passed May 20th, 1814. We quote from Bioen's Journals, pp. 310, 311.

"The following declaration was proposed and *agreed to* (in the House of Bishops:) It having been credibly stated to the House of Bishops, that on questions, in reference to property devised, before the Revolution, to congregations belonging to "The Church of England," and to uses connected with that name, some doubts have been entertained with regard to the identity of the body to which the two names have been applied, the House think it expedient to make the declaration, and to request the concurrence of the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies therein—That "The Protestant Episcopal

For its prominent doctrines, its various formularies for public worship and solemn occasions, (with such slight alterations as local circumstances have required,) its principles of free legislation by which every member of every order in the Church is expected to have his share in all its legislative concerns, and finally, for the regular succession and order of its Bishops, the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States owes much of gratitude to the Church of England, and feels the most thankful affection. Although it be now of age, and has the rights and the lawful independence of its maturity, it cannot but love the venerable mother, who was the guide and support of its infancy, and who when it was first and early called to provide for itself, and to buffet with the roughness of the world, stood forth as its benefactress and faithful friend, and (to borrow a mercantile phrase) advanced to it in its poverty, and when it lacked even the

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Church in the United States of America," is the same body heretofore known in these States, by the name of "The Church of England;" the change of name, (although not of religious principle, in doctrine, or in worship, or in discipline,) being induced by a characteristic of the Church of England, supposing the independence of Christian Churches, under the different sovereignties, to which, respectively, their allegiance in civil concerns belongs. But that, when the severance alluded to took place, and ever since, this Church conceives of herself, as possessing and acting on the principles of the Church of England, is evident from the organization of our Conventions, and from their subsequent proceedings, as recorded on the Journals; to which, accordingly, this Convention refers for satisfaction in the premises. *But it would be contrary to fact, were any one to infer, that the discipline exercised in this Church, or that any proceedings therein, are at all dependent on the will of the civil or of the ecclesiastical authority of any foreign country.*

The above declaration having been communicated to the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies, they returned for answer *that they concurred therein.*"

advantage of credit, the capital, upon which its present wealth and prosperity have been gained.

III. The Protestant Episcopal church in the United States *is* a denomination of Christians; a society, united under certain laws of association, professing to be a Church of the Lord Jesus Christ; an American branch of "the true vine;" a member of the universal body of Christ. It endeavors to realize its own definition of a Church as contained in the 19th of its Articles of Religion. "The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same."

IV. It is a Church at unity with the ancient and the universal Church of Christ; which has never separated itself, and has never been separated by others, from this unity; and which is not liable to the charge of sectarism.

This unity is maintained by the regular connexion of the Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church (in which order of ministers its peculiarity as a Church consists,) and through them of the Church itself, which acknowledges them, with the Church of England whose unity has been unbroken from the primitive and apostolical age. Be it remembered, we are *not arguing for the validity of a ministry derived from Bishops*, (that is a totally distinct argument,) but *simply for the unity of the Protestant Episcopal Church with the ancient and universal Church, through*

its derivation from the English Church. The argument is as follows: The English Church has always been an Episcopal Church, and its Bishops for the time being have been acknowledged by it. Its Bishops for the time being have been ordained voluntarily by their predecessors in that office. Thus the Church of England for the time being has always acknowledged that which preceded it; and has been regularly connected with the Church in the age immediately previous, with the free consent of both. The Church in each succeeding age has derived its acknowledged ministry (with which its own existence according to its peculiar organization is identified) from the Church in the age which immediately preceded it, and this of course with the actual consent of both parties. Thus *its unity* may be traced to the apostolical age, and this too whether its Bishops have come from the early British, or Gallican, or from the later Italian line.*

Now the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States has been acknowledged by the English Church, and has acknowledged it, and has maintained ecclesiastical unity with it, in receiving from it the succession of Bishops now acknowledged in the

*The gospel was planted in Great Britain in the very first age of the Christian Church, and the Church in that country was very soon organized under Bishops obtained probably from Gaul in the second century. By the irruption of the Anglo-Saxons in the year 452, the Church and Christianity were driven back into the mountain fastnesses, where they were maintained. About the year 600, the Church and Christianity were extended among the Saxons by Augustin, an Italian Missionary, who was consecrated to the Episcopal supervision of the converted Saxons. The reference above is to these two lines. The reader is referred to the various writers on Ecclesiastical History.

American Church and constituting its peculiarity. Hence the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, with the Church of England, is united to the ancient and universal Church. Neither has ever at any time separated itself, or been separated by others, from the Church in the age which preceded it, but has always acknowledged it, and been acknowledged by it; and so down to the apostolic age.

Again, we beg the reader to remember that this argument is simply to prove the unity of the Protestant Episcopal Church with the primitive and universal Church of Christ; and that it is entirely distinct from the question whether Bishops are necessary to constitute a valid ministry or a regular Church. This latter question we intend to have nothing to do with in these pages. The argument we have presented has no sort of connexion with the controversy on the validity or the propriety of the various denominational Churches in our country.

We are aware that there is an objection to the foregoing view, frequently pressed upon Episcopalians by persons not very conversant with the true points of the Episcopal controversy; and we propose to meet it.

The objection is to the following effect: The Protestant Episcopal Church in England at the Reformation separated from the Church of Rome, which was at that time the universal Church, and that Church excommunicated the Protestant Episcopal Church in England, so that it is after all but a sect.

This objection admits of several answers, some of which we will state succinctly.

1st. The Church of Rome never was the universal Church, for the great body of the Eastern or Asian Churches have never acknowledged its authority, and it never itself assumed a supremacy until after the eighth century. In leaving the Church of Rome therefore, the English Church did not leave its connexion with the universal Church, but simply its connexion with the Church of Rome.

2nd. It was a maxim of the primitive Church, which Protestant Episcopalians acknowledge, that every regular Diocesan Church, *i. e.* every Church regularly organized with its Bishops, Clergy and Laity, is absolutely independent of all others. The Church of Rome, therefore, had no authority over the Church of England. The only influence, which one independent Church can exercise over another, is that of moral influence. The one may *protest* against the errors of the other, but has no other right. This is the doctrine of the Protestant Episcopal Church, as shown by its name and by its 19th and 20th articles. Each Church has the whole management of its own affairs, even in the reforming of itself from error. None other has any right of interference.

3d. There is no such right in any Church, as that of excommunication in the absolute sense. The highest right of punishment in any Church is that of suspension (until penitence allows the return of the offender), and then only in the case of individuals, never to be exercised by one Church towards another. This is the doctrine of the Protestant Episcopal Church, as expressed in the Rubric prefatory to the

order for the administration of the holy communion and in the 33d article.

4th. The true state of the case is this. The Church of Rome never had any canonical or lawful authority over the Church of England. The influence which that Church exercised for a period, in the ecclesiastical and secular affairs of England, was obtained altogether by usurpations which depended upon various circumstances in the history of the times. This is understood by the objectors as well as the respondents; and Protestant Episcopalians think no more, than the objectors, of the excommunications of the Pope of Rome beyond his own diocese, *i. e.* the city of Rome and a small tract around it in Italy. Now the Church of England was always a regularly organized Church by itself, and could not possibly become a sect or schismatical, unless it could separate from itself, which is impossible. In the light of the reformation it proceeded to reform itself; and as one item in this reformation, it discarded the usurpations of the Roman Church, it refused to allow that foreign Church any longer to interfere or have a hand in its concerns; it cut or broke off its connexion and correspondence with that Church. It never destroyed itself, it simply reformed or changed some circumstances in its system. It was always regular in its doings. It never made one change, or abolished one custom, or added one circumstance to its system, irregularly or contrary to its own laws. As well might the Presbyterian or Methodist Church be said to make itself schismatical, to form itself into a totally new and distinct Church,

repudiating and abandoning the old—because in its last General Assembly or General Conference, it made some new arrangements, passed some new resolutions, enacted some new laws, as the new or changing circumstances of the year had demanded, or shewn necessary or expedient. As an independent Church, the Church of England separated, as it had a perfect right to do, from its temporary connexion with another and foreign Church.

Two or three familiar illustrations will make our argument perfectly clear even to the most undisciplined. It is well known that for many years the Presbyterian Church in the Middle, Southern, and Western States, has been connected with the Congregational Churches of New England, by some articles of association for their mutual convenience. Now, if the one of these independent bodies should see fit to withdraw from this compact, to cut its correspondence with the other, could it be called schismatical, or could it be said to form, by so doing, a new sect? Again, suppose that the Protestant Episcopal Church of the diocese of Connecticut should see fit to withdraw itself from its union with the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, and to return to the same position which it occupied before the year 1789 (when it first united with the General Convention), could it be said that a new sect had been formed in Connecticut, would it not be the same Church still? Once more, suppose that two men independent of each other, and resident in different places, E and R, should become acquainted with each

other, and should open a correspondence with each other, and E should ask and receive advice from R, and should always be ready to entertain hospitably such persons as R should recommend to him, and indeed should place so much confidence in R, as to acknowledge the validity of various unauthorized proceedings of R in relation to E's business concerns, as if R were his agent, and should presently even appoint R his authorized agent for an indefinite term; and suppose that after a time E should discover that R was not his friend, but had really been overreaching him, and involving him in difficulty, and thereupon should legally annul the *agency* entrusted to R, and should cut all correspondence with R, and should even publish to the world that R was not trustworthy, could it be said, that in so doing E had violated his principles, or that, by so doing, E had lost his personal identity, and had become, actually, as well as metaphorically, *a new man?* These illustrations are all parallel to the point at issue.

The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, we conclude, by having received its peculiar organization by an unity, acknowledged on both sides, with the Church of England, is thereby at unity with the ancient and universal Church.

It may be interesting to some of our readers to learn the early history of the Protestant Episcopal Church in this country. Accordingly, we have inserted in the appendix, No. B, the history of its regular organization into the system which at present distinguishes it. The authority there quoted is the well known (although not so generally read) book entitled

"Memoirs of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States," by the late Bishop White, of the diocese of Pennsylvania.

Having now given our definition, we think that there is nothing in the fact, that such a Church exists in our land, to give pain to any sincere Christian. We think, indeed, that there is nothing in the definition to deter any sincere Christian from uniting with this Church.

SECTION II.

MEMBERS.

Clergy and laity—always connected in ecclesiastical legislation and divine worship—Bishops commonly distinguished from the other clergy by their titles of office—all Christians may be members of the P. E. Church.

The members of the Protestant Episcopal Church, like those of every other denomination, are of two orders, clergy and laity.

The clergy are in three degrees, or orders—Bishops, Presbyters or Priests, and Deacons.

Both clergy and laity have a reciprocal influence upon each other; and each has peculiar rights. Both are equally concerned in the government of the Church; and both are always expected to take an equal part in the public worship of God.

The peculiar rights and duties of the clergy will be stated in their proper places. The peculiar rights and privileges of the laity will also be illustrated as they come up in the progress of the present chapter.

The Bishops, although a portion or an order of the clergy, are generally distinguished by their title of

Bishops, for convenience sake; and by *the clergy*, therefore, are generally understood the inferior orders of Presbyters and Deacons. The laity are always referred to under their single title. Thus, for example, the acts of the General Convention, the Articles of Religion, the Book of Common Prayer, &c., are said to be adopted or passed by "the Bishops, Clergy and Laity of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America."

If it shall be made to appear, that in the Protestant Episcopal Church are all things essential to Christian and ecclesiastical unity, and that this Church is peculiarly fitted to bring together the scattered sheep of Christ's flock, we trust there is no Christian who will not, for the love he bears his Master and his brethren, be prompt to enroll himself among its members.

SECTION III.

TERRITORIAL DIVISIONS.

The P. E. Church co-extensive with the United States—all one Church—its unity represented in the General Convention—DIOCESES the sub-divisions of the whole Church—represented in Diocesan Conventions—combination, formation, size, and Episcopal charge, of Dioceses—independence of Dioceses—present number and names of Dioceses and their Bishops—PARISHES the sub-divisions of Dioceses—independence and rights of Parishes—parochial officers—the territorial divisions of the P. E. Church convenient for unity.

I. The limits of the Protestant Episcopal Church are co-extensive with those of the United States and its territories.

The whole Church within these limits is *one* under certain general principles of union and government.

This unity is maintained in a representative and legislative body, known by the name of "the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States," which body is assembled once in three years, in such place as itself appoints from session to session. Its custom, heretofore, has been to meet in the cities of New York and Philadelphia alternately, as central, and the most generally convenient places.

The General Convention is composed of two houses, the house of Bishops, and the house of clerical and lay Deputies; and the concurrence of both is necessary for all legislation. The former is composed of all the Bishops of this Church, and the latter is composed of a representation of both clergy and laity from all the Dioceses—each Diocese being entitled to send four clergymen (i. e. Presbyters or Deacons) and four laymen. In the house of Deputies, moreover, (if the majority of the clergy and laity representing any one Diocese require it,) any question may be put to each of these orders (*i. e.* clergy and laity) separately; and a concurrent majority of each of these orders is necessary to constitute a vote.

The powers and action of the General Convention will be more fully expressed in section 5.

II. Within the limits of the whole Church are certain sub-divisions, independent of each other in many respects, yet united as above stated.

These sub-divisions are denominated Dioceses each of which is under the Episcopal supervision of a

Bishop, (or overseer, or superintendent,) who is also called a Diocesan.

The ecclesiastical affairs of each Diocese are managed by a representative and legislative body, entitled the Convention of the Diocese—of New York, or Western New-York, or Maine, &c., according to its position in the United States. The Bishop of the Diocese is chairman of the Convention.

A Diocesan Convention is composed of the clergy of the Diocese, and of laymen, more or less, elected by each parish from its own members, to represent it. Any question may be put (at the request of any member or parish represented) to the clergy and laity separately; and the concurrence of a majority of each order is necessary to a vote.

These are the main principles in the formation and conduct of the Diocesan Conventions; although, as each Diocese manages its own affairs by itself, there are various modifications of these main principles. These Conventions are constituted, in the main, upon the model of the General Convention.

The powers and action of the Diocesan Conventions will be further explained in section 5.

When two or more neighboring Dioceses are each too small, or unable to employ or support the services of a Bishop, they may be united, or associated temporarily for that purpose.*

* As we desire not to burden the body of this chapter with any thing more than is absolutely important to our purpose—the illustration, in very brief statements, of the outline of the P. E. Church in the United States; and as some of our readers would like a view of the subject somewhat more complete, we shall throw the authorities for our statements (as has

When a single Diocese has become so large as to require the services of more than one Bishop, it may be divided into two or more independent Dioceses, according to the exigency.†

When a Diocese is too small to elect a Bishop by its own Convention,‡ it may, at its own request, be provided with one by the General Convention.§

When any Diocese, through the demise of its Bishop or other causes, is deprived of Episcopal services, it may obtain the services of some Bishop of another Diocese provisionally.‖

When any Diocese, through the old age or infirmity of its Bishop, is in need of increased Episcopal services, it may elect an assistant Bishop, who shall succeed the Bishop, on his decease, in the entire charge of the Diocese.¶

When there are any portions of the United States or Territories under no Episcopal supervision, and unable to procure or apply for it, the General Convention may appoint Missionary Bishops for such destitute portions of the country; and it may also appoint Missionary Bishops for Foreign Missionary Stations.**

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already been done in a few instances), and occasionally discuss a suggested topic, in the notes. Yet we would commend the notes and their references to all our readers. The authority for the statement above made is Canon 1 of 1838, section 2, part 2, appendix G.

† Constitution of P. E Church in U. S. Article 5, appendix C. Also Canon 8 of 1838, appendix G.

‡ Canon 1 of 1838, section 2, part 1, appendix G.

§ Canon 1 of 1838, section 1, appendix G.

‖ Canon 3, of 1838, sections 1, 2, 3, appendix G.

¶ Canon 6, of 1832, appendix G.

** Canon 2 of 1838, sections 1—6, appendix G,

When a Church, consisting of one or of two or more regularly organized parishes, in any part of our country which has never been united with the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States so as to be regularly a part of it, shall wish to be thus united with the Protestant Episcopal Church, it may, upon its application, be received into union with the General Convention, and be entitled to a representation in that body, as an independent Diocese, even if it be not large enough to elect or maintain a Bishop for itself.*

Furthermore, each Diocese is absolutely independent, except in certain particulars, wherein, by its own voluntary union with the others, it transfers its own authority to the General Convention. The connexion or union of each Diocese with the others, through the General Convention, is perfectly voluntary; and any Diocese has a right to withdraw from that connexion whensoever it may please. The only penalty for so doing exists in nature—the inconveniences attendant upon such a withdrawal and the sense of having departed from the most perfect unity of the Church in our country. An example of such withdrawal is not, we may add, on record, and from the nature of things, will probably never occur.

There are, at this date, twenty-six Dioceses.†

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* Constitution of P. E. Church, article 5, section I, appendix C.

† The names of these Diocese and of their Bishops, are as follows; of Maine, of Massachusetts, of Rhode Island, (these three are united by the name of the Eastern Diocese) under the Episcopal charge of the Rt. Rev. Alexander V. Griswold, D. D; of New Hampshire, provisionally under Bishop Griswold; of Vermont, Bishop John H. Hopkins, D. D; of Connecticut, Bishop Thomas C. Brownell, D. D. LL. D; of New-York, Bishop Benjamin T. Onderdonk, D. D; of Western New York, Bishop William

III. It is hardly necessary to add, that, within the limits of the Dioceses, the Church is distributed into the smaller sub-divisions of Parishes or congregations or societies.

These parishes are all at perfect liberty to manage their own concerns in any way which they may choose, except in those cases where they conform to the general laws for their unity and mutual convenience, which they themselves have made, and which they may at any time alter, by their delegates in the Diocesan Conventions, and by their deputies in the General Convention. They may elect and settle their own ministers, appropriate their own monies as they please, hold property independently, &c. &c.

Each parish, at an annual parish meeting (holden generally on Easter Monday, which occurs in March or April,) elects, for the year, two wardens, (the one

H. DeLancey, D. D; of New Jersey, Bishop George W. Doane, D. D; of Pennsylvania, Bishop Henry U. Onderdonk, D. D; of Delaware, provisional Bishop H. U. Onderdonk; of Maryland, Bishop William R. Whittingham, D. D; of Virginia, Bishop Richard C. Moore, D. D; assistant Bishop William Meade, D. D; of North Carolina, Bishop Levi S. Ives, D. D. LL. D; of South Carolina, Bishop Christopher E. Gadsden, D. D; of Georgia, Bishop Stephen Elliot, D. D; of Ohio, Bishop Charles P. Mc Ilvaine, D. D; of Kentucky, Bishop Benjamin B. Smith, D. D; of Tennessee, Bishop James H. Otey, D. D; of Alabama, of Mississippi, of Louisiana, these three each under the provisional charge of Bishop Leonidas Polk, D. D; of Michigan, Bishop Samuel A. McCoskry, D. D; of Illinois, Bishop Philander Chase, D. D; of Florida, having no Bishop; of Indiana, provisional Bishop Jackson Kemper, D. D. Besides these Dioceses, the Church in Arkansas and Texas is under the care of the Rt. Rev. Leonidas Polk, Missionary Bishop; and that in Missouri, Iowa, and Wisconsin, under the Rt. Rev. Jackson Kemper, Missionary Bishop. In the General Convention, all of these *twenty* Bishops are equally entitled to seats in the house of Bishops: and every one of the twenty-six Dioceses has a right to be represented in the house of clerical and lay deputies, by four clergymen, and four laymen, chosen by its own Convention.

called the senior, and the other the junior warden,) whose business it is to advise and assist the pastor. These officers correspond to the Deacons of Congregational and Presbyterian Churches. At the same meeting, and for the same term, it elects also a vestry, of an indefinite number, whose business it is to superintend, with the wardens, the secular concerns of the parish, and to attend to all such matters as the parish leaves in their hands, after its annual meeting. These officers save the necessity of frequent parish meetings; and are analogous to the trustees or business committees of other denominations.

We will remind the reader, before we pass to another topic, that the territorial divisions of the Protestant Episcopal Church are similar to those of all extensive denominations. Parishes are alike in all. The limits of Synods and Presbyteries, Consociations, Associations, Conferences, &c., are all correspondent to Dioceses. So, too, the General Conference, the General Association, the General Assembly, &c., do each, like the General Convention, take in the extent of the United States and Territories.

The arrangement of its territorial divisions furnishes, therefore, no objection to the Protestant Episcopal Church; while, to say the least, the simplicity and extent of these exhibit convenient instrumentalities for the formation of an united and universal Church.

SECTION IV.

LAWS.

All written—made by the whole Church—laws of the General Convention—laws of the Dioceses—the election of wardens and vestry, and the use of the clerical dress common customs—liberty in every thing not defined by law—clear laws advantageous for unity.

The laws of the Protestant Episcopal Church are all a *lex scripta*, written laws, statutes.

They are all made by the whole Church—Bishops, Clergy, and Laity. In the next section this will be further elucidated.

They are as follows:

1. The Constitution and Canons of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, adopted in the General Convention; also the Resolves of the General Convention. These are obligatory upon the whole Church, in all the dioceses. They are liable to revision, change or repeal, every three years, at each session of the General Convention.

The various orders and rubrics in "The Book of Common Prayer and administration of the sacraments and other rites and ceremonies of the Church, &c." relate to sundry occasions of public worship, and are also laws of the General Convention, and liable, like its other laws, to change or repeal every three years.*

* This Constitution is in *nine* articles, and may be found in the apppendix, C.

The canons are on various subjects, and are but partially referred to in this treatise. All the previously-existing canons were revised and re-arranged into a new code, in the General Convention of 1832. Of these a few have been changed, and a few have been added, in the General Conventions

2. The Constitutions and Canons and Resolves of the different Dioceses represented in their Annual Conventions. These are obligatory only in the dioceses which adopt them. These are liable to repeal or change, every year, at each session of the Diocesan Convention.

In the above two classes are all the laws and the only laws of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States. There is no such thing as a *lex non scripta*, an unwritten law, a law of custom, or of arbitrary individual enactment, in this Church.

There are, however, two customs, very common in the Church, which it is proper to allude to. The one is the election of wardens and vestrymen, by the parishes, at their annual meetings. This was a custom adopted from the parish customs of England, and is, we believe, universally practised. It is not, however, enjoined by canon, or necessary, except in the case of such churches as would institute their rectors. The legal (corporate) existence of most parishes is, likewise, in almost every instance, through these officers. So that it has never been necessary to provide for their election by any special ecclesiastical legislation. The other custom is the use of the clerical dress—the bands, surplice, and gown. This dress is enjoined by ecclesiastical law, only for the particular time and occasion of ordination. It is a very general custom, although not, like the former, universal.

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of 1835 and 1838. Their titles, quoted from the table of contents prefixed to them, illustrate their subjects, and may be found in the appendix, D.

In the appendices, E, F, and G, may be found quoted such of the canons as are referred to in the course of the present chapter.

In every matter, not defined by written law, there is liberty.

If clear and definite laws, under which every person may accurately know his rights and privileges, as a member of the Church, and be able to defend and to continue them, be praiseworthy as well as important and useful in a Church; and if such be especially necessary in any system proposed to the favorable regards of all Christian people,—then may the Protestant Episcopal Church claim the attention, and ask for the kind consideration, of the Christians of the United States, as a Church fitted to heal their differences, and secure them in "the unity of the spirit and in the bond of peace."

SECTION V.

GOVERNMENT.

Democratical—representative—PARISH MEETINGS—the original sources of government—their various powers—how composed—elect wardens and vestry—powers and duties of these officers—an instituted rector is chairman—elect lay delegates to the Diocesan Conventions. DIOCESAN CONVENTIONS—their duties and powers—meet annually—composed of clergy and laity—mode of conducting business—the Bishop the Chairman—elect standing committees—duties of these committees—elect clerical and lay deputies to the General Convention—GENERAL CONVENTION—its duties and powers to provide general legislation and promote unity—composed of bishops, clergy and laity—meets triennially—is in two houses, each has a veto on the other, each equal—*House of Bishops*—how composed—senior Bishop presides—mode of conducting business—*House of Clerical and Lay Deputies*—how composed—mode of conducting business—the vote by a division of orders—by this the clergy and laity have a veto upon each other—the next General Convention—COMMENTS—analogy between the ecclesiastical institutions of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States and the civil institutions of the United States—government of the

Protestant Episcopal Church very comprehensive—primitive—combines the three elements, the Episcopal, the Presbyterial, the Congregational—a just system—broad enough to unite all Christians.

The government of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States is strictly and purely democratical; that is to say, every member of the Church, without any exception in any class, has an equal right in the making of every one of its laws, and in appointing the method and means of their administration. Or to express the same idea in another form, there is not a single exercise of authority in this Church, which may not be directly influenced by every member of it. The supreme power of governing this Church is the will of the majority of the whole Church, which is composed of bishops, clergy, and laity; so that the bishops cannot govern alone, nor the clergy alone, nor the laity alone. But all these, as equally belonging to the Church, and interested in it, act together, and thus, in the highest and justest style of popular and universal suffrage, the certainly-ascertained will of the actual majority of the whole Church is the supreme law of the Church.

The government of this Church is, also, representative; that is to say, its laws are all made by bodies composed of representatives elected directly by the whole Church.

That the government of this Church is democratical and representative will now be illustrated more particularly.

I. Parish Meetings. In these are the unity of the Church in the parish. The original powers of gov-

ernment exist in, and proceed from, the parishes, which are the primary assemblies of the people.

1. These have complete control of their own parochial or congregational affairs, which control they exercise absolutely in the parish meetings. The persons voting at the parish meetings are all pew-holders, or pew-lessees, or regular occupants of seats, or persons of age in any way regularly connected with the parish, whether by certificate, as in some States, or in other ways. No distinction is made in these parish meetings between communicants and others.*

2. For the management of such parochial concerns, as are not attended to by the parish meetings, there is a representative body, elected annually by the parish at its annual meeting. This body, as has been stated already, is composed of two wardens and an indefinite number of vestry-men. Most parishes elect from four to six or eight vestry-men, some have more, and one very large and wealthy parish in our country has between thirty and forty. In some parishes it has been the custom to leave all their concerns, even the calling

* It is the experience of the Church, that in all cases where both the communicants and other members of a parish are to act jointly (as in the call and settlement of ministers, &c.,) it is best that they consult and vote in one body. The communicants, if they are not separated into a distinct body, supposed thereby to have interests different from those of the other members of a parish, will always exercise, from their personal characters, their various relations to others and from different circumstances, a controlling and decisive influence in parish meetings. It is doubted, whether, in Episcopalian parishes, measures are ever carried contrary to the will of a majority of the communicants. To take an illustration, the writer believes, that among the thousands of cases which have occurred, there probably has never been a minister settled over any Episcopalian parish, by the vote of a parish-meeting, in opposition to the clearly expressed will of a majority of the communicants.

and settlement of a Rector, with the vestry, whom they elect with a careful and particular reference to the just fulfilment of their duty.

In all parish and vestry meetings, we may say in passing, an Instituted Rector has a legal right, it is understood, to preside; and, as chairman, has the privilege of a casting vote, in the case of a tie. A minister not instituted has no such right.

3. At the annual meeting, each parish elects, from its own members, certain lay delegates (more or less, according to the number specified in the constitution of the Diocese) to represent it in the Diocesan Convention.

We wish this fact to be especially noted; for in this is the first great step in that representative government, by which the legislation of the whole Church is controlled.

II. Diocesan Conventions. In these are the unity of the Church in the Diocese. Each Diocesan Convention represents only a Diocesan Church, and its laws are obligatory only upon the Church within the limits of the particular Diocese.

1. The chief duties of a Diocesan Convention are to elect the Bishop of the Diocese;* to consider the state of the several parishes; to discuss and consult concerning matters of interest to the Diocese and to the Church at large; to instruct their deputies to the General Convention in reference to any propositions which may have been brought before their notice by the previous General Convention; to pass resolutions

* Constitution of P. E. Church, Art. 4, Appendix C.

and canons for the regulation of the affairs of the Diocese; especially for the discipline and trial of unworthy clergymen of every grade;* &c. &c.

2. A Diocesan Convention meets annually; and is composed of the clergy of the Diocese, and of Laity elected, as just mentioned, by all the parishes.

On all questions the clergy and laity may, if it be required, vote separately, and the concurrence of the two orders is then necessary to a vote.

These general principles are expressed in the Constitutions of all the Dioceses, although variously modified. Thus some Dioceses admit all the clergy to the Convention; others only those engaged in parishes; others admit also clerical teachers and Professors in Colleges; some require a year's, some a six-months' residence in the Diocese; &c. Some allow one lay delegate for each parish; others allow two or three, or more; some allow one for every certain number of families in a parish; &c. So, in the case of a vote by a division of the clerical and lay orders, some Dioceses require that one member of the Convention may call for it; others, that the clergyman and delegates of one parish, may call for it; others, that five, or more or less, members may call for it; &c. So, in the declaring of the vote on a division of orders, some Dioceses require that the clergy and laity in a majority of the parishes shall concur; others, that a majority of the two orders, without any reference to parishes, shall concur; &c.

The Bishop of the Diocese is Chairman of the

* Constitution of P. E. Church, Art. 6. Appendix C.

Convention, and as such has a casting vote. This is expressly provided for in the Constitutions of all the Dioceses; since, without such a provision, the Bishop would be excluded from the Convention.*

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* The writer would remark, that to his mind there appears to be an impropriety in leaving this fact to be expressly provided for in the Constitutions of the several Dioceses. He thinks, that, by a special article or clause in the Constitution of the P. E. Church in the United States, every Bishop should be declared, *ex officio*, Chairman of the Convention of the Diocese of which he is overseer.

Having referred to the freedom of the Diocesan Conventions, in which the Bishop has no other power than that just and fitting one of the Chairman, it becomes us to acknowledge, that among all the Dioceses of the United States, there is one exception to the description we have given. In the Diocesan Convention of Vermont, the Bishop has a veto upon all the proceedings of the body, even upon all propositions to alter the Constitution of that Diocese which gives him this power of control.

As the Constitution of this Diocese has been the subject of much and severe animadversion in the Church, it would be unjust not to admit, that the Convention of Vermont has also a veto upon the Bishop, which it may exercise by refusing to enact laws for his sanction, since without the action of the Convention no legislation can be accomplished.

For the sake of illustrating the liberalizing and protective influence of our General Constitution, we beg our reader to observe, that there is one clause in this Constitution of the Diocese of Vermont, which leaves its Convention free to act, without any extraneous influence or interference, so far as the general legislation of the Church is concerned. It is this: "The clergy and laity may elect officers without a Diocesan." Under this clause we suppose that clerical and lay deputies are chosen by the Convention to represent it in the General Convention; for it is contrary to the Constitution of the P. E. Church in the United States, that any Bishop shall have any direct influence in the appointment of clerical and lay deputies from his Diocese, except so far as his vote, as a member and chairman of the Diocesan Convention goes. Its language is: "*The Church in each Diocese shall be entitled to a representation of both* the clergy and laity, which representation shall consist of one or more deputies, not exceeding four of each order, *chosen by the Convention of the Diocese.*" Any Diocese, therefore, whose Convention is not perfectly free to elect its own representatives to the General Convention, would not be admitted into union with the P. E. Church in the United States through the General Convention; and any deputies, which it might elect, unless they "*represent*" without qualification "*the Church in the Diocese*," could not take their seats in the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies.

The view here presented is confirmed by the 6th Canon of 1838, which declares, that "no person, who is a candidate for Holy Orders in this Church,

3. By each Annual Convention there is a body chosen, called the Standing Committee of the Diocese, composed of clergymen, or of clergy and laity, according to the peculiar rule of the Diocese. The relation of this body to the Diocesan Convention is somewhat analogous to that of the vestry to the parish. It is a sort of sub-Convention, authorized to act, at all times, in certain specific matters which the Convention has the primary right to control but cannot manage conveniently.*

The chief duty of the Standing Committee is to examine and recommend candidates for the ministry, for ordination; and no candidate can be ordained, except through this recommendation.†

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shall be permitted to accept from any Diocesan Convention, an appointment as a lay deputy to the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies of the General Convention." The reasons assigned for the passage of this Canon, it is understood, was, that the candidate is subject to the Bishop, and therefore upon the principle just asserted can not properly represent the Diocesan Church or Convention. (Query: Ought not the same rule to be applied to Deacons?

Each Bishop has his proper and lawful influence and representation in the General Convention, in his own person, as a member of the House of Bishops.

* Canon 4, of 1832, Section 1. Appendix E.

† Every person ordained into the ministry of this Church, must first become a "candidate for orders," that is, be placed by the bishop upon the list of those in his diocese who are preparing for the sacred ministry. Now, in order to become a candidate, this rule must be complied with: "No person shall be considered a candidate for orders in this Church, unless he shall have produced to the bishop, to whom he intends to apply for orders, a certificate from the standing committee of the diocese of said bishop, that, from personal knowledge, or from testimonials laid before them, they believe that he is pious, sober, and honest; that &c." Canon 4, of 1838, section 2. After a person has been admitted a candidate, and is prepared for ordination, there is another rule to be complied with: "No person shall be ordained deacon or priest in this Church, unless he exhibit to the bishop the following testimonials from the standing committee of the diocese for which

They are secondarily a council of advice to the bishop, when he desires their advice; and they may also advise him, whensoever they themselves see fit to do so.

Where there is no bishop, the standing committee supplies his place in all things possible.*

4. By each Diocesan Convention four clerical and four lay deputies are elected to represent the Church of the diocese in the General Convention.†

We wish this fact to be especially noted, as it is the second great step in the representative government of the Church.

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he is to be ordained, which &c." Canon 15, of 1832, section 1. In the case of persons, who have been ministers, licentiates, or students of theology among other religious denominations, a similar rule applies: "The party applying to be received as a candidate, shall produce to the standing committee the same testimonials, &c. The standing committee, being satisfied on these points, may recommend him to the bishop, &c." Canon 7, of 1838, section 3.

These canons may be seen entire in the appendices E and G.

* Canon 4, of 1832, sections 2 and 3, appendix E.

It would occupy many pages to exhibit the various occasions in which the standing committee are empowered to act—in the admission of candidates for orders—in the ordination of deacons and of presbyters—in the consecration and resignation of bishops—in cases of discipline, &c. &c. It will be enough for the purposes of illustration, to say, that out of *sixty-one* canons of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, *twenty-nine* refer, in some particulars, to the standing committees of the dioceses. The important influence of this body may be easily surmised by a comparison of these twenty-nine canons, as we shall name their numbers, with their subjects, as stated in the appendix, D. They are canons 3, 5, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 22, 23, 24, 32, 33, 37, 38, 39, 40, 44, 48, 53, of 1832. Canons 4, 5, of 1835, Canons 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, of 1838. In every one of these canons there is an order for the action of the standing committee, either as an independent body representing the Diocesan Convention, or else, in the case of a diocese without a bishop, as representing the whole ecclesiastical authority of the diocese. To understand the powers of a Diocesan Convention, the various agencies of the standing committee must be considered.

† Constitution of the Protestant Episcopal Church, art. 2. Appendix C.

III. The General Convention. In this is the unity of the whole Church in the United States and its territories.

The object of the General Convention is to provide legislation for the whole Church—to define a uniform system of ecclesiastical government; and to promote, as far as possible, the external unity of the whole Church in all those matters, the control of which is not essential to the acknowledged independence of the various dioceses. It is the body, through which the several dioceses are united with each other; each diocese submitting itself, in all matters of general legislation, to the will of the majority of the dioceses—through which all are united (as in the case of individuals united with each other in the Church) upon the grand principles of mutual compromise and general conformity, in all matters which are not felt by each to be essential to their common independence, and which, of course, will be most jealously guarded by each separately, as well as by all conjointly. Thus, while the absolute unity of all is secured, the absolute independence of each is maintained inviolate; and this, indeed, perpetually, by the very nature of the association.

In the General Convention all the bishops and all the clergy and all the laity of the whole Church in the United States are represented.

Each of these three orders or classes has an absolute veto or negative in the passage of all the acts of the body; so that a concurrence of the three is necessary to all legislation.

The General Convention meets once in three years, at such time and place as itself determines.

A majority of the dioceses must be represented, before it can proceed to business; but the representation from two dioceses may adjourn.*

Freedom of debate is always allowed.

Special meetings may be called, under certain rules.†

The General Convention is in two Houses—the House of Bishops, and the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies.

Each House may originate and propose acts to the other; and each has a negative upon the acts of the other; so that the concurrence of both Houses is necessary to all legislation. The legislative powers of each are on an exact equality.

Each House elects its own Chairman and Secretary; and the two Houses communicate with each other by their secretaries, or by occasional committees.

In both Houses, the ordinary rules of parliamentary bodies prevail. Joint committees, and committees of conference, are frequently, and whenever necessary, appointed.

The two Houses unite with each other in public worship, at the opening of the session, (when the holy communion is administered,) and at the close of the

* Constitution of Protestant Episcopal Church, art. I. appendix C. There are now *twenty-six* dioceses at unity through (or, as it is more commonly expressed, in connexion with) the General Convention. *Fourteen* must, therefore, be represented, before the General Convention can proceed to business. The next General Convention will meet in the city of New York, on the first Wednesday in October, 1841, thenceforward triennially.

† Canon 49, of 1832, section 1, Appendix E.

session, (when the pastoral letter—a letter of solemn advice, addressed to all the Episcopal parishes in the United States—is read,) and during every day of the session.

1. *The House of Bishops.* This body is composed of all the bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States,* excepting such as shall have resigned their Episcopal charge.†

By a resolution adopted by it in 1804, it was made "a standing rule of this House, that the senior bishop present at the opening of any Convention, shall preside," seniority being reckoned, not from the years of human life, but from the date of consecration to the office of a bishop. From that time, until the Convention of 1835, inclusively, Bishop White, late of Pennsylvania, presided, having never been absent from a single session. The present Senior Bishop is the Rt. Rev. Alexander V. Griswold, D. D. of the Eastern Diocese. The secretary is chosen from session to session. The present secretary, who for many sessions has been elected, is the Rev. Bird Wilson, D. D. Professor of Systematic Divinity in the General Theological Seminary of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States.

In case the House of Bishops shall fail to signify its concurrence or non-concurrence (the latter in writing with the reasons therefor) with any act proposed to it by the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies, within three days thereafter, the proposed act will become

* Constitution of Protestant Episcopal Church, art. 3, Appendix C.

† Canon 32, of 1832, sect. 7, Appendix E.

a law. No such provision exists in regard to any measure originating with the House of Bishops, and proposed by them to the other House.

As the mode of conducting the business of this body is perfectly simple, and all the important particulars are stated in the general remarks above made upon both Houses, we close our notice of it by a reference to the note here subjoined as our authority.*

2. *The House of Clerical and Lay Deputies.* This body is composed, as has been mentioned, of Clerical and Lay Deputies, four of each order being elected by each Diocesan Convention to represent it in the same.†

The Chairman and Secretary of this body are chosen from session to session. The Rev. William E. Wyatt, D. D. of Baltimore, has, for several sessions last past, been elected president; and the Rev. Henry Authon, D. D. of New York city, the present secretary, has also been elected, for several sessions, to the office which he now fills.

Any question may, (if the clerical and lay deputies of any one diocese require it,) be put to each order (clergy and laity) separately. In case of such a division of the House, the mode of taking the vote provided by the constitution is as follows. Each order votes by dioceses, the majority of each order in each diocese represented being counted as one vote in that order. To constitute a concurrence of both orders, there must be, for the clergy, a majority of the dioceses actually represented by them, and, for the laity, a major-

* Constitution of the Protestant Episcopal Church, art. 3. Appendix C.

† Constitution of the Protestant Episcopal Church, art. 2, Appendix C.

ity of the dioceses actually represented by them, in the present convention.*

To illustrate the full power of this negative in the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies, we will state a case. There are now *twenty-six* dioceses in connexion through the General Convention; and, according to the first article of the constitution already quoted, a majority, that is, at least *fourteen*, of these dioceses must be represented (each, according to the second article of the constitution, by at least *one* of the clerical, *or one* of the lay deputies elected by its convention,) before the General Convention can proceed to business. Suppose now, it should so happen, that, in some meeting of the General Convention, all the clerical deputies from the twenty-six dioceses, that is, 104 clerical deputies, should be present, and only *three* lay deputies from three different dioceses should be present, then the majority of these three, i. e. *two* lay deputies, would, in the event of a vote by the division of orders, have an absolute veto upon all the legislation of the General Convention. So it would be, if the case were inverted, and only three or even two clerical deputies were present. So it would be, if only one clergyman, or one layman, being the only representative from one diocese, should represent his order in the General Convention; he might require the division of orders, and veto all the doings of the Convention. Such a disproportion in the representation, as here supposed, is of course only fanciful; we suppose the case, not as probable, or morally possible,

* Constitution of the Protestant Episcopal Church, art. 2, Appendix C.

but only to illustrate a fundamental principle in the Constitution of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States.

Thus the clergy and laity, as such, have a negative upon each other, not accidental, but constitutionally provided. And, since the House of Bishops and the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies must concur in all legislation, each order in the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies has actually a veto upon all the proceedings of the General Convention.

Thus the bishops, the clergy,* and the laity, have each a veto power; and *the concurrence of the three, as separate orders, is necessary to all legislation in this body.*

The observations here presented, in connexion with our previous statement of things common to both Houses, will suffice for the present topic.

In the next General Convention, if all the dioceses shall be fully represented, there will be *twenty* members in the House of Bishops, and *one hundred and four* clergymen, and *one hundred and four* laymen, in the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies.

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* It is possible, that to some minds there may seem to be no propriety in recognizing the bishops and clergy as separate orders, having a reciprocal check upon each other. But he must be a careless reader in the history of past ages, and a poor philosopher, and very much unacquainted with the facts in the case, who does not know, that (so far as the different orders in the Church can have separate interests) there is a wider distinction between the bishops and the clergy, than between the bishops and the laity. In the event of undue authority in the hands of bishops, the clergy are always the first to feel it, and the most exposed to suffer by it. In the great majority of cases, (and we appeal to the history of the past, and the reason of things, and to present facts, for proof,) the laity will be willing to give power to bishops, when the clergy will strive to withhold it.

IV. The view, which has been presented to the reader, suggests one or two comments.

It will be perceived, that there is a very manifest and beautiful analogy between the ecclesiastical institutions of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States, and the civil institutions of the United States.

In both, the power of government resides primarily in the whole people.

In both, the forms of government are representative; in the Church, however, there are no limitations in the application of the principle of universal suffrage.

The parish meetings, and the town or district elections are analogous.

The parish vestries, and the select men or common councils of the towns or cities are analogous.

The union of parishes into dioceses, and the union of towns or counties into states are analogous.

The independence of the several dioceses, and the independence of the several states are analogous.

The union of the several dioceses into one General Convention, and the union of the several states into one General Government are analogous.

The Diocesan Conventions with their secretaries, and the State Legislatures with their secretaries are analogous.

The representation in the Diocesan Conventions, and the representation in the State Legislatures, from the people directly, are analogous.

The standing committees, and the committees appointed by the Diocesan Conventions for the discipline

and trial of the clergy, &c., in the dioceses, and the Probate and County and Superior Courts of the states, are, in many particulars, analogous.

The General Convention of the United Dioceses, and the General Congress of the United States are analogous; the House of Bishops in the former corresponding to the Senate in the latter, and the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies in the former, corresponding to the House of Representatives in the latter.

So there is an analogy in the *course and mode of representation*, between the Protestant Episcopal Church and the United States; the Diocesan Conventions and the State Legislatures being chosen directly by the people, and the Deputies to the General Convention being chosen by the Diocesan Conventions as the Senators to the General Congress are chosen by the State Legislatures. The analogy is even more perfect than it seems to be. It is true, the members of the lower House in the General Convention are elected by the Diocesan Conventions as the members of the upper House in the General Congress are by the State Legislatures. But the clerical and lay deputies are elected *anew* for *every* General Convention, and not for several consecutive sessions as the United States Senators are, so that they are, in fact, (although elected by the Diocesan Conventions, which, it must be remembered, are themselves new every year,) more popular and representative of the peculiar and changing views and interests of the passing and present day than are the United States Senators, and actually correspond in this respect, (as hold-

ing their seats for a *single* session, and being elected under the peculiar circumstances and changing interests of the passing day,) to the United States Representatives. Then the bishops, although members of the upper House for life, are not hereditary, (like most members of the upper House in the British Parliament,) but elective, like our United States Senators, being elected each one by the convention of the diocese to which he belongs. The bishops, too, are generally elected, when in mature and experienced and somewhat advanced life, so that, actually, the bishop, as a member of the upper House in the General Convention, will not occupy his seat through many sessions more than the *three* several Congresses to which each United States Senator is elected. Hence members of the House of Bishops as elected by the Diocesan Conventions, and holding their seats for a few consecutive sessions, do actually, and almost exactly, correspond to the members of the Senate in the American Congress.

Furthermore, there is an analogy, in the mode of conducting business, between the legislative bodies of the Protestant Episcopal Church and those of the United States; especially in the necessity of a concurrence of the two Houses for all legislation, between the General Convention and the General Congress.

The reader may prove the foregoing analogies for himself. More might be added, if it seemed necessary.

It is to be observed, however, that the ecclesiastical institutions of the Protestant Episcopal Church are very much more simple than the civil institutions of

the United States,—*the popular representation being more direct, and the popular suffrage universal.* This assertion will be proved, by noticing two or three prominent points of diversity between the two systems.

Thus, in the Protestant Episcopal Church, there is no such body in the Diocesan Conventions as will correspond to the Senate in the State Legislatures. In the Diocesan Conventions, there is but one body, like the House of Representatives of the State Legislatures. In this one body, there is free discussion and free action, without any of the restraining influences of an upper House. The Diocesan Conventions are the simple Representative Conventions of the Diocesan Churches.

Again, in the Protestant Episcopal Church there is no officer analogous to the Governor of a state, or the President of the United States; for the bishop of a diocese corresponds rather to the chairman of a State Legislature, endowed with certain larger and standing powers. The Church, both diocesan and general, provides its executive as occasion requires; it is its own executive; it does not entrust its executive powers, by any system, away from itself.

Moreover, in the Protestant Episcopal Church there is nothing analogous to the Supreme Court of the United States; for each diocese is, in respect of all judiciary concerns, independent in itself.

Not to tarry longer upon the comparison, we pass to another comment.

It will be perceived, if any one will look carefully into the system of ecclesiastical government which

has been developed, that there is in it a remarkable comprehensiveness—that the elements of the three great systems, the Episcopal, the Presbyterial, the Congregational, are admirably and harmoniously combined—that these are so combined, that the entire strength of each is preserved.*

* In reading over the last sentence, the writer was reminded of an assertion very much like it, applied by the Rev. George Waddington to the Primitive Church. In turning to the "Church History" of that author, and reading the second section of his second chapter, entitled "Church Government," the writer was struck with the minute correspondence of the system exhibited in this section of our little book, with the system of the Primitive Church as there delineated. The passage is thrown into the Appendix, No. H, where the reader may mark the resemblance.

As there are some, who always associate, with the name of an Episcopal Church, the idea of an absolute or despotic government of bishops, we take this occasion to say, for their benefit, what all Episcopalians understand, that there is a wide distinction between the Episcopal *office* and Episcopal *government;* and that each may exist, and does exist, without the other. Thus, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, and the Executive Committee of the American Home Missionary Society do each exercise over all their missionaries and missionary stations an Episcopal (supervisory) *government* without any Episcopal *office*. Thus, in the Methodist Episcopal Church, there are both the Episcopal *office* and an almost absolute Episcopal *government*. Thus, in the Moravian Episcopal Church there is an Episcopal *office*, with almost no Episcopal *government*. And thus in the Protestant Episcopal Church there is the Episcopal *office*, while the *government* of the Church is an equal and mutually-balanced combination of Episcopal, Clerical, and Laical power.

The *office* of a bishop, in the estimation of the Protestant Episcopal Church, (as may be clearly shown by a collation of its ordinals,) is simply this—to ordain ministers for the Church, and to exert a supervisory watchfulness, and a constant and laborious moral influence, for the peace and holiness and edification of the flock of Christ over which he is appointed a chief pastor; and all this according to law. The *government* (i. e. control having the force of law and compelling obedience by penalties) of a bishop, in the estimation of the same Church, is granted by the authority of the whole Church, and is more or less, as the whole Church defines it. "It is to be remembered," writes one who has looked deeply into the history and theory of the Protestant Episcopal Church, "that there are many rights and functions held and exercised by bishops, not necessarily included in a strict interpretation of their divine commission, but—conferred by the Church. Besides,

Thus the Methodist will find in this Church the Episcopal and Clerical influence which are fundamental in his system; the Congregationalist will find the absolute and controling Laical influence which are fundamental in his system; and the Presbyterian will find that united agency of the Clergy and Laity, which he looks for,—not, however, variable and unequal, as must continually be the case where the two orders always vote in common, without any division, but just, uniform, and constitutionally guarded and perpetuated.

We wish our reader to understand the completeness and simplicity and the largeness of the system which has been unfolded. It may seem a solecism, still we assert truly, although paradoxically, that the Protestant Episcopal Church is governed absolutely by the bishops, yet it is governed absolutely by the clergy as a different order, nay, it is governed absolutely by the laity, as separate from both. Its government is such, that it associates the common wisdom, while it secures the independent rights, of these three orders in the Church.

With a further remark upon the justice and republicanism (and these terms are synonymous) of this

it is a fixed and settled thing in the organization of our Church, that *even in the exercise of their peculiar and appropriate spiritual functions, the bishops are to act within certain limits, and in certain prescribed modes.* Hence a portion of our constitutional and canon law. The same principle is recognized in the English Church. *It was in the Primitive Church.* There is, and always has been, a distinction between the *regular and canonical*, and the *irregular and uncanonical* exercise of the *spiritual* and *divinely-conferred* authority of the *bishops*, as well as of presbyters and deacons."—NEW YORK REVIEW, Oct. 1837, p. 480.

system, we will close the section. The laity, as an order, and as individuals, are a part of the Church, (yet not the whole Church,) and are peculiarly interested in all its concerns. It would be unjust and anti-republican to exclude them from their full share in the administration of all its affairs. So it may be said, and with equal truth and force, of the clergy, and of the bishops, both as separate orders and as individuals. Now, is there not true justice, and true republicanism in that system of ecclesiastical government here exhibited, which allows to every individual in the Church a vote in all its affairs; which secures, conclusively and inalienably, to every order in the Church, the right and the power of self-protection; and whose laws all, without any exception, are and must be the harmonious result of the unconstrained suffrages of the whole Church? Indeed, is not every system, which does not rest upon these strong principles, essentially opposed to justice and to republicanism?

Is not the system of government of the Protestant Episcopal Church so firm and so broad, that all the Christian people in our land may stand upon it and be brethren?

SECTION VI.

ORDINATION AND DUTIES OF MINISTERS.

Three orders or degrees of ministers—Deacons the lowest—Presbyters next—Bishops the highest—rules concerning ordination—Candidates for orders—testimonials of Standing Committee—preparatory steps of a Deacon—of a Presbyter—of a Bishop—all promise conformity to the doctrine, discipline and worship of the P. E. Church—duties of ministers—

explained in the ordinals—as commonly understood—scope and variety of clerical influence—the judgment of all denominations here approved.

The ministry of the Protestant Episcopal Church, as has been mentioned, is in three orders or degrees —Bishops, Presbyters or Priests, and Deacons.* The same orders, and no others, exist in the Protestant Episcopal Church in Great Britain. But there, owing to the secular arrangements of the Church, and its relation to certain property held in various ways, there are various offices and titles held by members of these three orders. Thus, two of their Bishops are called Archbishops, and the rest of their Bishops are called Suffragans; and among their Presbyters there are Archdeacons, Deans, Prebendaries, &c. These distinctions in the same orders do not exist in the United States. In respect to their ecclesiastical rights and titles, all Bishops here are equal, all Presbyters are equal, and all Deacons are equal.

I. No person may be ordained a Presbyter until after he has been a Deacon, nor a Bishop, until after he has passed through both of the inferior degrees. No person may be ordained a Deacon under twenty-one years of age, nor a Priest under twenty-four, nor a Bishop under thirty.†

Before any one can be ordained at all, he must be received as a "Candidate for Orders," that is, he must state his wish and intention to become a minister to the Bishop of the Diocese in which he resides,

* Canon 1, of 1832, App. E. Also preface to the Ordinal, Common Prayer Book.

† Canon 8, of 1832, App. E.

and be registered by the Bishop upon the list of approved candidates. To be thus registered, he must present to the Bishop certain testimonials of character and fitness, and also a recommendation, from the Standing Committee of the Diocese.*

After this, when a candidate has finished his primary studies, and applies for ordination, first as a Deacon, and then as a Presbyter, he must pass through certain literary examinations.† He must also present from the Standing Committee certain other testimonials to his moral and religious character and fitness for the ministry, before he can be ordained.‡

Candidates for Orders and Deacons are both subject to the particular care and direction of the Bishop.§

Before a person can be ordained a Bishop, he must exhibit, to the other Bishops, testimonials of his proper character, and of his election. These testimonials must be signed by the members of the Convention which elects him, and also by the clerical and lay Deputies in the General Convention. Or, if the election occur more than a year previous to the meeting of the General Convention, they must be signed by the members of the Convention which elects him and approved by the Standing Committees of the major number of the Dioceses in connexion with the

* For a fuller detail of these requisites, see Canons 4 and 7, of 1838, App. G.

† Canon 14, of 1832, and Canon 5, of 1838, App. E. and G.

‡ Canons 15 and 18, of 1832, and Canon 7, of 1838, App. E. and G.

§ Canon 4, of 1838, concluding sections, and Canons 10 and 17, of 1832, App. G. and E.

General Convention. In both cases, the majority of the Bishops must approve the testimonials, and consent to his consecration, before he can be ordained a Bishop.*

No person may be ordained a Deacon, Presbyter, or Bishop, until he has, in a book kept by the Bishop who ordains him, subscribed the following declaration: "I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salvation; and I do solemnly engage to conform to the doctrines and worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States."†

Every person ordained a Bishop, publicly before the Church at the time of his ordination, repeats and assumes the following promise to the same effect: "In the name of God, Amen. I, *N*, chosen Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in *N*, do promise conformity and obedience to the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. So help me God, through Jesus Christ."‡

II. The duties of the three orders are defined in the questions and answers and exhortations in the three ordination services respectively. They may be seen at length in the Common Prayer Book.

They are, substantially, to fulfil the various duties of the Gospel ministry, as these are commonly under-

* Canons 3 and 5, of 1832, App. E.

† Constit. of P. E. Church, Art. 7. App. C.

‡ See Ordinal, Common Prayer Book.

stood; and to conform to the laws of the Church, as they exist from time to time.

The peculiar duties of the Bishop, as may be seen in the Ordinal referred to, are—to ordain ministers, in obedience to the laws of the Church; to see that the lawful discipline of the Church is duly administered; and to exercise all possible moral influence for the glory of God and the unity and edification of the Church.

If the reader will examine carefully the several ordination services, in the Common Prayer Book, and also the several Canons quoted in the Appendices E, F, G, which relate, in divers particulars, to the ministry, he will perceive that there is in the Protestant Episcopal Church a very remarkable scope and variety of clerical influence and effort provided for.

It is true, that these have never yet been but partially developed or improved, because the hitherto straitened circumstances of the Church have not warranted nor indeed called for any new applications of clerical influence. But it is still true, that almost all the peculiar varieties and modes of clerical influence and effort now in operation amongst the several denominations in our country are actually provided for, and in many cases employed, in the Protestant Episcopal Church.

Thus the itinerant or unsettled missionary clergy of the Protestant Episcopal Church are identical nearly with the itinerant clergy of the Methodist Church. Thus the Missionary Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church correspond, in many respects,

to the Superintendents of the Methodist Church. The Diocesan Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church, with less powers and in a definite district, fulfil the same Episcopal or supervisory care of the Churches, which the Bishops of the Methodist Church fulfil. The State or County missionaries of the Protestant Episcopal Church, indeed, the Bishops themselves, are correspondent to the Evangelists of the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches. The parochial or settled clergy of the Protestant Episcopal Church correspond to the same class in all other Churches. Then, in the office of Deacon in the Protestant Episcopal Church there is a provision (which has never yet been fully improved) for an order corresponding to the local clergy of the Methodist Church; and, also, for an order intermediate between the local clergy of the Methodist Church and the Deacons of the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches—a less educated and local, yet an ordained, ministry, assistant to the regularly settled parochial clergy.

There are sundry other modifications of clerical influence, provided for by the system of the Protestant Episcopal Church. Not to be tedious, we assert (what may be proved and what the reader may prove for himself) that there is hardly a single mode or form of the ministry existing in the many bodies of professing Christians amongst us, which either is not actually, or may not be easily, evolved out of the existing system of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

In the arrangements of this Church on the subject of the clergy, or rather of ministerial agencies, there

is a scheme of unity provided, and respectfully and affectionately offered to the several denominations of Christians in our country.

SECTION VII.

RIGHTS OF THE BISHOPS AND CLERGY.

Each order has a separate right in legislation—a right to fulfil its duty without restraint—ordinary rights—those of the clergy well understood—those of the Bishops misunderstood—proper to explain—their rights all defined by the laws of the Church—no arbitrary official power of Bishops—they cannot be oppressive—for several reasons—from the organization of the Church—they are subjects of discipline—under public opinion—depend on the clergy and laity—are elected by the Diocesan Conventions—subject to their control—the Bishops are good and trust-worthy men—elected for this reason—we appeal to their character—are thankful for them—the system of the P. E. Church a medium between extremes—invites to unity.

Each of these orders has a separate and an equal right, as has been illustrated, with the laity, in the legislation of the Church.

Each of these orders has the right to fulfil its canonical and lawful duties, as has been represented, without restraint.

In all matters not connected with their peculiar ministerial duties and official character, they have the various rights of laymen.

The rights of the clergy are generally well enough understood. But it will be well to consider more minutely the rights of the Bishops, as on this subject there is a great deal of misapprehension.

If any one will take the trouble to look over the Constitution and Canons of the General Conventions, and the ordinals of the Church, and observe also the actual relation of our Bishops to the Diocesan Con-

ventions, he will be ready at once to enquire, in almost the very words of St. Jerome to Evagrius or Evangelus: "What does the Bishop do, *ordinatione excepta, ordination excepted,* which the Presbyter may not do?"

The Bishop has *canonically* a general right of supervision over the spiritual and other interests of his Diocese; and he has, moreover, a position of extraordinary moral influence.* But he has *not a single right* beyond, or above, or aside from the laws of the Church—which laws, as the Church has made them, so it may change whensoever and howsoever it may please.

It is evident, from what has been shewn, that the Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church have not *now* any too much power, nor indeed any power which ought to be restrained, or which may not be lawfully restrained.

But as many minds are very apprehensive that the Bishops of this Church do have, or at least may have, an undue and arbitrary and oppressive power, we will state a few reasons to shew that such an apprehension is altogether unwarrantable.

1. The organization of the Church, both general and diocesan, as it has been developed, is such that both the clergy and the laity have the most unrestricted means of self-protection.

* The writer can not soon forget the impression made on his mind, when once he heard one of the Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church, in referring to the fact above alluded to, apply with the deepest emotion to himself that solemn and affecting maxim of our Lord: "To whom much is given, from him shall much be required."

2. The Bishops are as much the subjects of ecclesiastical discipline, as the clergy or the laity; and the least assumption, on the part of any one of them, of unlawful or uncanonical power, being a violation of his "promise of conformity to the doctrine and discipline (i. e. laws) and worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States," would make him liable to presentment and trial. Furthermore, he would be so liable in his own Diocese, the very place where such assumption would be first felt and resisted.

3. The Bishops, be their own dispositions ever so severe, are, equally with all others, under the influence and the control of public opinion—that highest of all tribunals in our republican country. Their self-love and self-respect, if nothing more, would prevent Episcopal usurpations, even if they were not, as they are, from other causes impossible.

4. The Bishops depend, ordinarily, for their support even, and for all their prerogatives, upon the free action of the clergy and laity. They know very well, that any attempt or effort to increase their prerogatives would be the very last way to accomplish such an object.

5. The Bishops are always elected (according to the laws of the Protestant Episcopal Church) by the Diocesan Conventions. The clergy and laity would not surely elect over themselves either monsters or tyrants. In this fact is the fullest security. If it should so happen, that any Bishop, elected and consecrated to a Diocese, should be disposed to be arbitrary (yet by no overt breach of the law subjecting

him to discipline), one would think, that his Diocese would learn some carefulness and prudence for the election of his successor. But the supposition is improbable; for such a Bishop would find his hands tied continually, and his influence would be destroyed, and he would be compelled to one of the two alternatives—reformation or resignation. Or, in any event, the Church could soon make laws which should reach and control him.

6. Apart from these various considerations, in all of which it has been implied that the Bishops may be disposed to usurpation, there is another security which renders all these considerations actually unnecessary, and it is—the character of the Bishops. Who are the Bishops? They are men from the ranks, elected by the free suffrages of their brethren both clerical and lay—elected because of their worth, their fitness for the office—tried men, who would suffer the loss of all things rather than take one privilege unrighteously—faithful men, who have, in the laborious duties of the inferior ministry, proved themselves "worthy of a good degree"—men, who have the confidence and affection of their brethren, whom their brethren gladly exalt to be the first because they are the best in the Church—men who will "be to the flock of Christ, shepherds, not wolves, who will feed them, and devour them not, who will hold up the weak, heal the sick, bind up the broken, bring again the outcast, seek the lost, who will be so merciful, that they be not too remiss, so minister discipline that they forget not mercy, that when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, they may

receive the never-fading crown of glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord."*

We are willing to appeal to the character of the living Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church, as well as the departed, as to one—most powerful—testimony to the well-working of our ecclesiastical institutions. Let the reader look through the list of the House of Bishops, from the meek and venerable senior, who, like "Paul the aged," even now fulfils laboriously and patiently his "care of all the Churches," down to its junior member, who, like Timothy of Ephesus, was devoted to the work of the Lord Christ "from a child;" and then let him say, if there are in the country twenty other men, whom, in respect of the various qualifications for the Episcopal office, he would desire to see in their places. We love our Bishops; we thank God for such overseers; we thank Him, that, whatever may be the imperfections of our clergy or of our laity, we may point to them and say: "The angels of the Churches."

In conclusion, we ask, Is there any thing in the fact of having Bishops or overseers, such as those in the Protestant Episcopal Church, whose powers are all exercised in "conformity and obedience to the doctrine, discipline, and worship" appointed by the Church, and who are directly responsible to the Church for all their conduct, and who, likewise, from the very circumstances of their appointment to office, must be good and faithful men, is there any thing, we repeat, to deter Christians from an union with this

* Service for the Consecration of Bishops, Common Prayer Book.

Church? Indeed, is there not, in all those arrangements which refer to the Bishops and clergy, much to recommend the Protestant Episcopal Church as the "happy medium" between all extremes, and the best system for promoting the desirable result of Christian and ecclesiastical unity?

SECTION VIII.

ADMISSION TO THE SACRAMENTS.

Principles of Church membership important—two sacraments—admission to Baptism—requisites—Belief in the Scriptures—and earnest self-consecration to the service of Christ—no requisites beyond the *spiritual character* of a Christian—admission to the Lord's Supper—through Confirmation which is the resumption of the Baptismal obligation—Sacraments open to all true disciples of Christ—free as the Saviour's blood—the Church has no right to restrict them from any who love their Lord—the clergy bound to administer them—liable to punishment if arbitrary—no substitution of human traditions in place of the Divine commandments—the sacraments of the Protestant Episcopal Church open to all Christians in our land.

The title of this Section is a phrase synonymous with the more common phrases: Admission to the Church, or to the privileges of the Church, or of Church membership. Any person, having free access to the sacraments is in that fact shewn to be in full communion with his brethren. And the chief subjects of watchfulness are the sacraments; and discipline consists generally in the limitation or forbiddal of sacramental privileges. It is, therefore, an important characteristic of any Church—the mode or rules of admission to the sacraments.

The sacraments of the Protestant Episcopal Church, in the language of its catechism, are "two only, as

generally necessary to salvation, that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord."

1. Baptism. The rule for admission to baptism is in the rubric prefatory to the Office for its ministration: "When any such persons as are of riper years are to be baptized, timely notice shall be given to the minister; so that due care may be taken for their examination, whether they be sufficiently instructed in the principles of the Christian Religion; and that they may be exhorted to prepare themselves, with prayers and fasting, for the receiving of this Holy Sacrament."

The only public confession required is in the following extract from the same service:

"The Minister shall then demand of the Persons to be baptized as follows; the Questions being considered as addressed to them severally, and the Answers to be made accordingly.

Question. Dost thou renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the sinful desires of the flesh; so that thou wilt not follow, nor be led by them?

Ans. I renounce them all; and, by God's help, will endeavour not to follow, nor be led by them.

Quest. Dost thou believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith, as contained in the Apostles' Creed?*

Ans. I do.

Quest. Wilt thou be baptized in this Faith?

Ans. That is my desire.

Quest. Wilt thou then obediently keep God's holy will and commandments; and walk in the same all the days of thy life?

Ans. I will, by God's help."

* This Creed, a concise and beautiful summary of Christian doctrine, is as follows:

"I Believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth:

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell, (*or* He went into the

It will be perceived, that nothing is required for this holy ordinance of entrance into Christs's visible Church, more than a solemn confession of Christ; and self-dedication to His service; and renunciation of the sins of the world, the flesh, and the devil; and a declaration of belief in the great historical facts and uncontroverted practical doctrines of Christianity. There is no profession of any Philosophy of Religion, or of any thing not clearly revealed and declared in the Scripture; *no requisition of any thing not indispensably necessary to the spiritual character of a true disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

2. THE SUPPER OF THE LORD. The rule for admission to the Supper of the Lord is in the Rubric at the end of the Order of Confirmation: "There shall none be admitted to the Holy Communion, until such time as he be confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed."

Confirmation is administered by the Bishop to such persons as being prepared for the Holy Communion are recommended to him by the parish minister for the ordinance: "The minister of every parish shall either bring, or send in writing, with his hand subscribed thereunto, the names of all such persons within his parish, as he shall think fit to be presented to the Bishop to be confirmed."*

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place of departed spirits;) The third day he rose from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; The holy Catholic Church; The Communion of Saints; The forgiveness of sins; The resurrection of the body, And the life everlasting. *Amen.*"

* Rubric at the end of the Catechism.

The public confession, then, made in Confirmation is all that is required for the Supper of the Lord. It is in the following:

"Then shall the Bishop say (to the persons to be confirmed), 'Do ye here, in the presence of God, and of this congregation, renew the solemn promise and vow that ye made, or that was made in your name, at your baptism; ratifying and confirming the same; and acknowledging yourselves bound to believe and do all those things which ye then undertook, or your sponsors then undertook for you?'

And every one shall audibly answer,

I do."

It will be perceived, that the only confession required is the ratification or renewal of the baptismal vow and faith.

The same remarks made on that baptismal confession are equally applicable here.

The Sacraments in the Protestant Episcopal Church, we have shewn, are open to all who receive the truth of the Scriptures, and who have devoted themselves to the discipleship of the Son of God. Whatsoever may be his peculiarity of opinion on a thousand topics of biblical interpretation or of systematic and philosophical theology, whatsoever may be his natural infirmity of mind or the prejudices of his education, whether he be Calvinist or Arminian, of the old school or of the new school, or none of these, *if he be a true disciple of the blessed Redeemer*, the man is welcome to the sacraments of his Master.

There is a stronger view of this fact. Such a man,

as this referred to, may come and *demand* admission to the sacraments, and there is no power in the Church to refuse him; he may demand the sacraments, and he may prosecute the clergyman, who shall contumaciously and arbitrarily refuse them to him, even to ecclesiastical censure and degradation.*

We ask the reader to look again at the requisites for admission to the sacraments, and we tell him, that, if he can return the answers there given to the questions there propounded, he will be welcome to all the privileges of Church-membership, nay, he has a right lawfully to demand that he be received to an equality in all things with his brethren, in the Protestant Episcopal Church.†

It is in our heart to enlarge much upon the subject of this Section, and to defend more elaborately these regulations of the Protestant Episcopal Church; but we must leave them to the decision of the reader upon his own investigation of their merits.

The theory of the Protestant Episcopal Church is, that the sacraments of our Lord are as free to all his true disciples, as are the benefits of his precious blood. And sin is upon the man, or the Church, that dares to put any bar between the sacraments and the true disciple of our Lord. But, alas! how often in our Protestant land, do they "teach for doctrines the

*See the Section (No. 11.) on Discipline.

†To be a minister, be it remembered, however, more is required, viz. "Conformity to the doctrines, discipline, and worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States," as these are at any time canonically defined by the authority of the whole Church. This has been explained in Section 6, on the Ordination and Duties of Ministers, and will be farther explained in the next Section, (9) on Creeds.

commandments of men," and substitute mere human traditions in place of the commandments of God! We hold, that the Church may not reject any whom Christ has admitted to his love, and whom Christ will not reject at the last. If the Church of Rome has erred in withholding the cup from the laity, what shall we say of those Protestant Churches, which perseveringly withhold both the bread and the wine from all, even true disciples of Christ, who cannot conscientiously believe, or profess to believe, in certain peculiar and unimportant dogmas? When Christ our Lord has declared: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," and when he has commanded all those who love him: "do this, as oft as ye eat this bread and drink of this cup, in remembrance of me," what right has the Church (the company of his disciples bound to obey Him and to fulfil His will in all things) to superadd to his commands the condition of its frail and unwise humanity. At this moment there are thousands of Churches professedly Protestant in our land, contending with each other, each systematically debarring forever from Christ's sacraments, in the keeping of itself (the "one body"), the thousands and tens of thousands of Christ's beloved disciples, who do not conscientiously believe, or declare a belief, in certain tenets or practices—a belief in which is, upon their own acknowledgment, in no wise necessary to either the formation or the proof of the Christian character, a spiritual discipleship of Christ. To take a single illustration, there is a Christian Church in the United States, numbering about *seven hundred*

thousand members, the Methodist Episcopal Church; and it is a distinctively Arminian Church. Now its members are, upon the acknowledgment of all, in great numbers, most devotedly pious and exemplary followers of Christ. Yet *not one* of these seven hundred thousand Christians, could be received into regular standing, as a member, of a large proportion of the Churches, professedly Calvinistic, among the Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, &c., of our country. So far as the theory or system of these last named Churches is concerned, every one of these *seven* hundred thousand Christians would be compelled to live and to die without the sacraments of their Lord; not because they do not love Christ, not because they do not wish his sacraments, not because they do not fulfil all *His* commandments, but simply because they cannot believe in a certain way, upon certain topics, purely intellectual and not connected with Christian spirituality, simply because they cannot comply with certain instructions or devices of men. And for aught we know to the contrary, there may be some Arminian Churches in our country as particular in the exclusion of Calvinists from the sacraments of their Lord. We speak not of Church doctrines but Church systems. Accordingly we say, that if Romanism be the name of a system, which sets up unlawful terms of admission to the sacraments, which superadds, to Christ's commands, merely human traditions, and which therefore oppresses and tyrannizes over Christ's true disciples, and which therein disobeys and dishonors Christ, then there is such a thing in our country as Protestant Romanism and that on a large scale.

And it is necessary that the cry of the great Reformers be continued even in our day and country: "come out and be separate," until the Reformation of Christ's Church be complete, and her primitive purity be restored, and her members all "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free."

We love our Christian brethren of all denominations—all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. But we cannot, and ought not to speak otherwise than solemnly and strongly of errors, especially when they are so widely prevalent, and when the very perfectness of Christ's Church, and the Christian liberty of his disciples are so imminently endangered, so systematically violated.

There is one Church which may hold all these dissentients—one, in which they shall all be welcome to the sacraments of their common Lord, and in which, while they shall be "all one in Christ Jesus," they shall be at liberty to differ as widely as they may please on the many topics which now divide them, the determination of which is not essential to holiness or to salvation. Being thus united they will have less to separate them even on these points, and may hope for an honest and an earlier agreement in their intellectual theories.

SECTION IX.

CREEDS.

Enumeration of the creeds of the P. E. Church—in what respects the creeds are obligatory upon the members of the Church—the laity—the clergy—the Apostles' creed only to be believed and confessed, *ex animo*—the creeds may be changed by the majority of the whole Church in the General Con-

vention—the benefit of the creeds—why the Church requires any creed—no other, more minute and explicit, than the Apostles' creed, ought to be required for admission to the sacraments—the system of the P. E. Church in regard to her creeds favorable to the discovery and the security of Christian truth—the P. E. Church fitted for the union of all Christians who love their Lord supremely, and each other affectionately and forbearingly.

I. What are the creeds of the P. E. Church?

These are contained in the Holy Scriptures;* the two books of Homilies; the thirty-nine Articles of religion; the Apostles' creed; the Nicene creed; and in the language of the various formularies of the Church.

II. In what respects are the creeds obligatory upon the members of the Protestant Episcopal Church?

The Apostles' creed is required to be believed and confessed *ex animo* by every person clerical and lay, in communion with this Church through the sacraments. This is the only creed which is required to be so believed and confessed by any member of this Church. The reasons of the requisition were alluded to in the last section.

In the case of the clergy there is a further obligation. None of the clergy, indeed, are obliged to confess their belief in any other than the Apostles' creed. But every Deacon, and Priest, and Bishop is obliged, prior to his ordination, to "engage and promise confor-

* So do all Churches claim, none more decidedly than the P. E. Church; as in the 6th article: "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatever 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 the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." So, too, in the question put to every Presbyter and Bishop at his ordination: "are you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain all doctrine required as necessary for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ? and are you determined out of the said scriptures to instruct the people committed to your charge, and to teach or maintain nothing, as necessary to eternal salvation, but that which you shall be persuaded, may be concluded and proved by the scriptures?"

mity to the doctrines (and discipline, *in the case of the Bishop*,) and worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States."*

The object accomplished by this engagement of conformity is the harmony, and in general terms, the internal unity, of the Church.

III. May the creeds be changed?

The creeds are all subject to the revisal and decisions of the General Convention; and may at any time be changed, or abrogated, whensoever the majority of the whole Church represented in that body shall so order.†

IV. We will now briefly reply to two or three enquiries which may be proposed by different classes of readers.

1. Since the members of the Protestant Episcopal Church are expected or rather required to believe heartily, and confess publicly only one of them, and that the most concise and the most general and scriptural in its terms, what is the benefit of these creeds?

We reply: These creeds, as they exist from time to time, are the religious opinions of the actual present majority of the whole Church. On all matters contained in them, therefore, the members of the Church learn to be kind and tolerant towards each other.

Furthermore and chiefly, these creeds serve as standards of religious faith and duty, and are powerful agents to instruct the ignorant, to confirm the wa-

* See Section 6, on the "Ordination and Duties of Ministers."

† Constitution of the P. E. Church, article 8, Appendix C.

vering, to restrain the rash, and to guide the enquiring.

2. Since only the Apostles' Creed is made the test of religious (intellectual) opinion, for admission to the sacraments, why does the Church require any creed for this purpose?

We reply: Because the confession of religious faith on these occasions is thought to be scriptural, and has been practised by the universal Church in all ages; and the form on these occasions in the apostolical and primitive Church was substantially the same with that contained in the Apostles' Creed. We contend, moreover, that there is nothing oppressive in requiring the confession of this creed; for whosoever does not believe in its simple and scriptural clauses, is an infidel and no Christian in his belief, and, of course, wishes for no Church and no sacraments.

As to the abstract propriety of creeds, *as standards of faith* (not as requisites for the sacraments), in a Church, we contend, that there always must and will be such, from the very nature of things. Even in those cases, where it is supposed that no creeds exist, the prayers and sermons of the minister or preacher, the Psalms and the Hymns in use, &c., are the exponents and representatives of the religious opinions, that is, they are the creeds, of the congregation which adopts and approves them as its own.

3. Since none other than the Apostles' Creed is obligatory (that is, under the penalty of a refusal of the sacraments except it be confessed) upon the members of the Church; and since all persons, who believe

the scriptures and are not infidels, will acknowledge this creed, whatever may be their differences in interpreting and explaining the scriptures,—is there not, therefore danger to the doctrines of the Church from such liberality? and ought not another and more minute and explicit creed to be substituted?

We reply: The Church has no right to require any further intellectual qualifications for the sacraments, than a belief in the plain and indisputable facts and doctrines of the scripture, such as is expressed, substantially, in the Apostles' Creed. When it goes beyond this, it sets up human reasonings, the doctrines of men, as the terms upon which men are to receive the privileges of Christ's Church—an usurpation which can not be justified. It is not for the Church, in the execution of its trust, to say what is danger on the one hand, or what is expediency on the other. It is simply to administer the ordinances of Christ upon his own terms, and as He himself would to all his true disciples, and leave the protection of its doctrines to the gracious and mighty providence of its great Head.

We grant, that the doctrines of the Church, as they exist from time to time, are liable to be changed or modified; but, we contend, there is no danger to Christian truth, under the regulations objected to. The object of the Church is not to perpetuate the thousand peculiar interpretations of scripture and the many other opinions, which happen at any time to be generally maintained. Its object is to perpetuate the scriptures, and to develope and extend Christian truth.

It is secured completely against any hasty or immature change of its standards; while, at the same time, it keeps itself ready and willing to allow any change in them, whensoever the cautious judgment and mature deliberation of the whole Church has prepared it for such change, and the lawful decision of the true majority demands it.

Under the existing regulations of the Protestant Episcopal Church, there is room for the most free enjoyment of honest private opinion, and liberty for the most unreserved discussion; there are no penalties nor restraints upon opinion or discussion. And whensoever any opinion, at variance with any other at present embodied in its standards, shall become the opinion of the majority of the whole Church, it may then, in a quiet and regular way, be acknowledged, and the public standards and teachings of the Church be made to conform to it. In the mean time, it must be thoroughly tested, and truth will be promoted by the discussion. If the opinion be not so manifestly truth, as to commend itself, in the discussion, to the majority of the whole Church, it certainly is not worthy of being publicly or formally acknowledged. If, on the other hand, it be so manifestly truth, there surely ought not to be any hindrance to its public and formal acknowledgment.

Let the minority, then, whilst they have unrestrained access to all the privileges of the Church of Christ, and whilst there is no bar to the utmost freedom of discussion, and none, therefore, to the eventual triumph of truth (and the opinions of any hypothetical

minority are supposed by them to be truth), be wisely satisfied, if the opinions of the majority are expressed in the standards of the Church. Let them labor on for truth. If they have it with them, they will ultimately and certainly carry the whole Church by the truth. Let them labor in faith; for their efforts, as brethren, and within the Church, will be vastly more effective than their efforts as opponents or adversaries without it.

It appears to us, that a Church, having such regulations as these of the Protestant Episcopal Church, is constituted, better than all others, for the elucidation, the extension, and the perpetuity of Christian truth; and therefore, for the union of all those who love our Lord with supreme devotion, and who love each other with brotherly kindness and affectionate forbearance.

SECTION X.

DOCTRINE.

The doctrine of the Protestant Episcopal Church scriptural and practical—enumeration of some prominent doctrines—reference to standards—the position of the Protestant Episcopal Church in relation to doctrines connected with the philosophy of religion—the thirty-nine articles—especially the seventeenth article—controversies concerning them—formerly—now ceased—benefit of the controversy—history of the articles—their sense in the English Church—to be literally and liberally interpreted—quotations from Bishop Burnet and Bishop White—both Calvinists and Arminians always in the English Church—subscriptions of the clergy—history of the articles of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States—established in 1801—are articles of peace—both Calvinists and Arminians in the Protestant Episcopal Church—members of this Church free to be either, and to discuss their opinions—both clergy and laity—but the pulpit is protected from both—the clergy to preach only scripture—these, if they please, as scripture—but not as a system—neither Calvinism nor Arminianism, as such, may be advocated or be condemned in the pulpit—only the

word of God to be preached—proved—the Protestant Episcopal Church well arranged to unite all Christians of all opposing views on these subjects.

THE doctrine of the Protestant Episcopal Church, as taught in its various formularies and standards, is strictly scriptural and practical, rather than philosophical and abstract; and this is generally, we believe, as it ought to be universally, the doctrine taught by its living ministry from the pulpit.

That man is by nature very far gone from original righteousness, and utterly unable to do any thing good of himself; that the Lord Jesus Christ made, by his own oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world; that no man can be saved, except he be a disciple of Christ, and be converted by the Spirit of God; that the Holy Ghost is always reproving the unconverted, and sanctifying the watchful and prayerful believer; that whosoever will, may (the Holy Spirit being ever ready to help) come to Christ and be saved; and that all, who do not repent of sin, and believe (practically and spiritually as well as intellectually) in the Son of God, are exposed to everlasting damnation, and can never see God if they die without repentance and without faith, are cardinal and prominent doctrines, and are continually repeated in all its Confessions of Faith and Standards of instruction, exhortation and prayer.

The doctrines of the Protestant Episcopal Church adjunct to those here mentioned, and on many other points, which we have no space to notice or to defend,

may be seen by the reader who will examine its published standards.

Our chief design in this Section is to define the position of the Protestant Episcopal Church, as respects those doctrines which are especially connected with the philosophy of religion, and are known by the names of Calvinism and Arminianism. These two general names cover, in popular language, several varieties of opinion.

It has been debated very much formerly, and chiefly in the Church of England, by the Calvinists, that certain of the thirty-nine Articles of Religion are favorable to their views; and by the Arminians, that other of the Articles and portions of the public formularies are favorable to their opinions. That controversy was the occasion of a very thorough historical research into the opinions of the first English Reformers, and their connexion with the Continental divines. It was also the occasion of a very careful comparison of the respective dates or periods, when the English Articles and Formularies were first arranged, and when the Calvinistic and Arminian systems were first generally agitated. The controversy has of late years almost entirely ceased; and it is now very generally conceded, that the Articles of the English Church (with which, in fact, the controversy is mainly concerned) were framed, not with a reference to the systems known afterwards distinctively as Calvinism and Arminianism, but with a reference to previous systems maintained in the Churches of the East and of the West prior to, and at the date of, the Reforma-

tion. Their object was primarily to elucidate the ancient doctrines of the Christian Church, and to expose many errors of the Church of Rome; and not to decide upon questions which had hardly begun to be controverted by the Continental Protestants.

Not to enter upon a discussion of the sense of the Articles, we wish to state, that there always have been, in the Church of England, both Calvinists and Arminians, of every grade, in full communion with that Church and in the discharge of its highest offices, clergymen and laymen; and that their respective systems have been very freely and extensively treated and disputed, and without subjecting any of the controversialists to discipline. Now, in the Church of England, every clergyman is obliged to subscribe the Articles "willingly, and ex animo, and acknowledge all and every Article to be agreeable to the word of God." At the same time each subscriber must take the Articles "in the literal and grammatical sense." In this way, while the Articles concerned in this discussion are worded in general terms capable of several constructions, men may conscientiously subscribe them with different opinions. The facts, referred to, shew that even in England these Articles are not supposed to be decisive upon either side of the question between the disputants. In confirmation of our statement, we may add, that Bishop Burnet, at the close of his elaborate exposition of the seventeenth Article, declares: "the Church has not been peremptory, but a latitude has been left to different opinions;" and Bishop White, of our own time, in his "Comparative

Views," asserts: "the Reformers of the Church of England did indeed accommodate to an opposition of opinion existing as early as the fifth century of the Christian Church."

At all events, whatever may be the sense of the Articles in the English Church, those of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States are not to be judged by that sense, but by themselves.

The Articles of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States were not established by the General Convention, until September 12th, in the year 1801, after the whole subject of Articles of Religion, and of these in particular, had been before the Church and the General Convention for many years. They were finally adopted, in their present form, as Articles of peace and a Declaration of opinion, and not as authoritative upon the conscience. They are not binding in any way upon the laity, further than as they expound and testify to Christian truth, and illustrate the general judgment of the Church; and in this influence, as testimony, they have great force. They are obligatory upon the clergy, only as they are embraced under the "promise of *conformity* to the doctrines, &c. of the Protestant Episcopal Church." This obligation is, nevertheless, sufficient for the maintenance of concord, and of uniformity in the public instructions of the pulpit.

An interesting and succinct history of the discussion of the Articles in the General Convention, and of their final establishment in 1801, is copied into the Appendix, No. I, from the "Memoir of the Life of

Bishop White," by the Rev. Bird Wilson, D. D., Professor of Systematic Divinity in the General Theological Seminary of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States.

From this history of their establishment, it appears, that all efforts to make them speak more distinctly on either side of the controverted systems of philosophical Theology were rejected; and that the Articles were finally left without any reference to the more modern controversies.

As a matter of fact, too, there are Calvinists and Arminians among both the Clergy and the Laity of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, and all are considered as perfectly justified in holding their particular views.

The opinion of the writer, which he states with diffidence, as he has formed it from a consideration of the history of the Articles in our American Church, as compared with the obligations assumed in the services for baptism and confirmation, and in the ordination offices, is this—that all the members of the Church, both clergy and laity, are at liberty to hold any opinions they may see best on these systems, and are also at liberty to discuss their opinions, as they may please, and at all times, *with one exception.* This exception regards the public preaching of the clergy. The writer supposes, that no minister of this Church has any right to advocate either of the controverted systems, *as such*, in the pulpit. Else, these Articles are not Articles of peace, and will not accomplish uniformity in the public ministry. If one minister may

argue for, or declaim against, the one system, another minister has an equal right to argue for, or declaim against, the other system; and thus the pulpit may be contradictory, and the Articles be made, contrary to their design, Articles of contention. The writer supposes, that in the purpose of this Church, no minister is to be known, in his pulpit, as a Calvinist or an Arminian; that he has no right there to preach the one or the other system, or to condemn the one or the other, as such. He has a right to explain the Articles, as the decisions of the Church, or to preach on any of their topics as scriptural, in the pulpit. He may advocate a philosophical system out of the pulpit, as he may see fit. But in the Protestant Episcopal Church, the entire preaching of the minister, and all the instruction he may communicate to any, in his ministerial or official character, must be purely scriptural. The office of the ministry in this Church is solemnly, and singly, and jealously devoted to the heralding of the word of God.

A few extracts from the Ordination Services will sustain our assertion. In the exhortation in the Ordination of Priests is the following decisive passage:

"Forasmuch then as your Office is both of so great excellency, and of so great difficulty, ye see with how great care and study ye ought to apply yourselves, as well to show yourselves dutiful and thankful unto that Lord who hath placed you in so high a dignity; as also to beware that neither you yourselves offend, nor be occasion that others offend. Howbeit ye cannot have a mind and will thereto of yourselves; for

that will and ability is given of God alone: therefore ye ought, and have need to pray earnestly for his Holy Spirit. And seeing that ye cannot by any other means compass the doing of so weighty a work, pertaining to the salvation of man, *but with doctrine and exhortation taken out of the holy Scriptures*, and with a life agreeable to the same; consider how studious ye ought to be *in reading and learning the Scriptures*, and in framing the manners both of yourselves and of them that specially pertain unto you, *according to the rule of the same Scriptures;* and for this self-same cause, how ye ought to forsake and set aside, as much as ye may, all worldly cares and studies.

"We have good hope that ye have well weighed these things with yourselves long before this time; and that ye have clearly determined, by God's grace, to give yourselves wholly to this Office, whereunto it hath pleased God to call you: so that, as much as lieth in you, ye will apply yourselves wholly to this one thing, and draw all your cares and studies this way; and that ye will continually pray to God the Father, by the mediation of our only Saviour Jesus Christ, for the heavenly assistance of the Holy Ghost: that *by daily reading and weighing the Scriptures*, ye may wax riper and stronger in your Ministry; and that ye may so endeavour yourselves from time to time to sanctify the lives of you and yours, and to fashion them after the rule and doctrine of Christ, that ye may be wholesome and godly examples and patterns for the people to follow."

Then, the three questions and answers, in the ordi-

nation of both Priests and Bishops—the only ones which relate particularly to preaching, are these :

" *The Bishop.* Are you persuaded that the holy Scriptures contain all Doctrine required as necessary for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ? and are you determined, *out of the said Scriptures* to instruct the people committed to your charge, and to teach nothing, as necessary to eternal salvation, but that which you shall be persuaded, *may be concluded and proved by the Scripture?*

Answer. I am so persuaded, and have so determined, by God's grace.

The Bishop. Will you be ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away from the Church all erroneous and strange doctrines *contrary to God's word;* and to use both public and private monitions and exhortations, as well to the sick as the whole within your cures, as need shall require, and occasion shall be given?

Answer. I will, the Lord being my helper.

The Bishop. Will you be diligent in prayers, and in reading the holy Scriptures, and in such studies as help to the knowledge of the same, laying aside the study of the world and the flesh?

Answer. I will endeavour so to do, the Lord being my helper."

Thus it appears that the Scriptures only are recognized in the public ministry of the Protestant Episcopal Church; and that there is no obligation, and indeed no permission, to its clergy to preach except upon the sacred scriptures immediately and distinctly.

Hence, while all the members of the Church, both clergy and laity, are left at perfect liberty to form and to hold and to discuss any conscientious opinions on these controverted systems, and this, too, without affecting any of their rights or privileges of Church-membership, at the very same time, the pulpit is protected from discords; and the people are secured in their right to be always instructed from the sacred Scriptures; and the public ministry is compelled ever to fulfil its one holy office of publishing the divine truth, of proclaiming to a needy world the message of that mercy and salvation which God has provided through His Son and Spirit.

Does not the Protestant Episcopal Church deserve the approbation of all Christians, however they may differ on these controverted doctrines? And does it not come before them, and offer itself to them all, as a friendly arbiter, by whom their differences may be reconciled, or, at least, by whose agency they may "agree to differ," when they shall have learned that their Christian interests, and aims, and hopes, and affections are common, and that they may worship God in a common temple.

SECTION XI.

DISCIPLINE.

The Discipline of the Protestant Episcopal Church not arbitary—regulated by law—the *occasions* defined by the General Convention—the *modes* by the Diocesan Conventions—*the subjects*—THE MINISTRY—degrees of discipline—enumeration of offences liable to discipline—prosecutors—candidates for orders liable as laymen—mode of trial of ministers—each order tried by peers—sentence pronounced by the Bishop—THE LAITY—*oc-*

casions and mode of Discipline—right of appeal—first to the Bishop—then to a special Ecclesiastical Diocesan court—Discipline of the Protestant Episcopal Church rather merciful than austere—defended—open to improvement—present principles just—proper to an all-embracing Church.

THE Discipline of the Protestant Episcopal Church is not arbitrary; it is defined and regulated by law.

The *occasions*, on which discipline shall be administered are all defined by the General Convention.

The particular *modes* of its administration are for the most part defined by the Diocesan Conventions.

The subjects of discipline are, all unworthy members of the Church—both of the ministry and the laity.

1. THE MINISTRY. There are several degrees of discipline, such as admonition, censure, suspension, and degradation. A minister once degraded can never be restored to the ministry.*

The offences which make any minister liable to discipline are various, such as discontinuance of his ministry; neglect of public worship or of the holy communion; frequenting improper places of amusement; presenting an unworthy candidate for ordination; obstinate refusal to resign a Rectorship in case of certain specified differences with his congregation; violation of his ordination vows and of the laws and canons of the Church; as well as immoralities of all sorts.†

Any minister, wishing to renounce the ministry of this Church, may, at his own request, be displaced;

* Canon 39, of 1832, Section 1. App. E.

† Canons 34 and 37 of 1832, App. E.

and if his moral character be not implicated, this fact shall be declared.*

Whenever there is a public rumor, or a formal complaint, against any minister, it is the duty of the Bishop, or of the Standing Committee, as the case may be, to take measures for bringing the individual accused to trial.†

Candidates for the ministry are liable in their character as Laymen. If any candidate, however, shall delay, longer than three years, to apply for his first and second examinations, or longer than five years, to apply for his third and fourth examinations, unless the Bishop for sufficient reasons grant him a special permission for such delay, his name must be struck from the list of candidates.‡

In every trial of a minister, the decision of the ecclesiastical court appointed or provided for by the Convention of the Diocese to which he belongs, is definitive. The Convention may allow him a new trial, if there be new or fuller testimony to be presented. But there is no court of appeal of higher authority than the ecclesiastical court referred to, since each Diocese is independent in the management of its own affairs.

Every sentence, after the decision of such ecclesiastical court, is pronounced by a Bishop, whether it be against a Deacon, or a Presbyter, or a Bishop.§

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* Canon 38 of 1832, App. E.

† Canon 37, of 1832, and Canon 5, of 1835, App. E. and F.

‡ Canon 4, of 1838, Section 9, App. G.

§ Consit. of P. E. Church, Art. 6, App. C.

2. THE LAITY. The *occasions* and the *mode* of discipline, in the case of the laity, are both expressed in the two First Rubrics, Prefatory to the Order for the administration of the Lord's Supper, as follows:

"If among those who come to be partakers of the Holy Communion, the Minister shall know any to be an open and notorious evil liver, or to have done any wrong to his neighbours by word or deed, so that the Congregation be thereby offended; he shall advertise him, that he presume not to come to the Lord's Table, until he have openly declared himself to have truly repented and amended his former evil life, that the Congregation may thereby be satisfied; and that he hath recompensed the parties to whom he hath done wrong; or at least declare himself to be in full purpose so to do, as soon as he conveniently may.

"The same order shall the Minister use with those, betwixt whom he perceiveth malice and hatred to reign; not suffering them to be partakers of the Lord's Table, until he know them to be reconciled. And if one of the parties, so at variance, be content to forgive from the bottom of his heart all that the other hath trespassed against him, and to make amends for that wherein he himself hath offended; and the other party will not be persuaded to a godly unity, but remain still in his frowardness and malice; the Minister in that case ought to admit the penitent person to the Holy Communion, and not him that is obstinate: Provided, that every Minister so repelling any, as is herein specified, shall be obliged to give an

account of the same to the Ordinary, as soon as conveniently may be."

These Rubrics are condensed in Canon 42, of 1832, Section 1, as follows. "If any persons within this Church offend their brethren by any wickedness of life, such persons shall be repelled from the Holy Communion, agreeable to the Rubric."

Every Layman, subjected to discipline as above, has a right of appeal to the Bishop. And if the Bishop think not best to reverse, that is, if he should approve, the action of the clergyman, the person has a right to demand a trial by such ecclesiastical court, as is provided for by the canons of the Diocese to which he belongs. And the decision of such court is definitive.*

Any clergyman, who should exercise discipline arbitrarily and without sufficient and canonical cause, would himself be liable to a prosecution (both civil and ecclesiastical) by the layman or others, for a violation of the canons of the Church.

If any Bishop should reverse the action of a clergyman, on the appeal of any person subjected by him as above to discipline, the clergyman has a right to prosecute the Bishop, on a charge of violating his ordination vow to "to execute discipline, &c.," and also of violating the canons of the Church, and in this way he may bring his own action in the reversed decision to an ecclesiastical trial. This contingency is mentioned, simply because we wish to illustrate the whole subject. It is one which never has occur-

* Canon 42, of 1832, App. E.

red, to our knowledge, and probably never will occur.

Thus the clergyman and the layman are each protected, the former in the fulfilment of his duty, the latter against the tyranny of an arbitrary clergyman.

It is perceived, from the foregoing statements, that the clergyman has the sole right of exercising discipline in the case of a layman; while, it is also perceived, that the layman has a right of appeal and of self protection, if he be innocent, and, indeed, a right of punishing the arbitrary and tyrannical clergyman.

It may be supposed by some, that, under these circumstances, a clergyman will be tempted to relax discipline and to deal too leniently with even very unworthy members of the Church. If it were so, it would be better, that the error should be on the side of mercy than of severity, upon the acknowledged principle: "Better that ten guilty should escape, than that one innocent should suffer." But, to disprove the supposition, let it be remembered, that, if the clergyman feels more the temptation to remissness, as an individual, he also, as an individual, feels more of responsibility in fulfilling the personal and special trust committed to him. Besides, while he is faithful in discharging his duty, he will in most cases be tender towards the offending. And, again, he will have the most powerful and constraining motives to use all possible means of private and pastoral exhortation and remonstrance to reclaim the offending, in order to save himself the necessity of exercising discipline. Finally under the regulations in this Section, besides the peculiar benefits just referred to, there are all the

benefits supposed to be incident to discipline by the congregation or Church directly; for all the individuals, who, under other regulations, would themselves administer the discipline in their congregational or Church capacity, may now compel the clergyman, if he be manifestly too remiss, to perform his duty, under the pain of being brought by them to ecclesiastical trial for neglect of duty and violation of his ordination vows and of the canons of the Church.

It is to be expected, that the experience of the Church and the occurrence of new facts will suggest (as has been already done continually) many improvements in the details of the whole system of ecclesiastical discipline. There will be a continual approximation towards a perfect system, even if such be never actually attained. Still it is thought, that the principles in the present system are both liberal, and just, and efficient; and, whilst they secure all the members of the Church against the tyranny of the ministers or of the brethren, they, at the same time, provide ample and effective instrumentalities for promoting the peace and honor of the Church, and for advancing the Christian holiness of its members.

We believe, that the principles of ecclesiastical discipline in the Protestant Episcopal Church are proper for an extensive, an all-embracing Church.

SECTION XII.

PUBLIC WORSHIP.

Public worship in the Protestant Episcopal Church by Precomposed Formularies—shall not discuss their propriety—the substance of them generally approved and admired—reference to an answer to some objections—gene-

rally used by dissenters in England—not in this country—but preferred by most of the pious and intelligent dissenting clergy, and by many laity in our country—the Festivals and Fasts of the Protestant Episcopal Church observed in many denominations—the reading of the Bible without note or comment in public worship becoming common in other denominations—also the responsive social reading of the scriptures and worship better understood—the Liturgies of the Protestant Episcopal Church under the control of the Church—may be changed by a majority—in the General Convention—to any extent—even to abrogation—subject of changes sometimes discussed—when necessary or generally desired will be accomplished—those who love uniformity and order of some sort in public worship, may be suited in the Protestant Episcopal Church.

It is already well known to the reader, probably, that on all solemn stated occasions, where an Episcopalian Congregation is convened for the purpose of public worship, *a precomposed form* is employed for the purpose of directing uniformly and regularly the various devotional exercises of the assembly.

Our object here is not to discuss the propriety or the advantages of employing such a form.

As to the particular forms of the Protestant Episcopal Church, we believe, that if any of our readers, of whatsoever Christian denomination he may be a member, will take the trouble to peruse candidly the various contents of the Book of Common Prayer of the Protestant Episcopal Church, he will be ready not only to tolerate it, but he will esteem it as able and as interesting a leader of his devotions, as any to which he may have been accustomed.*

The conviction is growing upon the public mind of

* An able answer to several of the most common prejudices against the Liturgy of the Protestant Episcopal Church—prejudices originating altogether in a misapprehension of the subject—may be found in a quotation from the Rev. Calvin Colton's "Thoughts on the Religious state of the Country," in the Appendix, J.

Protestant Christians, that precomposed formularies of devotion are important. The Rev. Calvin Colton, who spent several years in England, (himself being then a minister of the Presbyterian Church,) writes as follows: "Having been intimate with Dissenters while in that country, I can say with pleasure, that I never discovered among dissenting ministers and the most enlightened of their laity any degree of prejudice against the Liturgy, but rather a partiality in favor of it. Indeed, the entire Liturgy is actually used in a vast many dissenting chapels of London and over the kingdom. The whole of Lady Huntingdon's connexion use it; it is used in Whitfield's Chapels; at Tottenham Court Road; and at the Tabernacle, Moorfields; and in many others that might be named. I am clearly of opinion, that there is little or no obstacle in the way of the return of the great majority of Dissenters to the bosom of the English Church, except the union of Church and state."

It is not true, indeed, that in this country Dissenters have yet commenced the practice of using the Liturgy regularly. The prejudices have heretofore been too strong against it. But these are wearing away, perhaps, we may say, in a great measure worn away. The writer has been acquainted with many very respectable dissenting ministers, of various denominations; and in conversation with them on this subject, they have almost uniformly conceded their approval of a Liturgy, and not unfrequently they have expressed warmly their own desire to use one. Similar views are expressed often among the more intelli-

gent of the dissenting laity. The Book of Common Prayer is now much more generally known, and we believe, that, in the large majority of the extemporaneous public prayers of the present day, passages of the Liturgy will be recognized, naturally and liberally incorporated therein.

Then, again, the solemn religious Festivals and Fasts of the Protestant Episcopal Church are commonly approved; and the more important of these special religious anniversaries are now almost universally observed in our country.

The extensive reading of the Bible, without note or comment, which is so prominent in all Episcopalian services, is becoming more common, and is made more prominent in the services of other denominations.

So, too, the responsive reading of the Scriptures, and the responsive worship, which make every Episcopalian Church like the social family group of worshippers, is better understood, and is even recommended often as worthy of imitation.

Our object is not to discuss the principle on which Liturgies are composed, nor to explain or apologize for the Liturgy of the Protestant Episcopal Church. We have stated briefly the above facts to illustrate the assertion—that the public are not so much opposed to *a* Liturgy as to *the* Liturgy; and not so much opposed to the substance of the Liturgy as to the particular arrangement of its parts. Some think it too long, others too diversified; some think it too general, others too particular; but all think it good, all admire it.

Our object in this Section is to call attention to the fact, that the Liturgical Formularies, the public worship, or Common Prayer, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, are all under the control of the Church. They may be changed to any extent which, to the majority of the whole Church represented in the General Convention, may seem advisable. The General Convention has the whole subject under its cognizance. Any General Convention may propose an alteration or addition to any extent, and it must inform the several Diocesan Conventions of the proposal; and if the next General Convention thereafter approve it, the proposed alteration or addition becomes the law of the Church. Thus changes may, at any time and to any extent, be effected, according to the varying circumstances and wants of the whole Church.*

The subject of modifications in the Liturgy has frequently been touched upon and been considerably discussed in the General Convention. Some modifications have been introduced; others when proposed have been rejected. There has never yet been any expression of opinion, sufficiently general and sufficiently definite, by the whole Church, to warrant or authorize any very extensive changes. But the spirit of the General Convention is liberal, and necessarily so from the mode of its organization; and whensoever there shall be any sufficiently general and definite demonstration by the Church that extensive changes are demanded, then such changes will be accomplished.

* Constit. of P. E. Church, Art. 8. App. C.

It has been supposed, that in the matters of public worship there is an inflexible stiffness in the Protestant Episcopal Church; that this Church is bound down to a fixed and invariable form, which can never be modified nor adapted to the changes in the public sentiment or taste, or to the varying circumstances and wants of society. It appears from our statements, that this common supposition is altogether erroneous; that, in the matter of public worship, the pliability of the Church is as manifest as in all its other arrangements; that in this, as in every thing else, the will of the majority of the whole Church is the supreme law.

It is astonishing what misapprehensions prevail in regard to this subject. It seems to be supposed that a rigid and arbitrary set of *forms* is necessary to the very structure of an Episcopal Church. But, indeed, *a perfect Episcopal Church may exist without any precomposed forms whatsoever.* It is, however, generally maintained by Episcopalians, that the use of some precomposed Formularies of public worship are scriptural. The views of the Protestant Episcopal Church on this whole subject of the use and obligations of forms and ceremonies, are expressed frequently and clearly, not only in its constitution as just referred to in the last note, but in its various standards. Thus, in the 34th Article it is written: "Every particular or National Church hath authority to ordain, change and abolish ceremonies or rites of the Church, ordained only by man's authority, so that all things be done to edifying." To the same effect the very preface to

the book of Common Prayer, at its very beginning, declares:

"It is a most invaluable part of that blessed *liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free*, that in his worship, different forms and usages may without offence be allowed, provided the substance of the faith be kept entire, and that, in every Church, what cannot be clearly determined to belong to Doctrine must be referred to Discipline; and therefore, by common consent and authority, may be altered, abridged, enlarged, amended, or otherwise disposed of, as may seem most convenient for the edification of the people, 'according to the various exigencies of times and occasions.'

"The *Church of England*, to which the Protestant Episcopal Church in these States is indebted, under GOD, for her first foundation and a long continuance of nursing care and protection, hath in the preface of her Book of Common Prayer, laid it down as a rule, that 'The particular forms of divine worship, and the rites and ceremonies appointed to be used therein, being things in their own nature indifferent and alterable, and so acknowledged, it is but reasonable, that upon weighty and important considerations, according to the various exigencies of times and occasions, such changes and alterations should be made therein, as to those who are in places of authority should, from time to time, seem either necessary or expedient.'"

"The same Church hath not only in her preface, but likewise in her Articles and Homilies, declared the necessity and expediency of occasional alterations

and amendments in her forms of public worship; and we find accordingly, that, seeking to 'keep the happy mean, between too much stiffness in refusing, and too much easiness in admitting variations in things once advisedly established, she hath &c.' "

From these extracts, it appears that the sense of the Church on the subject has been clearly and unqualifiedly expressed.

Now granting for the occasion, that the present arrangements of the forms and modes of public worship in the Protestant Episcopal Church, are not such as would be acceptable to the majority of all the Christians of our country, if they were united in one Church, is it not, at the same time, perfectly manifest that, if they were all united in the Protestant Episcopal Church, they might at once, and according to the existing laws of this Church, make such arrangements as to such majority would be entirely satisfactory? Is it not also manifest, that the majority, which exists at any time in this Church, may regulate to suit itself and to accomplish what to it may appear the benefit of the whole, the entire order and method of public worship?

SECTION XIII.

RIGHTS OF THE LAITY.

Arrangement under a single view of previous observations—the Laity an *order* in the P. E. Church—their rights in parishes—rights in Diocesan Conventions—rights in the standing committees—rights in the General Convention—rights of Church membership—rights in ecclesiastical trials of discipline—rights of full and perpetual self-protection—their peculiarity as a constituent order in the Church insisted upon—the P. E. Church worthy of the approbation of all Christians.

We propose to offer nothing new in this section, but to recapitulate or arrange, under a single view, the rights of the Laity which have been unfolded as they have come up in the course of our preceding observations.

The Laity are recognized, as a distinct and independent order in the Protestant Episcopal Church. They have a constitutional or chartered right to act in all the legislative affairs of the Church without exception,—and this, not as they happen to be members of legislative bodies, but as a separate and independent order always represented in those bodies.

To be somewhat more particular:

I. The Laity have a right to manage their own parochial affairs, as members of separate and independent parishes; to elect their own ministers and settle them, to hold corporate funds, to appoint their own parish officers, &c., and finally, to elect or appoint and send lay-delegates from the several parishes to represent them in the Diocesan Conventions.

II. They have a right, *as a separate order*, in the Diocesan Conventions, in the discussion and passage of all legislative acts; in the appointment of all conventional committees and officers; in the election of standing committees; in the regulation of ecclesiastical discipline, &c.,; and finally, in the election of all the Diocesan Bishops of the Church, and in the election of clerical and lay deputies to the General Convention.

They have a right in the Diocesan Conventions, we repeat, being a separate and independent order, to a

separate vote as such, and in this, to an absolute veto on all proceedings of these Conventions whatsoever. If it should so happen, that only a single layman was present as a delegate in any organized Convention, he would represent *the order* of the Laity, and as such, would have a right to the separate vote, and to the veto power, just as if all the lay delegates from all the parishes of the Diocese were present.

III. They have a right, as members of the standing committee in many of the Dioceses, to act directly, as well as representatively, in advising the Bishop; in deciding (during the interims of the General Convention) upon the election of Bishops by other Dioceses and upon the resignation of Bishops; in short, in exercising all the manifold and important functions of that body, and especially in recommending all candidates for orders, first to be received as candidates by the Bishop, and afterwards to be ordained by the Bishop.

We believe that in this last mentioned fact (as in others) the Laity in the Protestant Episcopal Church exercise a power beyond that exercised by them in any other denomination whatsoever. No person can be either received as a candidate for orders, or afterwards be ordained, without the consent and recommendation of the standing committee. The laity in those Dioceses wherein they are members of this body, may control the very power of ordination. The ministers in all other denominations, as we understand, do actually have the sole charge and control in the licensing or appointing of ministers. The ordination

of ministers (already licensed) in the Congregational Churches, is nearly equivalent to the settlement or institution of ministers in the Protestant Episcopal Church.

IV. They have a right, as an order, in the General Convention, to act in the arrangement and regulation of all the creeds and formularies of the Church and modes of public worship; in all the legislation of that body; and, finally, in the recommendation and appointment of all the Bishops of the Church.

They have a right, in the General Convention, not only to free discussion, but also to a separate vote, and to a veto power, in every act of that body. If it should so happen, that in any General Convention there should be but a single lay deputy present, while all the clergy and all the Bishops were also present, that single layman would represent his order, and, as such, might have his separate vote, and his veto, in all the doings of the body.

V. They have a right to all the privileges of Church membership, whensoever they give the evidence in their life, and are willing to confess with their mouth, that they are devoted to the service of God in the discipleship of the Lord Jesus Christ.

VI. They have a right to a fair trial in any cases of ecclesiastical discipline, and a right not only to protect themselves from arbitrary or oppressive treatment in such cases, but also to punish those who would thus tyrannize over them.

Not to be more minute, (for the reader can extend, from the preceding sections, the catalogue of rights) we will state, that,

VII. Finally, they have a constitutional and chartered right, and the power also, to protect themselves in the full and perpetual enjoyment of all their rights.

The point which we wish our readers to observe most attentively in these statements, is this—that the Laity are always regarded (and constitutionally regarded) in the Protestant Episcopal Church, *as a separate and independent order;* and their influence is felt, not only as they happen to be good debaters, or happen to number more or less in an ecclesiastical body, but *as they are a constituent order*—so that whether they lead or not in the debates, and whether they are few or many in the body, they have always, as an order, their independent and legitimate and controlling power.

We ask our readers to reflect upon the facts here presented, and decide for themselves, whether any system can be more purely democratical, which, in other words, would be, whether any system can be more intrinsically and uniformly just, either in its organization, or in its operation—whether any system can be more deserving of the approbation of all humble-hearted and free-hearted Christians.

SECTION XIV.

BAPTISM.

The *meaning* of Baptism—explained in the 27th Article—the Baptismal service to be interpreted by this Article—doctrine compared with the standards of the Methodist, the Presbyterian, and the Congregational Churches—the *mode* of Baptism—Immersion or affusion—adults and infants—requisites for Baptism—witnesses for adults—sponsors for children—duties of witnesses and sponsors—Baptism followed by confirmation—will be shewn to meet the views of all Christians.

It is proper, that we take a more particular survey of the sacraments—those important and peculiar blessings which our Lord Jesus Christ has left in the care of his Church. We therefore exhibit to the reader the sacrament of Baptism as held in the Protestant Episcopal Church.

1. *The meaning of Baptism.* This is explained in the 27th Article of Religion—by which also the office for the administration of Baptism is to be interpreted, as follows:

"Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christian men are discerned from others that be not christened: but it is also a sign of regeneration, or new birth, whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive baptism rightly are grafted into the Church: the promises of the forgiveness of sin, and of our adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are visibly signed and sealed: faith is confirmed, and grace increased by virtue of prayer unto God. The baptism of young children is in any wise to be retained in the Church as most agreeable with the institution of Christ."*

* This Article is substantially the same with those of most other Churches. The 17th Article of the Methodist Episcopal Church (formed upon the above) reads thus: "Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized: but it is also a sign of regeneration, or the new birth. The Baptism of young children is to be retained in the Church." The confession of faith of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, in the 28th Chapter is similar: "Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, not only for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible Church, but also to be unto him a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, of his ingrafting into Christ, of regeneration, of remission of sins, and of his giving up unto God, through Jesus Christ, to walk in newness of

2. *The mode of Baptism.* This is by affusion or immersion, indifferently, at the option of the individual. The Rubric in the public baptism of infants is: "he (the minister,) shall dip it in the water discreetly, or shall pour water upon it." The Rubric in the public baptism of adults is similar: "the minister then shall dip him in the water, or pour water upon him."

Baptism is administered to both adults and infants.

1. *Adults.* The requisites for the ordinance, in the case of adults, are conversion, a new heart, whatsoever is implied in the discipleship of Christ, a willingness to assume the obligations contained in the

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life: which sacrament is by Christ's own appointment, to be continued in his Church until the end of the world. II. The outward element to be used in this sacrament is water, wherewith the party is to be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, by a minister of the Gospel, lawfully called thereunto. III. Dipping of the person into the water is not necessary; but baptism is rightly administered by pouring, or sprinkling water, upon the person. IV. Not only those that do actually profess faith in, and obedience unto Christ, but also the infants of one or both believing parents, are to be baptized." (pp. 120—122.) The same words are in the Saybrook platform generally approved by the Congregational Churches of New England. Both are nearly literally the same with the 29th Chapter of the Confession of faith owned and consented to by the messengers of the churches assembled at Boston, in New England, May, 12, 1680, (see Mather's Magnalia, 2nd volume, Hartford, 1820, p. 177.) The language of the larger or Westminster Catechism (question 165,) is: "Baptism is a sacrament of the New-Testament, wherein Christ hath ordained the washing with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, to be a sign and seal of ingrafting into himself, of remission of sins by his blood, and regeneration by his spirit; of adoption, and resurrection unto everlasting life: and whereby the parties baptized are solemnly admitted into the visible Church, and enter into an open and professed engagement to be wholly and only the Lord's." These various Articles we believe to be all capable of a scriptural interpretation, and certainly that of the P. E. Church is to say the least, as definite and guarded and unexceptionable as any of them all.

answers to the questions propounded to the person at the time of administering the rite. These questions and answers have been already quoted in Section 8, on Admission to the Sacraments, where the reader may find them. The same requisites are declared in the Rubric preliminary to the service for "the ministration of baptism to such as are of riper years and able to answer for themselves," as follows:

"When any such persons as are of riper years are to be baptized, timely notice shall be given to the minister; that so due care may be taken for their examination, whether they be sufficiently instructed in the principles of the Christian religion; and that they may be exhorted to prepare themselves, with prayers and fastings, for the receiving of this holy sacrament.

And if they shall be found fit, &c."

Every adult is expected to have certain "chosen witnesses," called godfathers and godmothers, who shall stand by his or her side during the administration of the rite; and whose duty it shall be (it being thus publicly and voluntarily assumed) to exercise a special watch and care over the baptized person. At the close of the service of adult baptism the minister addresses these "chosen witnesses" as follows:

"Forasmuch as *these persons have* promised, in your presence, to renounce the devil and all his works, to believe in God, and to serve him; ye must remember, that it is your part and duty to put *them* in mind, what a solemn vow, promise, and profession *they have* now made before this Congregation, and especially before you *their* chosen witnesses. And ye are also to call

upon *them* to use all diligence to be rightly instructed in God's holy word; that so *they* may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; and live godly, righteously, and soberly, in this present world."

2. *Infants.* There is but "one baptism." This principle the Protestant Episcopal Church consistently maintains. It is the same rite and implying the same essential ideas, whether administered to the adult or the infant; there is no such thing as one baptism for adults and *another* for infants, consequently, no infant is allowed to be baptized, unless there are with it sponsors, or sureties to assume, *in its behalf*, as a legal and valid act, the obligations of the ordinance. The following passage from the Church Catechism will illustrate our remarks:

"*Question.* What is required of persons to be baptized?

Answer. Repentance, whereby they forsake sin; and faith, whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that sacrament.

Quest. Why then are infants baptized, when by reason of their tender age they cannot perform them?

Ans. Because they promise them, both by their sureties; which promise, when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform."

The obligations assumed are precisely the same, in baptism, with the infant as with the adult, the sponsor answering "in the name of the child"—as his legal proxy or representative.

The duties of the sponsors are expressed in the

following exhortation to them at the close of the service of infant baptism.

"Forasmuch as *this child hath* promised by you *his* sureties, to renounce the devil and all his works, to believe in God, and to serve him; ye must remember; that it is your parts and duties to see that *this infant* be taught, so soon as *he* shall be able to learn, what a solemn vow, promise, and profession *he hath* here made by you. And that *he* may know these things the better, ye shall call upon *him* to hear sermons; and chiefly ye shall provide, that *he* may learn the Creed, the Lord's prayer, and the ten commandments, and all other things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health; and that *this child* may be virtuously brought up to lead a godly and a Christian life; remembering always, that baptism doth represent unto us our profession; which is, to follow the example of our Saviour Christ, and to be made like unto him; that as he died, and rose again for us, so should we, who are baptized, die from sin, and rise again unto righteousness; continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections, and daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living."

It is not required that either of the parents shall be communicants; the Church itself being willing, in the provision of sponsors, to supply the place of parents; it being thought, likewise, unjust to deprive the children of the privilege of being dedicated to the Lord by the public act of the Church and its ministers, on account of the negligence or fault of the parents.*

* It is almost unnecessary to add, after exhibiting the peculiar office and

The act of baptism is always followed by the rite of Confirmation.

The rule in the case of adults is in the Rubric at the end of adult baptism:

"It is expedient that every person thus baptized should be confirmed by the Bishop, so soon after his baptism as conveniently may be; that so he may be admitted to the Holy Communion."

The rule, in the case of infants, is in the concluding exhortation to the sponsors.

" Ye are to take care that *this Child* be brought to the Bishop to be confirmed by him, so soon as *he* can say the creed, the Lord's prayer, and the ten commandments, and *is* sufficiently instructed in the other parts of the Church Catechism set forth for that purpose."

This exhortation is interpreted, as may be proved by a collation of the offices referred to, as meaning a spiritual and experimental knowledge of religion, as opened in these means of instruction, a willingness and preparedness to assume the whole baptismal vow.

We hope in our next Section, to shew that the views of Baptism held in the Protestant Episcopal Church are such as to reconcile completely and beautifully the opposing opinions entertained on the subject by different denominations.

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duty of sponsors, that these ought always to be communicants, and that no minister may be justified in admitting children carelessly to baptism, without regard to the Christian character of their sponsors.

SECTION XV.

CONFIRMATION, THE SEQUEL OR COMPLEMENT OF INFANT BAPTISM.

Confirmation follows Baptism—reasons for this rule—the rite of admission to the Lord's supper—no new obligation assumed in it—the re-assumption of the Baptismal obligation—analogous in part, to the "owning of the Christian Covenant" in other denominations—some grounds on which Confirmation is defended—special consideration of the relation of Confirmation to infant Baptism—Baptism implies voluntary confession of Christ after faith—Infant Baptism imperfect without some rite attached to it, as a sequel, for adult confession—Confirmation this rite—supported by legal analogies—this the view of the P. E. Church—proved—importance of Confirmation—a part of a Comprehensive System—the P. E. Church differing from all Dissenters—and reconciling their controversies—the foregoing principles applied to the system of Pedo-Baptists—dissenting churches—which are faulty—may be reformed by the system of the P. E. Church—applied to the views of Baptist Dissenters—confirmation shown to be *de facto* adult baptism—may be by immersion—Baptists may consistently with their principles unite with the P. E. Church—objection answered—our view in perfect accordance with the Congregational system of Baptists—Confirmation, being de facto adult Baptism, is in harmony with a de-facto ministry, and de facto sacraments, such as Baptists acknowledge and maintain—the P. E. Church well qualified to unite both Pedo Baptist and Baptist Dissenters, and thus to restore the unity of the Church of Christ.

CONFIRMATION, we have seen, is expected to follow baptism as soon as conveniently and properly may be, in the case of those baptized, both in their riper years and in their infancy.*

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* As the form or service for the rite of Confirmation in the P. E. Church is very short, and as we refer to it frequently in this Section, we throw the whole of it, for convenience, into a note.

"*The order of Confirmation, or laying on of hands upon those who are baptized and come to years of discretion.*

Upon the day appointed, all that are to be then Confirmed, being placed and standing in order before the Bishop; he, or some other minister appointed by him, shall read this preface following:

The reason why Confirmation is expected to follow baptism as soon as circumstances warrant, is this—that by Confirmation the person is admitted to the supper of the Lord, and it is thought by the Church that every baptized person ought to come, at the earliest opportunity, to the Supper of the Lord. Of

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To the end that confirmation may be ministered to the more edifying of such as shall receive it, the Church hath thought good to order, that none shall be confirmed, but such as can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments; and can also answer to such other questions, as in the short Catechism are contained: which order is very convenient to be observed; to the end that children, being now come to the years of discretion, and having learned what their godfathers and godmothers promised for them in baptism, may themselves, with their own mouth and consent, openly before the Church ratify and confirm the same; and also promise, that, by the grace of God, they will evermore endeavor themselves faithfully to observe such things as they, by their own confession, have assented unto.

Then shall the Bishop say,

Do ye here, in the presence of God, and of this congregation, renew the solemn promise and vow that ye made, or that was made in your name, at your baptism; ratifying and confirming the same; and acknowledging yourselves bound to believe and do all those things which ye then undertook, or your sponsors then undertook for you?

And every one shall audibly answer,

I do.

Bishop. Our help is in the name of the Lord;

Ans. Who hath made heaven and earth.

Bishop. Blessed be the name of the Lord;

Ans. Henceforth, world without end.

Bishop. Lord hear our prayer,

Ans. And let our cry come unto thee.

Bishop. Let us pray.

Almighty and ever living God, who has vouchsafed to regenerate these thy servants by water and the Holy Ghost, and hast given unto them forgiveness of all their sins; strengthen them, we beseech thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost, the Comforter; and daily increase in them thy manifold gifts of grace; the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and ghostly strength, the spirit of knowledge and true godliness; and fill them, O Lord, with the spirit of thy holy fear, now and forever. *Amen.*

Then all of them in order kneeling before the Bishop, he shall lay his hands upon the head of every one severally, saying,

course then, he must come at the earliest opportunity to the preliminary rite.

That Confirmation is this preliminary rite has been shown in the Rubric last quoted, from the close of the office of adult baptism, p. 165. It is also asserted in the Rubric at the close of the order of Confirmation, which may be seen in the last note, (at the foot of this page.)

Defend, O Lord, this thy child [*or, this thy servant*] with thy heavenly grace; that *he* may continue thine forever, and daily increase in thy Holy Spirit more and more, until *he* come unto thy everlasting kingdom. *Amen.*

Then shall the Bishop say

The Lord be with you.

Ans. And with thy spirit.

And all kneeling down, the Bishop shall add,

Let us pray.

Our Father, who art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name; Thy Kingdom come; Thy Will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. *Amen.*

And these Collects.

Almighty and everlasting God, who makest us both to will and to do those things which are good, and acceptable unto thy Divine Majesty; we make our humble supplications unto thee for these thy servants, upon whom, after the example of thy holy Apostles, we have now laid our hands; to certify them, by this sign, of thy favour and gracious goodness towards them. Let thy Fatherly hand, we beseech thee, ever be over them: Let thy Holy Spirit ever be with them: and so lead them in the knowledge and obedience of thy Word, that in the end they may obtain everlasting life, through our Lord Jesus Christ; who, with thee and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

O Almighty Lord, and everlasting God, vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to direct, sanctify, and govern both our hearts and bodies, in the ways of thy laws, and in the works of thy commandments; that through thy most mighty protection, both here and ever, we may be preserved in body and soul, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Bishop shall bless them, saying thus;

lessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, you, and remain with you forever. *Amen.*

hall none be admitted to the Holy Communion, until such time as he be confirmed, y and desirous to be confirmed."

The Protestant Episcopal Church, holds, that after Baptism no new obligations may be required for admission to the Lord's Supper. In Baptism the person confesses, to its full extent, the discipleship of the Lord Jesus Christ; and this is all that is needed to entitle him to a seat among his fellow disciples at the Table of their Lord. It holds, that it is both inconsistent in itself and unscriptural to require of a person once, by its own act, already admitted to the name and privileges of a member of the Christian Church, any new or different obligations, before he may be allowed to obey his Lord's command: "Do this in remembrance of me." Accordingly, in Confirmation there is no new obligation assumed. It is nothing more nor less than a solemn re-assumption of the one baptismal obligation. And the Church very properly holds, that if any of its members should be unwilling to conform to its rules of order, so far as to be unwilling to confess Christ publicly a second time, and to be made a special subject of the prayers of the Church and of its chief earthly Pastor for the strengthening grace of the Holy Ghost, he would, by such unwillingness, be proved unfit for the sacred Feast of Christ's humble and prayerful disciples.

In almost all religious denominations there is some Rite, called the "owning of the Christian covenant," or by some other name, which interposes between Baptism and the Supper of the Lord. Confirmation is such a Rite. But if, in any case, a Church should require in such a Rite any obligations different from

those required in Baptism, it would by the requisition be elevating the institutions of man above the laws of Christ.

There is a peculiar reference in Confirmation to Infant Baptism, to which we shall presently ask particular attention. First, however, we will state briefly some of the other grounds on which the Rite is defended.

It is contended, that Confirmation was instituted by the Apostles, and administered by them always, as in the Protestant Episcopal Church, as soon as possible after Baptism;—that the earliest Christian Fathers testify to its continuance and enjoin it in strong terms;—that the Church universal has always practised it;*—that it is a most effective bond of unity, by which every member of the Church becomes introduced personally to his chief Pastor under Christ, and voluntarily acknowledges his canonical authority and superintendence;—that the particular benediction of a venerable man of God and a chief officer in the Church, received in this Rite, is desirable;—that to be made a special subject of prayer by the whole Church met together in the name of Christ is profitable; that to repeat the baptismal vow of self-consecration to the Lord's service is in itself confirmatory of the disciple's faith and purposes;—that, if these con-

* From the Apostolical age to the Protestant Reformation there is no question of this assertion Since that era all Protestant Episcopal Churches have retained it, and all the Lutheran Churches (even those not Episcopal) have retained it. And the learned and leading men in all those Protestant Churches which have not retained it from Calvin and Beza down to the heads of the dissenters of the present day in our own country, have strongly favored the re-establishment of the Rite.

siderations were absent, and the Rite were simply an ordinance of the Church for the sake of promoting decency and order in its services, there would be nothing objectionable in it, but much to recommend it.

The force of all these considerations applies in the case even of persons who have been baptized in adult or riper years.

We will not dwell upon this view of our subject, since the doing so would be foreign from our object.

We now ask the attention of the reader to our main design in this Section—*a statement of the relation of Confirmation to Infant Baptism.*

Our argument is brief and distinct. There is but "one Baptism." The same ideas must be always implied in it, upon whomsoever administered. There are two great ideas, as the Protestant Episcopal Church interprets the Scriptures, always implied in it, —*the one* a voluntary confession of the person baptized by Christ and His Church, *the other* a voluntary confession of Christ and His Church, (after repentance and faith, i. e. conversion) by the person baptized. Now, in Infant Baptism the former may exist, but the latter can not exist. The voluntary confession of Christ and His Church, after repentance and faith, can not be made by the infant directly; and therefore the Church has appointed sponsors or sureties (legal agents, like the guardians of minors) to make it "in the name of the child." There must, it is therefore contended, in order to secure to an adult the perfectness or completeness of his Infant Baptism, be *some*

one public act, as distinctive as Baptism itself, appointed by the Church which practices Infant Baptism, for the definite and special object of allowing every person baptized in infancy to come before the Church and the world, when arrived at years of discretion, and having exercised repentance and faith, and there solemnly to assume his baptismal obligations to himself, and by approving and acknowledging his Infant Baptism, to thus transfer it, to all intents and purposes, to his maturity, as his own voluntary adult act.

This view is not only suggested by common sense; it is sustained by manifest and abundant legal analogies. The adult thus acknowledges the infant (i. e. himself in his infancy) as his proxy; he clothes the sponsors of his childhood with his power of attorney, he approves them as his agents, and binds himself to their acts. And what occasion can be more appropriate to this one public and solemn act, than that which combines with this act so many other delightful and impressive associations—viz. the Rite of Confirmation?

In the Protestant Episcopal Church, the ormer idea in Baptism (the voluntary confession of the person baptized by Christ and His Church) is accomplished upon the infant; and the latter idea (the voluntary confession, by the person baptized, of Christ and His Church after repentance and faith), *which is separated from the former in respect of time only so far as the nature of the case requires*, is provided for in the Rite of Confirmation, which is thus shewn to be intimately connected with Infant Baptism, and is, as it were,

a part of it, and its proper and necessary sequel or complement.

This peculiar relation of the Rite of Confirmation in the Protestant Episcopal Church to Infant Baptism, will be readily perceived by any one who will compare together the Church Catechism and the offices of Baptism and Confirmation.*

The view here presented is, that, although Confirmation is, in many respects, an independent Rite, there is connected with its administration, in the Protestant Episcopal Church, an assumption of the previous baptismal obligation and act, in such a way, that the rite is, so far at least as regards Infant Bap-

* It may be objected to the view here presented, that the Protestant Episcopal Church allows private Baptism of infants without sponsors. But the very fact alluded to confirms our views. The Protestant Episcopal Church (we speak not of the customs of any of its ministers or members who neglect or violate its regulations) allows private Baptism without the confession of the Baptismal obligation, *only in one case*, that of infants or children, and when the life of the child is in such imminent hazard, that public Baptism cannot be performed. The confession of Christ by the sponsors for the child is in this case omitted, because there is no reasonable probability nor hope that the child will ever live to assume it for himself. All is done, which in the nature of the case is possible—the parent consecrates his child to the Lord, and the minister of Christ and the Church confesses the child in their behalf. Yet the Church provides, that "if the child which is after this sort baptized do afterwards live, it is expedient that it be brought into the Church, to the intent that the congregation may be certified of the time and form of Baptism privately before used;" at the same time, when this certificate is read, the sponsors must publicly present the child, and, in its name, make the confession (which was before omitted for the reasons given) required in public Baptism, since now there is an expectation that the child may live to assume it. In other words, so soon as the child recovers from its dangerous sickness, the whole service of Public Baptism must be performed with it, excepting the act of immersion or affusion by water which was before done, and which is now certified. Thus, in all its offices, the Protestant Episcopal Church never neglects to provide for what is considered necessary to the completeness of Baptism—the public confession of Christ by the person baptized.

tism, the regular sequel or complement of it. We are looking at the Rite, just as it is in fact, as it exists in the ritual of the Church. We ask the reader to examine the order of Confirmation as printed just now in a note ; and he will perceive that the view here presented—this peculiar relation of confirmation to infant baptism—is altogether the most prominent in its administration.

It appears to us, that in the view presented, we see one of the comprehensive arrangements of the Protestant Episcopal Church—its capability to unite the opposing denominations of Christians. We think, then, that we shall have the attention and the approval of our intelligent and candid readers, while we endeavor to shew very succinctly the bearing of our statements upon that subject.

The dissenters in our country are all in two classes—Pedo-Baptists and Baptists ; and none of them practise the rite of Confirmation.

1. Pedo-Baptists. We see not how any Church of Pedo-Baptist dissenters can allow the administration of Infant Baptism, while at the same time, they neglect to provide some *one public Rite*, which shall be equivalent for the purpose above stated (the public confession of Christ) to Confirmation. It will not do to say, that in the Lord's Supper is this equivalent ; because the Lord's Supper is divinely appointed (and man may not add to the appointment nor take away from it) to be *the mode, not of confessing Christ before the world, but of commemorating Christ* in a social communion with Himself and His disciples. It will not do to suppose an equivalent in any rite or cus-

tom, *except one, which shall be specially designed for the purpose, and which shall be directly connected with the Baptism of the infant, as a sequel or complement; because Baptism is the one and only divinely appointed mode in connexion with which Christ shall be confessed.*

The Pedo-Baptist dissenter, as appears to us, forgets that, in rejecting Confirmation, and supplying no equivalent for this particular use of the Rite, he detracts from the perfectness of Infant Baptism—he provides the one part of Baptism—the confession of the individual by Christ and His Church,—but he neglects to provide for the other part—the confession of Christ and His Church by the individual. So long as this is the case, he lays himself open to the criticisms of his Baptist opponents. Here is a weak point in his system, which he finds it difficult to cover. In the Protestant Episcopal Church the difficulty is exactly met by the peculiar relation of Confirmation to Infant Baptism.

2. Baptists. If it is said, that none but adults may be baptized, we reply, that Confirmation in the view here presented is, *de facto*, adult Baptism. The adult, after repentance and faith, comes forward, and under the most solemn and public circumstances, declares: "I do here, in the presence of God and of this Congregation, *renew* the solemn promise and vow that *was made in my name at my* Baptism; *ratifying and confirming the same; and acknowledging myself bound* to believe and do all those things which *my sponsors* then undertook for me." Be it remembered, that *there has been the washing of the water upon the body* of the person *with the regular Baptismal Form.* Now, to analyze the above declaration, the adult declares

to this effect: "I acknowledge that washing of water which was once performed upon my body with the regular Baptismal Form to be now my Baptism; I assume it now as my own by this solemn and public act; and I ratify, and also assume to myself, by this act, all the Baptismal obligations which those persons, whom I hereby acknowledge as my sponsors, then undertook for me." The analogies are numerous. As a man recognizes the contracts of his agents or of his minor children, as a man, by his note of hand, assumes the obligation of a book-debt which has been outlawed, (to mention a few out of many examples) so does the same principle apply in the act of Confirmation. It matters not, indeed, at what previous time the Baptism by water may have been effected, so long as the individual, after repentance and faith, in a formal and solemn act, specially appropriated to the purpose by the authority of the Church, does expressly assume to himself that Baptism and its obligations. In this act of assumption, whensoever it occur, he transfers the Baptism of his infancy to the moment in which he assumes it, he makes it his own present adult act. Thus *Confirmation is, de facto, adult Baptism.*

If it be said, that immersion is the only valid form of Baptism, we reply, that the parent may have his children baptized by immersion (for the Protestant Episcopal Church allows either affusion or immersion, and he may have his choice and insist upon it); and it seems to us that a person, who was baptized by immersion, with sponsors, in his infancy, and who afterwards has been confirmed in the order of the Prot-

estant Episcopal Church, (and thus has transferred his Infant Baptism by immersion to the moment of his adult years wherein he was confirmed) must be acknowledged, upon even the strictest principles of our Baptist brethren, as having had, *de facto*, all that they esteem essential to Christian Baptism.*

The view of Confirmation presented must commend itself, we presume, to our Baptist brethren; for it is in perfect harmony with all the fundamental principles of their ecclesiastical system—those of Congregationalism. They acknowledge and contend for *no other than the de facto validity* of their own ministry and sacraments, i. e. their validity, because they ex-

*The assertion, which we sometimes hear, that even adult Baptism, and that by immersion, must, in order to be valid, have been administered by a minister, who has himself been baptized as an adult and by immersion, we suppose, is not made by intelligent Baptists; since at the period of the Reformation there had been no such thing practised, for several preceding centuries, in Europe, as either adult Baptism or Baptism by immersion, the practice of the Roman Catholic Church (with a partial exception in England, in the matter of immersion,) having been the Baptism of infants and that by sprinkling. Accordingly, the validity of the first adult Baptisms by immersion, in the chain which began at that time (granting for the occasion, although unnecessarily, that there has been an unbroken chain in the succession of such Baptisms), must depend simply upon the fact that such adults were actually immersed, or immersed themselves, and not upon the principle contained in the assertion which we are noticing. This assertion would annihilate the validity of all the present adult Baptisms by immersion in our country and in the world; and therefore we suppose, that no intelligent Baptist would venture or approve it. The validity of such Baptisms must rest upon grounds entirely independent of the fact, whether the minister, who performs them, has ever been so baptized or not. The validity of such Baptisms depends simply upon *the fact of their having been actually performed* (whether by the individuals themselves or by others, matters not) without any reference whatsoever to the qualifications of the minister. The fact, therefore, that many of the ministers of the Protestant Episcopal Church were never baptized by immersion, would not prevent any intelligent Baptist from uniting himself with the Protestant Episcopal Church; since that fact could not affect nor weaken the validity of any immersions which such ministers might be called upon to administer.

ist and are acknowledged by the Church, in other words, because they do actually have, to all intents and purposes, a ministry and sacraments—a validity independent of any particular mode or causes through which these exist. Upon the same principles, they must admit the *de facto* validity of the Baptism (although performed in infancy) of all adults, who, in compliance with a special and formal requisition of the Church, have voluntarily, after repentance and faith, assumed their infant Baptism as their own adult act. Confirmation is actually equivalent to adult Baptism; it is, to all intents and purposes, adult Baptism; and such adult Baptism, in the very fact that it exists, actually is, upon the ecclesiastical principles of Baptists, valid, just as their own ministry and sacraments (even their own Baptism) are valid. There is no escape from this argument. We may say, without boasting, that it is perfectly clear and perfectly conclusive. The reasoning, which would disprove our assertion—that Confirmation as practised in the Protestant Episcopal Church, is de facto Adult Baptism—would inevitably disprove also the validity of all the ministry and sacraments, and ecclesiastical regulations of all the Baptist Churches.

We can conceive of only one reason, which, so far as the whole subject of Baptism is concerned, can operate upon the mind of any Baptist Dissenter to prevent him from uniting with the Protestant Episcopal Church. It is this: he would be obliged to communicate in the Lord's Supper, doubtless, with many who have never been immersed; and if he should conscientiously account it sin to do so, he

could not conscientiously communicate at the Lord's Table in the Protestant Episcopal Church, where many, who have never been immersed, would doubtless be present. But, if any Baptist is satisfied to receive for himself and children and all who think with him, such ordinances as himself approves; and if he does not deem it a necessary part of his duty to decide upon the conclusions of other Christians; and if he is conscientiously willing to sit down with all other Christians at the Lord's Table, leaving it to each to determine his own duty in the fear of God, (he having, all along, for himself and for all who think with him, whatsoever he holds essential in the Church and its sacraments, and losing no personal or spiritual privilege by such union), then I see no reason why such a Baptist may not (so far as any differences on the subject of Baptism are concerned) unite himself at once and heartily with the Protestant Episcopal Church. Indeed, he might, without any sacrifice of his Baptist principles, bring forward his children to infant Baptism, (by immersion), therein placing them under the covenant care of sponsors and of the Church, and receiving for himself and children that peculiar blessing which any such voluntary and public and faithful consecration of his children to God would obtain.* At the same time, his children, after repentance and faith in their riper years, might as-

* In some Baptist Societies, it has been customary for the ministers and the people to bring their children before the congregation and publicly to dedicate them to God. The suggestion here made accords with the custom referred to, and would meet every where the natural wishes of the parent's heart.

sume, and would be required to assume, their infant Baptism as their own adult act, (thus making it de facto their adult Baptism,) in Confirmation, prior to their admission to the Holy Communion.

In looking into the institutions of the Protestant Episcopal Church, on the subject of Baptism, we find that infant Baptism is allowed, so that the Pedo-Baptist Dissenter may on this head be satisfied; while the Rite of Confirmation is so connected with it, that the Baptist Dissenter may have nothing to object to, on the score of his peculiarity. We ask: Is there not comprehensiveness in that system, which unites, so easily and harmoniously, opinions and practices, which, when considered separately, appear irreconcilable? Is not that a comprehensive system, which may unite both Pedo-Baptists and Baptists into one Church, allowing each to retain his peculiarity both of opinion and of practice; while their diversities shall not only not conflict, but combine most naturally and effectively to sustain each other, as well as the one system, which includes and upholds them both?

SECTION XVI.

THE SUPPER OF THE LORD.

The *meaning* of the Lord's Supper in the Protestant Episcopal Church--a commemoration of the love of Christ—proved from standards—*Qualifications* for the Lord's Supper—whatsoever may be included in a worthy discipleship of Christ—proved from standards—the views of the Protestant Episcopal Church commend themselves to all Christian people of every denomination.

Our object in this Section is concisely to explain what the Protestant Episcopal Church considers the

meaning of the Lord's Supper, and the qualifications for it.

1. *The meaning of the Lord's Supper.* This holy ordinance or sacrament is regarded by the Protestant Episcopal Church, as by all other Protestant Churches, as the public and solemn commemoration or memorial, by His disciples, of the love of the Lord Jesus Christ, in His sufferings and death for sinners.

A few extracts from the Order for its Administration will explain its meaning.

The warning or invitation given on the Sunday or Holy-Day previous to its administration, commences thus:

"Dearly beloved, on —— day next, I purpose, through God's assistance, to administer to all such as shall be religiously and devoutly disposed, the most comfortable Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ; to be by them received, in remembrance of his meritorious Cross and Passion; whereby alone we obtain remission of our sins, and are made partakers of the kingdom of heaven."

In the Exhortation, given at the time of its celebration, the following passage occurs:

"And to the end that we should always remember the exceeding great love of our Masrer and only Saviour Jesus Christ, thus dying for us, and the innumerable benefits which by his precious blood-shedding he hath obtained for us, he hath instituted and ordained holy Mysteries, as pledges of his love, and for a continual remembrance of his death, to our great and endless comfort."

The prayer of Consecration is as follows:

"All glory be to thee, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for that thou, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there (by his one oblation of himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy gospel command us to continue a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice until his coming again: For in the night in which he was betrayed* he took bread; and when he had given thanks,† he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, Take, eat,‡ this is my Body, which is given for you; Do this in remembrance of me. Likewise, after Supper§ he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this, for|| this is my Blood, of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins; Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me.

The Oblation.

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, according to the institution of thy dearly beloved Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, we, thy humble servants, do celebrate and make here before thy divine Majesty, with these thy holy gifts, which

* Here the Priest is to take the Paten into his hands.

† And here to break the Bread.

‡ And here to lay his hand upon all the Bread.

§ Here he is to take the Cup into his hand.

|| And here he is to lay his hand upon every Vessel, in which there is any Wine to be consecrated.

we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; rendering unto thee most hearty thanks, for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same. And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us; and of thy Almighty goodness, vouchsafe to bless and sanctify, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine; that we, receiving them according to thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his Death and Passion, may be partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood. And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness, mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching thee to grant, that by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we, and all thy whole Church, may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion. And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls, and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee, that we, and all others who shall be partakers of this holy Communion, may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with him, that he may dwell in them, and they in him. And although we are unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice; yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our

The Invocation.

merits, but pardoning our offences; through Jesus Christ our Lord; by whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. *Amen.*"

In delivering the elements the minister first pronounces a benediction, or asks a blessing upon each communicant, and then calls upon him to remember Christ, and have faith in Him, and be thankful:

"When he delivereth the Bread, he shall say,

The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life: Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith, with thanksgiving.

And the Minister who delivereth the Cup, shall say,

The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life: Drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for thee, and be thankful."

The same meaning is assigned in the Church Catechism:

"*Quest.* Why was the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ordained?

Ans. For the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby.

Quest. What is the outward part or sign of the Lord's Supper?

Ans. Bread and Wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received.

Quest. What is the inward part or thing signified?

Ans. The Body and Blood of Christ, which are

spiritually taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper.

Quest. What are the benefits whereof we are partakers thereby?

Ans. The strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the Body and Blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the bread and wine."

2. *Qualifications for the Lord's Supper.* These are, as in all other Protestant Churches, whatsoever is implied in a true discipleship of Christ,—self examination, repentance, faith, a deep sense of sinfulness and unworthiness, humble thankfulness, charity, holiness. These qualifications are insisted on throughout the whole order for its administration, particularly in the preliminary warnings and exhortations. One or two extracts from this service at the time of the celebration of the Holy Ordinance will suffice for proof. In the early portion of the service and following up the warnings which notify the administration, we find the following:

"At the time of the Celebration of the Communion, the Priest shall say this Exhortation.

Dearly beloved in the Lord, ye who mind to come to the Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ, must consider how St. Paul exhorteth all persons diligently to try and examine themselves, before they presume to eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup. For as the benefit is great, if with a true penitent heart and lively faith we receive that holy Sacrament; so is the danger great, if we receive the same unworthily. Judge therefore yourselves, brethren, that ye be not judged of the Lord; repent

ye truly for your sins past; have a lively and stedfast faith in Christ our Saviour; amend your lives, and be in perfect charity with all men: so shall ye be meet partakers of those holy Mysteries. And above all things, ye must give most humble and hearty thanks to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for the redemption of the world by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ, both God and man; who did humble himself, even to the death upon the cross, for us miserable sinners, who lay in darkness and the shadow of death; that he might make us the children of God, and exalt us to everlasting life.

[The clause, commencing "And to the end, &c." —which belongs here, was quoted just now in explaining the meaning of this Sacrament. See back on page 181.]

To him, therefore, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, let us give (as we are most bounden) continual thanks; submitting ourselves wholly to his holy will and pleasure, and studying to serve him in true holiness and righteousness, all the days of our life. *Amen.*

Then shall the Priest say to those who come to receive the Holy Communion,

Ye who do truly and earnestly repent you of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbors, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his holy ways; draw near with faith, and take this holy Sacrament to your comfort; and make your humble confession to Almighty God, devoutly kneeling.

Then shall this general Confession be made, by the Priest and all those who are minded to receive the Holy Communion, humbly kneeling.

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men; we acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine Majesty; provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us; the burthen of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; for thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive us all that is past; and grant, that we may ever hereafter serve and please thee in newness of life, to the honour and glory of thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*"

Immediately before the Prayer of Consecration the following is introduced:

"Then shall the Priest, kneeling down at the Lord's Table, say, in the name of all those who shall receive the Communion, this Prayer following:

We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy: Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through

his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. *Amen.*"

The concluding clauses of the Prayer of Consecration quoted under the former head illustrate our topic further. The reader is referred to them. The same qualifications are stated concisely in the Church Catechism:

"*Quest.* What is required of those who come to the Lord's Supper?

Ans. To examine themselves, whether they repent them truly of their former sins, stedfastly purposing to lead a new life; have a lively faith in God's mercy, through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death; and be in charity with all men."

We might have added illustrations on both of the topics in this Section from the Homilies, particularly the 27th (the 15th of the second Book), on the Holy Sacrament, but they are not necessary. We have purposely omitted to illustrate from the Articles of Religion, because the Articles do not profess to go into the whole subject of the Lord's Supper, the standards quoted from, and referred to above being thought sufficient. The four Articles on the Lord's Supper are designed simply to meet certain errors of the Church of Rome, in relation to it. They are subjoined:

"Art. XXVIII. *Of the Lord's Supper.*—The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the Love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another; but rather it is a Sacrament of our Redemption by Christ's death: insomuch that to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the

Bread which we break is a partaking of the Body of Christ; and likewise the Cup of Blessing is a partaking of the Blood of Christ.

Transubstantiation (or the change of the Substance of Bread and Wine) in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ; but it is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a Sacrament, and hath given occasion to many Superstitions.

The Body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper, only after an heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper, is Faith.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ's Ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshipped.

Art. XXIX. *Of the Wicked which eat not of the Body of Christ in the Use of the Lord's Supper.*—The wicked and such as be void of a lively faith, although they do carnally and visibly press with their teeth (as St. *Augustine* saith) the Sacraments of the Body and Blood of Christ; yet in no wise are they partakers of Christ; but rather to their Condemnation do eat and drink the Sign or Sacrament of so great a thing.

Art. XXX. *Of both Kinds.*—The Cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the Lay-People: for both the parts of the Lord's Sacrament by Christ's Ordinance and Commandment, ought to be ministered to all Christian men alike.

Art. XXXI. *Of the one Oblation of Christ finished upon the Cross.*—The offering of Christ once

made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin, but that alone. Wherefore the Sacrifice of Masses, in which it was commonly said, that the Priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, were blasphemous fables, and dangerous deceits."

The mode of admission to the Lord's Supper has been explained in Section 8, on admission to the Sacraments. The rules for dealing with unworthy communicants have been shewn in Section 11, on Discipline.

It appears to us, that the views of the Protestant Episcopal Church on the subject of the Lord's Supper—its meaning, the qualifications for it, the mode of admission to it, and the discipline of those who are proved unworthy of it—are such as will commend themselves to the intelligent judgment and the hearty approval of sincere Christians, with whatever denomination they may be connected. There is nothing at all events, so far as its views on the Lord's Supper are concerned, to prevent them from uniting with the Protestant Episcopal Church.

SECTION XVII.

LITERARY, EDUCATIONAL, BENEVOLENT, AND MISSIONARY ASSOCIATIONS.

Literary Institutions—Enumeration of some—for Males and Females—No General Education Society—various Diocesan Education Societies—subject of Education under the consideration of the General Convention—General Sunday School Union—Diocesan and Local S. S. Societies—Gen-

eral Theological Seminary—Diocesan Theological Seminaries—No General Bible and Tract Societies—various Diocesan Bible and Tract and Common Prayer Book Societies—American Bible and Tract Societies—various Diocesan Benevolent Societies—various Diocesan Missionary Societies—City Mission Societies—the General Missionary Society—notice of its constitution—great Evangelical principles asserted in it—its operations—money collected and expended by it—its principles such as to win the assent of all Christians.

In giving a view of the System of the Protestant Episcopal Church, it is proper to notice, in passing, such topics as those in the title of this Section.

1. There are various Literary and Collegiate Institutions under the care of Episcopalians. Among such we may name the Vermont Episcopal Institute, of Vermont; Washington College, of Connecticut; Columbia College, Geneva College, St. Paul's College, &c., of New York; St. Mary's Hall (for females), of New Jersey; Kenyon College, of Ohio; Jubilee College, of Illinois; Episcopal School, of North Carolina; Columbia Female Institute, of Tennessee; Kemper College, of Missouri, &c.

Some of these institutions are under the charge of the Convention of the Diocese in which they are located. Among such we name the Cheshire Episcopal Academy, of Connecticut.

Besides these, there are very many Parochial schools, and Academies for males and for females, and Boarding Schools, under the care of the Episcopalian clergy, or conducted in accordance with the principles of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

2. There are various Diocesan Education Societies connected with the Church in almost all the Dioceses. Such for instance, are the Church Scholar-

ship Society, of Connecticut; the Protestant Episcopal Society for the Promotion of Religion and Learning in the State of New York, the Education and Missionary Society, of New York, &c.

There is, however, no General Education Society connected with the Protestant Episcopal Church. The subject has been several times before the General Convention, and some plan will probably be soon matured, if it be found that the Diocesan Education Societies are inadequate to all the wants of the Church.

The subject of "the Christian Education of the youth of both sexes in accordance with the principles of the Church" is now in the hands of a Committee appointed by the last General Convention, which Committee is "to make such a report to the next General Convention, as may aid them in adopting the best measures for promoting this great object."

There is a General Protestant Episcopal Sunday School Union, under the control of the General Convention, whose Secretary and Depository are located in New York City.

There are, also, many Diocesan and City Sunday School Societies.

There is a General Theological Seminary of the Protestant Episcopal Church, under the control of the General Convention, located in the City of New York. Its Faculty are very able, and many of the clergy of the Church are its graduates.

There are, besides, sundry Diocesan Theological Seminaries, such as that at Alexandria, District of

Columbia; at Gambier, Ohio; at Lexington, Kentucky; at Peoria, Illinois, &c.

3. There are no General Bible or Tract Societies of the Protestant Episcopal Church. The existence of the American Bible and Tract Societies, and of the Protestant Episcopal Bible and Tract Society of New York, whose Depositories are in a central point, seems to have rendered any General Societies of this sort in the Protestant Episcopal Church unnecessary.

There are sundry Diocesan Societies for the circulation of Bibles and Tracts, and Common Prayer Books, such as the New York Bible and Common Prayer Book Society, of New York; the Bishop White Common Prayer Book Society, of Pennsylvania; the Protestant Episcopal Tract Society, of New York; the Protestant Episcopal Tract Society, of Virginia, &c.

There are various Diocesan Benevolent Societies, such as those for the relief of the widows and children of deceased clergymen, &c.

There are various Benevolent Institutions of other sorts, Diocesan and Parochial, connected with the Protestant Episcopal Church.

It is to be remembered that many Episcopalians are connected with all the General (not denominational) Benevolent Societies in our country.

4. In almost all the Dioceses there are Diocesan Missionary Societies, for the prosecution of Domestic Missions within the several Dioceses, such as the Education and Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the State of New York; the

Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge in Connecticut; the Board of Missions in Massachusetts; the Protestant Episcopal Clerical Convocation of Rhode Island, &c. These local Societies have done much good. Probably one third of all the Diocesan clergy of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, are supported wholly or in part by them. Probably seven-eighths of all the Protestant Episcopal Churches in the United States have been planted and sustained by them.

There are, also, Protestant Episcopal City Missions sustained in several of the large cities of our country, as in New York, Boston, &c.

There is a General Missionary Society, entitled "The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America." We propose to review some leading principles in its Constitution.

In the first place, this Society is composed, not of subscribers as such, but of all the members of the Church, according to the 2nd Article of its Constitution: "The Society shall be considered as comprehending all persons who are members of this Church." The principle here asserted is new in this application of it. No other church, we believe, excepting that of the Episcopal Church of the United Brethren, has ever asserted it distinctly in such a connexion. The theory of the Protestant Episcopal Church, as expressed in this Article with authority, is—that the Church of Christ is itself the great Missionary Society appointed by Himself; and that every person bap-

tized into this Church is, *ipso facto*, whether he acknowledges his obligation or not, a member of the Missionary Society. The Constitution of this General Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church is founded upon the principle here asserted.

Again, the principle is carried out into the organization of the society; for according to the 3d Article of the Constitution, the General Convention "as the constituted representative body of the whole Protestant Episcopal Church in these United States," is the Managing or Executive Body, which has the entire control of the Society. Accordingly, at every triennial meeting, the General Convention "appoints, by a concurrent vote, on nomination by a joint Committee of the two Houses, a Board of thirty members, who, together with the Bishops of this Church, and such persons as became patrons of this Society before the meeting of the General Convention in the year 1829, shall be called the 'Board of Missions of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America.'"

To this Board, by the 4th Article, is "entrusted the supervision of the General (i. e. not Diocesan) Missionary operations of the Church, with power to establish Missionary stations, appoint Missionaries, make appropriations of money, regulate the conducting of Missions, &c."

This Board, by the 6th Article, is bound to "publish an annual report of their proceedings for the information of the Society (i. e. the Church), and pre-

sent a triennial report to each stated General Convention."

This Board, also, as soon as may be after it has been constituted, is bound, by the 7th Article, to "appoint eight persons, four of whom shall be clergymen, and four of whom shall be laymen, who, together with the Bishop of the Diocese in which the Committee shall be located, shall be a committee for Domestic Missions; and eight other persons, four of whom shall be clergymen, and four of whom shall be laymen, who, together with the Bishop of the Diocese in which the Committee shall be located, shall be a Committee for Foreign Missions; all of whom shall be, *ex officio* members of the Board of Missions. The Board of Missions shall determine the location of the Committees respectively."

The present location of both Committees is the City of New York.

According to the 9th Article, "the Board of Missions shall appoint, for each Committee, a Secretary and General Agent, with a suitable salary, who shall be the executive officer of the Committee, to collect information, to conduct its correspondence, to devise and recommend plans of operation, and, in general, to execute all the purposes of the Board, in his proper sphere, submitting all his measures, before their adoption, to the Committee for whom he is appointed, for their approval. Each Committee shall appoint a Treasurer. Local and subordinate agents and officers may, when necessary, be appointed by each Committee." The Rev. J. Dixon Carder, D. D. is the present

Secretary and General Agent for the Domestic Committee; and the Rev. John A. Vaughan, D. D. for the Foreign Committee. James Swords, Esq. of New York is Treasurer for the Domestic Committee; and Dr. John Smyth Rogers of New York for the Foreign Committee.

We have thus given a brief sketch of the plan of this General Missionary Society. We have seen that it recognizes distinctly, at the very head of its Constitution, the broad principle that the whole Church is the great Missionary Society; and all its organization is in accordance with this principle.

Following out its noble principle to the widest extent of its application, it asserts, in the 10th Article, that the field of this Society is the world, the whole world, and that all parts of this field have an equal claim upon the sympathies and exertions of the Church of Christ: "For the guidance of the committees, it is declared that the missionary field is always to be regarded as one, THE WORLD; the terms Domestic and Foreign being understood as terms of locality, adopted for convenience. *Domestic missions* are those established *within*, and *Foreign missions* are those which are established *without* the territory of the United States."

As is very proper the constitution closes, in the 13th Article with a solemn recognition of the need of the superintendence and blessing of Almighty God, and the duty of constant and faithful prayer on the part of the Church: "It is recommended to every member of this Society (the Church) to pray to Almighty God for his blessing upon its designs, under

the full conviction that unless He direct us in all our doings with His most gracious favor, and further us with His continual help, we can not reasonably hope to procure suitable persons to act as Missionaries, or expect that their endeavors will be successful."

The operations of this society have hitherto been very much blessed both in our western Territories and new States, and also in Foreign lands. But it has been straitened for means. Its income at present is only about sixty thousand dollars per annum. It is, however, promising to do more; and the plans of the society are formed in faith; and it is trusted, that ere long, this General Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church will call out the whole strength of the Church in sustaining and carrying into full and triumphant effect, the noble and truly evangelical missionary principles which are so unequivocally asserted in its Constitution.

It cannot be denied, that the theory of missions, and the relation of the Church to this subject, declared so authoritatively by the General Convention, are correct.

If the conviction of right principles and also the frankest acknowledgment of duty are evidences of the soundness and honorableness of a Church, then there is much in the Protestant Episcopal Church to invite to its unity all those, certainly, who love to own and to fulfil the last charge of their ascended Lord: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."

SECTION XVIII.

LIBERTY.

Replies to several enquiries—liberty in the P. E. Church—to join voluntary and benevolent societies—to form associations for religious improvement—to offer extemporaneous prayers—to engage in social meetings for religious purposes—to make special efforts for the good of souls—statement of a grand principle of liberty in the P. E. Church—this Church therefore dear to all friends of religious liberty.

THERE are certain questions, which meet Episcopalians continually, and which deserve to be answered in our present review. We have selected a few as specimens of the class. These we will briefly answer; and then we will state the principle upon which the answers are rendered.

1. Are the ministers and members of the Protestant Episcopal Church at liberty to join the various voluntary societies for benevolent and other purposes, such as bible, tract, colonization, anti-slavery, peace, temperance, and other societies?

We reply: they are at perfect liberty to do so; and we believe, distinguished members of the Protestant Episcopal Church are among the leading men in all these societies.

2. Are the ministers and members of the Protestant Episcopal Church at liberty to unite themselves in little bands, or classes or associations for their personal improvement in religious knowledge and affections—associations like those, for instance, in the Methodist societies?

We reply: they are at perfect liberty to do so. Such associations of Episcopalian ministers are very common; and in many, probably most Episcopalian parishes, associations of the Laity similar in many respects do exist, though their names may be different, and though they have no formal name by which they are distinguished.

3. Are the ministers and members of the Protestant Episcopal Church ever allowed to offer extemporaneous prayers?

We reply: they are at perfect liberty to do so, on every occasion, and in all circumstances, for which no regular services are provided.

4. Are the ministers and members of the Protestant Episcopal Church ever allowed to engage in prayer meetings and other social meetings for religious purposes?

We reply: they are at perfect liberty to do so; and such meetings have been always more or less common.

5. Are the ministers and members of the Protestant Episcopal Church ever allowed to engage in protracted meetings, and other special and extraordinary efforts for the good of souls?

We reply: they are at perfect liberty to do so. The various festivals and the fasts, the season of Lent, and the solemn Passion week, all appointed by the Church, are of this character. So also are the various clerical associations and convocations. The Protestant Episcopal Church holds, that men cannot pray too much, nor know too much of the Word of God,

nor make too much effort for their own salvation and that of others. Supreme devotion is the end of all its arrangements. If the services of a congregation should be protracted through a year, or a century of years, there would be an "Order for Daily Morning Prayer," and an "Order for Daily Evening Prayer," and a "Table of Lessons of Holy Scripture to be read at morning and evening Prayer," provided by the Church, for every day in the year, or in the century of years, and offered to the use of that congregation.

We have thus selected, and answered distinctly, a few very common and very broad questions.

The principle, upon which our replies have been rendered, will apply to all other questions concerning the lawfulness of things in the Protestant Episcopal Church. The grand principle referred to, and which lies at the foundation of the system of the Protestant Episcopal Church, is this—*perfect liberty in all things not defined by the positive laws which have been made and acknowledged by the whole Church.*

Every thing not defined by these laws is lawful; and the only question, in reference to any such thing, is this: Is it expedient? For it is true, in the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, as it was in the Primitive and Apostolical Church, of which St. Paul wrote: (1 Cor. x: 23.) "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not."

Within this Church may not all unite, who would "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free?"

SECTION XIX.

ADAPTIVENESS.

The P. E Church adapted to all circumstances of society, and all the temperaments and habitudes of men—thus proved a true Church—accordant with the design of the Church—importance of adaptiveness—folly of establishing a Church on different principles—necessity of adaptiveness illustrated—the opposite of adaptiveness a fundamental error in sectarism—lessons from the history of the past—the Church may not forbid any thing, and may use every thing, but sin—objections answered—no evils resulting from adaptiveness in the P. E. Church—such evils cannot exist in it—illustrated—the writers advice to his Christian brethren—a word to Episcopalians—the P. E. Church founded on the most expansive principles.

Under the principle stated in the last Section, it will be seen, while individuals are left to the most unrestricted Christian liberty, the Church is, at the same time, made beautifully and exactly adaptive to all the varying circumstances of society and all the peculiar temperaments and habitudes of men.

The propriety of the principle, and the vital importance of such adaptiveness in the system of the Church, will be evident, if we look for a moment at the design of the Church. It is intended to take in all men, in all places, at all times, that it may teach and bless them, and keep them near to the Great Head. The Church, in its theory, is universal. It must therefore accommodate itself to all. It must be, like its ministers, "all things to all men, that by any means it may win some." The example of Christ is the rule and pattern of His Church; and as He adapted Himself to all persons and all circumstances, so must His

Church imitate Him. This adaptiveness is essential to the very idea of the Church; and every Church which does not have it, is radically, if not fatally defective. The Church represents the universal religion of Christ, and must therefore be fitted to every class and condition and period of mankind.

Now the habits and the intelligence of some communities are very different from those of others, and such must be approached in some respects very differently. So, too, in all communities, there is a vast diversity in the physical and moral temperaments of individuals, and the social habits and modes of intercourse of different classes of individuals. The Church must meet them all, nay more, she must embrace them all, nay, she must even do much more, she must make use of all these diversities, she must employ them all as her own instruments (with which the God of nature has furnished her) for elevating all classes to holiness, and conforming all individuals to the image of the Lord.

It is impossible, indeed, (to use the strong language of a friend in conversation on another topic,) "it is treason against nature and treason against nature's God," to attempt to shape all the varieties of individual mental, moral, and physical character, by one exact and elaborately contrived standard of human rules. The attempt has been made often enough, and has always necessarily failed. It is the fundamental error in sectarism. It is an error into which the weakness of men is continually falling. It springs from that inordinate but hidden self-love, which causes

every man to look at himself as the standard of perfection, to which all others must be made to conform. The Church, which embodies this error into its system must be always a limited Church, the Church of a sect, of a class of men, not the Church for the world. It has in it no elements of universality.

To illustrate: the man of intellectual and refined tastes and of a sensitive and meditative temperament, will enjoy much the solemn and regular services of the public worship of the Church, as well as private and intimate communion with his friend on the things of religion. He may examine much his own heart, and "purify himself as He is pure," and be often in prayer. Yet he may not be profited by more informal and social and communicative assemblies. His religious sensibilities, which are of course modified by his other personal characteristics, might indeed be seriously injured by them. He might become critical and perhaps cynical; at least, he would bear a burden inconsistent with his Christain liberty. So long as he loves and serves his Master, and is faithful in the discharge of the manifest duties of piety, it would be wrong to insist that he must conform to customs which are not consonant to his peculiar character. On the other hand he will be no standard for men of a different class. If he requires one rule, they require another. The men of every day life, common men, the great world of men for whom Christ died and whom Christ loves, must in their turn be indulged while they consult their natural predilections. Not sensitive, not meditative, like the other, or at

least in the same degree, accustomed to be much together and to converse with unreserved freedom with each other upon all topics; practical and confiding in all their habits; familiar with the animated and exciting and discursive language of conversation, rather than the formal and quiet and studied language of books; these men require, they must and will have, a liberty to act out their own religious sensibilities in their own way, and if they cannot have this liberty in one Church, they will have it in another.

Now we would not legislate for this liberty. The very law which should grant, would limit. There is no law which could reach all cases in any one community or in any one period, much less in all places and all ages. The proper course is, as in the system of the Protestant Episcopal Church, (would it were better understood even by its own members!) to leave this liberty untouched, without either the condemnation or the justification of law. The true Church of Christ, who is the universal Redeemer, and whose Church represents the universal religion, is liberal and forbearing with all. It is adapted to all.

There are some lessons in the history of the past which apply forcibly to this subject. So long as the Church of Rome, even after it had lost the "harmlessness of the dove," retained the "wisdom of the serpent," and, instead of restricting, encouraged liberty, it was sustained with all its errors. When the zeal of a St. Dominic, or a St. Francis, or a St. Bernard, or a Loyola was active and had excited powerful sympathies, that Church, instead of opposing that

zeal and those sympathies, employed them as its own agencies, and made for itself most powerful friends and supporters of the very classes, which would have been its bitter adversaries, if they had been opposed. The broad and rapid stream, which flows forth, melted from nature's ice by the genial summer sun, or projected from the mountain by nature's volcanic fires, and which it would be utterly vain to attempt to force back or to bury, may be easily diverted and guided in its course, and, like the rivers of Asia, be made to irrigate and fertilize and bless the land.

There is but one thing which the Church of Christ may at all times forbid, but one thing in the world, which it may not under some circumstances be justified in using,—and that one thing is *sin*. To fight against nature in all other things is to fight against God; for God is in every thing except sin. Rather let the Church, like her Divine and Almighty and All-wise Head, seek not to destroy or to suppress nature, but to control nature; not to oppose any of the legitimate operations of nature, but to bend them all as her own appropriate instrumentalities given her from heaven, to the accomplishment of her own heavenly purposes—the glory of God, and the salvation of souls.

The characteristic of adaptiveness, whose importance we have been briefly illustrating, belongs to the Protestant Episcopal Church; and it is produced by the large liberty and toleration which are radical principles in its organization.

It is well to state here, that the evils which are sup-

posed sometimes to result from such liberty, cannot result from it in the Church, which is adapted to universality. They result from it often in sects; because it is at variance with the narrow and intolerant spirit of sectarism. They cannot result from it in a Church universal, for it accords exactly with the spirit or genius of such a Church. That which is liberty in the universal Church, is but revolution or tyranny in the sect. The elasticity of an adaptive Church will yield, and fit it to every impression. The rigidity of the sect (which demands absolute unity in all things and cannot yield nor bend without relinquishing its peculiarity or distinctiveness) is such, that either itself must be broken by the new impression, or its members must be all crushed by it into one mass.

We believe, that the evils referred to cannot result from the most extensive toleration in the Protestant Episcopal Church. There are in it restraining and regulating influences always steadily and powerfully at work—its standards of faith, and its standards of prayer, and its constant lessons from the word of God. The experience of the past corresponds with the conclusions of our judgment, that no permanent or considerable evils (certainly none equivalent to the evils of intolerance) can result from the most unrestricted exercise of that large liberty which the Protestant Episcopal Church allows to its members. We believe, that this Church, while in its liberal system it is the encourager and patron of all varieties of action and effort for the promotion of human piety, is, at the

same time, in its careful and scripturally defended system, the regulator and guide of them all.

That evils may and do result from liberty under any circumstances, we grant; but there are evils resulting from every thing which is connected at all with the imperfection and frailty of man's moral and mental nature. It cannot be otherwise. Still we contend, that where there is liberty there can be no permanent evils. Such as may arise, will be temporary; they will cure themselves; they will be removed soon by the common sense and experience of men. New evils, occasional evils, will arise and be removed continually, while the great body of the Church shall be continually progressing in grace and happiness. It cannot be thus where there is intolerance. Evils, the evils which always appertain to things human, will be made permanent; and the devotions of many souls will be repressed; and error will pass into malignity and heresy; and innocent diversity of opinion or of practice will go out into rancorous and deadly schism. This has been the woful history of the Church of Christ. It takes but the enactment of a positive law —done in a moment of deliberation, or, it may be, of carelessness or of passion—to make a religious duty or a sin of a matter in itself indifferent or unimportant; and rulers, as well ecclesiastical as civil, should beware how they exert their power. The great fault of ecclesiastical legislators, in all ages of the Church, has been in legislating too much. They seem to have forgotten how wide and almost boundless is the application of a law, though it appear to be circumscribed;

and that even a legal license will operate somewhere as a legal prohibition. They seem to have forgotten that there are laws in nature itself and in the Gospel as well as in their codes of canons. The legislators of a Church ought to have faith in the common sense and the deliberate judgments and the sincere hearts of the Christian people; they should trust much to the laws of experience, the laws of the human mind and affections; they should have calm confidence in the gracious care of the Holy Spirit, the superintendence of the Head of the Church. They ought not to seek to curtail the liberty of the earnest soul in its searchings after holiness and God.

The Protestant Episcopal Church, as it now exists, is, in the highest sense, an adaptive Church. It is able to take in the countless diversities in the practice of the Christian community, and to hallow them all, by the spirit of unity; to convert them all from opponents, often too bitter and severe, into friendly and loving co-workers with each other, all in the unity of its one capacious system. We pray that the day may be forever removed, when this Church shall be taken off from its present free and adaptive principles, to be placed upon an intolerant and sectarian foundation. And if the day shall come, when its own members and others professing Christianity, shall understand well the adaptiveness of its system, then the glorious ideal of an united and happy Church will be realized. But never can that ideal be realized until these principles are acknowledged sincerely and in practice.

If the writer may be indulged in offering one word

of advice to his Christian brethren generally, he will say, let the principles of a Church, so free, and so adaptive, be carried out. So long as men are willing to conform to laws which respect essential duty, leave them in other matters to their liberty. You cannot, you ought not to restrict them. If men are willing to strive after holiness, let them do so in every way; it is hard enough to be gained in any way. And be sure, that whatsoever custom or effort will promote holiness is accordant with the design and the system of Christ's true Church. Let men alone, leave them to themselves, so long as they are willing to come together upon the great essential principles on which Christ's Church is founded.

To the Protestant Episcopalian we say: look well to the system of your Church, and endeavor to catch its spirit of forbearance and toleration, its spirit of wisdom and comprehensiveness. And remember, if ever you should be tempted to strive, or even to wish, to restrict the Christian liberty of your brother—his liberty in things not essential to salvation—then you will be tempted to war treacherously, and in the spirit of sectarism, against the grand and glorious principles upon which your Church is established.

SECTION XX.

RELIGIOUS DEVOTION AND ACTION.

Two tests of a Church—*Religious Devotion*—formularies of the P. E. Church—high spirituality—order of services—holy men of the Church—distinction between the system of the P. E. Church and other systems for the production of devotion—*Religious Action*—variety and arrangement of evangelical subjects—in connexion with liberty—and with adaptive-

ness—the P. E. Church the revival Church of the U. S.—working of the system—such a Church should be dear to all true Christians.

In looking at the system of a Church—as a practical system, there are, among others, two grand results, by which it must be tested; *first*, Religious Devotion, that is, its capacity to improve and cultivate the piety and spirituality of Christ's disciples, and *next*, Religious Action, that is, its fitness to act upon the world in converting it to the service of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In considering these results from the system of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, we can only allude to them in the briefest terms. We do so, that the reader may follow out the subject more fully in his own thoughts, and in the more extensive treatises of others.

I. Religious Devotion.—The Formularies of social public worship, or, as the Church terms it, of common prayer, illustrate the spiritual standard of Churchmen.*

* "Our Liturgy" says Bishop Newton, "was composed principally out of *scripture* or out of *ancient liturgies and fathers*. Our prayers are addressed to the *proper object* through the *proper mediator*; to the one God, through the 'one mediator between God and man' the man Christ Jesus. Each collect (prayer) begins with a solemn invocation of the one, and concludes with the prevailing merits and intercessions of the other. The *variety* of our service is another excellence in the composition of it, and contributes much to the keeping up of our attention and devotion. A sameness in anything soon satiates and wearies us; and it is as difficult to keep the mind, as it is the body long in one posture. But by the beautiful intermixture of *prayer and praise*, of *supplication and thanksgiving*, of *confession and absolution*, of *hymns and creeds*, of *psalms and lessons*, (of Holy Scripture) our weariness is relieved, our attention is renewed, and we are led on agreeably from one subject to another. The frame of our Liturgy is somewhat like the frame of the world; it is order in variety, and though all the parts are different, yet the whole is consistent and regular. What renders it more excellent is its *comprehensiveness*. There is nothing that relates

We cannot enter here into any analysis of these. We beg the reader to examine for himself the book of common prayer of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States; and we venture to af-

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either to ourselves or others, nothing that concerns us either as men or members of society, nothing that conduces to our happiness in this world or in the world to come, but is comprehended in some or other of the petitions. It is easy while the minister is reading it, to appropriate and apply any passage to ourselves and our own case. A great deal is *expressed* but more is *implied*; and our devotions in our closets, and in our families, we cannot better perhaps express, than in the words of our Liturgy: it is so suited to all ranks and conditions, and adapted to all wants and occasions. The *congregation* have particular reason to be pleased, as they have a larger share in our service than in any other whatever; and the *minister and people* mutually raise and inflame each other's devotions. It is a singular privilege, therefore, that our people enjoy, of hearing so large a part in our service; and it is this that properly denominates ours, what really none else is, a book (service) of COMMON *prayer*." *Quoted in Bishop Hobart's "Companion for the Book of Common Prayer."* p. 8—10.

"I discovered in this (the P. E.) Church, in addition to sound doctrine, evangelical piety, and a truly Catholic spirit, the appendages of a *Liturgy* which furnished the worshiper with a medium of prayer that was appropriate, comprehensive, and spiritual, that afforded security against offensive additions as well as defections and variations, and that established a firm bulwark against any extensive or permanent degeneration into heresy —a form of public worship that gave and secured to the scriptures their deserved participation in the service of the sanctuary; and a discipline which a succession of ages has proved to be an effectual preservation of union and subordination. I was not a little confirmed in my determination to make this the Church of my choice, by the approbation which intelligent and catholic spirited clergymen of my former communion awarded to the Episcopal Church; and among them, one who stands second to scarcely a clergyman in the land in point of influence, learning, and talent, assured me, that had he known as much of this Church when he was a candidate for the ministry, as he now did, he should without hesitation have made his election to be an Episcopalian. In conclusion, I will only add that nearly fifteen years of intimate acquaintance with this Church, has strengthened my bond of attachment, nor have I to record a single circumstance of a seriously adverse character, save this—that Episcopalians in general do not rise up to the lofty standard and sublime spirituality of the Liturgy, Articles and discipline of their apostolical Church."—*Extract from a letter in the Rev. J. A. Clark's "Walk about Sion,"* p. 277, 278.

firm, that however high may be his attainments in the divine life, in the imitation of the spirit and character of the Lord Jesus Christ, he will find the devotion of this volume still equal to him, still in advance of him.*

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* "That distinguished Methodist divine, Dr. Adam Clark, says of the Liturgy of the P. E. Church, 'it is almost universally esteemed by the devout and pious of every denomination, and is *the greatest effort of the Reformation, next to the translation of the Scriptures into the English language;* a work which all who are acquainted with it, deem *superior to every thing of the kind, produced either by ancient or modern times*, and several of the prayers and services in which, were in use in the first ages of Christianity, and many of the best of them before the name of Pope or Popery was known in the earth. AS A FORM OF DEVOTION IT HAS NO EQUAL IN ANY PART OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH OF GOD. *It is founded on those doctrines which contain the sum and essence of Christianity, and speaks the language of the sublimest piety, and of the most refined devotional feeling.* NEXT TO THE BIBLE, IT IS THE BOOK OF MY UNDERSTANDING AND OF MY HEART.'

'Though a Protestant Dissenter,' says the eminent Baptist minister, Robert Hall, speaking of the Liturgy, 'I am by no means insensible to its merits. I BELIEVE THAT THE EVANGELICAL PURITY OF ITS SENTIMENTS, THE CHASTISED FERVOR OF ITS DEVOTION, AND THE MAJESTIC SIMPLICITY OF ITS LANGUAGE, HAVE COMBINED TO PLACE IT IN THE VERY FIRST RANK OF UNINSPIRED COMPOSITIONS.'"

These quotations are taken from the "Churchman's Manual," an admirable volume, by the Rev. Benjamin Dorr, Rector of Christ's Church, Philadelphia, formerly of Utica, N. Y., and more recently Secretary and general agent of the Dom. Com. of the Bd. of Miss. of the P. E. C. in the U. S. The doctrines, ministry and worship of the P. E. Church are clearly and concisely opened and defended in this volume. Testimonies to the same effect with the above might be multiplied from other sources. We subjoin a single extract from a more partial, but very instructive and able writer: "In the Liturgy we have the very words in which some of the most saintly of men chose to breathe out their devotions. There are the prayers of such men as Crysostom, Gregory, and Cranmer, with a 'noble army' of others, whose names are high in the estimation of every true Christian. And there we have the rich and heavenly spirit of the olden time—the time when men 'walked with God,' and earnestly contended for the faith delivered to them. If we shall ever catch the fervor of those primitive days, will it not be when the incense of prayer is offered in the same censer of antiquity? Blame us not, then, if we value our Liturgy. It embodies the anthems of saints. It thrills the heart with the dying songs of the faithful. It is hallowed with the blood of martyrs. It glows with sacred fire. Long may it resound in

Not to allude to numerous arguments in proof of the devotional tendencies of the Formularies of the Church, we will allude to one only in this place—the *order of subjects* presented in the annual course of the Ritual. If any arrangement might inflame our love for our Master, and quicken us to newness of life, this may be depended on for the purpose.*

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the temples of the crucified. Loud be its seraphic strains. Mighty its swelling chorus. Eternal the angelic hymn, GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO, GLORY BE TO GOD ON HIGH!"—*The Rev. Wm. Staunton's "Church Dictionary." Art.* LITURGY, p. 320.

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* "The whole year is distinguished into two parts; the one to commemorate Christ's living here on earth, and the other to direct us to live after his example. For the first are all the Sundays appointed, from Advent to Trinity Sunday; for the second, all the Sundays from Trinity to Advent again. And because THE FIRST PART is conversant about the life of Christ, and the mysteries of his divine dispensation, therefore, beginning at advent, is the memory of *his incarnation* celebrated; and after that, his *nativity;* then his *circumcision;* his *manifestation to the Gentiles;* his *doctrine;* his *miracles;* his *passion;* his *burial;* his *resurrection;* his *sending of the Holy Ghost;* all in the most perfect order: in all which we see the whole story and course of our Saviour in manifesting himself and his divine mysteries to the world. The SECOND PART, which contains all the Sundays after Trinity till Advent, being for our guidance during our pilgrimage in this world, hath such Gospels in order appointed, as may most easily and plainly lead us in the true paths of Christianity; that those, which are regenerated by Christ, and initiated into his faith, may know what virtues to follow, and what vices to eschew. Thus, *in the first part, we are to learn the mysteries of the Christian Religion; and in the second, to practice that which is agreeable to the same.* For so it behoves us, not only to know that we have no other foundation of our religion, but Christ Jesus, born, and crucified, and risen for us; but also to build upon this foundation, such a life as he requires of us." *Bishop Overall, quoted in Bishop Brownell's Family Prayer Book*, p. 84.

"'While we are upon this subject, allow me to enquire,' said Mr. R——, 'upon what ground the Episcopal Church observes the Saints' days, and numerous other festivals, such as Christmas, &c: the Romish Church, you know, makes much of these.'

'It is true,' was the reply; 'and the Romish Church also makes much of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. But this is no reason why we should re-

It is proper to point to the many sincere and exemplary Christians, who have been trained up under the

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ject those ordinances. The observances, to which you refer, we adopt solely on the ground of expediency. We do not think that Christ enjoined them, or that all Christians are bound to adopt them. In like manner we do not think that Christ enjoined the observance of the first Monday evening in each month as a season of prayer for Missions, nor that all Christians are necessarily bound so to observe it. But we do think that it is very pleasant, and proper, and profitable, to spend the first Monday evening of each month in this way—and that those Christians who do so will find it truly a season of refreshing from the Lord. So also we think it pleasant, and proper, and profitable, to observe those Christian festivals to which you have referred, and that a blessing will not fail to rest upon those who engage in those appropriate religious exercises with a right spirit. No possible objection can be made to our observance of the Saints' days; since we admit into the calendar the names of *those only, whose history the Holy Ghost hath recorded in the sacred volume for our instruction.* The Church observes these days for the same reason that memoirs are written, of good, and great, and distinguished men. Who is there that does not regard the biography of such men as Payson, and Brainard, and Martyn, and Legh Richmond, as a great blessing to the world? These memoirs have done a vast deal for the cause of Christ. But surely Peter, and John, and Paul, in point of holiness and self-sacrifice, were not inferior to Payson, and Brainard, and Martyn. And are not the lives of Peter and John, and Paul, then, worth contemplating? Is it not proper that the ministers of the Church should, at least once a year, call the attention of the people to the contemplation of the holy lives, and exalted piety of those first heralds of the cross, who did not count any sacrifices too great, so that they could but make known to a perishing world 'the unsearchable riches of Christ?' *The other festivals and fasts, to which you refer, commemorate some event connected with the birth, life, or mediatorial work of Christ, thus furnishing a fit opportunity upon which to inculcate severally, and with increased effect, the great doctrines of the cross.* Long experience has convinced us of the expediency of setting apart particular days, in which to contemplate the cardinal facts connected with the history of man's redemption. These annual commemorations are attended with signal benefit. They make us more thoroughly acquainted with the prominent and most interesting Gospel facts, and impress the remembrance of them more vividly upon our minds. *By this arrangement we are sure to have the great truths of salvation every year systematically brought up before us. This is a very important consideration.* As year after year, we contemplate, on Christmas, the *incarnation* of the son of God, with the kindred truths that stand connected with it; and on Epiphany, *his manifesta-*

influences of the Protestant Episcopal Church, as evidences of the fitness of the system of this Church to promote spirituality.* To say nothing of "the

tion to the Gentiles, and are thus led to pray over a dying world, that 'the heathen may be given to him for an inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession'—then on Good Friday, as we contemplate *his bitter sufferings and death*—on Easter, his *resurrection* from the tomb—on Ascension day, *his ascent* from the top of Olivet to 'the right hand of God where he ever liveth to make intercession for us'—on Whitsunday, *the descent of the Holy Spirit* to revive, refresh, enlighten, and sanctify our hearts:—and finally, on Trinity Sunday, *the sublime and glorious mystery of the 'three that bear record in heaven*, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, which three are one,'—I say, *as from year to year, particular days bring up the consideration of these great fundamental truths, we find our faith invigorated, our love to the Redeemer increased, our knowledge enlarged and our souls refreshed.*'"—*Walk about Sion*, p. 318—321.

* "And here we must not omit to mention the obligations, which all Protestant Churches are under, to the learned and pious members of our communion. For the translation of the Scriptures, now in common use, we are indebted to Episcopalians. This 'most wonderful and incomparable work' was the joint labor of the most distinguished divines of the English Church. That Church, too, has ever been considered as 'the bulwark of the Reformation.' The first martyr to that glorious cause was Rogers, an Episcopal divine, and after him, Cranmer, and Latimer and Ridley, and Hooper,—all of them Bishops distinguished for piety and learning—were called upon to lay down their lives in defence of the same holy principles. Of divines of later days, who have come forth in defence of the doctrines and institutions of our Church, we might name a Jewell, a Burnet, a Barrow, a Bull, a Taylor, a Pearson, a Chillingworth, a Warburton and a Horsley; and we might well say in respect of them—'There were giants in the earth in those days.' But the time would fail us to tell of her Tillotsons, and her Leightons, her Halls, and her Wilsons; or to speak of Usher, and Stanhope, and Stillingfleet, and Jones and Secker, and Porteus, and Butler, and Paley, and Magee, and Horne;—men whose praise is in all the Churches.

Of illustrious Laymen, we can boast of a Locke, a Boyle, a Sir Isaac Newton, an Addison, and a Johnson, a Lord Littleton, a Sir William Jones, a Lord Chief Justice Hale,—and, in our own country, a Washington, a John Jay, a Chief Justice Marshall;—men distinguished not less for their piety and virtue, than for their pre-eminent talents;—men 'whose lives and writings will continue to enlighten and improve mankind, so long as the art of printing shall perpetuate them.' And surely these men of mighty minds,

noble army of martyrs" of the Protestant Reformation, the mention of such names as Walton, and Ken, and Herbert, and Hooker, and Leighton, and Venn, and Newton and Simeon, and the Wesleys, and Whitfield, (for these last were taught their devotion in the Church) and Heber, and Martyn, and Buchanan, and Thomason, and, in our own land, of the venerable White, and of Hobart, and Ravenscroft, and Bedell, and of the early lost, and tenderly mourned, the English Henry Kirke White, and his compeers, Lyde, and Winslow, amongst ourselves, will furnish a sufficient illustration.

We have spoken of Religious devotion, as distinct from Religious action ; and the distinction is manifest.

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who applied their utmost powers to the investigation of religious truth ; may well serve to strengthen our confidence in the purity and soundness of a Church to which they were the ornament and support, and in the communion of which they lived and died.

Of laborers in the Missionary field, who have taken their lives in their hand, and gone forth with apostolic zeal, to preach the Gospel to every creature, what names stand higher than Swartz, and Middleton, and Heber, and Henry Martyn ?

As writers of practical devotion, who are more read than Thomas Scott, and John Newton, and Legh Richmond, and William Wilberforce, and Hannah More ?

Or where will you look for works of more fervent piety—works that have been oftener blessed to the conversion of sinners, and the instruction and comfort of Christians—than Law's Serious Call, Beveridge's Private Thoughts, Scott's Christian Life, Sherlock on Death and Judgment, Wilson's Private Meditations, Nelson's Practice of true Devotion, and Bishop Taylor's Holy Living and Holy Dying ? Very many other works of a kindred spirit and character, to be found in the closet and sick room of almost every Christian, of every name and nation, might be mentioned ; but they will readily occur to every pious reader's mind.

These are indeed the precious fruits of piety, born, nourished, and perfected—so far as any thing human can be perfect—in the Episcopal Church."—*Dorr's Churchman's Manual*, p. 278—280.

Now we contend, that the *system of worship* in the non-Episcopal churches of our country is not adapted to foster devotion; and the devotion felt in the hearts of the members of these churches (and there is much of it, be it spoken to their praise) is attributable to other causes not provided in their regular ecclesiastical systems. And the *system* of the Protestant Episcopal Church is contradistinguished *from these other systems*, by the fact that *it* provides directly for the furtherance of devotion, and that this result, so far as it has been accomplished among the Episcopalians of our country, is owing manifestly to the working of the system, even in the face of powerful counteracting causes connected with the history and progress of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States. The tendency of *other systems*, while they allow Religious action, is, in connection with the spirit of the age, to discourage, or at least restrain unduly Religious devotion. The *system of the Protestant Episcopal Church* provides especially for the increase of devotion, while at the same time it furnishes to its members every encouragement to the most energetic action. We are only able here to hint at the distinction above stated. The point to which we call attention is this—that the system of the Protestant Episcopal Church nourishes Religious devotion.*

* Within a few months, a pious and intelligent minister of a dissenting denomination said to the writer, substantially as follows: "The reason why so many in the professedly religious community are not disposed to approve, or do not like to attend your Church service, is, that your service is too devotional; the present is an undevotional age." He is in the main correct. There ought to be over all our land more of heart-worship, as well as intellectual and personal activity.

We will now consider the other topic.

II. Religious Action.—The reader is requested to bear in mind what was said, in the last two Sections, on the liberty and the adaptiveness of the Protestant Episcopal Church. Let him consider those characteristics, as therein exemplified, in connexion with the stated and elevated devotional arrangements of the Church; and he will perceive that there is the largest scope and encouragement for Religious action. Indeed, *the Protestant Episcopal Church is, in its system, the Revival Church of our country.*

Look at the variety and at the same time the unity or harmony of Evangelical subjects continually presented in the annual course of the Ritual—Ascension, and Whitsunday, and Trinity, and Christmas, and Epiphany, and Lent, and the solemn Passion-Week, wherein, in daily services (what would be called, in the language of the time, an annual protracted meeting), we contemplate the tenderness and love, the sufferings, the judicial trials, and the bloody sweat, and the crucifixion and burial of our Lord, and finally, the glorious Easter—the festival of the Resurrection of Christ, and how much there is continually presented to quicken the pious and convert the careless! Look, then, at the liberty of the Church which allows the employment of so many and various co-operant instrumentalities to arouse and edify. And look at the adaptiveness of the Church, which carries it and its Gospel message to every class, and condition, and age, and to every heart. It is manifest that here is a system formed, which needs only to be used to

effect unrivaled results for the honor of the Master. There is no *Ecclesiastical system* extant which in itself provides legitimately and directly for a constant and orderly succession of revivals over the whole country except this. Individuals and many societies of other denominations have been active in revivals, under some special or occasional arrangements; but *the Protestant Episcopal Church is preeminently and singularly, in its system,* THE REVIVAL CHURCH *of the United States.**

There is a passage in one of the writings of the Rev. Albert Barnes, the distinguished Presbyterian clergyman of Philadelphia, suggested by the above observations which we cannot forbear to quote. It will be found in the concluding paragraphs of what Bishop Onderdonk of Pennsylvania has called "a truly elegant and courteous tribute to the Episcopal Church —a truly splendid eulogium on our Church—and one which does credit to the candor, the benevolence, the superiority to prejudice, of the elevated mind that conceived it, and the honorable frankness which gave it public utterance." The whole eulogium is as follows: "We associate it (Episcepacy) with the brightest and happiest days of religion, and liberty, and literature, and law. We remember that it was under the Episcopacy that the Church in England took its firm stand against the Papacy; and that this was its form when Zion rose to light and splendor, from the dark night of ages. We remember the name of Cranmer,—Cranmer, first, in many respects, among the Reformers; that it was by his steady and unerring hand, that, under God, the pure Church of the Saviour was conducted through the agitating and distressing times of Henry VIII. We remember that God watched over that wonderful man; that he gave this distinguished prelate access to the heart of one of the most capricious, cruel, inexorable, blood-thirsty, and licentious monarchs that has disgraced the world; that God, for the sake of Cranmer, and his Church, conducted Henry, as 'by a hook in the nose,' and made him faithful to the Archbishop of Canterbury, when faithful to none else; so that, perhaps, the only redeeming trait in the character of Henry is his fidelity to this first British prelate under the Reformation. The world will not soon forget the names of Latimer, and Ridley, and Rodgers, and Bradford; names associated, in the feelings of Christians, with the long list of ancient confessors 'of whom the world was not worthy,' and who did honor to entire ages of mankind, by sealing their attachment to the Son of God on the rack, or amid the flames. Nor can we forget that we owe to Episcopacy that which fills our minds with gratitude and praise, when we look for examples of consecrated talent, and ele-

The actual working of the system, where it has been faithfully carried out, agrees with our statements.

There are scores of Protestant Episcopal Churches in our country which have for years been blessed with a continual revival of religion, and in which hardly

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gant literature, and humble devoted piety. While men honor elevated Christian feeling; while they revere sound learning; while they render tribute to clear and profound reasoning, they will not forget the names of Barrow and Taylor, of Tillotson, and Hooker, and Butler;—and when they think of humble, pure, sweet, heavenly piety, their minds will recur instinctively to the name of Leighton. Such names, with a host of others, do honor to the world. When we think of them, we have it not in our hearts to utter one word against a Church which has thus done honor to our race, and to our common Christianity.

Such we wish Episcopacy still to be. We have always thought that there are Christian minds and hearts that would find more edification in the forms of worship in that Church than in any other. We regard it as adapted to call forth Christian energy, that might otherwise be dormant. . . . . We have never doubted that many of the purest flames of devotion that rise from the earth, ascend from the altars of the Episcopal Church, and that many of the purest spirits that the earth contains, minister at those altars, or breathe forth their prayers and praises in language consecrated by the use of piety for centuries.

We have but one wish in regard to Episcopacy. . . . . We wish her to fall in with, or to go in advance of, others, in the spirit of the age. Our desire is that she may become throughout,—as we rejoice she is increasingly becoming,—the warm, devoted friend of revivals and missionary operations. She is consolidated; well marshalled; under an efficient system of laws; and preeminently fitted for powerful action in the field of Christian warfare. We desire to see her, what the Macedonian phalanx was in the ancient army; with her dense, solid organization, with her unity of movement, with her power of maintaining the position which she takes; and with her eminent ability to advance the cause of sacred learning, and the love of order and of law, attending or leading all other Churches in the conquests of redemption in an alienated world. We would even rejoice to see her who was first in the field at the Reformation in England, first, also, in the field, when the Son of God shall come to take to himself his great power; and whatever positions may be assigned to other denominations, we have no doubt that the Episcopal Church is destined yet to be, throughout, the warm friend of revivals, and to consecrate her wealth and power to the work of making a perpetual aggression on the territories of sin and of death." *Christian Spectator, Vol.* 6. See also "*Episcopacy examined and re-examined,*" *New York, Protestant Episcopal Tract Society.*" p. 89—91.

a month elapses without some new accessions to the list of the confirmed and of the communicants. And each successive year is developing more clearly and encouragingly this peculiar tendency of the system.

It is our purpose to be concise. We leave it to our Christian brethren, whether or not they can agree to love and to sustain such a Church as has been here described.

SECTION XXI.

COMPREHENSIVE TRAITS.

If the Protestant Episcopal Church be the Comprehensive Church, it becomes the duty of all Christians to unite themselves with it—extent of this duty—a recapitulation of the various comprehensive traits elucidated in the preceding Sections—the Protestant Episcopal Church proved to be the Comprehensive Church—the only Church founded successfully and completely upon the maxim of the primitive and Apostolical Church—there are few even of its own members who understand its comprehensiveness—this Church not originated by human wisdom or accident—it is a system provided by the gracious providence of the Lord, for the Christian and Ecclesiastical unity of all His disciples.

We hold it to be an axiom, that if the Protestant Episcopal Church be the Comprehensive Church, that is, if it have within its system all the particulars which are held essential, not only by all Christian Denominations jointly, but also by each distinctively, and if there be no other system in our country equally comprehensive, *then it is the bounden duty of all Christians, who love their Lord, and wish to keep his commandment of unity, to unite themselves at once, even if it be at some personal sacrifice, with the Protestant Episcopal Church.*

And one or both of two things is required of every

one, who would, with a good conscience, avoid uniting himself with this Church—either, he must disprove what we have just laid down as an axiom, that is, disprove the importance of obeying his Lord's command, when he has it in his power to do so; or else he must prove that the Protestant Episcopal Church is not the Comprehensive Church.

It will not be enough for him even to prove, that he is in a Church, which has a valid ministry and valid sacraments, and in which he himself is perfectly satisfied. He must prove, that his Church is comprehensive, and capable of receiving all sincere disciples of his Lord, whatever their diversities of opinion and customs; or else his Church has not the characteristics of Christ's one Church adapted to all His disciples; and he is therefore bound to leave it as a defective and *so far* a corrupted Church, if indeed he may find the one Comprehensive System elsewhere.

In summing up the characteristics of the Protestant Episcopal Church, we shall merely recapitulate some of the main thoughts suggested in the preceding Sections.

The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, while it is at unity with the Ancient and Apostolical Church, is, at the same time, purely an American Church, and, therefore, is entitled to the sympathies of all American Christians.

Its members are classed, necessarily, just as they are in every Protestant Church; and this fact recommends it to the members of all other Churches, as a

medium of unity, having, in this particular, a quality common to them all.

Its territorial divisions, while prepared for its universal extension, are yet perfectly simple, and afford the most desirable facilities for the external union of all Christians.

Its laws and government are such that every one of its members is represented in them, and has a power of control over them; and they are constituted upon such equitable and truly republican principles, as to endear the Church to every Christian, who loves the free and righteous principles upon which our political institutions are ordered.

Its ministry is such that every conceivable and useful mode of clerical influence may be exerted; while every minister, in every degree, is directly responsible to the Church for his faithfulness and obedience to its laws. Its ministry meets exactly the wishes of every Christian of every denomination in our land.

Its sacraments are free to all true disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, without regard to their differences in the interpretation of difficult passages of Scripture or in their abstract systems of Theological and Philosophical doctrine. In this fact it welcomes all to one communion and fellowship.

Its creeds, although explicit, are never oppressive; and its doctrines and preaching are scriptural and practical; so that on these subjects its system tends to concord.

Its discipline is severe against manifest sin, but it is patient towards human infirmity, "having mercy

and not sacrifice," "desiring not the death of the sinner but rather that the sinner turn unto God and be saved;" so that in this it is sure of the approval of all who are like their Father in heaven and who have the meekness and gentleness of his only Son.

Its modes of public worship, while they seek to encourage solemnity and the spirit of devotion and prayer, are yet always accommodated to the spiritual wants and the Christian judgment of its members; so that all Christians, who unite themselves with it, do have it in their power to worship God, according to the dictates of their own consciences, and the necessities of their own hearts.

Its laity are fully and effectually represented in all the regulations and action of the Church, and have not only every Right which they have in other Churches, but also, in some very important respects, more Rights, and always the power of self-protection. In this particular, therefore, the Church may expect the favor of all Christian laymen in our country.

Its arrangements concerning Baptism, and its connexion of the Rite of Confirmation with that ordinance, furnish, what in no other Church has been done, the means of uniting, on a basis of harmony, all Christian people, who, in other denominations, are so widely at variance on this subject of the time and mode of Baptism.

Its views of the Lord's Supper agree, substantially, with those of other Churches, while its terms of admission are more liberal than those of most others;

and thus it is able to combine and associate them all around one table of mutual charity.

It furnishes opportunities for the exercise of every benevolent affection; it cultivates literature and labors for Christian education; and it is pledged wholly and without reserve to the work of missions in all the earth; so that all Christians must admire its singleness and honest devotion, who love to labor for the good of men, and to fulfil the last charge of the ascended Lord.

It tolerates all the modes, through which the piety of the heart would find outward expression; and it invites to its protection every variety of temperament and habit; so that all may join themselves unto it, who take delight in the worship of God.

Finally, it is capable of modifying itself, in any and in every possible respect, to the circumstances of society and the wants of men, in all periods of time; so that it is able to unite all Christians into one body and to be the Church of the world.

Now we enquire: Is not the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States entitled peculiarly to the name of the Comprehensive Church? Are not all the essentials of a Church within it, and all the essentials for Christian and ecclesiastical unity?

The writer will be pardoned, if he ventures the remark, that, of all the Ecclesiastical systems, which the history of the past and of the present has brought under his notice, there is none, which, in the principles of its organization, has carried out the maxim upon which the Primitive and Apostolical Church was

organized, as alluded to in our first Chapter, so fearlessly and so successfully, as that, which it has been the design of the foregoing Sections to illustrate.

Thanks to the superintending Spirit and Providence of God!

And alas! that so few, even of Episcopalians, do understand the occasion for this thanksgiving!

We further enquire: Was it the mere wisdom of men, or were they mere circumstantial and happy accidents, which have fashioned and matured this Comprehensive System? Rather, is it not the provision of the All-seeing and Gracious Head of the Church, for bringing together again into "One Body" His scattered and divided disciples, when they shall have learned the evils and the distresses of dissension, and the importance of his own new commandment: "Love one another," and "Be one?"

CHAPTER X.

Conclusion—mode in which our subject has been treated—the Protestant Episcopal Church comprehensive—none other like it—duty of uniting with it—another aspect of this Church—enumeration of certain principles preliminary to the exhibition of it—the Protestant Episcopal Church a platform on which Christians may meet and perfect a plan of unity—this proved—the means of unity are provided if Christians will use them—the Protestant Episcopal Church capable of infinite modification—invites all Christians to unite in it and modify it as they please—objection answered—the system of the Protestant Episcopal Church further opened—a beautiful and grand scheme—argument concluded—sin of negli-

gence on this subject—a call to unity—true unity—deprecation of false unity—advantages of true unity—call upon the laity—call upon the clergy,—necessity of effort and of self-denial in the matter—these the evidences of Christian character—our plan submitted to the candid judgment and honest decisions of the Christian public.

We have been looking at the System of the Protestant Episcopal Church *as it is*. We have desired to divest ourselves of all the associations of the past, as we have desired our readers to do; and have looked at this Church as an existing system, just as we should look at it, if it had been broached for the first time in the course of the present year, or as though we were suggesting in these pages the outline of a new Ecclesiastical Scheme, as though we were proposing a new organization for the promotion of Christian unity.

We enquire now respectfully: Are not the elements of concord in this Church? Are not those points which are held chiefly important by the several denominations in our country all included already in the system of this Church? Does not this Church blend into one harmonious arrangement the "distinctive peculiarities" of the several denominations amongst us? We ask our readers: Can you not recognize in this Church, distinctly maintained, the very points to which you, as members of some particular denominations, have respectively given chief prominence? Can you find similar characteristics in any other of the numerous models of the Church which have been constructed by the wisdom of those who at any time have separated from the one old Church to form new Churches?

Then we again enquire respectfully: Ought you not all to come together and heal your divisions within the unity of this Church, whose outline has been presented? Brethren, we ask you as humble-hearted Christians, who love to do your duty at all times, and who do daily "bear the cross" while you follow Christ. Answer us in the spirit of meek and self-denying disciples of Him, who prayed for you and for us in these words: "Holy Father, I pray that they all may be one, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

There is, however, another aspect of the Protestant Episcopal Church, to which your attention is solicited.

In order to present clearly the aspect referred to, the reader must be reminded of one or two preliminary principles. These principles are the following: That Christians wish to be united—that they must be united in some one Comprehensive Church—that, in order to be thus united, they must come together on some common platform, where they may discuss their differences, and compare opinions, and suggest reciprocal compromises, and finally agree upon some scheme of unity, to which all shall be pledged to adhere—that when they shall have finally agreed upon such scheme of unity, they must make further arrangements, by which they may come together at stated periods, perhaps year after year, continually, and change and modify that scheme (still maintaining unity) to meet the various changes and modifications of human society.

These principles being acknowledged correct, we say, that, if they were carried out (as they ought to be) they would eventuate in the construction of exactly such a system as that of the Protestant Episcopal Church—the scheme of unity would be the counterpart of the Protestant Episcopal Church. This is the other aspect of the Protestant Episcopal Church to which we just now alluded.

Granting for the occasion, that the Protestant Episcopal Church is not now in every respect just the system which the several denominations when united might desire, it is, nevertheless, *exactly the platform upon which they all may meet and arrange such a system as they would desire.* It is the living agent, which will, at their bidding, work out for them precisely their *ideal* of unity. It is a beautiful and perfect *organum* (to many doubtless a *novum organum* in this application of it) whose machinery can accomplish any result. Let them put their hand to its machinery, let them enter the building which encloses it and whose doors are thrown wide open and nailed back so that they cannot close again, and there let them superintend and guide its operations, and they may have whatsoever product they may please to have.

We refer now to the general principles of Ecclesiastical Government unfolded in the last Chapter. Let all the parishes—the newly formed as well as the others—elect men, who shall represent their views to the Diocesan Conventions, where are free discussions and fair decisions. Let the Diocesan Conventions look to it that their own views are correctly repre-

sented in the General Convention. Majorities govern—majorities in the parishes, in the Diocesan Conventions, in the General Convention—majorities of the whole Church—majorities of the Laity, of the Clergy, of the Bishops. When such majorities wish for change, it is right that changes occur. Until they do, it is wise, and the secret of unity, that the minority forbear.

Is it not manifest that, if the Christian people of our land wish to unite into some comprehensive scheme of Ecclesiastical unity (without which there can be no true Christian union), they can accomplish their object, quietly, and certainly, and immediately, by uniting themselves with the Protestant Episcopal Church? Are not instrumentalities here supplied to their hands, by which they may triumphantly effect their wish?

We say then to our fellow-Christians in the several denominations: "Cast in your lot with us." We will welcome you to our unity. We do not invite you to a Church in which you must be cramped and straitened incessantly—but to a pliant Church—*a Church capable of infinite modification.* We are willing to amalgamate with you; only let the wounds of Christ's body be healed, only let us become one. You may outnumber us in a year; you may have the control in our parishes, in our Diocesan Conventions, in our General Convention. You may revise and rearrange our laws. Be it so! We are willing to be melted down with you, in our own crucible, into one mass of Christian love and fellowship. Is this the

language of a narrow, and arbritrary, and intolerant bigotry? Is the Church, whose entrance is so wide, and which is willing to be moulded by any influence you may exert, sectarian or contracted in its spirit? Is it not fitted for universality, which is the collateral principle with unity? Like some spacious and noble ship, she can take in all, who would trust her decks, or be entertained in her various saloons, while she ever moves hither and thither, true to the slightest motions of her helm, and while her broad canvass bends at the pressure of the faintest breeze, and hurries her still forward.

If it should seem to any, that, in representing the system of the Protestant Episcopal Church as has been done, we expose a weak point in its organization, we develope a liberality which is suicidal, we shew it to be in the power of others to modify it, until its essential idea shall be destroyed, our reply is ready: That which seems to be the point of its weakness is the very hinge of its strength; the apparent defect is, on closer examination, the real beauty. The system is one of checks and balances, not artificial but natural, and therefore invariable in their operation. The door which admits one man of a certain class of predilections, admits with him another man of perhaps opposite predilections; and these men must harmonize. Each must deny himself a little, that both may have the greater liberty; and these men, who, if they had remained in opposite sects, would have been bitter adversaries, become, in the Protestant Episcopal Church, brothers. So would it be in any event.

Such is our confidence in the adaptation of the Protestant Episcopal Church to the common wants of the many, that we should not fear any essential change in its system from any accession of numbers. In fact, every accession of numbers would confirm the system and make it more tenacious, just as an increase of weight gives stability to the mechanical arch. We are confident, that if all the members of all the denominations in our land should unite with the Protestant Episcopal Church to-morrow, although there might be a thousand changes in the minute details of the system (as now such are constantly occurring) yet there would be no change of any of its essential features. It is a grand scheme, the result, not of a single intellect nor of a single age, but combining the conclusions of countless minds, and framed upon the experience of many ages, and based upon the philosophy of the universal heart.

Our argument, we think, is conclusive. The issue, as appears to us, admits of no reply nor evasion from any who acknowledge the necessity of a comprehensive Church, the importance of Ecclesiastical unity.

We can conceive of but one mode of parrying the application of the argument. There may be multitudes, who will say: "After all, it is no matter about this outward unity; we may as well continue separate, and strive each to do what he can for the glory of God and the salvation of souls." But, brethren, why work at a disadvantage so great, so entirely unnecessary, so unconquerably full of evil? How long shall Christians declare, in the face of all Scripture, in the

face of all experience, in the face of all true philosophy of the mind and heart, in the face of all nature: "Let us have the internal unity, it is no matter about the outward"—when, all the while, it is absolutely impossible, that the two can be separated? We will not recapitulate our reasonings in the early chapters of this volume; but we will press their conclusions. If it is no matter about this outward unity, then it is no matter about the internal; then it is no matter about the honor of the Church in the eyes of the profane, and the impenitent, and the careless, and the unthoughtful; then it is no matter, whether Christians shall ever love each other, in a perfect reciprocal confidence, without concealment and without reserve,—whether they shall ever work together for Christ without molestation and with their utmost energies,—whether they shall ever rejoice over the conversion of the nations, and join their hosannas on earth with the "great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever."

Does our reader denominate himself a Christian, and will he return to our reasonings a reply which must involve such tremendously solemn and dreadful consequences as these which have been enumerated?

We have done with our argument. We have stated it as concisely and as familiarly as the subject would allow. We have presented topics of serious thought. We have spoken with the utmost frankness of a Christian brother to his Christian brethren. Ah

brethren! we are bound for eternity; we shall all soon be there. Let us now look for the truth and love it. Let us root out all human pride from our dispositions. Let us be willing to give up every thing and to take up any thing for the glory of the Master, for the edification of His Church, for the salvation of the world. Let us remember, each one of us, our cross.

We call for Christian unity, without which there can never be a millenium of peace and holiness on earth,—without which the Lord Jesus can never establish his kingdom among men.

We call not for that Christian union, which flares up into life, and dies, in some brilliant paragraph of a Religious—Literary Journal; or which shews itself, like a sprite, and vanishes, in the dazzling appeal of some fine orator on the stage of some great Benevolent Society. We ask not for that Christian union, which flows so softly from the lips of men, who never think of any thing beyond the narrow limits of their own narrow sect; nor for that which is breathed forth so faintly by good and holy men, who long for peace, yet know that the peace, which their lips speak of, is a very different thing from the actual strifes which are wearying their hearts.

We call for actual Christian union, in which the dissensions, which part brethren, shall be done away; in which the causes of contention shall be removed; in which the plottings and counter-plottings, the prejudices and hard speeches, the suspicions and intole-

rance, which distract the family of the Redeemer, shall be destroyed. We ask for Christian union, which shall be not sentimental, but real; not visionary, but existing; not in words or wishes, but in fact. We ask not for a shadow, but for a substance; not for a creature of dreams however lovely, but for a being of flesh and blood, who shall be an every-day companion. We ask for the "one body;" that so we may have the "one spirit, and the one Lord, the one faith, and the one baptism, and the one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in us all." We want one holy Church, visible and tangible, fitted for the period in which we live; so that the soldiers of Emmanuel shall no more be compelled to act as spies upon each other, and to waste their energies in internal and self-destructive conflicts, but rather shall present one undivided front, and have unweakened courage in their grand "aggressive attack" upon sin whether at home or abroad.

We call for a true Christian unity, which shall expand itself through our land; which shall go into all the little villages, and all the private dwellings, over the whole length and breadth of our long and our broad country, and unite hearts, and unite voices, and unite labor, and strength, and wealth, that have always before been separated—which shall bring into one Comprehensive Church all the disciples of Christ.

Then our villages will be gardens of God, which are now wrangling-places. Then plain men and learned men together will give up their jealousies and contentions, and with these their unhappiness; and men will be able to think about Christ and souls and the

world. Then the multitudes, who have hitherto excused themselves from their duty behind the dissensions of Christians, will be left without excuse, or will take up the exclamation of the worldly in the days of Tertullian: "See how these Christians love one another." Then shall we "all be one, and the world will believe on the Son of God."

Our call is upon the Christian people of our land.

We call upon the Laity, in every class and condition of Christian Society, to consider this subject; to decide upon duty; and to act promptly, as reasonable and as responsible men.

We call upon the clergy, and especially those among them who fill the high places of influence and of authority. We entreat you patiently and candidly to investigate this subject. Let it be canvassed fully in your public prints. Let it be the topic of agitation or at least of discussion in your large assemblies. We pray you to come yourselves, and to bring with you those whom you may lawfully influence, into the unity of one happy fold of the chief Shepherd. Come in your strength—whole Associations and Consociations, whole Presbyteries and Conferences. We will sit down with you most gladly in our earliest Conventions, and, in all our deliberations, our motto shall be: Compromise and Conformity, Liberty and Law, Universality and Unity.

Christian Brethren of the Laity and of the Clergy:

We know, that we ask at your hands for much, yet not for more than your Christian character implies your readiness to give. We ask you to "take up the

cross;"—to be willing to deny yourselves some prepossessions for the peace and unity and glory of the Church of Christ;—perhaps to deny somewhat of human pride, that disposition, which makes a man adhere to his present habits, because they are his,—a disposition, however, which brings death to the soul, if it hold back a man from any self-sacrifice for the honor of the Master. It must cost an effort, it must involve some trial, to unite the Church again, after its long and its many arbitrary and tyrannous divisions; especially when their tendency has been to foster self-will, and to encourage an unhallowed pride, under the name of Christian liberty.

It may be, my brother, that your eternity is depending upon your decision in the present subject; that your soul's happiness is depending upon your giving this evidence of your faith and holiness—this proof of your willingness to "deny yourself" for Christ. Indeed, if you will not "take up your cross" for the unity of Christ's Church, by which alone His reign may be established, and the world be sanctified, are you sure, can you be sure, that you are a Christian? In this cross may be the test, in your particular circumstances, of your Christian character. If you can not do *this* for Christ, are you sure that you would be willing to go to the rack or to the stake for Christ? Is there not danger, in the case supposed, that you are "counting your life dear unto yourself?" My brother, the Master wants the whole soul, he requires supreme devotion, he will accept nothing less, he has purchased as much with his own most precious blood.

The subject is momentously serious. It demands action as well as consideration. "Let no one," we quote from our title-page, "let no one excuse or deceive or console himself by pertinacious disputatiousness: for our treatise is concerning life and salvation."

There may be some, who will esteem our Call preposterous, and smile at our Plan. But let no Christian esteem our Call preposterous, before he has solemnly, with prayer and in honesty, determined his duty in reference to it. And let no Christian smile at our Plan, until he has proved it to be impracticable.

WE SINNERS DO BESEECH THEE TO HEAR US, O LORD GOD; AND THAT IT MAY PLEASE THEE TO RULE AND GOVERN THY HOLY CHURCH UNIVERSAL IN THE RIGHT WAY; WE BESEECH THEE TO HEAR US, GOOD LORD!

Book of Common Prayer;
The Litany.

APPENDIX.

"O ALMIGHTY GOD, WHO HAST BUILT THY CHURCH UPON THE FOUNDATION OF THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS, JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF BEING THE CHIEF CORNER STONE; GRANT THAT, BY THE OPERATION OF THE HOLY GHOST, ALL CHRISTIANS MAY BE REJOINED TOGETHER IN UNITY OF SPIRIT, AND IN THE BOND OF PEACE, THAT THEY MAY BE AN HOLY TEMPLE ACCEPTABLE UNTO THEE, THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD."

Book of Common Prayer;
Collect for the Institution of Ministers, and also for the Festival of St. Simon and St. Jude.

APPENDIX.

A

A SCRIPTURAL ARGUMENT FOR THE EXTERNAL UNITY OF THE CHURCH; *extracted from a book entitled* "CHRISTIAN UNION," *by the late Abraham Van Dyck, Counsellor at Law, of Coxsackie, New York.* Chapter 1. p. 5—23.

"God has most unequivocally declared his mind, that the individuals composing his Church, should be held together by a strong, indissoluble bond of union.

1. *God has constituted the Church one* and indivisible.

It has but one head, and that is Christ. Col. i. 18. Under the Old Testament dispensation, prior to the building of the temple, the manifestation of God's glory was in the cloud and in the tabernacle. There was but one cloud, and there was only one tabernacle, nor was there more than one ark of the covenant. And thus was the *unity* of the Church represented in that period. After the children of Israel had taken full possession of the land of promise, the unity of the Church was demonstrated by the erection of one temple; and to this one temple all the tribes of Israel were cammanded to resort for the public worship of Jehovah.

If the unity of the church constituted any portion of its excellence, beauty, or strength, under the first dispensations, it would be strange indeed, if, under the New Testament, we had found a warrant for the severance of this union. In the history of our Lord and Saviour, we find no intimation from him that the unity of the church was not to be preserved, nor any warrant for a division of the church into distinct denominations, sects, or parties. His intercessory prayer for his church, which consists of all believers, is, "that they *all may be one*," as the father was in him and he in the father, "that the world may believe that thou hast

sent me." John, xvii. 21. And in the next verse he says, "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one." These words do most evidently convey the idea of a most intimate union between the followers of Christ, even as that which subsisted between him and his father; and this union was to be visible to all mankind, that the world, seeing the union of his disciples, might believe that the father had sent him. An union of heart, merely without an open visible union, which the world would perceive, could have no influence in convincing the world of the divine mission of Christ. Valuable and indispensable as an union of heart among believers is to the prosperity and beauty of the church, it is the open, visible, and known union of the disciples, that must conquer the prejudices and convince the understandings of the men of the world into the belief that Jesus Christ came from God. There is no force, no appropriateness, (be it spoken with reverence,) in the prayer, if an union of heart is all that is asked. No; this prayer of our Lord will not be answered; the avowed object for which he desired that his people might be one, will not be accomplished, until Christians shall be one in affection, in counsel, in action, and in name.

Though the personal ministry of Christ was confined to the Jewish nation, he knew that under the dispensation of the spirit and through the preaching of the Apostles, the Gentiles would also be called into the church, which before that period embraced only the children of Israel. When the Gentiles should thus be brought to embrace the gospel, there was not to be a Gentile church as distinguished from that of the Jews, and a line of division drawn between them; but they together were to form one church. In express reference to that event the Saviour says, John x. 16, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also must I bring in, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be *one fold* and one shepherd." And after the gospel had, subsequent to the death of the Saviour, been propagated among the Gentiles, and many in the city of Ephesus had been received into the family of believers, St. Paul, in the second chapter of his epistle, addressing the Ephesian converts, says, "But now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometime were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ, for he is our peace, who *hath made both one*, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in himself of twain *one new man*, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; and came and preached peace to you which were afar off and to them that were nigh. For by him we both have access by one spirit unto the father."

The doctrine of the unity of the church, so plainly declared by the Saviour, was taught and earnestly inculcated by his Apostles,

under the plenary inspiration of the Holy Ghost. St. Paul represents the unity of the church under the figure of a human body, consisting, indeed, of many members, but between which there is an intimate union and necessary dependence, and between which a schism cannot take place, without endangering the destruction of the body itself. "For as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many are one body; so also is Christ." 1 Cor. xii. 12. "For the body is not one member but many. If the foot shall say, because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?" v. 14, 15. "Now are they many members yet but one body, and the eye cannot say to the hand I have no need of thee, nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you." v. 20, 21. "That there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffers, all the members suffer with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." v. 25, 26, 27.

When the same Apostle reproves the Corinthians for their contentions and divisions, he proves to them the inadmissibility and absurdity of such divisions, by putting the emphatic question, "Is Christ divided?" leaving it to themselves to draw the inference irresistibly flowing from it, that as Christ, the head of the church, is one and indivisible, so must the members of Christ, constituting the church, be one among themselves, as well as one with him. 1 Cor. i. 10 to 13. Believers are declared by St. Paul to be members of Christ's body. Eph. v. 30. "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." 1 Cor. xii. 27. "Ye are the body of Christ and members in particular." And they are declared to be members one of another, constituting the body of Christ. Rom. xii. 4, 5. "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office, so we being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." The saints are declared to be *the family* of God on earth, excluding the idea that there may be more than a single family constituting the church of Christ. And in the first chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, the Apostle beseeches them, by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that they all speak the same thing, and *that there be no divisions* among them; but that they be *perfectly joined together* in the same mind, and in the same judgment. 1 Cor. i. 10.

2. *The division of the church into sects is a violation of its constitutional unity.*

Having proved the unity of the church by the constitution of God himself, we proceed to show that its division into denominations and sects, is a violation of this unity. A division into congregations cannot be understood to be a breach of this unity, when made for the sake of local convenience, and in the spirit of love; but we speak of those divisions which result from disagree-

ment and contention, and from the assumed impossibility or difficulty of remaining together in peace.

The unity of the church was understood in this sense by Christ himself; and it was so understood by his Apostles after his ascension into heaven, and the plenary effusion of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. That some difference would arise among true believers, on doctrinal and practical subjects, was known to the Saviour and his Apostles; for they were well acquainted with the imperfections of the human understanding; but neither he nor they could have suffered the thought of a division of the church, for such a cause, to have been harbored for a moment in the minds of Christians.

Every reader of the Acts of the Apostles knows that an unhappy disagreement arose between Paul, who was specially designated to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, and some of the Jews in those parts where he ministered. When the news of this disagreement was carried to Jerusalem, some of the Apostles who labored in that city and in the abjoining country of the Jews, took sides against Paul. It is evident, from the fifteenth chapter of the Acts, taken in connexion with the second chapter of the epistle to the Galatians, that this matter caused a strong excitement, easily accounted for from the nature of the subject, and the circumstances attending the case. But neither party took the ground that they might be considered as belonging, one to the Jewish and the other to the Gentile church, and so each pursue his own course independently of the other. No; they knew they must be united; that they had no right to rend asunder the church which God had joined together in the bond of inviolable union; and that by suffering the commencement of schisms, a train of evils would be brought upon the church of which they were unable to calculate the amount of duration. Paul, taking with him Barnabas and Titus, went to Jerusalem, and conferred with the other Apostles; an amicable understanding was, after considerable difficulty, effected, and the threatened rupture happily avoided; the parties acting in the spirit of conciliation and forbearance.

Whenever dissentions arise in communities, a separation between the parties at variance, is, to the corrupt mind of man, a natural suggestion. This separation may often be proper and harmless in those communities which are not designed to be of permanent duration. And the seeds of disunion being easily sown in the church, there has been from the beginning, notwithstanding the evident design of God that the church should endure to the end of the world, a disposition for one to say to the other in cause of any disagreement, "Stand by thyself." Had Paul yielded to this spirit, how plausibly might have seemed to him the expediency of setting up himself as the head of the Gentile church, leaving John, Peter, James, and the other Apostles, to manage the concerns of the Jewish Church? He had been chosen and sent by Christ himself to preach the gospel to the Heathen, and

in the course of his ministry among them, he was constantly vexed by the Judaising teachers, who sought to bring his converts under the yoke of the ritual law, while he was anxiously desirous that they should enjoy the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free. The establishment of a separate Gentile church might have seemed to him the most effectual measure to destroy the influence of those teachers who so much annoyed him, as well as disturbed and injured the converts under his ministry. And the difference between the Jews and the Gentiles in their national character, education, manners, habits, and other circumstances, might have presented an ample apology to human reason for a separation from the mother church. But Paul knew that the church was *one* by the constitution of Christ its head; and that any division of it would have been utterly unlawful and inadmissible. He knew it would be presumptuous impiety in him to rebuild the partition wall which Jesus Christ, by his death, had broken down; and that he might not put asunder what his divine master had joined together.

The same Apostle as appears from his acts and his epistles, was deeply impressed with the value of the Church's unity, and the calamities that would be consequent on its violation. His whole soul seemed to have been burdened with the subject. With what earnestness does he caution the believers, to whom he addresses his epistles, against this principle of division? He tells the Corinthians it had been declared to him that there were contentions among them, for that every one of them said, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ. He also tells them, "Ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envying and strife and *divisions*, are ye not carnal? For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal?" And again, "*I beseech you*, brethren, *by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ*, that ye all speak the same thing, and *that there be no division among you*, but that ye be *perfectly joined together* in the same mind and in the same judgment." The Apostle does not assume to heal their dissentions by interposing his authority to settle the question which party was right, or wherein the other was wrong; but he goes to the root of the evil, showing that the very fact of the disunion of Christians evinces the carnality, the unholy temper or habit of mind, into which they had suffered themselves to be betrayed. The Corinthians doubtless believed, as the different denominations at this day believe in regard to themselves, that they had sufficient reason for separating from those who agreed not with them in their preference; but the Apostle does not deem it necessary for his argument to demand of them what was the difference between himself and Apollos and Cephas; nor does he instruct them that they were disputing about trifles or minor differences. He presses upon them the unity of the church, and the sin and absurdity of a division of it into distinct denominations arising from strife and

disagreement. He does not admit one party to be less guilty than the other. The one that said I belong to Paul's persuasion, and he who said I believe with Apollos, and the third who enlisted himself among the admirers of Cephas, and even those, who, in the spirit of pride of sect and party, boasted of their superiority to the rest by claiming to belong to Christ,—all are alike reproved as either not understanding, or in their unholy excitements forgetting the relation in which they stood to each other as members of the same body of Christ, and "members one of another." He asks with abruptness and with great pertinency and emphasis, "Is Christ divided?" As if he had said, "If there may be two or more Churches, either all but one must be without a head, or the head must be divided into as many fragments as there are churches, both of which are equally impossible."

This vital principle was deeply engraven on the minds of the primitive Christians, no such thing being known as the separation of one body of believers from another on the ground of difference in matters of opinion, or on points of practice. The church continued one and undivided through the age of the Apostles, and after the death of the last surviving Apostle, even to the middle of the third century. In that period the gospel had been propagated, and the church extended throughout the inhabited world, and yet no such thing as a distinct denomination of Christians was known. What then was it that kept Christians together in one Church? It was the strength of the principle which they believed—which they *knew* to be according to the constitution of God, that the church is one, and any division of it wholly inadmissible.

The reformed Church remained one for many years, growing with the increase of God. Although minor differences arose, they were not permitted to rend her asunder. But after the lapse of years, the spirit of controversy was suffered to prevail among the successors of the reformers, and in the heat of their disputations, they separated into different sects, according to their varying creeds. The parties, however, were very reluctant to commence the business of separation. Their consciences were ill at ease, knowing as they did the unscriptural character of any division of the Church of Christ. The reformers themselves, when they withdrew from the church of Rome, did not do it on the ground that it is lawful for Christians to separate from each other. On the contrary, the only justification they avowed for leaving that church, was that she was not the church of Christ. They were agreed that the church is one, and that any division of that church is a breach of its unity.

Having shown in what sense the unity of the church was understood by the apostles, by the primitive Christians of the three first centuries, and by the reformers in the sixteenth century, we proceed to show that the constitution of the church admits of no other exposition. This constitution we have seen is coeval with

the church itself; and in the intercessory prayer of the Saviour, it is recognized as applicable to the Christian church, embracing all, both Jews and Gentiles who then believed, or should thereafter believe in his name; and for them he prays that they all may be one even as he and the father are one. That it is the duty of believers to be united in the sense here expressed, will not be denied. The enquiry therefore is, what is the nature of that union which Christ prays may subsist among his disciples.

In what sense, then, were the Saviour and his father one. Independently of their mysterious union above alluded to, they were one in feeling, in counsel, in action and in name. They are *united* together *in the feeling of love* one to another. So must his children be. But so they cannot be when divided into distinct denominations; for not only do such divisions spring from the want of that degree of mutual love and forbearance necessary to hold them together in the bond of union, but they tend to weaken and destroy what of the principle of love may be remaining, and produce the contrary affections of opposition or indifference, alienation of heart and hatred.

Jesus Christ and his Father are *one in counsel*, there being no discord or contrariety in their plans. So it ought to be with those who believe in the Saviour. They should speak the same thing and be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. 1 Cor. i. 10. But this cannot be predicated of believers belonging to opposite sects. Their counsels and their plans are not in unison; and the very reason why they have separated is, that they could not hold counsel together, because of their various views and feelings.

The Father and his beloved Son are *one in action*. The works that Jesus seeth the Father do, these he doeth also. John v. 19. They always act in concert. So it ought to be with believers; they should stand fast in one spirit, and in one mind, strive together for the faith of the gospel. Phil. ii. 2. But this cannot be asserted of Christians of different persuasions. They have arrayed themselves under different banners, manifesting that they are not willing to act together; and in point of fact each acts independently of the other. They do not strive *together* for the faith of the gospel. The faith which is propagated by the one is denied and opposed by the other. What one builds, another destroys, for the plain reason that what promotes the prosperity of one, often tends to the injury and even destruction of the other.

Our Saviour and his Father are *one in name*. There is indeed, a variety of names given to them in the Scriptures, expressive of the several perfections of their character, office, or appropriate work, not indicating opposition or contrariety, but the most perfect harmony. So it should be with the members of Christ's church. One name ought to suffice for them all; and if more than one name be applied to them, these names should convey to the mind a harmonious and not a discordant sound; as that of

believers, Christians, disciples, saints, children of God, the faithful, the just, and the like; all of which are in strict accordance with the characters and relation to Christ which they ought to exhibit. But how is it in point of fact?

Were there room for any remaining doubt whether the division into sects is a violation of its constitutional unity, we might adduce further evidence, from a more particular consideration of the figures of speech, employed by the Saviour and his apostles, to express the unity of the church.

When our Lord represents himself as *the vine*, he represents his disciples as *the branches*. Hereby is expressed, not only an intimate union between himself as the vine and his disciples as the branches, but also an intimate and inseparable union between the branches themselves.

Another figure employed to represent the unity of the church, as we have already had occasion to remark, is that of the human body composed of all its various members. There is an intimate union between all the parts of the body; the severance of one of the members is the destruction of that member, and mutilates the body. Between all the members too, there is a mutual dependence.

Again, believers are called the *family* of God on earth. A well ordered family will be harmonious in their feelings, views, plans, and actions.

Another expressive figure employed by the Holy Spirit in speaking of the church, is that of a *sheepfold*. Mark the expression, a *sheep* fold. Not an enclosure for dogs, wolves, or tigers, between whom it is necessary to build walls of great strength and height to keep them from biting, tearing and destroying one another; but of harmless, peaceable sheep, that may safely be kept together in flocks, be they never so large, and which are divided into several folds, only for the purpose of supplying to them with more facility their food, and their other necessities and conveniences. And must it be confessed, that the sheep of Christ cannot live together in peace? Do they embody so much of the nature of the ferocious brute, as that the only means of preventing one from destroying another, is to keep them at a safe distance? Even thieves and robbers can live in bands of brotherhood in the same den, with nothing but the tie of interest and common danger to keep them together. But the children of Christ's kingdom cannot live in a state of union, although they are exposed to hosts of common enemies, and all have the same everlasting interests, and ought to be bound in the same bond of love, and all the holy ties of religion. What a libel on the character of Christianity! What a perverted exhibition of its nature and influence!"

B

Origin and Organization of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States; *extracted from* "Memoirs of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, &c." *by the late Bishop White of Pennsylvania.*, p. 17—30.

"Although it happened, as might be expected, that a proportion of the settlers of English America were of the profession established in England; yet the number was not so considerable as might be supposed from the existing relation; owing probably to the circumstance, that several of the colonies arose in a great measure from dissatisfaction with the establishment at home, and partly to an influx of subsequent settlers, not only from other countries, subject to the same crown, but also from countries on the continent of Europe; principally some of the states of Germany. In the northern and eastern states, the comparatively small number of the Church of England may be seen in the fact, that when the revolutionary war began, there were not more than about eighty parochial clergymen of that Church to the northward and to the eastward of Maryland; and that those clergymen derived the greater part of their subsistence from the society instituted in England, for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts; with the exception of those resident in the towns of Boston and Newport, and the cities of New-York and Philadelphia: there being no Episcopal congregations out of those towns and cities, held to be of ability to support clergymen of themselves. In Maryland and in Virginia the Episcopal Church was much more numerous, and had legal establishments for its support. It was especially numerous in those parts of the said provinces which were settled when the establishments took place; for in the more recently settled counties, the mass of the people were of other communions, scarcely known among them in the early period of their histories. In the more southern colonies, the Episcopalians were fewer in proportion than in the two last mentioned; but more than in the northern.

The peculiar circumstances under which it existed prevented, and probably, under the old regime, would have continued to prevent its organization. Separated by the Atlantic ocean from the Episcopacy, under which it had been planted, it had no resource for a ministry, but in emigration from the mother country, and by sending its candidates for the ministry to that country for orders. The first could not be the channel of a respectable permanent sup-

ply. And the second, which was the most depended on in the latter years of the colonies, was very troublesome and expensive. The evil of the want of an internal Episcopacy did not end here. For although the bishop of London was considered as the diocesan of the Episcopal churches in America, it is evident, that his authority could not be effectually exerted, at such a distance, for the removing of unworthy clergymen; besides which, there were civil institutions supposed to be in opposition to it, in the provinces where establishments had been provided. In Maryland, in particular, all interference of the bishop of London, except in the single matter of ordination, was held by the proprietary government to be an encroachment on its authorities.

For these reasons, and on the ground of the evident propriety of being supplied with all the orders of the ministry, recognised by their ecclesiastical system, application had been made to England, at different times, by the Clergy, especially those in the northern colonies, for the obtaining of an Episcopate. These applications had produced much contention in pamphlets and in newspapers. What would have been the event, in this respect, had the Episcopal clergy succeeded in their desires, is a problem, which it will be forever impossible to solve.

If such was the difficulty of being supplied with a ministry during the acknowledged supremacy of the British crown; much greater, as may be supposed, was the same difficulty during the struggle which ended in the elevating of the colonies to the rank of independent states. During that term, there was no resource for the supply of vacancies, which were continually multiplying, not only from death, but by the retreat of very many of the Episcopal clergy to the mother country, and to the colonies still dependent on her. To add to the evil, many able and worthy ministers, cherishing their allegiance to the king of Great Britain, and entertaining conscientious scruples against the use of the liturgy, under the restriction of omitting the appointed prayers for him, ceased to officiate. Owing to these circumstances, the doors of the far greater number of the Episcopal churches were closed for several years. In the state in which this work is edited, (Pennsylvania,) there was a part of that time, in which there was, through the whole extent, but one resident minister of the church in question, he, (Bishop White) who records the fact.

The first step towards the forming of a collective body of the Episcopal Church in the United States, was taken at a meeting for another purpose, of a few clergymen of New-York, New-Jersey, and Pennsylvania, at Brunswick, in New-Jersey, on the 13th and 14th of May, 1784. These clergymen, in consequence of prior correspondence, had met for the purpose of consulting, in what way to renew a society that had existed under charters of incorporation from the governors of the said three states, for the Support of Widows and Children of deceased Clergymen. Here it was determined, to procure a larger meeting on the fifth of the

ensuing October, in New-York; not only for the purpose of reviving the said charitable institution, but to confer and agree on some general principles of an union of the Episcopal Church throughout the states.

Such a meeting was held, at the time and place agreed on: and although the members composing it were not vested with powers adequate to the present exigencies of the Church, they happily, and with great unanimity, laid down a few general principles, to be recommended in the respective states, as the ground on which a future ecclesiastical government should be established. These principles were approbatory of Episcopacy and of the Book of Common Prayer; and provided for a representative body of the Church, consisting of clergy and laity; who were to vote as distinct orders. There was also a recommendation to the Church in the several states, to send clerical and lay deputies to a meeting to be held in Philadelphia, on the 27th of September in the following year.

Although at the meeting last held, there were present two clergymen from the eastern states; yet it now appeared, that there was no probability, for the present, of the aid of the churches in those states, in the measures begun for the obtaining of a representative body of the Church at large. From this they thought themselves restrained in Connecticut, in particular, by a step they had antecedently taken, for the obtaining of an Episcopate from England. For until the event of their application could be known, it naturally seemed to them inconsistent to do any thing which might change the ground on which the gentleman of their choice was then standing. This gentleman was the Rev. Samuel Seabury, D. D. formerly missionary on Staten-Island; who had been recommended to England for consecration before the evacuation of New-York by the British Army.

On the 27th of September, 1785, there assembled, agreeably to appointment, in Philadelphia, a convention of clerical and lay deputies, from seven of the thirteen United States, viz. from New-York to Virginia, inclusive, with the addition of South-Carolina. They applied themselves to the making of such alterations in the Book of Common Prayer, as were necessary for the accommodating of it to the late changes in the state; and the proposing, but not establishing, of such other alterations in that book and in the articles, as they thought an improvement of the service and of the manner of stating the principal articles of faith; these were published in a book, ever since known by the name of the Proposed Book.

The convention entered on the business of the Episcopacy, with the knowledge that there was now a bishop in Connecticut, consecrated, not in England, but by the non-juring bishops of Scotland. For Dr. Seabury, not meeting assurance of success with the bishops of the former country, had applied to the latter quarter for the succession, which had been there carefully main-

tained; notwithstanding their severance from the state, in the revolution of 1688. Bishop Seabury had returned to America, and had entered on the exercise of his new function, in the beginning of the preceding summer, and two or three gentlemen of the southern states had received ordination from his hands. Nevertheless, the members of this convention, although generally impressed with sentiments of respect towards the new bishop, and although, with the exception of a few, alleging nothing against the validity of his Episcopacy, thought it most proper to direct their views in the first instance towards England.

Accordingly, they addressed the archbishops and bishops of England, stating, that the Episcopal Church in the United States had been severed, by a civil revolution, from the jurisdiction of the parent Church in England; acknowledging the favours formerly received from the bishops of London in particular, and from the archbishops and bishops in general, through the medium of the Society for Propagating the Gospel; declaring their desire to perpetuate among them the principles of the Church of England, in doctrine, discipline, and worship; and praying, that their lordships would consecrate to the Episcopacy those persons who should be sent, with that view, from the churches in any of the states respectively.

In order that the present convention might be succeeded by bodies of the like description, they framed an ecclesiastical constitution, the outlines of which were, that there should be a triennial convention, consisting of a deputation from the church in each state, of not more than four clergymen, and as many laymen; that they should vote statewise, each order to have a negative on the other; that when there should be a bishop in any state, he should be officially a member of the convention; that the different orders of clergy should be accountable to the ecclesiastical authority in the state only to which they should respectively belong; and that the engagement previous to ordination should be a declaration of belief in the holy Scriptures, and a promise of conformity to the doctrines and the worship of the Church.

Further, the convention appointed a committee, with various powers; among which was, that of corresponding, during the recess, with the archbishops and bishops of England; and they adjourned, to meet again in Philadelphia, on the 20th of June, in the following year.

After the rising of the convention, their address to the English prelates was forwarded by the committee to his Excellency John Adams, Esq. the American minister, with the request, that it might be delivered by him to his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury. There were also forwarded certificates from the executives of the states in which there was a probability of there being bishops chosen. The executives who gave these certificates were those of New-York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. These evidences, agreeably to instructions of the convention,

were applied for by the members of that body from the said states respectively. Mr. Adams willingly performed the service solicited of him, and in a conversation which he held with the Archbishop of Canterbury, on the subject of the address, gave such information, and expressed such sentiments, as were calculated to promote the object of it.

After the receipt of the first of the letters of the English prelates, and before the receipt of the second, the General Convention assembled, agreeably to appointment, in Philadelphia, on the 20th of June, 1786. The principal business transacted by them, was another address to the English prelates, containing an acknowledgment of their friendly and affectionate letter, a declaration of not intending to depart from the doctrines of the English Church, and a determination of making no further alterations than such as either arose from a change of circumstances, or appeared conducive to union; and a repetition of the prayer for the succession of the Episcopacy. Before their adjournment, they appointed a committee, with power to reassemble them, if thought expedient, at Wilmington, in the state of Delaware.

On the committee's receipt of the second letter, they summoned the convention to meet, at the place appointed, on the 10th of October following.

The deputies from the several states were called on, beginning from the northward, for information, whether any persons had been chosen in them respectively, to proceed to England for consecration: when it appeared, that the Rev. Samuel Provoost, D. D. rector of Trinity Church, in the city of New-York, had been chosen for that purpose by the convention in that state; that the Rev. William White, D. D. rector of Christ Church and St. Peter's, in the city of Philadelphia, had been chosen by the convention in Pennsylvania; and that the Rev. David Griffith, D. D. rector of Fairfax parish, Virginia, had been chosen by the convention there. Testimonials in their favour from the conventions in the respective states, agreeable to the form prescribed by the archbishops, were laid before the General Convention, who immediately signed, in favor of each of the bishops elect, a testimonal, according to the form prescribed to them by the same authority.

The two former of the above-named clergymen, having embarked together early in the next month, arrived at Falmouth, after a passage of eighteen days. On their reaching London, they were introduced to his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, by his Excellency Mr. Adams, who, in this particular, and in every instance in which his personal attentions could be either of use or an evidence of his respect and kindness, continued to manifest his concern for the interests of a church, of which he was not a member.

Before the accomplishing of the object of the voyage, there occurred the delay of a few weeks; owing to the archbishop's desire of previously laying before the bishops the grounds of his

proceeding to the accomplishment of the business, in the early stages of which they had been consulted. The greater number of them were at their diocesses, but were expected to be in town at the ensuing opening of parliament, appointed for about the middle of January. Very soon afterwards, the 4th of February, was appointed for the consecration.

On that day, and in the chapel of the archiepiscopal palace of Lambeth, Dr. White and Dr. Provoost were ordained and consecrated bishops, by the Most Rev. John Moore, archbishop of Canterbury. The Most Rev. William Markham, archbishop of York, presented. And the bishops who joined with the two archbishops in the imposition of hands, were the Right Rev. Charles Moss, bishop of Bath and Wells, and the Right Rev. John Hinchliff, bishop of Peterborough. Before the end of the same month, the newly consecrated bishops sailed from Falmouth for New-York, where they arrived on Easter Sunday, April the 7th, and soon afterwards began the exercise of the Episcopacy in their respective diocesses.

On the 28th of July, 1789, there assembled the Triennial Convention, by whom the Episcopacy of Bishops White and Provoost, of whom the former only was present, the latter being detained by sickness was duly recognized. At this convention, there naturally occurred the importance of taking measures for the perpetuating of the succession: a matter, which some circumstances had subjected to considerable difficulty. The subject of perpetuating the succession from England, with the relation which it bore to the question of embracing that from the Scotch Episcopacy, was brought into view by a measure of the clergy in Massachusetts and New-Hampshire. This body had elected the Rev. Edward Bass, rector of St. Paul's Church in Newburyport, their bishop; and had addressed a letter to the bishops in Connecticut, New-York, and Pennsylvania, praying them to unite in consecrating him.

And here it may be proper to record, that the difficulty was not long after removed in another way by the convention of Virginia, in their electing of the Rev. James Madison, D. D. president of William and Mary College, Williamsburg, their bishop; and by his being consecrated in England.

At the present session of the General Convention, the constitution formed in 1786 was reviewed and new modelled. The principal feature now given to it, was a distribution into two houses, one consisting of the bishops, and the other of the clerical and lay deputies, who must vote, when required by the clerical or by the lay representation from any state, as under the former constitution, by orders. The stated meetings were to be on the second Tuesday in September in every third year; but intermediate meetings might be called by the bishops.

When the convention adjourned, it was to the 29th of September following: and before the adjournment, an invitation was giv-

en by them to Bishop Seabury, and to their brethren generally in the eastern states, to be present at the proposed session, with a view to a permanent union.

On that day the convention reassembled, when it appeared that Bishop Seabury, with sundry of the clergy from Massachusetts and Connecticut, had accepted the invitation given them. There was laid before the convention, and by them ordered to be recorded, evidence of that bishop's consecration; which had been performed by Bishops Kilgour, Petrie, and Skinner, of the non-juring Church in Scotland. There then ensued a conference between a committee of the convention and the clergy from the eastern states; the result of which was, that, after one alteration of the constitution at their desire, they declared their acquiescence in it, and gave it their signatures accordingly.

It had been provided in the constitution, that the arrangement of two houses should take place, as soon as three bishops should belong to the body. This circumstance now occurred, although there were present only two of them, who accordingly formed the House of Bishops.

The two houses entered on a review of the liturgy, the bishops originating alterations in some services, and the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies proposing others. The result was the Book of Common Prayer, as then established, and has been ever since used.

Some canons had been passed in the preceding session; but they were reconsidered and passed with sundry others, which continue to this day substantially the same; but with some alterations and additions by succeeding conventions.

The next triennial Convention was held in the city of New-York, in the autumn of 1792, at which were present the four bishops already mentioned to have been consecrated abroad. Hitherto there had been no consecration in America; but at this convention, although nothing further was brought before them from Massachusetts, relative to Dr. Bass, the deputies from Maryland applied to the assembled bishops for the consecration of the Rev. Thomas John Claggett, D. D. who had been elected bishop by the convention of that state. Dr. Claggett was accordingly consecrated, during the session of the convention, in Trinity Church, of the city in which they were assembled.

The bishops, having reviewed the ordinal of the Church of England, proposed a few alterations in it to the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies; principally such as were necessary for the accommodating of it to local circumstances. The ordinal, thus reviewed, is now the established form for the consecrating of bishops and the ordaining of priests and deacons."

C

Constitution of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America; *extracted from the Appendix to the Journal of the General Convention of* 1838.

CONSTITUTION

Of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. Adopted in General Convention, in Philadelphia, October, 1789.

ARTICLE I.

There shall be a General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, at such time in every third year, and in such place, as shall be determined by the Convention; and in case there shall be an epidemic disease, or any other good cause to render it necessary to alter the place fixed on for any such meeting of the Convention, the presiding Bishop shall have it in his power to appoint another convenient place (as near as may be to the place so fixed on) for the holding of such Convention; and special meetings may be called at other times, in the manner hereafter to be provided for; and this Church, in a majority of the Dioceses which shall have adopted this Constitution, shall be represented, before they shall proceed to business; except that the representation from two Dioceses shall be sufficient to adjourn: and in all business of the Convention, freedom of debate shall be allowed.

ARTICLE II.

The Church in each Diocese shall be entitled to a representation of both the Clergy and the Laity, which representation shall consist of one or more deputies, not exceeding four of each order, chosen by the Convention of the Diocese; and in all questions, when required by the Clerical and Lay representation from any Diocese, each order shall have one vote; and the majority of suffrages by Diocese shall be conclusive in each order, provided such majority comprehend a majority of the Dioceses represented in that order. The concurrence of both orders shall be necessary to constitute a vote of the Convention. If the Convention of any

Diocese should neglect or decline to appoint Clerical Deputies, or if they should neglect or decline to appoint Lay Deputies, or if any of those of either order appointed, should neglect to attend, or be prevented by sickness or any other accident, such Diocese shall nevertheless be considered as duly represented by such deputy or deputies as may attend, whether Lay or Clerical. And if, through the neglect of the Convention of any of the Churches which shall have adopted, or may hereafter adopt, this Constitution, no Deputies, either Lay or Clerical, should attend at any General Convention, the Church in such Diocese shall nevertheless be bound by the acts of such Convention.

ARTICLE III.

The Bishops of this Church, when there shall be three or more, shall, whenever General Conventions are held, form a seperate House, with a right to originate and propose acts, for the concurrence of the House of Deputies, composed of Clergy and Laity; and when any proposed act shall have passed the House of Deputies, the same shall be transmitted to the House of Bishops, who shall have a negative thereupon, and all acts of the Convention shall be authenticated by both Houses. And in all cases, the House of Bishops shall signify to the Convention their approbation or disapprobation (the latter with their reasons in writing) within three days after the proposed act shall have been reported to them for concurrence; and in failure thereof, it shall have the operation of a law. But until there shall be three or more Bishops, as aforesaid, any Bishop attending a General Convention shall be a member *ex-officio*, and shall vote with the Clerical Deputies of the Diocese to which he belongs; and a Bishop shall then preside.

ARTICLE IV.

The Bishop or Bishops in every Diocese shall be chosen agreeably to such rules as shall be fixed by the Convention of that Diocese: and every Bishop of this Church shall confine the exercise of his Episcopal office to his proper Diocese or district, unless requested to ordain or confirm, or perform any other act of the Episcopal office, by any church destitute of a Bishop.

ARTICLE V.

A Protestant Episcopal Church in any part of the United States, or any Territory thereof not now represented, may at any time hereafter, be admitted on acceding to this constitution; and a new Diocese to be formed from one or more existing Dioceses, may be admitted under the following restrictions.

No new Diocese shall be formed or created within the limits of any other Diocese, nor shall any Diocese be formed by the junction of two or more Dioceses or parts of Dioceses, unless with the consent of the Bishop and Convention of each of the Dioceses concerned, as well as of the General Convention.

No such new Diocese shall be formed, which shall contain less than eight thousand square miles in one body, and thirty Presbyters who have been for at least one year canonically resident within the bounds of such new Diocese, regularly settled in a Parish or Congregation, and qualified to vote for a Bishop. Nor shall such new Diocese be formed, if thereby any existing Diocese shall be so reduced as to contain less than eight thousand square miles, or less than thirty Presbyters who have been residing therein, and settled and qualified as above mentioned.

In case one Diocese shall be divided into two Dioceses, the Diocesan of the Diocese divided may elect the one to which he will be attached, and shall thereupon become the Diocesan thereof. And the Assistant Bishop, if there be one, may elect the one to which he will be attached; and if it be not the one elected by the Bishop, he shall be the Diocesan thereof.

Whenever the division of a Diocese into two Dioceses shall be ratified by the General Convention, each of the two Dioceses shall be subject to the constitution and Canons of the Diocese so divided, except as local circumstances may prevent, until the same may be altered in either Diocese by the Convention thereof. And whenever a Diocese shall be formed out of two or more existing Dioceses, the new Diocese shall be subject to the Constitution and Canons of that one of the said existing Dioceses, to which the greater number of Clergymen shall have belonged prior to the erection of such new Diocese, until the same may be altered by the Convention of the new Diocese.

ARTICLE VI.

In every Diocese the mode of trying Clergymen shall be instituted by the Convention of the Church therein. At every trial of a Bishop, there shall be one or more of the Episcopal order present; and none but a Bishop shall pronounce sentence of deposition for degradation from the ministry on any Clergyman, whether Bishop, or Presbyter, or Deacon.

ARTICLE VII.

No person shall be admitted to Holy Orders, until he shall have been examined by the Bishop, and two Presbyters, and shall have exhibited such testimonials and other requisites as the Canons in that case provided, may direct. Nor shall any person be ordained until he shall have subscribed the following declaration :—

"I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the word of GOD, and to contain all things necessary to salvation; and I do solemnly engage to conform to the doctrines and worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States." No person ordained by a foreign Bishop shall be permitted to officiate as a Minister of this Church, until he shall have complied with the Canon or Canons in that case provided, and have also subscribed the aforesaid declaration.

ARTICLE VIII.

A Book of Common Prayer, Administration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, Articles of Religion, and a form and manner of making, ordaining and consecrating Bishops, Priests and Deacons, when established by this or a future General Convention, shall be used in the Protestant Episcopal Church in those Dioceses which shall have adopted this Constitution. No alteration or addition shall be made in the Book of Common Prayer, or other offices of the Church, or the Articles of Religion, unless the same shall be proposed in one General Convention, and by a resolve thereof made known to the Convention of every Diocese, and adopted at the subsequent General Convention.

ARTICLE IX.

This Constitution shall be unalterable, unless in General Convention, by the Church, in a majority of the Dioceses which may have adopted the same; and all alterations shall be first proposed in one General Convention, and made known to the several Diocesan Conventions before they shall be finally agreed to, or ratified in the ensuing General Convention.

Done in the General Convention of the Bishops, Clergy, and Laity of the Church, the 2d day of October, 1789.

NOTE.—When the Constitution was originally adopted, in August, 1789, the first article provided that the Triennial Convention should be held on *the first Tuesday in August*. At the adjourned meeting of the Convention, held in October of the same year, it was provided that *the second Tuesday in September, in every third year*, should be the time of meeting. The time was again changed to *the third Tuesday in May*, by the General Convention of 1804.—See Bioren's edition of the Journals of the General Convention, 1817, pp. 61, 75, and 216.

The first article was put into its present form at the General Convention of 1823.

The third article was so altered by the General Convention of 1808, as to give the House of Bishops a full veto upon the proceedings of the other House.—See Journals of the General Convention, pp. 248, 249.

The second sentence of the eighth article was adopted at the General Convention of 1811.—See Journals of General Convention, p. 274.

The words "or the Articles of Religion," were added to the eighth article by the General Convention of 1829.

The fifth article was put into its present form at the General Convention of 1838.

The same Convention adopted the following alterations.—See Journal of General Convention of 1838, p. 24.

Strike out the word "States" wherever it occurs in the first and second articles, except where it follows the word "United," in the first part of the first article, and insert in lieu of the word "States" the word "Dioceses." Strike out the word "State" wherever it occurs in the second, third and fourth articles, and insert in lieu thereof the word "Diocese."

Strike out the words "or District" in the fourth article.

Strike out the word "State" in the sixth article, and insert the word "Diocese."

Strike out the word "States" in the eighth article, and insert the word "Diocese;" and in the eighth article strike out the words "or State" after the words "every Diocese."

Strike out the word "States" in the ninth article, and insert the word "Dioceses." Strike out the word "State" in the ninth article, and insert the word "Diocesan."

D

Titles of the Canons of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States; *extracted from the Appendix to the Journal of the General Convention of* 1838.

CANONS OF 1832.

Canon I. Of the Orders of Ministers in this Church.
II. Of the Election of Bishops, (repealed by Canon 1. 1835.)
III. Of the Certificates to be produced on the part of the Bishops Elect.
IV. Of Standing Committees.
V. Of the Consecration of Bishops during the Recess of the General Convention.

VI. Of Assistant Bishops.
VII. Of the Performance of Episcopal Duties in Vacant Dioceses, (repealed by Canon III., 1838.)
VIII. Of the age of those who are to be Ordained or Consecrated.
IX. Of Candidates for Orders, (repealed by Canon IV., 1838.)
X. Of the Conduct required in Candidates for Orders.
XI. Of Candidates for Orders who are Lay Readers.
XII. Of Candidates who may be refused Orders.
XIII. Of the Learning of those who are to be Ordained, (repealed by Canon V., 1838.)
XIV. Of the Preparatory Exercises of a Candidate for Deacon's Orders.
XV. Of the Testimonials to be produced on the part of those who are to be Ordained.
XVI. Of Candidates coming from places within the United States in which the Constitution of this Church has not been acceded to.
XVII. Of Deacons.
XVIII. Of the Preparatory Exercises of a Candidate for Priest's Orders.
XIX. Of the titles of those who are to be ordained Priests.
XX. Of the Times of Ordination.
XXI. Of those who have officiated as Ministers among other Denominations of Christians. and apply for Orders in this Church, (repealed by Canon III., 1835.)
XXII. Of Clergymen ordained for Foreign Parts.
XXIII. Of Clergymen ordained by Foreign Bishops, or by Bishops not in communion with this Church, and desirous of officiating or settling in this Church.
XXIV. Of Ministers celebrating Divine Service in a Foreign Language.
XXV. Of Episcopal Visitations.
XXVI. Of the duty of Ministers in regard to Episcopal Visitations.
XXVII. Of Episcopal Charges and Pastoral Letters.
XXVIII. Of Parochial Instruction.
XXIX. Of the duty of Ministers to keep a Register.
XXX. Of Election and Institution of Ministers into Parishes or Churches.
XXXI. Of the Officiating of Ministers of this Church in the Churches, or within the Parochial Cures of other Clergymen.
XXXII. Of Episcopal Resignation.
XXXIII. Of the Dissolution of all Pastoral Connection between Ministers and their Congregations.

XXXIV. Of Differences between Ministers and their Congregations.
XXXV. Of Ministers removing from one Diocese to another. (repealed by Canon IV., 1835.)
XXXVI. Of the officiating of persons not Ministers of this Church.
XXXVII. Of offences for which Ministers shall be tried and Punished.
XXXVIII. Of a Minister declaring that he will no longer be a Minister of this Church.
XXXIX. Of Degradation from the Ministry, and of Publishing the Sentence thereof.
XL. Of a Clergyman in any Diocese chargeable with Misdemeanor in any other.
XLI. Of the due celebration of Sundays.
XLII. Of Crimes and Scandals to be Censured.
XLIII. Of a Congregation in any Diocese uniting with any other Diocese.
XLIV. Of the mode of Publishing Authorized editions of the Standard Bible of this Church.
XLV. Of the use of the Book of Common Prayer.
XLVI. Of the Mode of Publishing Authorized editions of the Book of Common Prayer, &c., (repealed by Canon VI., 1835.)
XLVII. Of Forms of Prayer or Thanksgiving for extraordinary occasions.
XLVIII. Of a List of the Ministers of this Church.
XLIX. Of the Mode of Calling Special Meetings of the General Convention.
L. Of the Mode of Transmitting Notice of all Matters submitted by the General Convention to the Consideration of the Diocesan Conventions.
LI. Of the Mode of Securing an Accurate View of the State of the Church, from time to time, (repealed by Canon VII., 1835.)
LII. Of the Alms and Contributions at the Holy Communion.
LIII. Of the Requisites of a Quorum.
LIV. Of Defraying the Expenses of the General Convention, (repealed by Canon VIII., 1835.)
LV. Of the Trustees of the General Theological Seminary.
LVI. Repealing former Canons.

CANONS OF 1835.

I. Of the Election of Bishops, (repealed by Canon I., 1838.)
II. Of Missionary Bishops, (repealed by Canon II, 1838.)

III. Of those who have officiated without Episcopal Ordination, as Ministers among other Denominations of Christians, and apply for Orders in this Church, (repealed by Canon VII., 1838.)
IV. Of a Minister removing from one Dioces eto another.
V. Of Amenability and Citations.
VI. Of the Mode of Publishing Authorized Editions of the Book of Common Prayer, &c., (repealed by Canon IX., 1838.)
VII. Of the Mode of Securing an Accurate View of the State of the Church from time to time.
VIII. Of Defraying the Expenses of the General Convention, (repealed by Canon X., 1838.)

CANONS OF 1838.

I. Of the Election of Bishops.
II. Of Missionary Bishops.
III. Of the Performance of Episcopal Duties in Vacant Dioceses.
IV. Of Candidates for Orders.
V. Of the Learning of those who are to be Ordained.
VI. Candidates for Orders Incligible to the General Convention.
VII. Candidates for Orders in this Church, who have been Ministers, Licentiates, or Students of Theology among other Religious Denominations.
VIII. Of the Organizing of New Dioceses formed out of Existing Dioceses.
IX. Of the Mode of Publishing Authorized Editions of the Book of Common Prayer, &c.
X. Of Defraying the expenses of the General Conventions.
XI. Of Repealed Canons.

E

Canons of 1832.

CANON I.

Of the Orders of Ministers in this Church.

[This Canon was first adopted in 1789.]

In this Church there shall always be three orders in the Ministry, viz: Bishops, Priests, and Deacons.

CANON III.

Of the Certificates to be produced on the part of the Bishops elect.

[Former Canons on this subject were the second of 1789; the fourth of 1792, and the third of 1808.]

SEC. 1. Every Bishop elect, before his consecration, shall produce to the House of Bishops, from the Convention by whom he is elected, evidence of such election, and from the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies in General Convention, evidence of their approbation of his testimonials, and of their assent to his consecration, and also certificates respectively, in the following words: such certificates, in both cases, to be signed by a constitutional majority of the Clerical and Lay Deputies, composing the State Convention, or the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies, as the case may be. The same evidence of election by, and the same certificate from the Members of, the State Convention, shall be presented to the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies in General Convention.

Testimony from the Members of the Convention in the Diocese from whence the person is recommended for Consecration.

We, whose names are underwritten, fully sensible how important it is that the sacred office of a Bishop should not be unworthily conferred, and firmly persuaded that it is our duty to bear testimony on this solemn occasion, without partiality or affection, do, in the presence of Almighty God, testify, that A. B. is not, so far as we are informed, justly liable to evil report, either for error in religion or for viciousness in life; and that we do not know or believe there is any impediment on account of which he ought not to be consecrated to that holy office. We do moreover jointly and severally declare, that we do in our conscience believe him to be of such sufficiency in good learning, such soundness in the faith, and of such virtuous and pure manners, and Godly conversation, that he is apt and meet to exercise the office of Bishop, to the honor of God and the edifying of his Church, and to be a wholesome example to the flock of Christ.

The above certificate shall be presented to the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies in General Convention.

Testimony from the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies in General Convention.

We, whose names are underwritten, fully sensible how important it is that the sacred office of a Bishop should not be unworthily conferred, and firmly persuaded that it is our duty to bear testimony on this solemn occasion, without partiality or affection, do, in the presence of Almighty God, testify, that A. B. is not, so far as we are informed, justly liable to evil report, either for error in religion or for viciousness of life; and that we do not know or believe there is any impediment on account of which he ought

not to be consecrated to that holy office; but that he hath, as we believe, led his life for three years last past, piously, soberly, and honestly.

SECT. 2. If the House of Bishops consent to the consecration, the presiding Bishop, with any two Bishops, may proceed to perform the same, or any three Bishops, to whom he may communicate the testimonials.

CANON IV.

Of Standing Committees.

[Former Canons on this subject were the sixth of 1789; the second of 1795; and the fourth and twenty fourth of 1808.]

SECT. 1. In every Diocese there shall be a Standing Committee, to be appointed by the Convention thereof, whose duties, except so far as provided for by the Canons of the General Convention, may be prescribed by the Canons of the respective Dioceses. They shall elect from their own body a President and a Secretary. They may meet on their own adjournment, from time to time; and the President shall have power to summon special meetings whenever he shall deem it necessary.

SECT. 2. In every Diocese where there is a Bishop, the Standing Committee shall be a council of advice to the Bishop. They shall be summoned on the requisition of the Bishop, whenever he shall wish for their advice. And they may meet of their own accord, and agreeably to their own rules, when they may be disposed to advise the Bishop.

SECT. 3. Where there is no Bishop, the Standing Committee is the Ecclesiastical authority for all purposes declared in these Canons.

CANON V.

Of the Consecration of Bishops during the Recess of the General Convention.

[Former Canons on this subject were the second of 1799; the fifth of 1808 and the sixth of 1820.]

SECT. 1. If during the recess of the General Convention, the Church, in any Diocese, should be desirous of the Consecration of a Bishop elect, the Standing Committee of the Church in such Diocese may, by their President, or by some person or persons specially appointed, communicate the desire to the Standing Committee of the Churches in the different Dioceses, together with copies of the necessary testimonials; and if the major number of the Standing Committees shall consent to the proposed Consecration, the Standing Committee of the Diocese concerned, shall forward the evidence of such consent, together with other testimonials, to the presiding Bishop of the House of Bishops, or in case

of his death, to the Bishop who, according to the rules of the House of Bishops, is to preside at the next General Convention, who shall communicate the same to all the Bishops of this Church in the United States; and if a majority of the Bishops consent to the Consecration, the presiding Bishop, or Bishop aforesaid, with any two Bishops, may proceed to perform the same; or any three Bishops to whom he may communicate the testimonials.

SECT. 2. The evidence of the consent of the different Standing Committees shall be in the form prescribed by the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies in General Convention; and without the aforesaid requisites, no Consecration shall take place during the recess of the General Convention. But in case the election of a Bishop shall take place within a year before the meeting of the General Convention, all matters relative to the Consecration shall be deferred until the said meeting.

CANON VI.

Of Assistant Bishops.

[The former Canon on this subject was the fifth of 1829.]

When a Bishop of a Diocese is unable, by reason of old age, or other permanent cause of infirmity, to discharge his Episcopal duties, one Assistant Bishop may be elected by and for the said Diocese, who shall in all cases succeed the Bishop in case of surviving him. The assistant Bishop shall perform such Episcopal duties, and exercise such Episcopal authority in the Diocese, as the Bishop shall assign to him; and in case of the Bishop's inability to assign such duties declared by the Convention of the Diocese, the Assistant Bishop shall, during such inability, perform all the duties, and exercise all the authorities which appertain to the office of Bishop. No person shall be Elected or Consecrated a Suffragan Bishop, nor shall there be more than one Assistant Bishop in a Diocese at the same time.

CANON VIII.

Of the Age of those who are to be Ordained or Consecrated.

[Former Canons on this subject were the fourth of 1789; the third of 1795; and the sixth of 1808.]

Deacon's Orders shall not be conferred on any person until he shall be twenty one years old, nor Priest's Orders on any one until he shall be twenty four years old. And no Deacon shall be ordained Priest, unless he shall have been a Deacon one year, except for reasonable causes it shall otherwise seem good unto the Bishop. No man shall be consecrated a Bishop of this Church, until he shall be thirty years old.

CANON X.

Of the Conduct required in Candidates for Orders.

[The former Canon on this subject was the eighth of 1808.]

The Bishop or other Ecclesiastical authority, who may have the superintendence of Candidates for Orders, shall take care that they pursue their studies diligently, and under proper direction, and that they do not indulge in any vain or trifling conduct, or in any amusements most liable to be abused to licentiousness, or unfavorable to that seriousness, and to those pious and studious habits, which become those who are preparing for the holy ministry.

CANON XIV.

Of the Preparatory Exercises of a Candidate for Deacon's Orders.

[Former Canons on this subject were the sixth of 1795; and the tenth of 1808.]

Sect 1. There shall be assigned to every Candidate for Deacon's Orders, four different examinations, at such times and places as the Bishop to whom he applies for Orders shall appoint. The examination shall take place in the presence of the Bishop and two or more Presbyters, on the following studies prescribed by the Canons, and by the course of study established by the House of Bishops. At the first examination—on some approved Treatises on Natural Philosophy. Moral Philosophy, and Rhetoric, and in the Hebrew Bible, the Greek Testament, and the Latin tongue. At the second examination—on the books of Scripture; the Candidate being required to give an account of the different books, and to explain such passages as may be proposed to him. At the third examination—on the Evidences of Christianity, and Systematic Divinity. And at the last examination —on Church History, Ecclesiastical Polity, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Constitution and Canons of the Church, and of the Diocese for which he is to be ordained. In the choice of books on the above subjects, the Candidate is to be guided by the course of study established by the House of Bishops. At each of the aforementioned examinations, he shall produce and read a Sermon or Discourse, composed by himself, on some passage of Scripture previously assigned him, which, together with one other Sermon or Discourse on some passage of Scripture selected by himself, shall be submitted to the criticism of the Bishop and Clergy present. And before his ordination, he shall be required to perform such exercises in reading, in the presence of the Bishop and Clergy, as may enable them to give him such advice and instructions as may aid him in performing the service of the Church, and in delivering his Sermons with propriety and devotion.

Sect. 2. The Bishop may appoint some of his Presbyters to

conduct the above examinations; and a certificate from these Presbyters, that the prescribed examinations have been held accordingly, and satisfaction given, shall be required of the candidate. Provided that, in this case, the candidate shall, before his ordination, be examined by the Bishop, and two or more Presbyters, on the above named studies.

SECT. 3. In a Diocese where there is no Bishop, the Standing Committee shall act in his place in appointing the examining Presbyters required by this Canon; and in this case the candidate shall be again examined by the Bishop to whom he applies for orders, and two or more Presbyters, on the studies prescribed by the Canons.

SECT. 4. A Clergyman who presents a person to the Bishop for Orders, as specified in the office of Ordination, without having good grounds to believe that the requisitions of the Canons have been complied with, shall be liable to ecclesiastical censure.

CANON XV.

Of the Testimonials to be produced on the part of those who are to be Ordained.

[Former Canons on this subject were the sixth of 1789; the fourth of 1792; the second of 1795; and the twelfth of 1808.]

SECT. 1. No person shall be ordained Deacon or Priest in this Church, unless he exhibit to the Bishop the following testimonials from the Standing Committee of the Diocese for which he is to be ordained, which recommendation shall be signed by the names of a majority of all the Committee, the Committee being duly convened, and shall be in the following words:

"We, whose names are hereunder written, testify, that A. B. hath laid before us satisfactory testimonials, that for the space of three years last past, he hath lived piously, soberly, and honestly; and hath not written, taught, or held any thing contrary to the doctrine or discipline of the Protestant Episcopal Church; and moreover, we think him a person worthy to be admitted to the Sacred Order of ———. In witness whereof, we have hereunto set our hands, this ———day of ———, in the year of our Lord ———."

SECT. 2. But before a Standing Committee shall proceed to recommend any Candidate, as aforesaid, to the Bishop, such Candidate shall produce from the Minister and Vestry of the Parish where he resides, or from the Vestry alone, if the Parish be vacant, or if the applicant be the minister of the Parish, a Deacon, desirous of Priest's Orders; or, if there be no Vestry, from at least twelve respectable persons of the Protestant Episcopal Church, testimonials of his piety, good morals, and orderly conduct in the following form:—"We whose names are hereunder written, do testify from evidence satisfactory to us, that A. B., for the space of three years last past, hath lived piously, soberly, and

honestly; and hath not, so far as we know or believe, written' taught, or held any thing contrary to the doctrine or discipline of the Protestant Episcopal Church; and moreover, we think him a person worthy to be admitted to the Sacred Order of ———. In witness whereof, we have hereunto set our hands, this ——— day of ———, in the year of our Lord ———." He shall also lay before the Standing Committee, testimonials, signed by at least one respectable Presbyter of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, in the following form :—" I do testify that A. B., for the space of three years last past, hath lived piously, soberly, and honestly, and hath not, so far as I know or believe, written, taught, or held any thing contrary to the doctrine or discipline of the Protestant Episcopal Church; and moreover, I think him a person worthy to be admitted to the Sacred Order of ———. This testimonial is founded on my personal knowledge of the said A. B. for one year last past, and for the residue of the said time upon evidence that is satisfactory to me. In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, this ——— day of ———, in the year of our Lord ———."

Sect. 3. But in case a Candidate, from some peculiar circumstances not affecting his pious or moral character, should be unable to procure testimonials from the Minister and Vestry of the Parish where he resides, the Standing Committee may accept testimonials of the purport above stated, from at least twelve respectable members of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and from at least one respectable Presbyter of the said Church, who has been personally acquainted with the Candidate for at least one year.

Sect. 4. Every Candidate for Holy Orders, who may be recommended by the Standing Committee of any Church destitute of a Bishop, if he have resided for the greater part of the three years last past within the Diocese of any Bishop, shall apply to such Bishop for Ordination. And such Candidate shall produce the usual testimonials, as well from the Committee of the Diocese in which he has resided, as from the Committee of the Church in the Diocese for which he is to be ordained.

Sect. 5. In the case of a Candidate for Priest's Orders, who has been ordained a Deacon within three years preceding, the testimonials above prescribed may be so altered as to extend to such portion only of the three years preceding his application for Priest's Orders, as have elapsed since his Ordination as Deacon; and the Standing Committee shall allow the testimonials so altered the same effect as if in the form prescribed, and shall sign their own testimonial in such altered form, with the same effect as if in the form above prescribed, unless some circumstances shall have occurred that tends to invalidate the force of the evidence on which the Candidate was ordained Deacon.

CANON XVII.

Of Deacons.

[The former Canon on this subject was the thirteenth of 1808.]

Every Deacon shall be subject to the Regulations of the Bishop, or, if there be no Bishop, of the Clerical Members of the Standing Committee of the Diocese for which he is ordained, unless he receive letters of dismission therefrom to the Bishop, or ecclesiastical authority of some other Diocese, and be thereupon received as a Clergyman of such other Diocese; and he shall officiate in such places as the Bishop or the said Clerical Members may direct. It is hereby recommended, that at the time a Candidate is finally examined for Deacon's Orders, the Bishop shall assign to him in writing, the subjects or studies on which it is expedient that he should be particularly examined before being ordained Priest, and with that view name also some author who has treated of such subjects or studies from among the works recommended by the House of Bishops. And the said Deacon shall deliver this document to the Bishop who examines him for Priest's Orders.

CANON XVIII.

Of the Preparatory Exercises of a Candidate for Priest's Orders.

[The former Canon on this subject was the eleventh of 1808.]

A Candidate for Priest's Orders shall, before his Ordination, be required to undergo an examination in presence of the Bishop, and two or more Presbyters, to be named by him, on any leading studies prescribed by the House of Bishops.

CANON XXXII.

Of Episcopal Resignations.

Whereas, the Resignation of the Episcopal Jurisdiction of a Diocese is to be discountenanced, but circumstances may sometimes create an exigency which would render an adherence to this principle inexpedient; it is hereby declared that the Episcopal Resignation of a Diocese may take place under the following restrictions: that is to say—

SECT. 1. A Bishop desiring to resign, shall declare his desire to do so, with the reasons therefor in writing, and under his hand and seal, to his Council of Advice, which shall record the said writing, and send a copy of the same forthwith to every Clergyman and every Parish in the Diocese.

SECT. 2. At the next Convention of the said Diocese, held not less than three months after the delivery of the said writing to the Council of Advice, the proposed resignation of its Bishop shall be considered; and if two thirds of the Clergy present, entitled to

vote in the election of a Bishop, and two thirds of the Parishes in union with the said Convention, and entitled to a vote, and at that time represented, each Parish having one vote by its Delegate or Delegates, shall consent to the proposed resignation, the subject shall be referred to the General Convention; but otherwise, the tender of resignation shall be void.

SECT. 3. The writing aforesaid, and the proceedings of the Diocesan Convention consenting to the resignation, shall be laid before the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies at the next General Convention, which shall have cognizance of all matters relating to them; and if a majority of each order of that House, voting by States, shall agree to the measure, the said writing and proceedings shall be laid before the House of Bishops of that Convention; but otherwise, the said writing and proceedings shall be void.

SECT. 4. The said writing and proceedings being laid before the House of Bishops, it shall have cognizance of all matters relating to them; and the Bishop who proposes to resign, may sit and vote as before in that House; and if a majority of the members present of that House shall agree to the proposed resignation, the presiding Bishop shall declare that it is confirmed; and this declaration shall be entered on the Journal of the House. But if a majority of the Bishops present do not agree to the resignation, all the previous proceedings shall be void.

SECT. 5. If no meeting of the General Convention is expected to be held within one year of the sitting of the Diocesan Convention aforesaid, the President of the Standing Committee of the Diocese shall transmit copies of the said writing and proceedings of the Diocesan Convention to the Standing Committees of all the Dioceses of this Church, and if a majority of them consent to the proposed resignation, the said President shall transmit copies of the said writing and proceedings, and of the consent of the majority of the Standing Committees, to every Bishop of this Church; and if a majority of the Bishops shall notify the senior Bishop of their consent to the proposed resignation, he shall declare, under his hand and seal, that the said resignation is confirmed, and shall transmit the said declaration to the President of the Standing Committee of the Diocese concerned. But if a majority of the Bishops do not notify the senior Bishop of their consent to the measure within six months, all the previous proceedings shall be void.

SECT. 6. A Bishop whose resignation of the Episcopal Jurisdiction of a Diocese has been thus confirmed, shall perform no Episcopal act, except by the request of the Bishop of some Diocese, or of the Convention, or the Standing Committee of a vacant Diocese. And if the said Bishop shall perform any Episcopal act contrary to these provisions, or shall in any wise act contrary to his Christian and Episcopal character, he shall, on trial and proof of the fact, be degraded from the ministry by any five

Bishops, or a majority of them, to be appointed by the senior Bishop of this Church, and to be governed by their own rules in the case; and notice of the same shall be given to all the Bishops and Standing Committees, as in the case of other degraded Ministers.

SECT. 7. No Bishop whose resignation of the Episcopal Jurisdiction of a Diocese has been confirmed as aforesaid, shall have a seat in the House of Bishops.

SECT. 8. A Bishop who ceases in any way to have the Episcopal charge of a Diocese, is still subject, in all matters, to the authority of the General Convention.

CANON XXXIV.

Of Differences between Ministers and their Congregations.

[Former Canons on this subject were the fourth of 1804, and the thirty-second of 1808.]

In cases of controversy between Ministers who now, or may hereafter, hold the Rectorship of Churches or Parishes, and the Vestry or Congregation of such Churches or Parishes, which Controversies are of such a nature as cannot be settled by themselves, the parties, or either of them, shall make applicatian to the Bishop of the Diocese, or in case there be no Bishop, to the Convention of the same. And if it appear to the Bishop and a majority of the Presbyters, convened after a summons of the whole belonging to the Diocese, or, if there be no Bishop, to the Convention, or the Standing Committee of the Diocese, if the authority should be committed to them by the Convention, that the Controversy has proceeded to such lengths as to preclude all hopes of its favorable termination, and that a dissolution of the connection which exists between them is indispensably necessary to restore the peace, and promote the prosperity of the Church, the Bishop and his said Presbyters, or, if there be no Bishop, the Convention or the Standing Committee of the Diocese, if the authority should be committed to them by the Convention, shall recommend to such Ministers to relinquish their titles to their Rectorship, on such conditions as may appear reasonable and proper to the Bishop and his said Presbyters, or, if there be no Bishop, to the Convention or the standing Committee of the Diocese, if the authority should be committed to them by the Convention. And if such Rectors or Congregations refuse to comply with such recommendation, the Bishop and his said Presbyters, or, if there be no Bishop, the Convention, or the Standing Committee of the Diocese, if the authority should be committed to them by the Convention, with the aid and consent of a Bishop, may, at their discretion, proceed, according to the Canons of the Church, to suspend the former from the exercise of any Ministerial Duties within the Diocese, and prohibit the latter from a seat in the Con-

vention, until they retract such refusal, and submit to the terms of the recommendation: and any Minister so suspended shall not be permitted, during his suspension, to exercise any Ministerial Duties. This Canon shall apply also to the cases of Assistant Ministers and their Congregations.

CANON XXXVII.

Of Offences for which Ministers shall be Tried and Punished.

[Former Canons on this subject were the thirteenth of 1789, the first of 1801; the twenty-sixth of 1808, and the second of 1829.]

SECT. 1. Every Minister shall be liable to presentment and trial, for any crime or gross immorality, for disorderly conduct, for drunkenness, for profane swearing, for frequenting places most liable to be abused to licentiousness, and for violation of the Constitution or Canons of this Church, or of the Diocese to which he belongs: and, on being found guilty, he shall be admonished, suspended, or degraded, according to the Canons of the Diocese in which the trial takes place, until otherwise provided for by the General Convention.

SECT. 2. If any Minister of this Church shall be accused, by public rumour, of discontinuing all exercise of the Ministerial Office without lawful cause, or of living in the habitual disuse of public worship, or of the holy eucharist, according to the offices of this Church, or of being guilty of scandalous, disorderly, or immoral conduct, or of violating the Canons, or preaching, or inculcating heretical doctrine, it shall be the duty of the Bishop, or, if there be no Bishop, the Clerical Members of the Standing Committee, to see that an inquiry be instituted as to the truth of such public rumour. And in case of the individual being proceeded against and convicted, according to such rules or process as may be provided by the Conventions of the respective Dioceses, he shall be admonished, suspended, or degraded, as the nature of the case may require, in conformity with their respective Constitutions and Canons.

CANON XXXVIII.

Of a Minister declaring that he will no longer be a minister of this Church.

[Former Canons on this subject were the second of 1817; the seventh of 1820, and the third of 1829.]

If any Minister of this Church, against whom there is no ecclesiastical proceeding instituted, shall declare to the Bishop of the Diocese to which he belongs, or to any ecclesiastical authority for the trial of Clergymen, or, where there is no Bishop, to the Standing Committee, his renunciation of the Ministry, and his design not to officiate in future in any of the offices thereof, it

shall be the duty of the Bishop, or, where there is no Bishop, of the Standing Committee, to record the declaration so made. And it shall be the duty of the Bishop to displace him from the Ministry, and to pronounce and record, in the presence of two or three Clergymen, that the person so declaring, has been displaced from the Ministry in this Church. In any Diocese in which there is no Bishop, the same sentence may be pronounced by the Bishop of any other Diocese, invited by the Standing Committee, to attend for that purpose. In the case of displacing from the Ministry, as above provided for, it shall be the duty of the Bishop to give notice thereof to every Bishop of this Church, and to the Standing Committee in every Diocese wherein there is no Bishop. And in the case of a person making the above declaration, for causes not affecting his moral standing, the same shall be declared.

CANON XXXIX.

Of Degradation from the Ministry, and of publishing the Sentence thereof.

[Former Canons on this subject were the third of 1792, and the twenty-seventh of 1808.]

SECT. 1. When any Minister is degraded from the holy Ministry, he is degraded therefrom entirely, and not from a higher to a lower order of the same. Deposition, displacing, and all like expressions, are the same as degradation. No degraded Minister shall be restored to the Ministry.

SECT. 2. Whenever a Clergyman shall be degraded, the Bishop who pronounces sentence shall, without delay, give notice thereof to every Minister and Vestry in the Diocese, and also to all the Bishops of this Church, and where there is no Bishop, to the Standing Committee.

CANON XLII.

Of Crimes and Scandals to be Censured.

[Former Canons on this subject were the twelfth of 1789; the twenty-fifth of 1808, and the third of 1817.]

SECT. 1. If any persons within this Church offend their brethren by any wickedness of life, such persons shall be repelled from the Holy Communion, agreeable to the Rubric.

SECT. 2. There being the provision in the second Rubric, before the Communion Service, requiring that every Minister repelling from the Communion shall give an account of the same to the Ordinary; it is hereby provided, that on the information to the effect stated being laid before the Ordinary, that is, the Bishop, it shall not be his duty to institute an enquiry, unless there be a complaint made to him in writing by the repelled party. But

on receiving complaint, it shall be the duty of the Bishop, unless he think fit to restore him from the insufficiency of the cause assigned by the Minister, to institute an inquiry, as may be directed by the Canons of the Diocese in which the event has taken place. And the notice given as above by the Minister, shall be a sufficient presentation of the party repelled.

SECT. 3. In the case of great heinousness of offence on the part of Members of this Church, they may be proceeded against, to the depriving them of all privileges of Church Membership, according to such rules or process as may be provided by the General Convention; and until such rules or process shall be provided, by such as may be provided by the different State Conventions.

CANON XLIX.

Of the Mode of calling Special Meetings of the General Convention.

[Former Canons on this subject were the first of 1799, and the forty-second of 1808.]

SECT. 1. The right of calling Special Meetings of the General Convention shall be in the Bishops. This right shall be exercised by the presiding Bishop, or, in case of his death, by the Bishop who, according to the rules of the House of Bishops, is to preside at the next General Convention; provided that the summons shall be with the consent, or on the requisition of a majority of the Bishops, expressed to him in writing.

SECT. 2. The place of holding any Special Convention shall be that fixed on by the preceding General Convention for the meeting of the next General Convention, unless circumstances shall render a meeting at such a place unsafe; in which case the presiding Bishop may appoint some other place.

SECT. 3. The Deputies elected to the preceding General Convention shall be Deputies at such Special Convention, unless in those cases in which other Deputies shall be chosen in the meantime by any of the Diocesan Conventions, and then such other Deputies shall represent, in the Special Convention, the Church of the Diocese in which they have been chosen.

F

Canons of 1835.

CANON V.

Of Amenability and Citations.

[Former Canons on this subject were the third of 1804; the thirty-first of 1808; the fourth of 1829, and the thirty-fifth of 1832.]

Sect. 1. Every Minister shall be amenable, for offences committed by him, to the Bishop, and if there be no Bishop, the Clerical Members of the Standing Committee of the Diocese, in which he is Canonically resident, at the time of the charge.

Sect. 2. Unless a State Convention shall otherwise provide, a Citation to any Minister to appear at a certain time and place for the trial of an offence, shall be deemed to be duly served upon him, if a copy thereof is left at his last place of abode, within the United States, sixty days before the day of appearance named therein; and, in case such minister has departed from the United States, by also publishing a copy of such Citation in some newspaper, printed at the seat of government of the State, in which the Minister is cited to appear, six months before the said day of appearance.

G

Canons of 1838.

CANON I.

Of the Election of Bishops.

[Former Canons on this subject were the first of 1795; the second of 1808; the first of 1817; the second of 1820; the second of 1832, and the first of 1835.]

Sect. 1. Any Diocese in union with this Church, having at the time less than six officiating Presbyters residing therein, regularly settled in a Parish or Church, and qualified to vote for a Bishop; and any Diocese at the time of its organization, with a view to ask for admission into union with this Church may, by a vote of the Convention thereof request the General Convention to elect a Bishop for the same. And, thereupon, the House of Bishops may nominate to the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies, for their concurrence, a suitable person for the office of

Bishop, who shall, in case of their concurrence, be consecrated as the Bishop of such Diocese. The evidence of the concurrence of the Clerical and Lay Deputies, shall be a certificate, to be signed by a Constitutional majority of them, agreeably to the form required by the III. Canon of 1832, to be signed by the members of the Convention, in a Diocese whence a person is recommended for consecration.

SECT. 2. To entitle a Diocese to the choice of a Bishop by the Convention thereof, there must be at the time of such choice, and have been during the year previous, at least six officiating Presbyters therein, regularly settled in a parish or Church, and qualified to vote for a Bishop; and six or more parishes represented in the Convention electing. But two or more adjoining Dioceses, not having respectively the requisite number of Presbyters, to entitle either to the choice of a Bishop, may associate and proceed to the choice of a Bishop, to exercise jurisdiction alike in each of the associated Dioceses, if there be at the time of such choice, and have been during the year previous, nine or more such Presbyters, residing in any part of such associated Diocese qualified as aforesaid; and the Bishop so elected, shall exercise Episcopal jurisdiction over each of the associated Dioceses, until such time as some one of said Dioceses, having six or more Presbyters canonically qualified to elect a Bishop, shall elect him, and he shall have accepted the office as its own exclusive Diocesan: whereupon, his connection with the other associated Diocese, or Dioceses, shall cease and determine: provided always, that the Dioceses thus associating in the election of a common Bishop, and the Conventions thereof, shall in all other respects remain as before, unconnected and independent of each other; and provided also, that such association shall be dissolved on the demise of the Bishop, if not before.

SECT. 3. A Minister is settled for all purposes here, or elsewhere mentioned in these Canons, who has been engaged permanently by any Pasish, according to the rules of said Diocese, or for any term not less than one year.

SECT. 4. The II. Canon of 1832, the special Canon of 1832, and the I. Canon of 1835, are hereby repealed.

CANON II.

Of Missionary Bishops.

[The former Canon on this subject was the second of 1835.]

SECT. 1. The House of Clerical and Lay Deputies may, from time to time, on nomination by the House of Bishops, elect a suitable person or persons to be a Bishop, or Bishops, of this Church, to exercise Episcopal functions in States or Territories not organized as Dioceses. The evidence of such election shall be a certificate to be subscribed by a constitutional majority of said House of

Clerical and Lay Deputies, in the form required by the III. Canon of 1832, to be given by the members of Diocesan Conventions, on the recommendations of Bishops elect for consecration, which certificate shall be produced to the House of Bishops; and if the House of Bishops shall consent to the consecration, they may take order for that purpose.

SECT. 2. The Bishop or Bishops so elected and consecrated, shall exercise Episcopal functions in such States and Territories, in conformity to the Constitution and Canons of the Church, and under such regulations and instructions, not inconsistent therewith, as the House of Bishops may prescribe.

SECT. 3. The jurisdiction of this Church, extending in right, though not always in form, to all persons belonging to it within the United States, it is hereby enacted, that each Missionary Bishop shall have jurisdiction over the clergy in the District assigned him; and may, in case a presentment and trial of a clergyman become proper, request the action of any Presbyters and Standing Committee, in any Diocese sufficiently near, and the presentment and trial shall be according to the Constitution and Canons of said Diocese. And the House of Bishops may, at any time, increase or diminish the number of States or Territories, over which the said Bishop or Bishops shall exercise Episcopal functions. And in case of the death or resignation of a Missionary Bishop, the charge of the vacant Missionary Episcopate shall devolve on the senior Bishop of this Church, with the power of appointing some other Bishop as his substitute in the said charge.

SECT. 4. The House of Clerical and Lay Deputies may, on nomination by the House of Bishops, in like manner, from time to time, elect, and the House of Bishops consenting thereto, may, in like manner, take order for the consecration of a suitable person to be a Bishop of this Church, to exercise Episcopal functions in any place or places out of the territory of the United States, which the House of Bishops may designate.

SECT. 5. Any Bishop or Bishops elected and consecrated under this Canon, shall be entitled to a seat in the House of Bishops, and shall be eligible to the office of Diocesan Bishop in any organized Diocese within the United States.

SECT. 6. Every such Bishop shall report to each General Convention his proceedings, and the state and condition of the Church in said States and Territories, and place or places out of the territory of the United States, and at least once a year make a report to the Board of Missions.

SECT. 7. The second Canon of 1835, is hereby repealed.

CANON III.

Of the Performance of Episcopal Duties in Vacant Dioceses.

[Former Canons on this subject were the first of 1795; the twentieth of 1808, and the seventh of 1832.]

SECT. 1. Any Bishop, Assistant Bishop, or Missionary Bishop, may, on the invitation of the Convention, or the Standing Committee of any Diocese where there is no Bishop, visit and perform Episcopal offices in that Diocese, or in any part thereof. And this invitation may be temporary; and it may, at any time, be revoked.

SECT. 2. A Diocese without a Bishop may, by its Convention, be placed under the full Episcopal charge and authority of the Bishop of another Diocese, or of a Missionary Bishop, who shall, by that act, become the Bishop also of the said vacant Diocese, until a Bishop is duly elected and consecrated for the same, or until the said act of its Convention be revoked. And in case there shall be an Assistant Bishop of the Diocese, under the Episcopal charge of whose Bishop the Diocese without a Bishop shall be placed, the said Assistant Bishop shall have the like charge and authority therein as he has in the Diocese of which he has been chosen Assistant Bishop.

SECT. 3. No Diocese thus placed under the full charge and authority of the Bishop of another Diocese, or of a Missionary Bishop, shall invite a second Bishop to perform any Episcopal duty, or exercise authority, till its connection with the first Bishop has expired, or is revoked.

SECT. 4. The seventh Canon of 1832 is hereby repealed.

CANON IV.

Of Candidates for Orders.

[Former Canons on this subject were the sixth of 1795; the seventh of 1804; the seventh of 1808; the eighth of 1820; the first of 1823; the Canon of 1826, and the ninth Canon of 1832.]

SECT. 1. Every person who desires to become a Candidate for Orders in this Church shall, in the first instance, give notice of his intention to the Bishop, or, if there be no Bishop, to such body as the Church in the Diocese in which he intends to apply, may appoint, or, where no appointment is made, to the President of the Standing Committee.

SECT. 2. No person shall be considered as a Candidate for Orders in this Church, unless he shall have produced to the Bishop, to whom he intends to apply for Orders, a certificate from the Standing Committee of the Diocese of the said Bishop, that from personal knowledge, or from testimonials laid before them, they believe that he is pious, sober, and honest; that he is attached to the doctrines, discipline, and worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and a communicant of the same; and, in their opinion,

possesses such qualifications as will render him apt and meet to exercise the ministry to the glory of God and the edifying of the Church. And when the Standing Committee do not certify as above, from personal knowledge, the testimonials laid before them shall be of the same purport, and as full as the certificate above required, and shall be signed by at least one Presbyter, and four respectable Laymen of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

SECT. 3. In addition to the above testimonials, the person wishing to become a Candidate must lay before the Standing Committee a satisfactory Diploma, or a Certificate from the instructor or instructors of some approved Literary Institution, which certificate must state what have been his studies, and the extent of his improvement in them; or a certificate from two Presbyters, appointed by the ecclesiastical authority of the Diocese, to examine him, of his possessing such Academical Learning, as may enable him to enter advantageously on a course of Theology.

SECT. 4. When a person applying to be admitted a Candidate, wishes the knowledge of the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages, and other branches of learning not strictly ecclesiastical, to be dispensed with, the Standing Committee shall not recommend him as a Candidate, until he has laid before them a testimonial, signed by at least two Presbyters of this Church, stating, that in their opinion, he possesses extraordinary strength of natural understanding, a peculiar aptitude to teach, and a large share of prudence; and the Bishop, with the consent of the Standing Committee, shall have granted said dispensation. This dispensation shall not be granted to any person under twenty-seven years of age, nor shall any person be ordained under such dispensation, until he shall have attained thirty years of age. And in regard to the knowledge of the Hebrew language in all cases in these Canons, the Bishop shall have the sole discretion of dispensation, without reference to the age of the Candidate, as mentioned in this section.

SECT. 5. With this enumeration of qualifications it ought to be made known to the Candidate, that the Church expects of him, what can never be the test of any outward standard—an inward fear and worship of ALMIGHTY GOD; a love of Religion and a sensibility to its holy influence; a habit of devout affection, and, in short, a cultivation of all those graces which are called in Scripture the fruits of the Spirit, and by which alone his sacred influences can be manifested.

SECT. 6. The requisition of this Canon being fulfilled, the Bishop may admit the person as a Candidate for Orders, and shall record the same in a book to be kept for that purpose, and notify the Candidate of such record. And in any Diocese where there is no Bishop, the Standing Committee may, on the same conditions, admit the person as a Candidate, and shall make record and notification in the same manner.

SECT. 7. If, after obtaining the Canonical Testimonials from the Standing Committee, the person be admitted as a Candidate

by the Bishop, or if there be no Bishop, by the Standing Committee, he shall remain a Candidate for the term of three years before his ordination, unless the Bishop, with the consent of the Standing Committee, shall deem it expedient to ordain the Candidate after the expiration of a shorter period, not less than one year.

Sect. 8. A Candidate for Orders may, on letters of dismission from the Bishop or Standing Committee of the Diocese in which he was admitted a Candidate, be ordained by any Bishop of this Church. And if there be a Bishop within the Diocese where the Candidate resides, he shall apply to no other Bishop for ordination without the permission of the former.

Sect. 9. If any Candidate for Orders shall not, within three years after his admission, apply to have his first and second examinations held, as hereafter prescribed, or if he shall not, within five years from his admission, apply to have his third and fourth examinations held, (unless the Bishop, for satisfactory reasons to him assigned, shall allow him further time,) the said person shall, in either case, cease to be a Candidate.

Sect. 10. A person desirous of becoming a Candidate for Holy Orders, shall apply to the Bishop or ecclesiastical authority of the Diocese in which he resides, unles the said Bishop or ecclesiastical authority shall give their consent to his application in some other Diocese. Candidates shall not change their Canonical residence but for *bona-fide* causes, requiring the same to be judged of by the Bishop or ecclesiastical authority; and they shall not be dismissed from the Dioceses in which they were admitted, or to which they have been duly transferred, for the convenience of attending any Theological or other Seminary.

Sect. 11. The ninth Canon of 1832 is hereby repealed.

CANON V.

Of the Learning of those who are to be Ordained.

[Former Canons on this subject were the seventh of 1789, altered in 1792; the fourth of 1795; the fourth of 1799; the second of 1801; the ninth of 1808, and the thirteenth of 1832.]

Sect. 1. No person shall be ordained in this Church until he shall have satisfied the Bishop and the Presbyters by whom he shall be examined, that he is well acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, can read the Old Testament in the Hebrew language, and the New Testament in the original Greek: is adequately acquainted with the Latin tongue, and that he hath a competent knowledge of Natural and Moral Philosophy, and Church History, and hath paid attention to composition and pulpit eloquence, as means of giving additional efficacy to his labors; unless the Bishop, with the consent of the Standing Committee of his Diocese, has dispensed with the knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages, and other branches of learning not strictly ecclesiastical, in consideration of such other qualifications of the Gospel Ministry as are set forth in the fourth section of Canon IV. The

dispensation, with a knowledge of the Hebrew language, to be regarded as in Canon IV.

SECT. 2. The thirteenth Canon of 1832 is hereby repealed.

CANON VII.

Concerning Candidates for Orders in this Church who have been Ministers, Licentiates, or Students of Theology, among other Religious Denominations.

[Former Canons on this subject were the sixth of 1804; the seventeenth of 1808; the fourth and fifth of 1820; the first of 1829; the twenty-first and twenty-fourth of 1832, and the third of 1835.]

SECT. 1. All persons seeking admission to the Ministry of this Church, are to be regarded as Candidates for Holy Orders.

SECT. 2. When a person who, not having had Episcopal Ordination, has been acknowledged as an ordained Minister or Licentiate among any other denomination of Christians, shall desire to be ordained in this Church, he shall give notice thereof to the Bishop, or if there be no Bishop, to the Standing Committee of the Diocese in which he resides; or if he resides in a State or Territory in which there is no organized Diocese, to the Missionary Bishop within whose jurisdiction he resides; which notice shall be accompanied with a written certificate from at least two Presbyters of this Church, stating that from personal knowledge of the party, or satisfactory evidence laid before them, they believe that his desire to leave the denomination to which he has belonged has not arisen from any circumstance unfavorable to his religious or moral character, or on account of which it may be inexpedient to admit him to the exercise of the Minsitry in this Church; and they may also add what they know, or believe on good authority, of the circumstances leading to the said desire.

SECT. 3. If the Bishop or Standing Committee shall think proper to proceed, the party applying to be received as a Candidate, shall produce to the Standing Committee the same testimonials of literary qualifications as are required of all other Candidates; and also a testimonial from at least twelve members of the denomination from which he came, or twelve members of the Protestant Episcopal Church, or twelve persons, in part of the denomination from which he came, and in part Episcopalians, satisfactory to the Committee, that the applicant has, for three years last past, lived piously, soberly, and honestly; and also, a testimonial from at least two Presbyters of this Church, that they believe him to be pious, sober, and honest, and sincerely attached to the doctrines, discipline and worship of the Church. The Standing Committee being satisfied on these points, may recommend him to the Bishop to be received as a Candidate for orders in this Church, or in a vacant Diocese the Standing Committee may so receive him.

SECT. 4. Candidates admitted as above, may, at the expira-

tion of a period not less than six months, be ordained, on their passing the same examinations as other Candidates for Deacon's Orders; and in the examinations, special regard shall be had to those points in which the denomination whence they come differs from this Church, with a view of testing their information and soundness in the same; and also to the ascertaining that they are adequately acquainted with the liturgy and offices of this Church; provided, that in their case the testimonials shall be required to cover only the time since their admission as Candidates for Orders; and provided, also, that the provisions of the Canon concerning Candidates for Orders, as far as the same relates to the age of the person to whom the dispensation may be granted, and the mode and restrictions in and under which the same may be granted, shall apply to the persons mentioned in this Canon.

Sect. 5. Every candidate for the Ministry of any other denomination, who applies to be received as a Candidate for Orders in this Church, may be allowed by the Bishop, with the consent of the members of the Standing Committee, the period of time during which he has been a student of Theology, or Candidate in such other denomination: provided, the time so allowed does not exceed two years.

Sect. 6. When any person not a citizen of the United States, who has been acknowledged as an ordained Minister among any other denomination of Christians, shall apply for Orders in this Church, the Bishop to whom application is made, shall require of him (in addition to the above qualifications) satisfactory evidence that he has resided at least one year in the United States previous to his application.

Sect. 7. The third Canon of 1835 is hereby repealed.

CANON VIII.

Of the Organizing of New Dioceses Formed out of Existing Dioceses.

Sect. 1. Whenever any new Diocese shall be formed within the limits of any other Diocese, or by the junction of two or more Dioceses or parts of Dioceses, and the same shall have been ratified by the General Convention, the Bishop of the Diocese within the limits of which another is formed, or in case of the junction of two or more Dioceses or parts of Dioceses, the Bishop of eldest consecration over the Dioceses furnishing portions of such new Diocese, shall thereupon call the Primary Convention of the new Diocese for the purpose of enabling it to organize, and shall fix the time and place of holding the same, such place being within the territorial limits of the new Diocese.

Sect. 2. In case there should be no Bishop who can call such Primary Convention pursuant to the foregoing provisions, then the duty of calling such Convention for the purpose of organizing, and the duty of fixing the time and place of its meeting, shall be

vested in the Standing Committee of the eldest of the Dioceses, by the junction of which, or parts of which, the new Diocese may be formed. And such Standing Committee shall make such call immediately after the ratification of a division by the General Convention.

SECT. 3. Whenever one Diocese is about to be divided into two Dioceses, the Convention of the said Diocese shall declare which portion thereof is to be the new Diocese, and shall make the same known to the General Convention before the ratification of such division.

II

PRIMITIVE CHURCH GOVERNMENT; *extracted from Waddington's Church History, Harper's edition, chapter* 2, *section* 2, p. 41–44.

"*Church Government.* We must now proceed to examine the discipline and government of the primitive Church, and, in this inquiry, we shall discover no marks of a loose and passing superstition, but on the contrary, the surest prognostics of vigor and immortality. There are many reasons which make it necessary, in the treatment of this subject, to distinguish clearly between what is historically known, and what is plausibly conjectured; for it is from the confusion of facts with probabilities, that most of the difficulties of this question have arisen. In the first place, it is certain, that, from the moment in which the early Churches attained a definite shape and consistency, and assumed a permanent form of discipline; as soon as the death of the last of the Apostles had deprived them of the more immediate guidance of the Holy Spirit, and left them, under God's especial care and providence, to the uninspired direction of mere men; so soon had every Church, respecting which we possess any distinct information, adopted the Episcopal form of government. The probable nature of that government, we shall describe presently; but here it is sufficient to mention the undisputed fact, that the religious communities of the Christian world universally admitted the superintendence of ministers, called bishops, before the conclusion of the first century. In the next place it is equally true, that neither our Saviour nor his Apostles have left any express and positive ordinances for the administration of the Church; desiring, perhaps, that *that* which was intended for every age and condition of man, to be the associate and guardian of every form of civil government, should have the means of accommodating its external and earthly shape to the various modifications of human polity.

It is also true, that in the earliest government of the first Christian society, that of Jerusalem, not the elders only, but the "whole Church" were associated with the Apostles; and it is even certain, that the terms bishop, and elder or presbyter, were, in the first instance, and for a short period, sometimes used synonymously, and indiscriminately applied to the same order in the ministry. From the comparison of these facts, it seems natural to draw the following conclusions,—that during the lifetime of the apostles they were themselves the directors, or at least the presidents of the Church; that as long as they remained on earth, it was not necessary, in all cases, to subject the infant societies to the delegated authority of a single superintendent, though the instances of Titus and Timothy clearly prove that it was sometimes done; and that, as they were severally removed from the world, some distinguished brother was in each instance appointed to succeed, not indeed to the name and inspiration, but to the ecclesiastical duties of the blessed Teacher who had founded the Church. The concurrence of ancient records confirms this last conclusion; the earliest Church historians enumerate the first bishops of the Churches of Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Smyrna, Alexandria, and Rome, and trace them in each case, from the Apostles. And thus it came to pass that, for more than twenty years before the death of St. John, most of the considerable Churches had gradually fallen under the presidency of a single person entitled Bishop; and that, after that event, there were certainly none which did not speedily follow the same name and system of administration.

Prophets. Again, for the first thirty years, perhaps somewhat longer, after the ascension of Christ, the labors of the apostles were aided by certain ministers entitled Prophets, who were gifted with occasional inspiration, and taught under the influence of the Holy Spirit. This order of teachers was withdrawn from the Church when their office became no longer necessary for its advancement, and it appears wholly to have ceased before the end of the century, at which period, as we have already observed, ecclesiastical government universally assumed that durable shape which has been perpetuated, and, with certain variations, generally adopted through every age of Christianity.

Deacons. We have yet made no mention of the deacons, who were the third order in the Episcopal Church. The word deacon means minister, and in that sense is sometimes applied to the office of the Apostles; but in a general sense only, since we are assured (Acts vi.) that the diaconal order was distinct, and instituted for a specific purpose. However, it seems certain that, in the very beginning, the office of the deacons was not confined to the mere ministry of the table, since we read that Stephen disputed publicly on the Christian truth, with irresistible wisdom and spirit; and, moreover, that "he did great wonders and miracles among the people." It is equally clear that attendance on the poor was for several centuries attached to it; even after the office

of treasurer was held by the bishop, the portion destined to charitable relief continued to pass through the hands of the deacon. It is not so easy to ascertain the extent of their spiritual duties in the earliest Church. Ignatius speaks of them with high respect, and, in one place, calls them "ministers of the mysteries of Christ." Tertullian distinguishes them from the laity, together with bishops and presbyters. Cyprian asserts, that the Apostles appointed them as "ministers of their episcopacy and Church." By the Nicene Council they are designated as servants of the bishop. It is certain that they were ordained by the bishop alone, without any imposition of hands by presbyters; that in some Churches they were admitted to read the gospel, and that they universally assisted in the distribution of the Eucharist, without any share in its consecration. Their early acknowledgment as members of the ministry is proved by their occasional presence in the original synods of the clergy.

Clergy and Laity. The origin of the distinction between the clergy and the laity has given rise to much controversy. Bingham is of opinion that it was derived from the Jewish into the Christian Church in its earliest days. And Clemens Alexandrinus has expressly declared, "that St. John, after his return from Patmos, ordained bishops, and appointed such men for *clerical* ministers as were signified by the Holy Spirit." If the persons here mentioned were actually set apart and consecrated to the ministry, the reality as well as the name of the distinction might with greater assurance plead apostolic authority; but this does not positively appear. On the other hand, the separation of the sacred order is so commonly mentioned by the early Fathers, not by Cyprian only, but by his predecessors Tertullian and Origen, and so invariably treated as a necessary part of the Christian system, that if its origin was not coeval with the foundation of the system, it was at least unrecorded and immemorial. The fairest supposition respecting this question appears to be, that the *first* converts, those who spread the earliest tidings of redemption before the Apostles themselves had quitted Judea, were commissioned to preach the name, and diffuse the knowledge of Christ indiscriminately. But it seems equally certain, that this commission was of very short duration; and that as soon as in any place converts were found sufficient to form a society or church, a bishop or presbyter was ordained for life to minister to them. The act of ordination established the distinction of which we are treating.

According to the earliest form of Episcopal government it would appear that the bishop possessed little, if any, power in matters of discipline, except with the consent of the council of presbyters; that the council possessed no sort of power except in conjunction with him; and that, in affairs strictly spiritual, as the ordination of the inferior clergy, and the administration of the sacraments, especially that of baptism, he acted as some think with original, and certainly with independent, authority. His

office was for life, and the funds of the society were committed to his care and dispensation. Of most of the apostolic churches, the first bishops were appointed by the apostles; of those not apostolical, the first presidents were probably the missionaries who founded them; but, on their death, the choice of a successor devolved on the members of the society. In this election, the people had an equal share with the presbyters and inferior clergy, without exception or distinction; and it is clear, that their right in this matter was not barely testimonial, but judicial and elective. This appointment was final, requiring no confirmation from the civil power or any superior prelate; and thus, in the management of its internal affairs, every church was essentially independent of every other.

The Churches, thus constituted and regulated, formed a sort of federative body of independent religious communities, dispersed through the greater part of the empire, in continual communication, and in constant harmony with each other. It is towards the middle of the second century that the first change is perhaps perceptible: as the numbers of the believers and the limits of the faith were extended, some diversities in doctrine or discipline would naturally grow up, which it was not found easy to reconcile except by some description of general assembly. Accordingly we find the first instances of such assemblies (unless that which was summoned by the Apostles may be so called) at this period. They were composed, either of the bishops only, or of these associated with a party of the priesthood; those ministers presented themselves as the representatives of their respective societies; nor was any superiority claimed by any of them in virtue of the supposed pre-eminence of particular Churches. These councils were called by the Greek name, Synods, and seem at first to have been provincial, following in some manner the political division of the empire. They had their origin in Greece—the land of public assemblies and popular institutions, of which the memory was fondly cherished there, after the reality had been lost in Roman despotism. Their character was essentially popular; the representatives of equal Churches, elected to their sacred offices by the whole body over which they presided, assembled to deliberate as equals; and we may reasonably indulge the belief, since the exertion of freedom in any one direction makes it more ready to act in every other, that the political emancipation of mankind was promoted, even thus early, by the free and advancing spirit of Christianity.

Such were the principles on which the affairs of the Churches were conducted for some time after the period mentioned by us; and none can be conceived more favorable to the progress of the faith. The government of a single person protected each society from internal dissension—the electiveness of that governor rendered probable his merit—the meeting together of the deputies of the

Churches in occasional assemblies, on equal terms, taught the scattered members of the faith that they were animated by one soul, and informed and dignified by one spirit."

I

History of the Articles of Religion of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, *extracted from the* "Memoir of the Life of Bishop White," *by the Rev. Bird Wilson, D. D., Professor of Systematic Divinity in the General Theological Seminary of the Protestant Episcopal Church.* p. 143–152.

"*Of the Articles of Religion.* In the "proposed book," the articles were reduced in number to twenty. These were regarded by the English bishops as containing the essential principles of the Gospel; and no objection was made to them, except to that relating to the creeds, as already mentioned. But they never received the sanction of the Church. While they were under consideration in the convention, Dr. White manifested his anxiety to prevent the use of any language having a tendency, even though only apparent, to oppose the great doctrine that salvation is of mere grace. The article on justification, as proposed in the report of the sub committee, was objected to by him and Dr. Griffith. It was at last withdrawn, and the eleventh article of the Church of England inserted. Their objection to the proposed article "was its being liable to a construction contrary to the great evangelical truth that salvation is of grace. It would have been a forced construction, but not to be disregarded." At that time he was desirous that the article on predestination "should be accommodated not to individual condition, and to everlasting reward and punishment, but to national designation, and to a state of covenant with God in the present life." The language proposed by him, and inserted by the convention of Pennsylvania, in their instructions to their deputies in the General Convention in 1786, was: "Predestination is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby (before the foundations of the world were laid) he hath constantly decreed, by his counsel, to admit to the inestimable privileges of the Gospel dispensation, all those Gentiles, as well as Jews, who should believe in his Son, Jesus Christ; they, through grace, obey the calling of God; they be justified freely; they be made sons of God by adoption; they be made like the image of his only begot-

ten Son, Jesus Christ; they walk religiously in good works; and at length, by God's mercy, they attain to everlasting felicity." This view of the subject he always continued to entertain; but was afterwards "convinced, that the introducing of it as an article would have engendered needless controversy, on the meanings of the terms predestination and election, as used in the New Testament. If we cannot do away the ground of controversy heretofore laid, it at least becomes us to avoid the furnishing of new matter for the excitement of it." Had articles been afterwards framed anew, he would, without doubt, have advocated the entire omission of the subject.

The thirty-nine articles of the Church of England, with the exception of the political parts abrogated by the revolution, were still the acknowledged faith of this Church, even before they were sanctioned by any resolution of the convention. But without some modifications in their language, and in the manner in which they should be set forth, they could not, with propriety, be published as her confession of faith. They were long under the consideration of the General Convention.

In the early periods of the discussion, there was much difference of sentiment on the expediency of having articles of religion at all. Bishop Madison gave his opinion against them altogether, on the principles of the Confessional and the like books; and Bishop Provoost, as Dr. White always supposed, did not materially differ from him, but being in the presidential chair at the time of the discussion in his presence, did not deliver his sentiments. Bishop Seabury at first expressed in conversation a doubt whether it were expedient to have any; thinking that all necessary doctrine should be comprehended in the liturgy, by which the object of articles might be accomplished. But afterwards, he saw so clearly the inconveniences likely to result from the want of an authoritative form of public confession, that he wished to adopt one, and, as was understood, the code of the thirty-nine articles. Bishop Claggett was in favor of them. Bishop White "professed himself an advocate for articles; the abolishing of which would, he thought, only leave with every pastor of a congregation the right of judging of orthodoxy, according to his discretion or his prejudices; while the articles determine that matter by a rule, issuing from the public authority of the Church."

In 1789, the bishops proposed a ratification of the thirty-nine articles, with an exception in regard to the thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh; but, with their concurrence, the subject was referred, in the house of deputies, to a future convention. In 1792, the bishops were ready to undertake the review of them; but as the churches in some of the states were not represented in that convention, and others only partially, the subject was postponed by the house of deputies. For similar reasons, it was again postponed by the convention of 1795, on the proposal of the bishops. At the next convention, in 1799, it was brought before the house of deputies;

which "resolved itself into a committee of the whole, to take into consideration the propriety of framing articles of religion." The committee of the whole reported to the house a resolution, "that the articles of our faith and religion, as founded on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, are sufficiently declared in our creeds and liturgy, as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer established for the use of this Church; and that further articles do not appear necessary." But this was negatived in the house; and a committee was subsequently appointed to frame articles. They reported seventeen. But the house of deputies resolved that, on account of the advanced period of the session, and the thinness of the convention, the consideration of them should be postponed; and that the secretary should transcribe the articles into the journal, to lie over for the consideration of the next General Convention. On this publication of the proposed articles in the journal, Dr. White remarks, that "the bishops had no opportunity of expressing their sense on the question of publishing the draft of articles which it (the journal) contains. Such a publication was certainly very injudicious; if for no other reason, because it might have been expected to be easily mistaken for the sense of at least one of the houses of the convention. Indeed it was so misunderstood; whereas it was the sense of a committee only; not an individual besides having delivered in his place any opinion on any article. But this was not the worst. It tended to excite religious acrimony, without any possible good effect at the present; and with the probable bad effect of the greater acrimony, on an opportunity of settlement in future." He disapproves of the application of the term "priesthood," in one of the articles, "to denote all the orders of the Christian ministry; and not confined to the order of presbyters, as in the established ordinal; of the former of which there is no example in the institutions of the Church of England." And he adds: "It is not here designed to charge any other fault on the articles proposed. They are, in substance, what is contained in the thirty-nine articles, without any superaddition, except in the particular stated. But the remarks may serve to show, that in the work of clearing that code of what may be thought unnecessary positions, there is danger of admitting some novelty, more fruitful of controversy than what may be done away. In the present instance, the novelty introduced is susceptible of the construction, of obtruding on the church the notions of 'sacrifice,' in the strict and proper sense; of 'altar' as the place of it; and of 'priest' as the sacrificer."

The articles were at length reviewed and established by a resolution of the two houses, in 1801. As the subject had been so frequently before them, and in various forms, the fullest opportunity had been given to ascertain the sentiments of the Church at large, and to adopt deliberately the most judicious determination. "As to repeated discussions and propositions, it had been found that the doctrines of the Gospel, as they stand in the thirty-

nine articles of the Church of England, with the exception of such matters as are local, were more likely to give general satisfaction, than the same doctrine in any new form that might be devised. The former were therefore adopted by the two houses of convention, without their altering of even the obsolete diction in them; but with notices of such changes as change of situation had rendered necessary. Exclusively of such, there is one exception; that of adopting the article concerning the creeds, to the former exclusion of the Athanasian." By the form of the resolution of the two houses, the previous obligation of the articles as a profession of religious faith, is impliedly recognized; the language being—"the articles of religion are hereby ordered to be set forth, with the following directions to be observed in all future editions of the same;" and again: "the articles to stand as in the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England, with the following alterations and omissions."

The reasons for adhering to the thirty-nine articles, in preference to forming new ones, are thus stated by Dr. White. "When the question has been put—Whether the thirty-nine articles are the best rule that can be devised; the author has answered, that he thought them better than any other, likely to be obtained under present circumstances. Conventional business is too much hurried, and the members of the conventions are not sufficiently retired from other avocations, for the entering on determinations of this magnitude. Even if the greater number of the body should be conceded to be sufficiently learned for the work; ecclesiastical legislation has not been of sufficiently long standing in this Church, to have established the characters of those who exercise it, as to this point, in the estimation of the world. Until such a character shall be established, a few obstinate or factious men will overset, in their respective congregations, what shall have been enacted in convention. Besides, many persons among the laity, and some even among the clergy, had declared their determination to abide by the articles at all events; which made it much to be feared that schism would take place, whenever any material change should be determined on. In this case, they who should adhere to the articles, would claim their relation to the Church of England; while it would be questionable, whether the others would have any permanent tie among themselves.

"Therefore, the author wished for an adherence to the thirty-nine articles, not excepting the general principles maintained in the political parts of them; but with an exception, in the ratification, of the local application of the said parts, according to the letter of them. But he did not wish to have the articles signed, as in England, according to the tenor of the thirty-sixth canon of that Church. He preferred the resting of the obligation of them on the promises made at ordination, as required by the seventh article of the constitution, considered as sufficient by the English bishops; which would render them articles of peace, as they are

sometimes said to be in the Church of England; but not with such evident propriety as they would then be in the American Church. As the author approves of the general tenor of the thirty-nine articles, he trusted, that however he might have supposed, in his private judgment, the possibility of omitting some of them, and of altering others to advantage; yet not perceiving a probability, either that such a change, if made, would have been for the better; or, that if so, it would have found such general acceptance as to prove a sufficient bond of union; he thought he acted consistently, in endeavoring to obtain them on the terms stated."

J

OBJECTIONS TO THE LITURGY OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH ANSWERED; *extracted from* "THOUGHTS ON THE RELIGIOUS STATE OF THE COUNTRY, *by the Rev. Calvin Colton.* p. 120—134.

"Let us consider separately some of the most common objections to a prescribed form, such as is used in the Episcopal church.

1. It is a Roman liturgy. This reason may have force in company with prejudice; not, I think, anywhere else. It has been already fully answered in the previous chapter on Episcopacy, by the suggestion, that the objection bears with equal sway against the Bible—against Christianity, &c. If the liturgy, as abridged and expurgated from Roman corruptions, is sound in doctrine and good for practical purposes, that is enough—that is all that needs to be claimed for it. No matter where it came from.

Moreover, our liturgy is not in fact a production of the Church of Rome; but in all that is of original and uninspired composition, in its collects, and in the general and substantial structure thereof, it may fairly be accepted, partly by presumption from a consideration of its intrinsic and obvious merits, where positive testimony of the origin of particular parts is wanting, and partly by historical evidence, as having emanated from the most eminent Christians of all ages, back to the Apostles; and is actually connected with them. All the devotional parts of the liturgy will satisfactorily demonstrate this, even though we lay aside the consideration of the notable fact, that no devotional compositions of our own day ever obtain a general acceptance, except they are from the hand of the most pious, godly, heavenly-minded men. There

is nothing in the history of the church of Rome to show, positively or presumptively, that her ritual, in any of the parts received by Protestants, had been corrupted. Besides the general excellence of the liturgical compositions, as approved by the conscience, and by the most devout and heavenly affections of the universal church, every true Christian must feel, that the service called the Litany is a very ecstacy of devotion, and that none can attain to the purity and height of its holy and heavenly breathings, without feeling that he is above the world and near to heaven. All persons accustomed to the liturgy must have felt the power of that part of it. To such, the Litany will need no commendation from me. The like was never written by the hand of uninspired man. It seems inspired—and inspired in the highest degree. I verily believe it is so; not indeed as claiming our respect as a part of the sacred canon—but as having been drawn by the hands of men, who stood and felt themselves to be standing in and breathing the holiest atmosphere that is possible on earth—in the presence and at the footstool of the Eternal Three in One—at the foot of the Cross—sympathizing with God and with the dependence and wants of our race—breathing out the holiest, most importunate prayer after God and for redemption from sin. It seems as if they stood at the last stage between earth and heaven, about to enter heaven, but unwilling to go there, till they had used their last opportunity of prayer, and poured out before the throne of God and the Cross of a dying Saviour their effectual intercessions for all whom they were leaving behind. Let any Christian read that portion of the Liturgy, and he will confess, that this which I have said of it is not praise, but a simple statement of its merits.

In short, it is evident, that this manual of public and private devotion, in all that is uninspired, and in its general plan and structure, is the joint product of the most orthodox and the holiest of men. Say, that it has been in use in the Roman Church; say, even—though that does not appear—that it was principally produced in that Church; I see not, I feel not, that it can be the worse for that. Nay, as we are certified, that some of the most eminent Christians that have lived since the days of the Apostles have been found in that connexion, and as we have satisfactory evidence, that such characters, running back through all ages of the church, must have had the charge of this production, it comes to us under the highest sanction of uninspired authority. It is in fact a joint work of the wisest and best men, that have been found scattered along through the entire range of the Christian Era to the sixteenth century. But the work, after all, speaks for itself, and by whomsoever used, is sure to make impressions of its own holy character. I have never yet seen the Christian, or the man, who could open his mouth against it, on the ground of its intrinsic merits. It is admitted to comprehend every subject of prayer,

and the wide scope of Scripture history, devotion, doctrine, and precept.

2. The prescribed service of the Episcopal Church is objected to as an irksome repetition, and therefore unprofitable. That the public services under the head of Morning and Evening prayers, are the same throughout the year, is true; and I have shown, that the public prayers of other denominations, who reject these and all *prescribed* forms, are notwithstanding for the most part *set* forms; and it is equally true, that they are in general nearly a repetition. The difference in this particular is too trifling to be made of any account, especially when balanced against other considerations, which will generally be allowed to operate in favour of the Episcopal service and against these. For example: The prayers of the Episcopal Church are short, having intervals occupied by the choir and by reading of the Scriptures. This gives variety and relieves from irksomeness. The language also is pure and comprehensive, and equally adapted to all minds. Whereas, in the other case, the principal prayer is long—often uncommonly so. Not unfrequently it occupies a half hour, till everybody is tired. Besides, the language often offends good taste; the subjects are sometimes treated awkwardly, so as to give pain, instead of promoting edification; topics are occasionally touched in a manner very objectionable; and the minds of a large portion of the congregation are unavoidably occupied in criticism, rather than joining in worship. But those who habitually attend on the Episcopal service have no room for criticism, and no provocation. If they are pious and devout, the prescribed form, so far as it occurs as a repetition, is a help to their devotions. Repetition there must be in all modes of worship; it is unavoidable. And when it must occur, it is desirable, that it should be brief, comprehensive, and pure, as in the prayers of the Episcopal Church. For those who are not pious, and consequently not absorbed in devotion, I believe, as a general fact, that the Episcopal service is less irksome and more agreeable. The frequent change and great variety are an obvious reason why it should be so. Besides, it should be recollected, that much the greater part of the services appointed for every day, and for every morning and evening, including the collects and Scriptures, are not a repetition except *once a year*—leaving out of view the part sustained by the choir, and even that has more or less variety in it. With the exception of a few short prayers offered up at intervals between other parts, the services of the Episcopal Church actually have less repetition and a greater variety, than those of any other Protestant Church. And it cannot be denied, that they are all in the highest degree Scriptural, and eminently calculated to assist devotion.

3. But there is too much getting up and sitting down, too frequent change of posture and of topic, too much interchange of different kinds of service, &c. Doubtless it does seem so to those

who are not accustomed to it, and who are more used to services like the Presbyterian. But when this objection is proved experimentally, it not only vanishes, but the practices before esteemed faults are transformed into excellences. The whole system is found to accord with nature and with the spirit of closet devotion. It might be presumed, that such a ritual, the product of so many centuries of the Christian church, and of the most illustrious saints adorning her annals, who had to do with the formation of this work, was never composed and constructed but with all the lights and suggestions of experience.

Follow the Christian to his closet, where is his Bible, his prayer and hymn books, his various manuals of devotion. He kneels and invokes God, his Father, Redeemer, and Sanctifier; he reads a verse, or two, or more, or a chapter of the Bible, according as his feelings incline. If a sentiment of devotion springs up in his heart at any moment or place of his reading or meditation, he instantly gives expression to it; if any desire, he offers it up in prayer; if he feels any evil, he prays for deliverance; if his kindness for others flows out, he prays for them;—whatever emotion springs up in his bosom, he utters it, whether of sorrow for sin, of gratitude for favours, of adoration, of intercession, or of praise. If one great feeling pervades his heart, he dwells upon it, and bring it out in various forms in his addresses to the Deity. In the course of half an hour he has perhaps looked many times into his Bible, hymn book, and other devotional helps that may lie before him, and at each interval poured out his various and rapidly succeeding emotions and desires before the throne and mercy seat of God. He rises and walks his room, and kneels again; he prays; he sings, it may be; he changes his subject, his book, his posture, and passes from one act of devotion to another, just as his feelings prompt him; and his states of feeling are every moment changing, as thoughts succeed each other. This is nature in such an occupation; it is man acting out, without restraint, his own character, as a religious being, in the cultivation of religious affections. And it is very likely he will offer the same petition, word for word, many times in succession, and at every time ending it with the usual doxology and Amen. He loves to say, "Through my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and to ascribe "praise to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." He loves to go over the same thing again and again, where his affections for the moment are strongly fixed; and he believes, that God, who is his Father, is willing to hear. And he will perhaps return to the same topic many times in the same season of his retirement.

Now let it be observed, that the entire system of the Episcopal ritual is based upon this principle—viz. on the natural and various promptings of religious affections in closet devotion, so far as it can be applied to public worship. There is this difference between the two: In his closet the Christian, being alone, *follows* the promptings of his feelings; whereas a public ritual should

itself be the prompter and the guide. In his closet the Christian is not called upon to have respect to others, but only to himself, in the course of his devotional exercises. But in public, where there are many minds and various states of feeling, the exercises of devotion should be so contrived, as to bring all these various minds, as far as possible, to the same state at the same time. In public, it is impossible, that a ritual of devotion should be conformed to the states of feeling in each individual; its aim should rather be to prompt and control feeling, but not without regard to that variety, as well as repetition, which is the spontaneous growth of the closet. The closet is the model; and the plan of public worship should be to come as near to it as possible. It is the natural flow and rapidly succeeding changes of the religious affections, which are to be regarded in the formation of a public ritual. In this view it will be seen, that the Episcopal forms and modes of worship have been ordered in wisdom; and that they demonstrate a consummate acquaintance with the human heart under the affections of religion.

4. But the common use of the ritual by all the people is a mere mockery, and sanctions hypocrisy; it is well known that there is no devotion in the hearts of a great portion of the congregation, and they know it themselves; and the practice, in connexion with this consciousness, is in great danger of making them mere formalists for life; and consequently it is perilous to their souls.

That any person should fail to enter into the spirit of the forms of public worship, on which they are accustomed to attend, is certainly to be regretted; but I am not aware, that this is a sin peculiar to Episcopalians. It may possibly be more visible among them; but in all honesty I do not think it is more prevalent. What is the appearance of any person in a religious congregation, but an ostensible profession of worship? The reigning public conscience of the community is in favor of religion; and the ordinances of public worship are God's appointed means, not only of edification to Christians, but of bringing unconverted men—sinners, who in their conscience respect religion—home to himself. For the most part, those who use the solemn, and as it must be confessed by all, the appropriate ritual of the Episcopal Church, may charitably be supposed to have a respect for its doctrine and sentiments; and in the exercise of the same charity, it may also be presumed, that their conscience goes with the service. On the last point, there is in most cases no doubt.

There is just as much reason for the Ministry of the Church to call on all the people to engage and take part in the public services of the Sanctuary, as for the Christian father and head of a family to call around the altar of his household his children and domestics, and exhort them to join in the acts of devotion, whatever be their form, in which he leads. Both institutions are suitable and good, and have the same general design; and all the objections, which can be brought against one, lie with equal force

against the other. It may be hoped, that he who can be induced to join formally and habitually in acts of social and public worship, will also by that very means, under the blessing of God, be brought to a participation in the grace and spirit of that worship. Certainly it must be granted, that it is more hopeful and better to do it, than not to do it. I think, indeed, it may be satisfactorily shown, that a formal and actual participation in the ordinary uses of the public ritual of the Episcopal Church, other things being equal, is more likely to issue in a cordial acquiescence in the requirements of the Gospel, than the passive and taciturn habit of the Presbyterian and some other denominations. The mere suggestion of this idea, I am disposed to believe, will generally be convincing. This suggestion is the more forcible, when we consider, that the temper of the age and of the public mind is favourable to the possession and exemplification of the graces of practical piety in all their legitimate bearings—which is an undoubted fact.

5. The audible responses of the congregation are objected to as improper, unprofitable, and tending to confusion.

As to the charge of confusion, inasmuch as it is an appo inted order, well understood, conformed to without difficulty in the manner intended, and to those concerned is in no sense confusion, it requires no reply. That it is improper, if it suits the feelings of the denomination, I cannot see, or feel. In all ages religious congregations have been accustomed to make responses to official performances, in one form or another: So did the Hebrews; so do the Jews still; and so have Christians from the beginning, with the exception of some Protestant sects, who have probably laid aside this practice, rather for the sake of setting up a *difference* under the name of an *improvement*, than for any good reasons, as is the fact in some other changes. I think it cannot fairly be made a question of propriety, but of taste and habit; and may therefore be lawful with those who like it.

As to its profitableness, it may be remarked, that it is not only an ostensible, and with true worshippers, a real expression of sympathy, but it is calculated to give greater effect to the power of sympathy, and to kindle livelier sentiments of devotion in the hearts of those who engage in these offices. What Christian does not know by experience the difference in the state and activity of his religious feelings, while engaged in the duties of the closet, when in one case his devotions are only mental, and in the other he gives them an audible expression? The mere sound of his own voice on his own ear, in the utterance of his emotions, and the effect of natural an l appropriate intonations, give a new character and an increased ardour and vigour to those sentiments. It is hardly possible for him to realize the full benefit of private devotions, when deprived of this privilege. It is in truth and in all experience the most indispensable and most active means of kindling devotion to its purest and most glowing fires.

And if such be the effect in the closet, how much more in the public congregation, where the mysterious and amazing power of sympathy comes in to give character and intensity to the devotions of the house of God? Such beyond all question is the natural tendency, and such the design of this practice. It is intended, moreover, that every one present should feel that he is a worshipper, and that he should sustain his own part. It makes all participants in concert, besides. that it gives to each, even in this public place, the additional privilege of the closet. While he reads and prays and sings in company with those around him, enjoying and communicating the power of sympathy, he also reads and prays and sings, as one alone in the presence of God, and in his earthly sanctuary. There is, perhaps, no feature of the Episcopal ritual, that is founded more in nature—that is better adapted to man as he is—and of course, none more demonstrative of wisdom, and of experience in the character and operations of piety, as well as in the means of assisting and promoting it. It is true, this privilege may be abused: so may any thing else. It may fail of its intended effect over undevout minds; and so may any other and whatever means.

7. The numerous holy days and saint's days, appointed or recommended to be observed, in the Episcopal liturgy, are objected to as relics of the Romish superstitions.

As a theory, independent of these fragments of history, it would seem very suitable, that the most remarkable events of our Saviour's earthly abode, from his nativity to his ascension, should be, in some form and by special ordinances, commemorated. Whether the very week of the year, or day of the month, can be precisely determined, is not of material importance, if Christians can be agreed on any assumed dates for the respective events. It must be evident, that such observances are calculated to fix and preserve in the public mind the remembrances suggested by them; and to do it more effectually, than could be realized in the want of them, in the same manner as our Fourth of July keeps alive the recollection and sentiments proper to be cherished in relation to that eventful period of our history; in the same manner as the 22d of February reminds us of the Father of our Country; and in the same manner as the annual celebration of any remarkable event or epoch, distinguished in history for good or evil to mankind generally, or to any community, may serve to inspire with gratitude, hope, and courage, if the event was a blessing, or with admonition and caution, if it was an evil.

And what harm in setting up in like perpetual memorials, if there is room for them, to such names as the most distinguished of the Apostles, Evangelists, Christian martyrs of the earlier and later ages, and of the most eminent saints, that belong to past history? Is not their history inspiring and profitable to contemplate? Is it proper—is it well to let their names, their example, and their virtues go into oblivion? Can it be honestly averred, inde-

pendent of the supposed origin and mediate descent of some of these appointments, that the use made of them in the Episcopal church, is likely to have, or does have any bad effect? Viewed as a theory, the objection falls; and I am not aware that the practice is found to be vicious in its tendency. Every question of this kind, to be determined fairly, must be decided on the simpe ground of its own merits, apart from the influence of prejudice.

But who are they that make this objection? I will suppose, for example, that they are Presbyterians and Congregationalists. Well, let us try them by their own rule: It is a singular fact, that within the limits of about twenty years, and for the most part in much less time than that, a calendar of stated religious occasions, or holy days, has been made up, adopted, and gone into general use throughout these two denominations, much more crowded, as I am inclined to believe—though I have not taken the trouble of counting the lists in the two cases for comparison—than the corresponding calendar of holy days, adopted and recommended by the Episcopal Church, which have grown principally out of events scattered along the entire line of eighteen centuries. And in addition to these, there are constantly occurring numerous special and extemporaneous appointments, which, in their number, added to the amount of time allotted to their observance, probably exceed the calendar of stated occasions of the same class. There is a monthly Concert, (of prayer) so called, at least for every week in the year, and I believe somewhat in excess of this, assigned each to its specific object, as for example, to Christian missions generally—which I believe is the primitive institution of the kind; to the Sabbath school enterprise; to the Tract cause and efforts; to the cause of Sailors; to the Temperance reformation; to abolition of Slavery; to Christian mothers' associations—which in many cases is weekly; to Revivals of religion; and to numerous other specific occasions, already gone into extensive, and many of them into general observance. I suppose it would be moderate to state the monthly concerts, which are very generally observed, at *seventy-five* a year. There is a large class of other stated and extemporaneous religious occasions, obtaining and receiving a great share of the attention of the religious public of these two denominations, amounting in all, I should think, if we include the entire list of every sort above specified, to not less than *two hundred* a year, independent of the Sabbath. Of course I do not mean, that each of these has got into general use; but probably not less than *one hundred and fifty* of them are very widely observed, and that too by the same individuals.

This surprising list of religious occasions, or holy days, stated and special, has all grown up within about twenty years. The original monthly Concert, on the subject of general missions, has long since attained to a very sacred estimation; and so in its train have several others of the same class, though falling somewhat behind, as regards the interest felt in them. There are sev-

eral annual Concerts, to which very great importance is attached, as the first Monday in the year, for the world; a day in February, for colleges; another for the cause of Temperance; and some others, the specific design of which I am not possessed of.

Of course I do not refer to these appointments to object to them. Many of them I have long sympathized with, and observed religiously for the design of their institution. My only object is to bring them up in array before those, who are supposed to object to the comparative paucity of stated religious observances, or holy days, which are to be found in the religious calendar of the Episcopal church, that it may be seen, which party in fact has the most, the complainants or the accused."

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