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Essays on the church







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# ESSAYS ON THE CHURCH

MDCCCXL

BY A LAYMAN

Robert Bellamy

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MDCCCXL.





TO THE

RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

RICHARD, LORD BISHOP OF OXFORD.

MY LORD,

CALLED, as I have been, to your Lordship's bar,<sup>1</sup> in a manner as unexpected as it was undesired; I feel that when I now make my appearance, I may be more reasonably asked, why I came not sooner, than why I come at all.

When I had perused Dr. Pusey's letter to your Lordship, on its appearance last spring, it was my first intention to have replied to it by a production of a similar class, and without permitting much time to elapse. Circumstances, however, of a peculiar nature, and with the particulars of which it is unnecessary to trouble your Lordship, interposed an hindrance; and on my resuming the subject in the summer, I found a strong inducement to a change of plan. The *Essays on the Church*,—the work which had been brought under your Lordship's notice,—required to be reprinted, and, of course, to be revised.

<sup>1</sup> Vide Dr. Pusey's *Letter to the Bishop of Oxford*, (1839) in the course of which, the statements and arguments of the last edition of the *Essays on the Church* are made the basis of a pamphlet of 239 pages.

An opportunity was thus offered, of considering the disputed points at more length, with more deliberation, and with the prospect of a wider circulation than a pamphlet could be expected to attain. For these reasons, therefore, I abandoned my first intention, and left my reprove, for some months, without a reply. The delay thus submitted to, has extended itself to a longer period than I originally anticipated. The volume has been almost entirely re-composed, and that, not in the calm of academic leisure, or with the aids of college libraries ; but amidst the din of the great thoroughfare of life, and the distractions of various other and conflicting engagements. On this account, as well as on the score of many obvious disadvantages, I feel that I have ground to apply for, and trust I may obtain, a degree of indulgence, on your Lordship's part, for the various faults and inadvertencies, which, to a master's eye, cannot fail to present themselves.

My chief reason, however, for a distinct appeal to your Lordship, in this epistle, is the desire thereby to gain an opportunity of especially noticing one point which could not appropriately form a part of the main discussion. Probably your Lordship may feel a degree of surprise when I add, that the complaint I wish to make, concerns the harsh and unkind spirit, and the unjust and unfounded imputations, in which Dr. Pusey has indulged, in the letter in question.

It is most likely that to many cursory readers this complaint may appear in the highest degree unreasonable. There is an appearance of gentleness and patient endurance in that letter, which is well fitted to convey a favourable impression of the writer's

spirit. But your Lordship will not require to be reminded, that it is quite possible to say and do very unjust and indefensible things, under the mildest phraseology, and with an air of the most resigned submission. The "reproofs even to smiting" of the hundred and forty-first Psalm are greatly preferable to the "words smoother than butter" of the fifty-fifth.

What is the term, my Lord, by which Dr. Pusey describes the parties against whom he is contending,—not an individual merely, or a few persons, but a very large body of the clergy of the church of England? It is an offensive, prejudicial and unjust appellation; affixed to them, too, without the least attempt to justify its application.

The phrases by which Dr. Pusey and his friends had been currently designated, had partaken very little, if at all, of this character. The term "Puseyites," which I do not think a good one, and have not adopted, is merely the ordinary mode of naming a party from one of its recognized leaders: as "Lutheran," "Wesleyan," "Hutchinsonian," and the like. The Master of the Temple designates them as "the Oxford Tractarians,"—another term merely descriptive, and involving nothing contemptuous or reproachful.

Dr. Pusey, however, before he has so much as attempted to prove anything, commences by denominating his opponents, the "*Ultra-Protestants*." Now this he must know and feel to be nothing better than the too common manœuvre of attempting to raise a prejudice by the use of a term of reproach. There is nothing that the plain, stolid, matter-of-fact people of England dislike more than an "*Ultra*." Availing themselves of this feeling, Dr. Pusey and his friends

have constantly adopted the use of this phrase, whenever speaking of those, who endeavour to abide by the principles of the Reformation.

It was well remarked, my Lord, by a writer of the last century, that “he who is not ashamed to *beg the question* in his title-page, will not often be found to shew either candour or impartiality in the body of the work.” It is time, indeed, that so obvious a principle were generally recognized, as, that a controversialist is not at liberty to fasten an odious appellation on his opponent, until he has first proved the justice of its application. This Dr. Pusey and his friends have neglected to do. They may perhaps refer us to various of their writings, from which such a proof, they think, may be *inferred*. But this is not sufficient. Dr. Pusey, coming forward, *de novo*, in this controversy, and addressing, for the first time, his Diocesan upon it, was bound, before currently adopting such a term towards his opponents, to recapitulate the argument,—if indeed such an argument existed,—by which its use was attempted to be justified. He had himself received at least this measure of justice from those opposed to him. His system had been described as one of “modified Popery;” but it was instantly added,—“this is a grave accusation, and we must establish it by proof, before we proceed another step.”<sup>1</sup> In like manner, Dr. Pusey was at liberty, if he chose, to accuse a portion of his brethren of going beyond the Reformation; but he was not at liberty to wrap up this charge, as if it were a thing proved and undeniable, in an odious appellation, and then to pass on without even an attempt to support it by evidence.

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on the Church*, 1838, p. 282.

This charge, my Lord, is in fact the whole question at issue. The entire dispute turns upon this one point, whether those to whom Dr. Pusey applies this term, *are*, or *are not*, higher Protestants than the men of the Reformation. I cannot admit the fact; nor has Dr. P. so much as attempted to prove it. Their *ultraism* is contented, after all, with the Articles and Homilies of our church; standards, which would, I believe, but for the parties now designated as *Ultra-Protestants*, have been in far less general use and circulation than they now are.

Recrimination is not a desirable mode of meeting a charge; but in the present case it is forced upon us. If those whom Dr. Pusey has accused to your Lordship, have *not* gone beyond the Reformation,—then it is to be feared that their accusers have themselves erred in an opposite direction. This is a grave and serious matter for discussion, and I am sure that your Lordship will feel that it is not unworthy even of your own personal consideration.

Glancing, for a moment, at the contending parties, as they in the present case appear to stand before you,—your Lordship might naturally be expected to feel the vast discrepancy, so far as their personal rank, and standing, and character, is concerned. But although Dr. Pusey has chosen to forget, your Lordship will scarcely require to be reminded, that among those who fall under the censure implied by the designation in question, there are several of the brightest living ornaments of his own university, and more than one distinguished member of the episcopal bench.

But we have no occasion to dwell on the weight of testimony, or the balance of personal character, as

found on the one side, or on the other. The published writings of those who accuse others of *ultra-Protestantism*, furnish abundant proof of their own dislike of Protestantism, *ultra* or *infra*, in every form or degree whatever.

Dr. Pusey, indeed, considering himself, apparently, as put upon his trial, is most cautious in his language; or, I might rather say,—is most profuse in his declarations of entire and implicit attachment to the doctrines of the church. But Dr. Pusey is acquainted with the writings of Mr. Newman, of Mr. Froude, and of Mr. Keble; and instead of clearing himself from all supposed participation in their sentiments, he constantly quotes them with approbation, and admits his connection with them by the frequent use of the plural “we.” We must embrace the whole, therefore, under the Master of the Temple’s phrase, of “the Oxford Tractarians,” and must consider all as alike answerable for language which is used in a series in which all are alike engaged.

And what is the general tenor of that language? It is as far as possible from a hearty concurrence in the principles recognized and avowed by the church at the time of the Reformation. We find Mr. Newman declaring that “our Reformers mutilated the tradition of 1500 years;” that their conduct fills him with “*indignation* and impatient sorrow,” and that “our present condition is a *judgment* on us for what they did.” In one of the *Tracts for the Times* we are told that the alterations in the Liturgy at the time of the Reformation, were “a taking from us a part of our ancient inheritance,—a withdrawal of our higher privileges, a thrusting us aside, and bidding us take the lower place, the position of suppliants, and to

“weep between the porch and the altar.” And Mr. Froude, in his *Remains*, for which, I believe, both Messrs. Keble and Newman are answerable, declares that “the principle on which our Communion Service is founded, is as proud, irreverent, and foolish, as that of any heresy, *even Socinianism.*”

The same writer, in another place, tells us that “he knows of no claim which the Prayer Book can have, on the respect of a layman, as the teaching of the church, which the Breviary and the Missal do not possess in a *higher degree.*” And, of the Reformation and Protestantism, he never speaks but in terms of abhorrence, as “that odious Protestantism,” “I hate the Reformation and the Reformers more and more.”<sup>1</sup>

These strong expressions naturally startled many, and the editors felt called upon to allude to the subject, in the additional volumes lately published. But instead of explaining or retracting these declarations of anti-Protestant feeling, they deliberately and distinctly defend them. They declare, unreservedly, their own opinion, “that the persons chiefly instrumental in that great change, (the Reformation) were *not*, as a party, *to be trusted* on ecclesiastical and theological questions,” “that these venerated men held the *wrong kind* of Protestantism,” and that “the church seems to have been left an inadequate image of antiquity, as a mark of *decay and deserved anger.*”

These, then, being the deliberately recorded and published opinions of these writers, may we not with truth and justice feel astonished when Dr. Pusey contends for their unblemished loyalty to the church,

<sup>1</sup> As these passages are quoted in the course of the present volume, with references to the works whence they are taken, it seemed unnecessary to repeat those references here.

and stigmatizes those who differ from them, as "*ultra-Protestants?*"

But we may and ought to take a wider range. Their own language, indeed, abundantly proves their dislike of the Reformers and the Reformation. Still, a more solid ground of examination will be found in the main facts,—in the actual state of the case. The grand question, my Lord, is, which of the contending parties is really in harmony with the Reformation and with the Church? Now their *doctrines*, as well as their *sympathies*, shew, that it is not the party of the Oxford Tracts.

What are the main facts and doctrines on which the issue should depend? Are they not such as these: The Rule of Faith;—the Plan of man's Salvation;—the nature of a Christian Church;—the character and effect of the Sacraments? Let us ask, then, which party, on all these great questions, is most in harmony with the standards and formularies of the Church of England.

On the Rule of Faith,—important as governing all other questions, what says the church? Let her Articles and Homilies be carefully studied, and nothing can be more clear than her sedulous exclusion of all other authority in matters of faith, than that of God's word. Again and again is this declared to be the sole and sufficient standard, and all recourse to other rules or guides, most vehemently condemned. "Let us diligently search (saith the Homily) for the *well of life* in the books of the Old and New Testament, and not run to the *stinking puddles* of men's traditions, for our justification and salvation." Hardly could language more distinct and peremptory be devised.

But how is this decision of the church received,



by the two parties now contending? Is it not cordially adopted by that, which Dr. Pusey calls "*Ultra Protestant*"; while it is evaded, questioned, and disobeyed by those, who most unjustly assume to themselves the title of "the *more faithful* among the church's sons." These latter most unhesitatingly declare, that without tradition, scripture is neither complete nor sufficient. And to strengthen themselves in this position, they fly from the authoritative declarations of the church, to the private opinions of this or that Reformer; and if they find a Cranmer or a Ridley willingly entering on the question with a Papist, of the sense of the Fathers on this or that topic, they straightway exalt this temporary deviation, for argument's sake, into a proof, that the church does not build her faith on the word of God alone. But, by a similar mode of proceeding, it would be no matter of difficulty to nullify and overthrow every one of the thirty-nine Articles!

On the Way of Salvation, the like discrepancy prevails. Nothing, one would think, could be clearer than the statements of the Articles and Homilies of the Church. Justification by faith is their one grand theme. Those who are now designated "*Ultra Protestants*" accept and rejoice in these statements. But, on the other side, we have whole volumes written to get rid of the Church's declarations, and to substitute Justification by Baptism for the grand distinguishing doctrine of the Reformation.

The nature of a Christian church is defined in our Articles and Homilies, in strict conformity with the belief of all Protestant Christendom, by the marks of a preaching of the pure word of God, and a right administration of the sacraments. (Art. xix.) The

alleged "*ultra-Protestants*" cordially accept this definition. Their opponents entirely reject it, and prefer the notes of the church adopted by Dr. Wiseman, Dr. Milner, and other Romish controversialists.

On the Sacraments the same opposition is maintained. The church demands, in her articles and formularies, *faith* in the recipients, as *indispensable* to the obtaining any benefit. The so-called "*ultra-Protestants*" recognize this necessity. The writers of the *Tracts for the Times* deny it, and adopt the figment of the Romish theologians, of a "faith of the church," imputed to, and available for, the faithless partaker. In the Eucharist the church carefully repudiates all idea of an altar or a sacrifice,—striking the very words out of all her services, and protesting against them in her Homilies. The "*ultra-Protestants*," as Dr. Pusey calls them, willingly consent to this;—but the writers of the *Tracts for the Times* weep and lament over it "with *indignation* and impatient sorrow;"—and yet, in the same breath, denominate themselves "the more faithful of the church's sons!"

In a word, those who are called "*ultra-Protestants*" subscribe the Church's Articles and read her Homilies, with hearty, entire, and thankful concurrence; while those who venture to stigmatize them by this unjust appellation, confess that they themselves "retire on the *letter* of the Articles and Liturgy for *refuge* from the *spirit* of their first compilers;—their letter, as interpreted and acted on by later generations,—the generations of Andrewes, of Laud, and of Ken."<sup>1</sup> They admit their aversion to the

<sup>1</sup> *Preface to Froude's Remains*, vol. iii. p. xxi.

spirit which animated the Reformers; and they refuse to accept the standards they bequeathed to the church, in the sense in which they *know* those standards to have been framed. Dissenting, then, substantially, from the church's authorized decisions; what course do they adopt, to avoid what ought to follow,—their open secession from her communion? They appeal from the spirit and sense and meaning of the Reformers, to “the letter,” the bare words of their standards. But this would avail them little, for the men of the Reformation were not so incompetent to their task as to be unable to express their own meaning. One more step is necessary,—the appeal is to be, to “the letter of the Articles and Liturgy, *as interpreted by later generations.*”

Is this honest, my Lord? Is this Christian simplicity and integrity? These writers admit to us, under their own hands, that they refuse the Articles and Liturgy of the church in the spirit of their compilers; nor do they accept them in “the plain and full meaning thereof,” as in their subscription they professed to be willing to do,—but they “*retire upon,*”—to use their own words,—“the interpretation of *later generations.*” I put it to your Lordship, where this kind of manœuvring is to end?

And these are the men, who, while they *thus* establish their claim to be considered “the more faithful of the sons of the church,” are so lavish of their censure of others, as to be ready at all times to stigmatize those, who honestly and sincerely accept the Articles and Homilies of the church, as “ultra-Protestants!” How much more truly,—whether regarding their *addition* of tradition to the word of God; their preference of the Romish notes of the church,

to those recognized in our Articles ;—their exaggeration of the Supper of the Lord into “ a sacrifice for the quick and dead ;” their reliance on the prayers of the saints departed ; and their fondness for all the multitudinous rites and ceremonies which our Reformers abolished,—how much more truly and appropriately have they themselves been described by Mr. Faber, by the designation of **ULTRA-CHURCHMEN !**

I will not weary your Lordship with more than one other remark. Having dealt unjustly with his opponents, throughout his pamphlet, by the summary course of an unmerited appellation of reproach, Dr. Pusey, once or twice, indulges in a more elaborate course of misrepresentation. One such passage I will venture to repeat to your Lordship :—

“ This modern system, whose very boast it is to make works of no account ; which teaches people, on their deathbed, after a life of profligacy and infamy, servants of sin and Satan, destroying, as far as in them lay, the souls of others, to put away all painful remembrance of past sin, and to exult and triumph in having cast away ‘ their righteousness ’ (which they had not) ‘ like filthy rags,’ and to joy as though they had ‘ fought the good fight,’ and been approved soldiers ; which would make it practically easier, and safer almost, to be saved without works than with them, speaking often of the danger of relying upon works, and but little of the danger of being lost for want of them ; which stifles continually the strong emotions of terror and amazement which God has wrought upon the soul, and ‘ healing slightly the wound ’ which He has made, makes it often incurable ; which makes peace rather than holiness, the end

of its ministrations, and by an artificial wrought-up peace, checks the deep and searching agony, whereby God, as in a furnace of fire, was purifying the whole man, 'by the Spirit of judgment, and by the Spirit of burning'—this is altogether a spurious system, misapplying the promises of the Gospel, usurping the privileges of baptism, which it has not to confer, giving peace which it has not to bestow, and going counter to the whole tenor of Scripture, that 'every man shall be judged according to his works.' ”<sup>1</sup>

Your Lordship will surely admit that these are heavy charges. But is it fitting, is it honourable, is it Christian-like, to cast down such a representation before his readers, without giving them even a probable clue for the right appropriation of this frightful description? Are imputations such as these to be thrown loose upon the world, for each man to pick up and apply according to his own fancy or surmise? "A modern system" is spoken of. Now, "a system" must needs be something settled, known, and capable of identification. Why, then, was such a picture drawn, without the least indication of the theologian or class of theologians who had sat for the portrait? A solitary reference only, and that to a single sentence in an anonymous work, is all that is afforded. This is not the way in which matters of this kind should be handled, or in which such accusations should be publicly maintained.

In the absence of all proof, and of all clue to the books or pulpits in which these doctrines may be found, I am necessarily precluded, by Dr. Pusey's own mode of preferring his accusation, from giving

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Pusey's Letter*, pp. 87, 88.

of policy than of manhood. However, being so challenged, I could not decline to appear; trusting something to the innate power of truth, but much more to the protection of Him, who has frequently "chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; that no flesh should glory in His presence."

I remain, My Lord,  
Your Lordship's most obedient  
and very humble servant,  
THE AUTHOR.

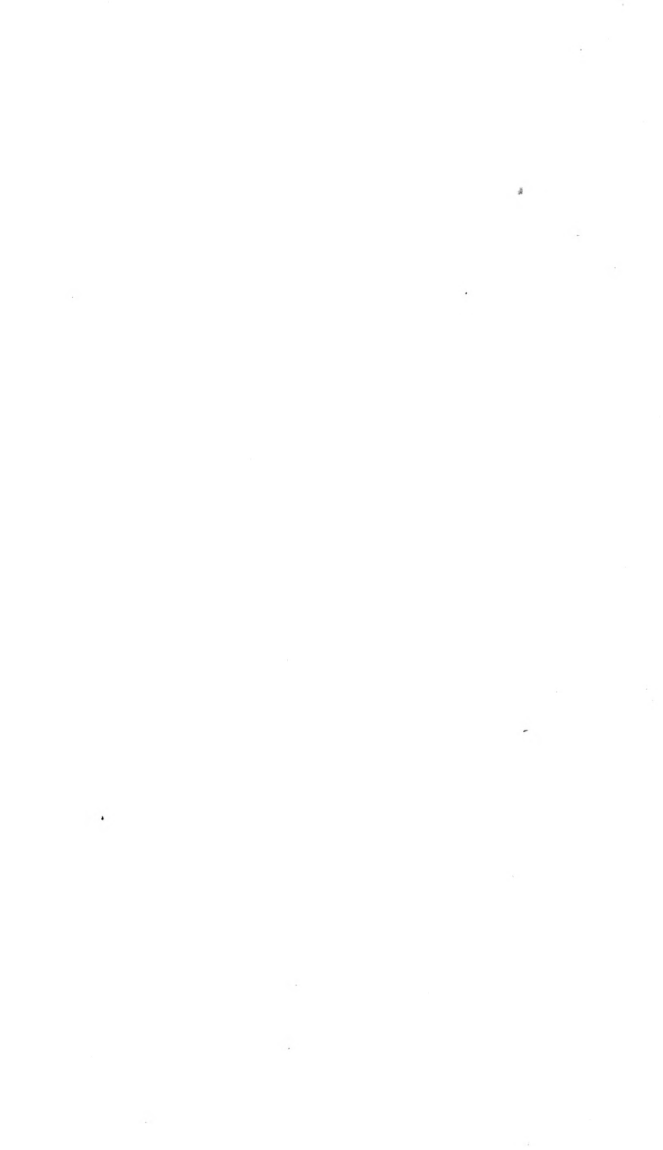
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ESSAYS ON THE CHURCH.



# ESSAYS ON THE CHURCH.

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## I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

THE state of the public mind about five years since, though now entirely changed and passed away, may yet be easily recalled to mind by most of those who will read these pages. A great political revolution had just taken place; vast numbers of the middle classes, and of those immediately below the middle classes, had been admitted to the elective franchise; and as it was chiefly in those classes that the strength of the various dissenting bodies was found, a general apprehension was entertained, that the change which had taken place in the legislature must necessarily be followed by an equally extensive alteration in the relations of the state to the church; and that the religious establishments of the realm would quickly experience some important modifications, if not an entire removal from their ancient standing, as an essential portion of the British constitution.

About this period it was, that, observing the press to be teeming with a multitude of publications, all anticipating and demanding the overthrow of our Church Establishment—the attempt was made to render such sort of support as might be practicable, in the form of a series of popular essays, originally appearing in the pages of a periodical work ; in which it was endeavoured to be shewn, first, that Church Establishments, in general, were in accordance with the mind of the Spirit, as displayed in the Scriptures ;—and, secondly, that the English Church was chargeable with no such faults or imperfections, as might render her case an exception to the general rule, or justify secession from her communion.

This attempt, such as it was, met with a degree of acceptance, which was as little expected as it was deserved. The present is the sixth time that the author has been called upon to revise his first hasty outlines ; and the whole number of copies, in various forms, already put into circulation, considerably exceeds fifteen thousand.

Meanwhile, however, a great and marvellous change has taken place in the public mind. In a most remarkable manner, *Truth has prevailed*. Many minds, of first-rate powers, have been engaged in the controversy ; many works of sterling value have been added to our standard collections ; and the general result of the whole struggle has been, that dissent has suffered a signal defeat, and the cause of the Church keeps the field in triumph.

That such has been the issue of this great conflict will hardly be denied. Were any one so reckless of character as to venture a contradiction, we should only need to refer him to the published boastings and

anticipations of his friends, in 1833 and 1834, and to ask him to compare the vauntings of that period with the sullen silence and the mute despondency of the present hour. *Then*, the possible existence of the Establishment was supposed to be limited, at furthest, to a very few months. *Now*, session after session passes away without any more serious assault than a casual petition, touching some church-rate ‘martyr;’ or the sapping and mining schemes of a ‘national education.’ Meanwhile, every week seems to develop the church’s growing strength and resources—whether in the work of education, or of church extension, or in the increased numbers and confidence of her friends within the legislature.

But it is not in human nature to enjoy a triumph of this kind without some excess; or to pause in a successful controversy, with that moderation, which a proper sense of human infirmity would dictate. The *reaction* is often more to be dreaded than the assault. In the present case this has proved most lamentably true. Five years ago we found it necessary to argue in defence of the right of the church to *exist*. And now we are compelled to protest, on the other hand, against those who are ready to deny that same right to those out of the church! At that period we had to plead with dissenters for the admission that churchmen might be within the pale of real Christianity. *Now* we find even greater need to contend against writers on our own side of the question, who gravely tell us, that ‘we have no right to admit that any persons out of the church are or can be in the way of salvation.’<sup>1</sup>

1 *Palmer's Treatise*, vol. i. p. 254.

The last-quoted passage clearly shews, that in the present position of these questions, it is most essential, that the leading terms employed should be clearly and scripturally defined. Until this is done, all must be confusion and seeming contradiction. In that passage every thing turns upon the sense, in which the term 'church' is used. If thereby is meant, the invisible or spiritual church of Christ, then it is most true, that 'we have no right to admit, that any persons out of it are or can be in the way of salvation.' But if it describes merely the external society or institution, commonly called 'the church of England;' then to limit salvation, or 'the way of salvation,' strictly to it alone, lands us, without reserve, in one of the most unscriptural and intolerable assumptions of the great anti-christian apostacy.

In this state of the question, then, we are compelled, if we would with safety enter upon a course of 'Essays on the Church,' to begin by considering very seriously, in what sense the word 'church' is to be employed. The treatise already referred to, exhibits, in a remarkable manner, the danger of neglecting this precaution. Mr. Palmer commences his work by a section of 'Definitions,' in which he particularizes *five* different senses, in which the term is used. 1. The whole body of the elect (Heb. xii. 23). 2. The universal visible church (1 Cor. xii. 28). 3. A local Christian community (1 Cor. i. 2). 4. A small society of Christians (Rom. xvi. 3—5). 5. A national church (1 Cor. xvi. 1). But he then proceeds in his course, most strangely forgetting to state, *in which* of all these senses he purposes to employ the term! Nay, what is still worse, in his after argument, he heaps together all kinds of quotations from scrip-

ture, in which the term is employed in each of these several senses, and applies them all indiscriminately to establish one and the same position! Such a course is in the highest degree perplexing and unsatisfactory, and can lead to no safe or tenable result. It behoves us, then, to learn caution by this manifest error, and to endeavour, before we advance a single step in the argument, to arrive at a clear understanding as to the principal meanings attached to the term, and as to that one particular meaning in which it is our intention to use it.

Not dwelling, then, on the minor uses of the word—such as, “*the church which is in thy house,*” or “*the church which is at Corinth;*”—we proceed to remark, that the three principal meanings attached to the word—the three senses in which it is now ordinarily used—are these: 1. The spiritual or invisible church,—“the body of Christ;” “the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” 2. The visible church, or the general aggregate of all professing Christians. 3. The ecclesiastical establishment of some particular nation. These are the senses, in which the word is commonly made use of amongst us: Let us now endeavour to arrive at a clear understanding of the nature and limits of each.

I. The highest and best sense in which the word can be employed, is that in which St. Paul uses it, in writing to the Ephesians and Colossians.

He tells them, that “*Christ is head over all things to THE CHURCH, which is his body; the fulness of him that filleth all in all.*” He adds, that “*Christ loved THE CHURCH, and gave himself for it;—that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be*

*holy and without blemish.*" Again, "*He is the head of the body, THE CHURCH;*" and that church is called "*the church of the first-born, which are written in heaven.*" In all these expressions there is a distinct and definite meaning. A certain body of persons, whose names are "written in heaven," are spoken of: Christ himself describes them as His sheep, and he adds, "*I know my sheep, and am known of mine.*" He further says, that they are His by His Father's gift; that they are led to Him by His Father's immediate guidance; and shall be assuredly preserved by His Father's power. "*My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand:*" "*All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*" (John vi. 37, 44; x. 29.)

This, then, is the church of Christ, described in our own communion service as "the mystical body of Christ, which is the blessed company of all faithful people."

And this is the only church which is truly called "Catholic," and which may be properly made an object of faith: "I believe in the holy Catholic church." That in which we are called upon to declare our *faith*, must be a thing invisible. "FAITH *is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things NOT SEEN.*" Throughout the creed there is not one single matter, which is the subject of sense or sight. Every individual fact or existence is of the unseen world, and is *therefore* a fit object of faith.

And thus argueth Archbishop Usher, "Why say you, that you *believe* that there is a Catholic church?" "*Because that the church of God cannot be always seen with the eyes of man.*" "And it is therefore called



*the Catholic church*, that is, God's whole or universal assembly; because it comprehendeth the multitude of all those that have, do, or shall believe, unto the world's end." "The true militant church is both invincible, and invisible." "Though there be many visible churches, there is but one Catholic and universal church; of which not one shall be lost, and out of which not one shall be saved." <sup>1</sup>

Thus, then, with respect to this first and highest sense of the term, we arrive at the following conclusions:—

1. The Catholic or universal church is the mystical body, of which Christ is the Head.

2. "The mystical body of Christ is the blessed company of all faithful people."

3. This church is essentially *invisible*: inasmuch as the union with Christ, which constitutes its very existence, is a spiritual union: and inasmuch as those men and women who constitute it, cannot with any certainty be discriminated by mortal eyes from other men and women who surround them. The tares and wheat grow together, and shall continue to grow together, "until the harvest." Now as the tares form no part of the Catholic church of Christ, and as they nevertheless do grow *together* with the wheat, it follows, that we cannot at present discern with any certainty the members of the Catholic church; or, in other words, it is, to us, *invisible*.

4. This, then, is the Catholic church, consisting, as Archbishop Usher says, of "the whole universal company of the elect that ever were, are, or shall be; gathered together in one body; knit together in

<sup>1</sup> *Usher's Body of Divinity*, 1677, p. 151—3.

one faith ; under one Head, Christ Jesus.” And of this church it is entirely true, that “ in it no one shall be lost, and out of it no one shall be saved.” (Acts ii. 47.)

But the very height and excellence of the privileges and blessedness which belong to “ THE CHURCH,” in this, the highest acceptation of the term, must make it the more important not to confound things so essentially different, as the true or spiritual church, and the professing or visible church. The latter is the subject which we have next to consider : For,—

II. We are in the habit of speaking of “ the church at large,” “ the whole Christian church,”—and of using other phrases of this general kind ; in which are usually included, not merely or strictly those only who are spiritually united to Christ, and made living members of his mystical body, but the general mass of those “ who profess and call themselves Christians.” And in thus speaking, we may probably justify ourselves by Apostolic example ; as 1 Cor. x. 32, “ *Give none offence ; neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God :*” —where the term is probably used with reference to the professing or visible church, as an human community. We are also in some measure warranted by the necessity of the case ; since it is obviously unavoidable, that we should sometimes have to speak of the general body of professing Christians, as distinguished from the followers of Mahomet or of Confucius ; and in so doing, some general phrase of this description seems unobjectionable ; so long as we take especial care not to confound the attributes of the spiritual church of Christ with those of the mass of mere external

professors; or to make adhesion to the latter, in any way equivalent to an union with the former.

The vast difference existing between these two bodies will be observed, the very instant we attentively consider their respective characters. The Catholic church, consisting of those whose names are "written in heaven"—the wheat which is at present mingled with the tares, is still limited to the "few," who enter in by the "narrow gate;"—while the mere professors are still the "many," who tread the broader way. Even to take our own country only, in which the proportion of the *true* to the *false* professors is probably greater than in any other part of the globe—and what can we say? We have probably from ten to twelve millions of baptized persons among us, few indeed of whom would avow their deliberate renunciation of their baptismal vows. But what proportion of the whole could we, in the largest exercise of charity, imagine to be really united to Christ by a living faith, and thus incorporated into the Catholic or true church? Would any one venture to hope that one-twentieth of the whole were of this character? We trow not. Let any one take a fair average instance of our congregations, and inquire, how many, out of a thousand external worshippers, bear even the least apparent tokens of the transforming power of the Holy Ghost; and he will be happy indeed if, in most cases, he can identify fifty. So totally different, in fact, are these two bodies—the Catholic or spiritual church of Christ; and the visible church of professing Christians.

Yet, although there is thus between these two bodies—the spiritual and the visible church—as much difference as between heaven and earth; we have

seen a great effort recently made, so to mingle and confound the two, as to make it appear, that all the promises made by Christ to his elect, belonged to some visible body, the far larger proportion of whose members were haters and opposers of his truth and his word! By this extraordinary hypothesis it would seem, that as Christ promised to be with his church “always, even to the end of the world;” and as this promise belonged to the visible church, or great body of professing Christians,—therefore he must be supposed to have been present, by his Spirit, with Dominic in the massacres of Languedoc, and with Alva in the horrors of Flanders:—a supposition which is near akin to downright blasphemy.

But common sense revolts from such a conclusion. And historic fact, even by the confession of the Romanists themselves, abundantly refutes it. Historic fact, however, is, by some of these theorists, very unceremoniously pushed aside. Take an instance:

The Homily of the church of England ‘Against peril of idolatry,’ says, ‘Not the unlearned and simple only, but the learned and wise; not the people only, but the bishops; not the sheep, but the shepherds themselves;’ ‘being blinded by the bewitchery of images, as blind guides of the blind, fell both into the pit of damnable idolatry. In the which *all the world*, as it were, drowned, continued until our age, by the space of above eight hundred years.’ ‘So that laity and clergy, learned and unlearned, *all ages, sects and degrees* of men, women and children, of *whole Christendom*, have been at once drowned in abominable idolatry, of all other vices most detested of God, and most damnable to man, and that by the space of eight hundred years and more.’

In answer to which, Mr. Palmer says, ‘*The meaning is, that some persons in every class were guilty of idolatry, which is very certain; but not that the whole church, literally speaking, fell into damnable idolatry; for if so, it must have entirely failed, which would be contrary to the doctrine of the Church of England. In fact, the Homilies themselves affirm, that the Holy Ghost was always to abide with the church.*’<sup>1</sup>

Thus, *historic fact* is wholly disregarded, because it does not agree with Mr. Palmer’s theory. The Church of England holds, that the true or spiritual church should never utterly fail; neither did it ever so fail. There is no period, in which we cannot point out the ‘dens and caves of the earth,’ into which the disciples of Christ had been forced by Her, who had driven the true church into the wilderness, and now usurped her place. ‘The Homilies affirm,’ says Mr. Palmer, ‘that the Holy Ghost was always to abide with the church.’ (Sermon on Whitsunday, part ii.) But the *same* Homily, replying to the claim of the Church of Rome to the possession of the Holy Spirit, says, ‘That ye may perceive the weakness of this argument, it is needful to teach you, first, what the true church of Christ is, and then to confer (compare) the church of Rome therewith,—to discern how well they agree together.’ The writer (supposed to be Bishop Jewell) then carries on this comparison, and arrives at this conclusion: ‘Where is now the Holy Ghost, which they so stoutly claim to themselves? Where is now the Spirit of Truth, that will not suffer them in any wise to err? If it be possible to be

<sup>1</sup> *Palmer’s Treatise*, vol. i. p. 307, 308.

there, *where the true church is not*, then is it at Rome : otherwise it is but a vain brag, and nothing else.'

Thus, then, according to the judgment of the church of England, the Holy Ghost did not abide with the church of Rome. Yet the church of England does not hold, that the true church had entirely failed, or that the Holy Ghost had departed from the earth. Believing that the Spirit was not with the church of Rome, she holds that His presence is to be sought elsewhere,—in those whom that apostate church persecuted. And thus we find, in the history of the English Reformation, that the fellowship and “ communion of saints ” cultivated by the leading persons in the church of England, was not with Rome or any of the churches subject to her ; but with the Vaudois, with the Navarrese, with the French Protestants, and in short, with all, in every part of the globe, who were separating themselves from Rome, and renouncing her as an apostate and idolatrous church.

But we again recur to the *historic fact*. Mr. Palmer cannot admit, that the Homily asserts, (though the words of that Homily are very plain)—‘ that the *whole church* fell into damnable idolatry ;’—‘ for *if so*,’ he adds, ‘ it must have entirely failed, which would be contrary to the belief of the church of England.’

Now, even were it possible for Mr. Palmer to confuse the testimony of our church in the book of Homilies, (which testimony, however, is too distinct and clear to be easily perverted,) still the *fact* would remain the same. We do not need the opinions of our Reformers, or the sentence of our own church, to establish that, which the whole current of history,

speaking almost wholly through Romanist historians, unhesitatingly declares. The universal depravity, idolatry, and corruption of Christendom, under the domination of Rome, are too clearly proved by "a cloud of witnesses," to be, at this time of day, made a matter of doubt or discussion. Not even to allude to one-tenth of the witnesses to this fact, we will merely name a few of the most noted. Cardinal *Baronius*, describing the tenth century, speaks of 'the abomination of desolation standing in the temple;' of the 'face of the church being exceedingly foul,' and of 'Christ's evidently being in a deep sleep in the ship, while it was covered with waves.' So, in the twelfth century, he describes 'Antichrist triumphing, while the abomination of desolation sat in Peter's chair.' And he quotes a letter from Pope Gregory VII. (A. D. 1075,) who says, 'I scarcely discover any bishops, who are lawful either in their entrance or in their mode of life; or who govern the Christian people from the love of Christ, and not from secular ambition.'

*Genebrard*, speaking of the same period, calls the state of the church 'deplorable,' inasmuch as 'the priests were of most depraved morals, and on that account, both themselves and the sacred things were despised by the people.'

*Honorius*, of Autun, (A. D. 1120,) says, 'Turn to the citizens of Babylon, and observe what manner of people they be, and by what ways they walk; come hither to the top of the mountain, that thou mayest behold all the habitations of the damned city. Look upon her princes and judges, her cardinals and archbishops: the very seat of the beast is there.'

*St. Bernard*, about the same date, writes, 'I say

nothing of the people; I desire you to raise your eyes to the pillars of the church themselves: Whom will you shew to me among these, who were given for a light to the nations, not rather smoking than burning? And if the light which is in thee, says Christ, be darkness, how great is that darkness!

In the next century, even the pope *Innocent III.* was compelled thus to speak, in opening the Lateran council: 'It is time, as the blessed apostle saith, that judgment should begin at the house of God. For all the corruption which is in the people chiefly proceeds from the clergy—*hence* evils have entered into the Christian world. Faith perishes, religion is disfigured, liberty is confounded, justice is trodden under foot, heretics spring up, schismatics gather strength, the wicked rage.'<sup>1</sup>

In the fourteenth, *Alvares* thus describes the state of Christendom: 'The mystical Sion, the church, which in her primitive state was adorned of her spouse with such and so many royal graces, is now clouded and eclipsed with the black mist of ignorance, iniquity, and error; and we behold her cast down from heaven, and as a desert uninhabited by virtue; since, if any godly people remain, they are esteemed as Arabians and Saracens.' 'Thus the law has perished from among the priests, and the vision from the prophet, and the spirit of prophecy literally fails in the church, and that saying is fulfilled, which is written in 1 Kings xxii. "I will go forth, and be a lying spirit in the mouth of the prophets."'

At the same period, *Anthony de Butrio* thus writes,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Labbe*, v. 11, p. 134.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, v. 27, p. 314.



‘Avarice, ambition, and simony, greatly increased among the clergy; with great immoralities. The strictness of ecclesiastical discipline was despised; truth, charity, piety, righteousness, and the honour of God, and all honesty of living, were banished from among the Christian people; and, worst of all, sinners were praised for their sinfulness.’

In the opening of the fifteen century, *Gerson*, the chancellor of Paris, thus speaks of the clergy: ‘Why should I speak of them, who use helmets for mitres, and an iron instead of a linen vestment? They carry arms, they wage wars, they shed blood, they refuse to be prelates, they appear as generals, they are unacquainted with the Spirit, they cherish the flesh:’ ‘Whom will you find among the priests, who is not ignorant of the laws of Christ?’<sup>1</sup>

At the opening of the fifth Lateran council, *Ægidius*, general of the Augustines, thus describes the state of the church: ‘We have beheld Christ asleep in the vessel,’—‘we have seen violence, rapine, adulteries, incest, every pestilence of wickedness, so confound all things sacred and profane, so strike against the sacred vessel, that she was almost sunk and foundered.’<sup>2</sup>

In the same council, *Marcellus* thus speaks, ‘Wickedness and intemperance fill and occupy all things; all things wander and deviate from the straight path of equity and righteousness; there is no one who looks to himself, his heart, or understanding.’

*Simon Begni* gave a similar picture: ‘Faith, piety, and religion, have grown so cold, I might almost say have become so corrupted, that scarcely any vestiges of

<sup>1</sup> *Sac. Conc. Mansi*, p. 414.

<sup>2</sup> *Labbe*, v. 14, p. 19.

*them remain.*—‘The priests and the ancients have despised God. There is no law or commandment, judgment is perverted.’

And at the council of Trent itself, *Cornelius*, bishop of Bitonto, thus lamented, ‘with what monsters of baseness, with what a heap of filth, with what a pestilence, are not both the priests and the people corrupted in the holy church of God! Begin with the sanctuary of God, and see if any modesty, any shame, any hope, or reasonable expectation remains of good living; if there be not unrestrained and unconquerable lust, a singular audacity, and incredible wickedness.’<sup>1</sup>

*Anthony Paganus*, at the same council, thus followed: ‘If we contemplate the state of the church at the present day, the depraved morals, the ignominy of all kinds of vice, the contempt of the sacraments, the lukewarmness of the minds of men, the sole anxiety for earthly things,’ &c. ‘Thus sin follows sin, and the beauty of the spouse of Christ is obscured.’

And *Mezerai*, summing up the whole, thus describes the state of the church: ‘The disorders and vices of the clergy reached the highest point, and became so public, as to render them the objects of the hatred and contempt of the people. The churches were without pastors, the monasteries were without monks, the regular clergy without discipline, the churches and holy houses in ruins, and changed into dens of robbers.’

Such are a very few, which might be extended to a large volume, of the confessions of Romanists

<sup>1</sup> *Labbe*, v. 14, p. 992.

themselves, touching the deplorable condition, into which Christendom had fallen, in the days of Rome's undisturbed ascendancy. We have chiefly referred to the authorities of the church; but were the historians and poets, such as Chaucer, Boccacio, or Matthew Paris, called as witnesses, their evidence would be still more decisive. Nor must it be supposed that the vices and crimes thus lamented were merely the offences of 'some persons,' as Mr. Palmer gently phrases it. Corrupt *practice* was merely the natural result of corrupt *doctrine*. The public profession, the faith of the church, had become idolatrous and antichristian. The marks of Antichrist—"forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats"—were openly assumed by the church. Idolatry was not merely practised by 'some persons,' but taught and maintained by popes and councils. The worship of images, the invocation of dead men and women, the adoration of the wafer, had become universal throughout the church. And thus it came to pass, in the natural order of events, that, 'as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, he gave them over to a reprobate mind;' and all manner of abominations in practice came in, as the fruits of all kinds of errors in doctrine.

To assume, then, that the visible church *could* not fall into idolatry, *because*, had she so done, the promise of God must have failed, is, at best, rather an irreverent mode of dealing with the Divine promises. The argument is entirely borrowed from Bossuet, who believes that in it will be found the utter discomfiture of Protestantism. This may naturally make it a favourite with the new Oxford school; but

whether used by Bossuet or by Mr. Palmer, the reasoning is, in truth, worth very little.

Christ gave, it is true, to his apostles and their successors, a general assurance, that, while they continued "teaching all things whatsoever He had commanded them," He would himself be ever with them.<sup>1</sup> We would desire by no means to weaken or impair the force of this most encouraging assurance; but there is no wisdom in affixing a meaning to it, which was never intended to be conveyed. Christ promises, in it, his presence and support to every faithful minister of the gospel; and this promise has never failed. But he does not promise never to take away the candlestick of a careless or faithless church. On the contrary, by the mouth of St. John, we hear him threaten to remove the light of the gospel from some of the Asiatic churches; and that threatening was subsequently realized. There is nothing, therefore, to assure us of the perpetuity of any one local or national church, or even of the never-failing endurance of an extensive visible church at all. The Lord, in Elijah's days, was with his prophet, and with the seven thousand faithful; but there could have been very little visible profession, when even the prophet concluded himself to be the last of God's servants remaining alive. And we must not forget, that while the Saviour's promise will not bear such an extended sense as is put upon it; there are other passages in the New Testament, which plainly warn us of "*a falling away*;" which tell us that "*the man of sin shall be revealed, sitting in God's temple as the object of worship, and thus turning the service of that temple into idolatry.* We must remember, that in the prophetic

<sup>1</sup> *Matthew* xxviii. 18—20.

foreview of the church's history, the "beloved disciple" was made to see the true church "*driven into the wilderness,*" there to abide for several centuries; while a "*false prophet*" "*deceived them that dwelt on the (Roman) earth.*" And again, he beholds "*the holy city trodden under foot*" of the Gentiles; while God's witnesses "*prophesy in sackcloth,*" hated and persecuted of all men, for the same prophetic period. Even a Romish commentator, Dr. Walmesley, writing under the name of *Pastorini*, is obliged to confess the meaning of this last-quoted passage to be as follows:—

'The churches consecrated to the true service of God, are, at this time, so far diminished in number, or so little filled, on account of the general apostacy and degeneracy of mankind, that all these churches are here represented by St. John, as reduced into one single church or temple. The faithful ministers of God are also become so few, as to be represented as officiating at one altar in this church: and all the good and zealous Christians make up so small a number with respect to the whole bulk of mankind, that they are shewn to St. John, as collected in this one temple paying their adoration to God. There is, therefore, given to St. John a reed or a small measuring rod, as sufficient for the few inconsiderable measures he has to take: and he is told to measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that adore therein, that the small size of both temple and altar may appear, and the little compass, in which are comprised those who are there adoring God. But, for the court which is without the temple, that is, the great multitude of those, who, for want of the spirit of religion, enter not the temple, but stand in the

court without the temple, St. John is told not to measure them, but to cast them out, or to banish them from the neighbourhood of the temple, because it (the court) is given to the Gentiles.'<sup>1</sup>

It appears, then, that our Lord's promise, to be with his disciples always, will not bear the weight of the meaning laid upon it, that there should always be a flourishing visible church, or that with the general church, or great mass of professing Christians, His presence should always abide. There is nothing in it to assure us that the spiritual church might not be reduced to the same straits as in Elijah's days, when Obadiah "*took an hundred of the prophets of the Lord, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.*" There is nothing in the Saviour's words to assure us, that this might not happen; but, on the other hand, there is much in the predictions of St. Paul and St. John to cause us to expect some such days of gloom. Most distinctly do they foreshew the coming of an apostacy, of a falling away, of days of persecution for the saints, and of triumph for the devil and his emissaries. Such days these two apostles lead us to expect; and history presents us with the exact fulfilment of their words. We there find the rise of a vast ecclesiastical power, "*sitting in the temple of God, and shewing himself that he is God;*" "*teaching doctrines of devils,*" and "*making war with the saints, and overcoming them.*" We are taught that the true church would be "*driven into the wilderness;*" and accordingly, in the "*dens and caves of the earth*" we find the true disciples of Christ, fleeing from Armenia to Thrace, from thence to Bul-

<sup>1</sup> *Pastorini's Gen. Hist. of the Christ. Church*, p. 325, 326.

garia, and then spreading themselves over the mountainous districts of Savoy and of France ; the constant object of alarm and annoyance to the Papacy ; and as constantly persecuted to the utmost by all the Pope's adherents.

These unquestionable facts must be kept steadily in mind. The central point in the reasonings lately put forth, seems to be this ; that, as the Lord promised his never-failing presence with his disciples and his church ; therefore we are bound to look upon the main body or chief association of his professed followers, as possessing his Spirit, and preserved from all fundamental error. The argument is precisely Bossuet's, though thrown into an English dress. It has, however, as we have endeavoured to shew, both " the sure word of prophecy," and the unanswerable testimony of historic fact, opposed to it. The greater portion of the professing Christian church, in this part of the globe, did fall away, and gave the clearest possible proof, that the Spirit of Christ was not among them. And so entirely was this apostacy foreshewn in the predictions of the apostles ; that if the fact had been otherwise, we should have been at a loss how to understand, or in what way to defend, the sacred writers.

Yet amidst all this, Christ still preserved a remnant, still maintained his " two witnesses," to testify, in sackcloth and amidst persecutions, his faithfulness to his promises, and his never-failing support of those who adhered to him, and kept his last command, to " teach men to observe all things that he had commanded them."

And now we may endeavour to define what is called " the visible church." It is a large and com-

prehensive term, for it cannot fairly be understood to exclude any, who by their baptismal vows have professed themselves disciples of Christ. Dissent, nay, even heresy, does not exclude from this extensive pale. Neither the church of England, nor even the church of Rome, repudiates the baptism of those of other communions. The canons of Rome distinctly declare all baptized persons, although receiving the rite from heretical hands, to be within the church's jurisdiction and authority; and to be subject to her ecclesiastical authority. And this view coincides with the simple charge of Christ to his apostles: "*Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*" This oath,—for the term *sacrament* is almost synonymous,—once taken, the baptized person is enlisted into the church's service; is known by Christ's name, and reckoned among his followers. The visible church, then, includes the whole number of the baptized, wherever found, or to whatever communion belonging, over the whole face of the globe.

The largeness of this enclosure, however, as in most other cases of a generally diffused benefit, very greatly diminishes its individual value. To belong to the visible church, consisting, perhaps, of three hundred millions of the human race, is very different from being one of that "*little flock, to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom.*" To have been baptized into the Christian name is something, indeed; but the common sense of mankind will tell us, that to have been made a Christian in name, after the fashion of the Copts or the Abyssinians; or to have been baptized in Mexico, with a baptism bestowed in common upon men, and bells, and



horses, is not to be reckoned as a very great spiritual privilege.

The chief result, however, of these considerations is this:—A fashion has lately sprung up, of speaking of some known and cognizable ‘Church,’—apart from the national Establishment, as subsisting, and acting, and imposing certain obligations on men as Christians. Thus the author already referred to speaks of ‘the doctrine of *the church* in all ages;’—‘the doctrine of *the universal church*,’ ‘the irrefragable judgments of *the universal church* ;’ ‘the spiritual authority of *the church* ;’ ‘*the church’s* divine privileges ;’ ‘the right of *the church universal* to judge in matters of faith, &c.’ ‘*the whole catholic church of Christ*,’<sup>1</sup> &c. &c. Now the inquiry we have been prosecuting enables us to perceive that all this sort of phraseology is either nonsense, or something worse.

The true and spiritual church of Christ—the only church in which, as ‘catholic,’ we profess any belief, is not, nor ever has been, in a position to act with the authority here imputed to it. Having been “driven into the wilderness” by the Romish apostacy, and having been the subject of the most cruel and remorseless persecutions, all idea of its collective action and supreme authority, as conveyed in the words just quoted from Mr. Palmer, is simply absurd.

The external or visible church, consisting of all persons baptized into the Christian name, is a body animated, in the proportion of at least nineteen-twentieths, with the most deadly hatred to Christ and his true disciples. It was foretold that “the

<sup>1</sup> *Palmer’s Treatise*, vol. ii. p. 97—133.

kings of the earth should give their power and strength to the beast;" and accordingly we observe, in the days of the Reformation, the truth offered, in succession, to every kingdom of the Roman earth; and we see it suppressed and put down, with a strong and cruel hand, everywhere within the limits of the old Roman empire,—the "earth" of the Apocalypse.

Mr. Palmer talks of 'the infallible judgment of the church,' and of 'the right of the church to judge in controversies;' and he declares his doctrine to be, 'that the whole catholic church of Christ, consisting of pastors and people, and every portion of it, are divinely authorized to judge in questions of religious controversy.' (Vol. ii. p. 97.)

Now the value of a theory is only to be determined by the test of practice. If a theory cannot be put into practice, it is worth very little: If, when put into practice, it works ill and not good, it is still worse. Mr. Palmer's theory belongs, we rather apprehend, to the first of these classes; if not, it certainly belongs to the second. If 'the whole church, pastors and people,' meaning thereby the whole body of baptized persons, could have been brought together, by representation or otherwise, at the time of the Reformation, they would assuredly have burned Luther and Melancthon, and, as far as in them lay, have extinguished the light of truth. And if the same 'universal church' could now in any way be congregated together, they would, in like manner, 'judge of the questions of religious controversy' now afloat; would decide, by a majority of votes, Popery to be right, and Protestantism to be wrong, and would either compel Mr. Palmer to return into the bosom of the Papal apostacy, or else, to use

his own expression, 'cut him off from the church of Christ.' That this is not the issue of his own theory, arises solely from the fact, that that theory is utterly impracticable, and therefore worthless.

We believe, then, in the holy Catholic church;—that is, we believe in the existence, though unseen by bodily eyes, of an impregnable, a divinely-sustained church; subjected, indeed, to persecution; 'chastened, but not killed.' We adhere to the belief that such a church has always existed, and always will exist; but of its 'authority to decide controversies' we know nothing, and believe nothing. The 'church' spoken of in our twentieth Article is a local and visible church;—not the 'Catholic church' of which Mr. Palmer speaks.

As for the 'universal church,' or what Mr. Palmer calls 'the whole Catholic church of Christ, consisting of pastors and people, and every portion of it,' we can only protest against its being permitted to have the least weight or authority in matters of religion. It is nothing else than a mass of mankind, of all countries and creeds, the great majority of which are Christians only in name, but heathens in practice. To take their decisions, or even the decisions of their priesthood, on any question of Christian faith or practice, would be, to leave to the wolves the disposal of the sheep, and to bind the 'children of light' by the laws of the 'children of the wicked one.'

There remains, then, only the third sense, in which the term church is used, to be considered. And that is, as describing a national institution, an establishment erected by human rulers and legislators, for the instruction of the people of their own community in

the Christian faith. Used in this, the most common sense, the meaning of the term is well understood. It is in this respect that the term is employed in the present work. When a book entitled 'Essays on the Church' was first offered to the public, it was of the church of England that it professed to treat; and, at that period, few persons applied the term in any other sense. The recent endeavour to extend its meaning and misapply its power, has rendered the present discussion unavoidable; but we shall now proceed, without any further delay, to deal with the matter in hand.

## II.

OF CHURCH ESTABLISHMENTS IN GENERAL ; THE  
VOICE OF SCRIPTURE IN THEIR FAVOR.

WE have endeavoured, in our introductory chapter, to clear our way in some necessary matters, by pointing out three different senses in which the term 'church' is now frequently used; and particularly describing two of them, as being perfectly distinct from *that* in which we are about to use it. We shewed that its first and highest sense is that in which it is commonly employed by the apostles,—as denoting 'the body of Christ;' the elect people of God; those 'whose names are written in heaven;' and among whom none of the multitudes of false professors and merely nominal Christians, while remaining such, can find any place. We next observed, that it is sometimes used for 'the visible church'—for the great aggregate of those baptized into Christ's name throughout the world;—as one vast brotherhood or society, called by one name, and professing allegiance to one common head. But the third sense was that, in which it had heretofore been used in this work; and was, indeed, the most cus-

tomary of all the meanings attached to the term:—to wit, the church established in the country in which we dwell—in short, the church of England. We are about, then, now, as on former occasions, to treat, not of the church of God, the Catholic and invisible church of Christ;—nor of Christendom, or the visible church universal; but of the established church of our own country, respecting which it is that we have had, of late years, so many sore contentions.

And, this being our subject, the very first question we have to ask is—‘*What saith the scripture?*’ We have no other—we desire no other, rule of faith or practice, than this—the unerring word of God; nor can we feel any doubt, that in a matter of so great importance, some degree of guidance, at least, will be found to be vouchsafed in the book of the Divine Revelation.

We turn, then, to the oracles of God, and find, to our surprise, that in this, the initial and governing question in the whole enquiry, we are opposed, and opposed even by those who profess, like ourselves, to submit everything to the decision of this sure and infallible rule.

The changes which take place, not in trivial matters, but concerning fundamental points—in the principles professed by various religious sects and parties—would form one of the most extraordinary and most humbling passages in the history of the church of Christ. We have already alluded to one strange revolution, by which the high church party in our national establishment, formerly resolutely Protestant, have now suddenly wheeled round and sought fraternity with Popery; and those who were

wont to expatiate on the beauties of the connexion between ‘church and state,’ now declare that alliance to be ‘like the union of the Israelites with the Egyptians in the house of bondage.’<sup>1</sup> We have now to contemplate another change of views, not less total, nor less extraordinary. For nearly two centuries, extending from the very earliest appearance of dissent, down to the period of the French revolution, all the leaders of the nonconformists, without one exception, we believe, worth naming,—agreed in this view of scripture,—that according to the word of God, rulers were charged with the spiritual, as well as with the temporal, interests of the people committed to their charge. At the close of the last century, however, a very different doctrine sprung up: and now the stream of dissenting authorities runs in an exactly opposite direction! It is to be feared, that the great majority of dissenting theologians, in the present day, are prepared to go to the full length of Dr. Wardlaw’s assertion; ‘that the true and legitimate province of the civil magistrate, in regard to religion, is, to have NO PROVINCE AT ALL;’ and to concur with him in ‘recommending the example of Gallio to the imitation of magistrates, supreme and subordinate, in every country in Christendom.’<sup>2</sup>

Yet, while Dr. Wardlaw and his confederates, at the present day, tell us that ‘it is *the axe that is wanted*,—not the pruning-knife;—removal, *not reformation!*’<sup>3</sup>—the fathers of independency in the last century held a very different language. MATTHEW HENRY, for instance, writes as follows:—

<sup>1</sup> *British Magazine*, vol. ix. p. 353. *Froude’s Remains*, vol. i. p. 405.

<sup>2</sup> *Wardlaw’s Lectures*, p. 191—193.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 234.

*‘ Let us give God praise for the national establishment of our religion, with that of our peace and civil liberty; that our Canaan is not a land flowing with milk and honey, but (which is of much greater advantage,) that it is Immanuel’s land; that the Christian religion,—that choice and noble vine, which was so early planted in our land—is still growing and flourishing in it, in despite of all the attempts of the powers of darkness to root it out; that it is refined from the errors and corruptions the church of Rome had, with the help of ignorance and tyranny, introduced;—that the Reformation was in our land a national act; and that Christianity, thus purified, is supported by good and wholesome laws, and is twisted in with the very constitution of our government.’*

DODDRIDGE adds, in the same strain, ‘ Ministers of all denominations claim our prayers; and peculiarly those of established churches; where, as the temporal emoluments are generally greatest, there is of course more to invite unworthy persons to offer themselves to the ministry. Nor ought we to forget those wise, learned, and pious men, whom our governors may from time to time think fit to raise to the most exalted stations among the clergy, and to invest with a dignity and authority, which, though no part of their ministerial office, is capable of being improved to great advantage. It is devoutly to be wished, that they may use their great influence and power to exclude those that are unworthy from that important trust; and that they may preside over the doctrine and behaviour of those committed to their care, in such a manner, as may render both most edifying to those who attend their instruction. By these pious and zealous endeavours, an establishment will flou-



rish, and separate interests decrease. *But what folly and iniquity were it so much as secretly to wish, that one limb might grow by the distemper of the body, or one coast be enriched by the wreck of the public navy!*'—Sermon on Deut. xxiii. 9.

However, we must deal with our opponents as we find them; and as it pleases the nonconformists of the present day to cast into utter oblivion all the views of scripture inculcated by their forefathers, and to *assume*, with the greatest possible confidence,<sup>1</sup> the voice of scripture to be just the opposite of what Henry and Doddridge, Owen and Baxter, Flavel and Howe conceived it to be,—we have no choice but to follow them into that path which they have, with so much intrepidity, struck out for themselves, and to endeavour to trace out its ultimate tendency, and its inevitable termination.

When Dr. Wardlaw was brought to the metropolis, especially to refute Dr. Chalmers and other opponents; and when, in his syllabus, he announced one of his intentions to be, to examine, at sufficient length, the argument from scripture; we confess that our expectations were considerably raised, and our feelings of interest and of a reasonable curiosity greatly excited. We had never seen, up to that period, any thing, on the dissenting side, at all approaching to a fair and candid examination of the scriptural evidence. When, therefore, a champion of such note was called into the field; and when he voluntarily

<sup>1</sup> 'The dissenting minister holds his place in conformity with the law of the Divine Head of the church; the parochial minister holds his by a two-fold infraction of that law.' (*Wardlaw's Lect.* p. 289.) 'He (Dr. Chalmers) takes the work of supporting and enlarging the church out of the hands, in which the authority of Christ originally placed it.' (*Ibid.* p. 286.)

pledged himself to a full and fair discussion of the argument from holy writ, we acknowledge, without hesitation, that we looked forward to that day's performance with a kind of wondering anticipation, with which the mind is very seldom exercised.

After hearing, with some natural impatience, an introductory lecture, informing us of what Paley had said—what Hooker, what Warburton, what Coleridge, and what Gladstone—we came at last to what was called the 'Opening of the Scripture Argument.' But Dr. Wardlaw, choosing, like most modern dissenters, to read his Bible backwards, began with the New Testament, and deferred the Old to a future day! He then shewed—what no one ever questioned—that the church established by the apostles was maintained by the voluntary principle. He next *assumed*, that this was an institution binding, in every leading particular, upon all Christians to the end of time, under whatever change of circumstances, and excluding all other aid; and forthwith erected his trophy, and loudly proclaimed his triumph.

Of course an argument *resting wholly upon an assumption*, could convince no one, who was not already prepared to be easily satisfied. But the main question remained behind. In the next—the third lecture—the whole of those passages of the Old Testament which bore upon this point, were to be examined. Now then, at least, we began to think, some progress must surely be made. At last, the real question must be grappled with!

We attended that third lecture with expectations heightened by the previous delay. And we came away, wrapt in an astonishment which no language

could express. This really able, and apparently candid man,—having been brought four hundred miles for the purposes of this discussion, and having himself placed the scriptural argument, in its rightful place, in the fore-front of the battle, absolutely could find no other course to take, with reference to the whole of those passages in holy writ on which churchmen mainly rely; but to evade, forget, and pass them over, *en masse*, in utter silence! As we have already said, this strange, and to us entirely unexpected, manœuvre, was at the moment, and remains so still, a matter respecting which astonishment seemed to swallow up every other feeling. We listened, as our hopes all vanished like a dream, and involuntarily asked ourselves,—‘Does Dr. Wardlaw *not know* what the argument from scripture advanced by churchmen, is? If he does not, why did he not, before he presented himself as its public opponent, at least acquaint himself with its bearings? But if he *does* know it,—if he *is* acquainted with its leading features, why does he thus evade a fair consideration of its strength? In the first case, what shall we say of his information? In the second, what shall we say of his candour?’

We desire to put from us as far as possible, so hateful a supposition, as that of deliberate dishonesty in an eminent servant of Christ. There is, however, a strange perversity of sight or perception about Dr. Wardlaw; insomuch that he often will not see, when a fact is placed immediately before him. Dr. Chalmers had said, that the scripture authority for an established church would be seen ‘to stand forth unequivocally in almost *every book of the Old Testament.*’ Dr. Wardlaw quotes these words, and then adds, ‘I

*presume* that the reference, in Dr. Chalmers' mind, was *to the Jewish economy*,—to the national constitution of the church under the dispensation of *Moses*. Now if Dr. Wardlaw, instead of '*presuming*,' had chosen to cast his eye over the passages generally adduced by churchmen, he would have seen that scarcely any of them 'have reference to the Jewish economy, or to the dispensation of Moses.' It was certainly a very succinct mode of dealing with these passages of scripture, to class them all under one single category, in order thereby to dismiss them all together, by a single objection. This may be a convenient way of evading the question ; but if Dr. W. wishes to *convince* his opponents, it would be more advisable not to begin by *misunderstanding* them.

But let us adduce some particulars, to shew that we are not calumniating Dr. Wardlaw. Perhaps the simplest and the fairest way will be to arrange, in one column, the passages of scripture adduced in support of the principle of church establishments, in the last edition of this work, and to place a note against such of them, as Dr. Wardlaw has condescended to notice. The question that will then remain for discussion, will be, whether the residue are really of such an irrelevant or immaterial character, as to justify the doctor in passing them over in utter silence.

The passages so adduced, were these :—

- (1) Genesis xiv. 18—20.
- (2) Genesis xvii. 27, in connection  
with xiv. 14, and xxiii. 6.
- (3) Genesis xxviii. 22.
- (4) Exodus ii. 16, 21.
- (5) Job xxxi. 26.

- (6) Exodus, Leviticus, &c. the laws of  
Moses. ....Adverted to by Dr. W.
- (7) 1 Kings v. 11, 13.
- (8) 2 Chron. ii. 1, 2, 10; vii. 12—15.
- (9) 2 Chron. xvii. 7—9, 10.
- (10) 2 Chron. xxxi. 20, 21.
- (11) 2 Chron. xxxiv. 33.
- (12) Ezra vi. 3, 4, 8, 9; vii. 23—26, 27.
- (13) Nehemiah ix. 34, 35.
- (14) Psalm ii. 10. ....Adverted to by Dr. W.
- (15) Psalm lxxviii. 29, 31.
- (16) Psalm lxxii. 10, 11. ....Adverted to by Dr. W.
- (17) Psalm lxxix. 6.
- (18) Psalm cxxxviii. 4.
- (19) Isaiah xlv. 28.
- (20) Isaiah xlix. 23. ....Adverted to by Dr. W.
- (21) Isaiah lx. 10, 12.
- (22) Ezekiel xliii. 7; xlv. 3, 30; xlv. 1,  
4, 17, 22.
- (23) Jonah iii. 6, 10.
- (24) Zechariah ii. 11.
- (25) Revelation xii. 10.
- (26) Revelation xxi. 24.....Adverted to by Dr. W.

Out of *twenty-six* passages from scripture, then, adduced by churchmen in establishment of their principle, that it is incumbent on rulers to care for the spiritual interests of their people,—Dr. Wardlaw chooses only to notice *five!* And in what manner does he make choice of these five?

He *selects* precisely those, on which we had already declined to rest our case, from a consciousness that dissenters would find a way to evade their force; and he *passes over* the whole mass of those, which we had declared to be, in our view, perfectly unanswerable!

The scripture proofs to which he adverts, and con-

cerning which he enters into a discussion,—are of two classes. 1. Those which describe the Levitical dispensation; and, 2, those which occur in Isaiah and the Psalms, touching the office of “kings and rulers of the earth,” under the gospel dispensation. Now on these two classes of texts we had distinctly declined to rest our case; not as doubting them to be in our favour, but as being aware of the pretexts, by which dissenters generally escape from their deductions. Of the first we had said, ‘*Our argument can well afford to do without it. We have already seen traces of an established priesthood—of a fixed contribution—and a penal law against idolatry, long before the Jewish dispensation began. And we shall find no difficulty in pointing out the fundamental principle of an establishment, in active operation, distinct from, and subsequent to, the Levitical institutions.*’<sup>1</sup> Of the second, we had remarked, ‘*The language of Isaiah and other prophets, concerning the church, such as, “Kings shall be thy nursing-fathers, and queens thy nursing-mothers,”—“The sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee,”—we shall only mention, as evincing a different feeling on the part of these inspired writers, from that of those modern objectors, who feel nothing but horror and alarm at the idea of any contact with the church, on the part of rulers and legislators. These expressions are too general to admit of our deducing any further meaning from them.*’<sup>2</sup>

Thus singularly does Dr. Wardlaw misunderstand or misstate our argument. Those numerous passages

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on the Church*, 1838, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 14.

of scripture which seemed to us conclusive, and on which we had rested our case, he entirely forgets to notice: while against those on which we had declined to lay any stress, he directs the main force of his reasonings! If he were really aware of the ground taken by his opponents, then this intentional evasion of the strongest parts of their position could speak but one language,—that of conscious weakness, and anticipated defeat. If, on the other hand, he was altogether ignorant of the bearings of his adversaries' arguments, it may fairly be asked, might it not have been as well to have informed himself on these matters, before he undertook to deliver public lectures on the controversy?

However, we may now recur to the main question. Our argument from scripture has been before the public for several years. It has appeared in many different publications, and has never yet been fairly met by reasoning. Last of all, this champion from the north enters the lists, flourishes his weapon, but withdraws without venturing an encounter. We have only, therefore, to review our position; to re-examine our forces, and once more to call upon our opponents, either explicitly to maintain, or honourably to abandon, the field.

We have already said, that the only two classes of texts to which Dr. Wardlaw has chosen to refer, are those, on which we had long before declined to rest our cause. We may therefore leave them, for the present, in his hands; not as making nothing for our side of the question; but as so far open to different interpretations as to yield insufficient ground for the basis of an argument. We are abundantly content to found our reasonings on those passages of scripture

alone, which the Doctor has chosen to pass over in silence. Let us at once review them, in the natural order of their occurrence.

1. *Genesis* xiv. 18—20. Abraham was a “mighty prince,” in the patriarchal times. He equips a little army of his own followers, and routs Chedorlaomer and his confederate kings. Returning, Melchisedec, “king of Salem, and priest of the most high God,” comes out to meet him, and blesses him; and Abraham acknowledges his spiritual character by “giving him tithes of all.”

Now we are not to be told, that this was a part of the Mosaic law, for “*the law was not till four hundred years after.*” Neither may it be said, that we know too little about Melchisedec, or that his case has no bearing on the duties of Christians. In quoting the case of Melchisedec we are only following the example of St. Paul; and as to its having no bearing on our own duties as Christians, it must be remembered, that Christ himself is declared by St. Paul to have been “*a priest after the order of Melchisedec.*” Surely, then, the priesthood of Melchisedec was at least a priesthood consistent with Christianity. Yet he was a priest established by law, and receiving a settled and fixed contribution.

2. *Genesis* xvii. 26, 27. Abraham, as we have remarked, is called, at chapter xxiii. 6, “a mighty prince,” and he was of a rank to war with kings. God makes a covenant with him, and ordains the rite of circumcision. Immediately Abraham,—not by the dictates of his own reason, but in obedience to the direct commands of God—circumcises *every male in his household*, whether bond or free, of all ages, being unquestionably a very large number.



3. *Genesis* xxviii. 22. We have here another intimation of the existence of *tithes*. Jacob, when entering into covenant with God, and avouching 'the Lord to be his God,' adds, as one consequence naturally connected with this engagement—" *And of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.*" The fact here recorded is a very simple one; but taken in connexion with the priesthood of Melchisedec and of Jethro, and the 'tithes' already mentioned in the former case, we discern, hundreds of years before the Levitical dispensation, a settled order of priests, and a settled and no doubt divinely-appointed payment for their support.

4. *Exodus* ii. 16, 21. We chiefly allude to the case of Jethro for the purpose we have already described. It can hardly be imagined, that he who had abandoned Pharaoh's court, simply because he "*esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt,*" could proceed immediately afterwards to join himself to a family of idolators. Jethro, then, the priest of Midian, must have been a priest of the true God. Here, therefore, again, as in the case of Melchisedec, we find traces of an established and recognised priesthood.

5. *Job* xxxi. 26. The book of Job is universally held to be one of the most ancient of the books of scripture. There is nothing Judaical—nothing partaking of the Mosaical dispensation about it. But Job says, "*If I beheld the sun when it shineth, or the moon walking in brightness, and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth has kissed my hand; this also were an iniquity to be punished by the Judge: for I should have denied the God that is above.*"

Here, then, we find, and in the earliest patriarchal

days, an established recognition of the true religion, and a penal law against idolatry. This goes further than either of the preceding instances ; and we should have been glad to have heard Dr. Wardlaw's mode of interpreting this text.

6. The code of ecclesiastical laws given by Moses we shall not here insist upon. Some remarks on this subject may afterwards be added.

7. 1 *Kings* v. 11, 13.

8. 2 *Chron.* ii. 1, 2, 10 ; vii. 12, 15.

We do not find that the gorgeous temple of Solomon was commanded by Moses to be built, or even by the high-priest then living ; nor was any command sent by God through any of the prophets. The idea and plan was as purely 'voluntary' on the part of David as we can suppose any pious idea to be ; knowing from whom "all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed." But it was the plan of a king, and was carried into execution by regal power. We hear of David's own personal offering ; and of the voluntary gifts of the princes and the people ; but we hear also of 'levies,' and of payments for materials, and for artificers, to an extent, which proves them to have been made from the coffers of the kingdom. This Dr. W. would call 'extortion,' and would pronounce it a 'shame—a burning shame ;' 'that the subjects of the God of this world should be taxed, and their coffers forcibly unlocked, for the replenishing of the treasury of the God of Zion.'<sup>1</sup> But the God of Zion himself did not take Dr. Wardlaw's view of the matter. This gracious approval was thus conveyed to Solomon : "I have heard thy

<sup>1</sup> *Wardlaw's Lectures*, p. 97.

*prayer and thy supplication, which thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house which thou hast built, to put my name there for ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.*" 1 Kings ix. 3.

9. 2 Chron. xvii. 7—9, 10. Here we have another exertion of regal power, the employment of which clearly shews that the doctrine of Dr. Wardlaw, 'that the true and legitimate province of the magistrate in religion, is,—to have *no province at all,*'—was unknown in those days. We are told of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, that "*In the third year of his reign he sent his princes to teach in the cities of Judah; and with them he sent Levites and priests. And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.*" The question, however, is, not merely what Jehoshaphat thought and did, but what the mind of the Spirit is, concerning his doings. And on this point, happily, we are left in no doubt; for the inspired writer is instantly instructed to add, "*And the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat.*"

10. 2 Chron. xxxi. 20, 21. Here the same Divine approbation is very explicitly expressed towards Hezekiah: "*And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and wrought that which was good and right and truth before the Lord his God. And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered.*"

11. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 33. A like record is preserved of the pious Josiah, who "*took away all the abominations out of all the countries that pertained to the chil-*

*dren of Israel, and made all that were present in Israel to serve, even to serve the Lord their God. And all his days they departed not from following the Lord, the God of their fathers."*

12. *Ezra* vi. 3, 4, 8, 9 ; vii. 23—26, 27. We now remove to a still greater distance from what Dr. Wardlaw calls 'the dispensation of Moses.' We find a heathen monarch, or rather a succession of monarchs, of whose personal faith in the God of Israel we have no knowledge, issuing decrees, both for large payments out of the public treasury ; and for the infliction of the highest penalties, even to death itself, on any hinderer of the work of the temple's restoration. Every thing that Dr. Wardlaw most vehemently contends against is here enacted ; and yet the inspired writer, wholly ignorant of the modern theory of "the province of rulers," adds, "*Blessed be the Lord God of our fathers, which hath put such a thing as this in the king's heart, to beautify the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem.*"

13. *Nehemiah* ix. 34, 35. This passage is chiefly remarkable for the peculiar expression chosen by Nehemiah, in his confession of the sins of the rulers of Israel ; "*For they have not served thee in their kingdom ;*" a phrase implying the very opposite of what Dr. W. contends for, when he declares that "the only province of the ruler, in matters of religion, is to have no province at all."

14. *Psalms* ii. 10.

15. *Psalms* lxxviii. 29, 31.

16. *Psalms* lxxii. 10, 11.

17. *Psalms* lxxix. 6.

18. *Psalms* cxxxviii. 4.

Of these passages, Dr. W. only adverts to those in

the 2nd and 72nd Psalms. But the doctor should have remarked the *frequency* of such expressions in the book of Psalms. They seem to establish one point at least; to wit, that *national* religion, or a public acknowledgment of God's government and providence, by the heads and rulers of a realm, is, to the writers of the Psalms and Prophecies, a most fit and becoming thing, and the contrary just as criminal. It is in this spirit that the Psalmist exclaims, "*Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen that have not known thee; and upon the kingdoms that have not called on thy name.*" And we remark an exactly similar spirit in

19. Isaiah xliv. 28.

20. Isaiah xlix. 23.

21. Isaiah lx. 10, 12.

Dr. Wardlaw notices only the 49th chapter; passing over the 44th, in which it is stated to be in performance of God's pleasure that Cyrus, at the empire's cost, and by taxes levied upon unbelievers, rebuilt the temple; and the 60th, in which the prophet says, "*The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, these nations shall be utterly wasted.*" In this latter passage, taken in connexion with the preceding verses, the prophet, by his varied expressions, seems to prevent and foreclose all the reasonings of modern dissenters. He says, "*Their kings shall minister unto Thee:*" 'Yes,' says Dr. W. 'but it was not by making Christianity the religion of their dominions, and becoming the heads and patrons of established churches, but by a *personal* faith in Christ, and a *personal* submission to his reign.'<sup>1</sup> But, says

<sup>1</sup> *Wardlaw's Lectures*, p. 143.

the prophet, "*the forces,*" or powers, "*of the Gentiles shall come unto thee ;*" "*for the NATION and KINGDOM that will not serve thee shall perish, yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.*"

22. *Ezekiel* xliiii. xliv. xlv. We are at a loss to imagine how Dr. Wardlaw could ever have forgotten—or not forgetting, could have resolved to pass over in silence—this very remarkable passage in God's word. The most eminent dissenting commentators, Henry and Gill, acknowledge that the prediction must relate to some bright era of the gospel church. Dr. Wardlaw himself assuredly will not attempt to refer it back to 'the Jewish economy.' But if it relates, as it must, to the Christian dispensation, then what will Dr. W. do with the lineaments, too clearly traced to be mistaken, of an extensive national establishment?

23. *Jonah* iii. 6, 10. Here we have another illustration of God's way of dealing with his creatures in their social relations. Dr. Wardlaw argues that although he once condescended to govern a single nation as their Head and Sovereign, yet this was a peculiar and a solitary case ; and that all the rest of mankind ever have been, and ever will be, contemplated by him solely in their individual capacities. But Jonah's history seems expressly meant to enlarge our ideas in this particular, and to make us aware, that, although God did indeed choose and adopt one nation, the Jews, for his own inheritance ; yet the rest of mankind were not so wholly cast out of his sight, as to be entirely disregarded by Him. We have again, therefore, quitted the pale of 'the Jewish economy,' and are on the ground of God's general government of the world. And we find, that

to the nation of the Ninevites he determined to send a special message, threatening his vengeance on their sins. That message was listened to with attention, *nationally*, and the king, as a ruler, acted upon it. He proclaims a fast; enforces it by a royal decree, and enacts,—what Dr. W. most abominates,—religious observances by civil authority. But these signs and deeds of repentance were not hateful to God. On the contrary, “*He saw their works, that they turned from their evil ways; and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them, and he did it not.*”

24. *Zech. ii. 11.* Another instance of the common mode of expression throughout the Hebrew scriptures, in which *kings* and *nations* are constantly spoken of as capable of, and responsible for, the knowledge and worship of God.

25. *Revelation xii. 10.*

26. *Revelation xxi. 24.* The latter only of these passages is adverted to by Dr. W. He asks, ‘What is to be made of it?’ We answer, Nothing, if taken by itself: but if taken in connection with the language of the whole Bible, of which we have now given a variety of instances,—much. It is as *continuing* and adhering to, the general tone of the Old Testament scriptures, even up to the very last page of inspiration, that this single expression is of value.

But the remaining passage in St. John’s Apocalypse, Dr. Wardlaw passes over in silence. Yet it might have claimed a few moments’ attention. The Apostle, in the twelfth chapter of his Revelation, says, “*I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ,*” &c. Now to what event

does he refer, in these exulting strains? Let us consult the leading dissenting commentators.

*Dr. Gill's* exposition is as follows:—

‘ This was a song of praise on account of the victory obtained by Michael and his angels over the dragon and his, or for the overthrow and downfall of Paganism in the Roman empire; for by *heaven* is meant the empire, now become Christian, or the Christian church state in it.’—‘ It denotes that safety and security, comfort, peace, and happiness, the churches enjoyed under the government of a Christian emperor;—the gospel was preached, and gospel churches were set up in all parts of the empire.’

*Matthew Henry* coincides in this interpretation, explaining the passage thus:—

‘ *The dragon and his angels fought, and prevailed not: there was a great struggle on both sides; but the victory fell to Christ and his church; and the dragon and his angels were not only conquered, but cast out;—the pagan idolatry, which was worshipping devils, was extirpated out of the empire in the time of Constantine. And this was the triumphant song that was used on this occasion.*’

We hazard no opinion as to the correctness of the interpretation adopted by these commentators. But clearly, in their judgment, the legal establishment of Christianity by Constantine was predicted by St. John, and was contemplated as an occasion of joy to the angelic hosts:—“ *Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them.*” And thus, in the latest portion of Divine Revelation, as in the earliest, we find that which modern dissenting writers unreservedly repudiate,—to wit, nationality and legislative responsibility in matters of religion.



Such, then, is the argument from scripture, in support of the principle of national establishments, which churchmen generally advance. Is it true,—can it be for an instant said, that it is too weak and unimportant to require the least notice? Assuredly not. The recurrence, at various periods, of instances of an established priesthood, and of established payments,—the frequent employment of regal power for religious objects, and God's distinct approval of such employment; and especially the clear exhibition of a millennial state of the church, with an established and endowed priesthood foreshewn; all these things, illustrated and strengthened by many incidental expressions, all confirmatory of the general view, constitute, together, a case, which so far from being unworthy a reply, may rather be considered as making all attempt at reply utterly hopeless.

Yet we are well aware, that by one mode of dealing with the proofs, an answer may be constructed, and even a tolerably plausible one. We have seen the mode to which we refer not unfrequently adopted, both in this and in other controversies. We should denominate it the *frittering* system; and we name it chiefly to condemn and to protest against it. It consists in a persevering separation and isolation of texts, and in a rejection, *one by one*, of all, which are not, in themselves, full, explicit, and beyond all cavil.

Nothing is easier than, in this way, to get rid of any conceivable argument from scripture. Set each text by itself, and then ask scornfully,—‘What does it prove?’

Thus, when we adduce *Isaiah* xliv. 28, to shew that the employment of the power and revenues even of a heathen king, in the restitution of the temple,

was a “ performing of the pleasure ” of the Most High,—the opponent takes the text *alone*, repeats it, and asks,—‘ What of that? Does Isaiah xlv. 28. assert more than may have been fulfilled by a mere restitution of civil and religious liberty to the Jews, and perhaps the encouragement of a large donation from the ‘ personal revenues ’ of Cyrus ? ’

It does not. But scripture is the only sure interpreter of scripture, and to understand this text accurately, we must turn to the book of Ezra, chap. vi. vii. There we find the decree of Cyrus, which directs the rebuilding of the temple, and directs also the payment of the expences. We also find a further decree of Darius, particularly ordering that the cost shall be defrayed “ out of the tribute beyond the river.” And a third decree, by Artaxerxes, repeats the injunction, and directing it “ to the treasurers beyond the river,” adds the penalties of death, banishment, or confiscation, against all the contumacious.

Here, then, remembering that all this was foretold by God’s prophets, above seventy years before, as a matter especially purposed and ordered by him, we learn how it was that Cyrus and his successors should “ perform all His pleasure,” and we feel assured that, in this case, we may adopt Dr. Wardlaw’s own language, and say, that, here, ‘ *facts* are of the same authority as precepts, *examples*, as commands.’

It is in this way, then, that the mind of the Spirit in the scripture ought to be studied:—not by tearing passages into little fragments, quoting isolated texts and half-texts with an air of scorn, and then remarking, ‘ It says little for the validity of a system, when, instead of presenting us with plain facts and precepts,

and Divinely-accredited principles, its supporters direct us for its foundation to little scraps of the phraseology of obscure prophetic symbol.<sup>1</sup>

This is one very easy, but not very creditable way of triumphing over opponents. Dr. W. first presents a miserable spectre of his antagonist's arguments, such as no churchman would have dreamt of producing; and, having shewn his prowess upon this invention of his own, he upbraids his opponents with the weakness of their case! He demands why, instead of 'little scraps of obscure prophetic symbol,' they do not adduce 'facts and precepts, and Divinely accredited principles?' We reply, that we have already done so, and have done so for years past, and that it is Dr. Wardlaw's own fault, if he has to own, or chooses to profess, a discreditable ignorance of them.

<sup>1</sup> *Wardlaw's Lectures*, page 136.

## III.

OF CHURCH ESTABLISHMENTS IN GENERAL: THE  
ARGUMENT OF DISSENTERS FROM SCRIPTURE.

THE length to which the preceding chapter had extended, obliged us to close it without including, as we had proposed to do, the *contra* statement of Dissenters. This, therefore, is obviously the next point that demands our consideration.

And the moment we address ourselves to this subject, the first thing that strikes us, now, as on former occasions, is,—the strange contrast that exists between the professions and vaunts of dissenting writers, and their performances.

We were forced to notice this in an early edition of the present work, when Mr. James's tract was chiefly under our consideration. We found that writer indulging in the highest professions of subjection to the voice of scripture, and pluming himself on the exhibition of a more loyal allegiance to the Divine word than churchmen could ever yield;—and yet, when actually engaged in the argument, he offered us but one single, solitary passage from holy

writ; quietly passing over multitudes of others, which presented a different view! And we have now to express our regret, that Dr. Wardlaw has followed an exactly similar course.

Nothing can exceed the emphasis, with which Dr. Wardlaw proclaims his principle,—perfectly sound in itself,—that scripture is the only rule of conduct in these matters. All we have to regret, is, that there runs through his pages, as through Mr. James's, the unfounded assumption, that this is a doctrine peculiar to Dissenters, and either disliked or neglected by churchmen. He even proceeds so far as to inflict on Dr. Chalmers a grave and solemn rebuke, because, in his Lectures of 1838, being greatly limited in time and space, he merely referred to, and asserted, the support given by scripture to the doctrine of establishments, instead of displaying it at large. Dr. Wardlaw 'seriously bewails' this; dwells at great length on the paramount authority of scripture; assumes, as usual, that churchmen undervalue, and dissenters uphold, its authority; and at last, after all this flourish of trumpets, introduces his own 'scripture argument,' which consists of *five* texts,—while he leaves the *fifty* to which churchmen are wont to refer, almost wholly without notice!

To do justice to Dr. Wardlaw's statement, let us draw up his little company of texts, with the same particularity that we have already adopted with our own. We will give them at length, for they occupy but a small space.

- (1.) 1 Cor. ix. 14. "*Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.*"  
 (2.) 1 Cor. ix. 11. "*If we have sown unto you spiritual*

*things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?"*

- (3.) *Galat. vi. 6.* "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things."
- (4.) *1 Thess. v. 12, 13.* "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them who labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake."
- (5.) *John xviii. 36.* "My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."

This is the whole muster. Let our readers look it well over; ponder it; and wonder, as we have done, that men who can find nothing more in the whole of God's word, in support of their theory, than this, should yet vaunt themselves on what they call their 'scripture argument,' and exclaim, 'Let the authority of the apostles be admitted, and the cause is settled.'

In these five texts we find, first, four of an exactly similar tenor,—insisting on the right of the Christian minister to a regular and just support, to be afforded by his flock, in return for the devotion of his time to their service. May we not fairly retort "Dr. Wardlaw's own exclamation in another place, and say, 'And what of that?'"<sup>2</sup> When have churchmen doubted or contravened all this? When have we raised any question, touching the right of the clergy to a maintenance, or the *especial* duty of those taught by them to see that maintenance provided? All this

<sup>1</sup> *Wardlaw's Lectures*, p. 387.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 80.

we fully admit. But what bearing has all this upon the present question? We know, indeed, that Dr. W. has tasked his powerful intellect to the utmost to compel these texts to prove something more; but we shall presently shew that he has totally failed. On the face of the matter, 'he who runs may read' their perfect inapplicability and irrelevancy to the present question.

The remaining solitary text is the especial favourite of all dissenting writers,—the *sole* one, indeed, that Mr. James, a few years back, could produce as *his* 'argument from scripture,'—the verse in John xviii. 36. Dr. W. in another place talks of 'that precious and fail-me-never phrase—"the earth helping the woman."' And assuredly we might, with quite as much propriety, speak of 'this precious and fail-me-never phrase,' "*My kingdom is not of this world.*"

Our reply, when this text is adduced, is simply, that we desire to submit to it, as to all other scriptures, in its plain and obvious meaning; but that we cannot consent to its being carried into the dissenting laboratory, and there beaten out, swelled up, and exaggerated, in order to give it a sense and meaning, which no plain and simple student of the scriptures would ever suspect to exist in it. Dr. Wardlaw, for instance, gives us a learned dissertation on the Greek adverb *νῦν* (*now*), and believes that he has extracted, by a sort of lexicographical chemistry, some heretofore concealed meaning from these three letters, which establishes his case. Is it not strange, that a man of his mental acumen should not have seen, that he was using the most effectual means in the world to satisfy any simple-hearted enquirer

of the weakness of his case? Think of a doctrine, which Dr. W. represents as of immense importance, lying hidden in the Greek adverb *νῦν*! A scriptural argument, which at last shrinks into the compass (for we shall presently shew that it has no other support) of a subordinate word of three letters! The thing is too absurd. It has only to be named, to be at once appreciated.

The sense of the verse, John xviii. 36, to any plain reader of the Bible, is this: Our Lord was charged before the Roman governor with the crime of high treason;—with setting himself up as a king, in the place of Cæsar. “*We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying that he himself is Christ, a King.*” (Luke xxiii. 2.) The governor interrogates him, as to whether he really claims this dignity. “*Art thou the King of the Jews?*” Now our Lord could not, on the one hand, reply in the negative; he could not say that this was a title to which he had no claim; for it had been foretold of him of old, that “*of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end; upon THE THRONE OF DAVID and upon his KINGDOM, to order it, and to establish it,*” &c. (Isaiah ix. 7.) But, on the other hand, he could not admit the truth of the charge brought against him, of setting himself up against Cæsar, and aiming at the establishment of a mere earthly dominion. He points out, therefore, the fact, that he had no hostile array, no gathering together of armed men, nothing whatever which came within the governor’s meaning, as amounting to a ‘levying war’ against Cæsar. “*My kingdom,*” saith he—for it was impossible to deny his regal character—“*is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world,*



*then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence."*

Such is the text which, in our times, and never before, has been supposed to bear a meaning, which none for the first eighteen hundred years could discern in it, of an absolute prohibition of all rulers and legislators from aiding, in their public capacities, in the spread of the gospel!

Hidden alike from Augustine and from Luther, unperceived by either Calvin or Dr. Owen, the clearer vision or superior critical knowledge of our modern non-conformists has at last brought it to light; and we learn, for the first time, that in the apparently insignificant adverb "*now*" is contained the distinction; that whereas under the Mosaical dispensation it had been lawful for rulers to take cognizance of the affairs of the church,—"*now*" it should no longer be permitted them to have anything to do with religion, save in their *personal* and *individual* capacities!

We find, however, far more of common sense in Dr. Wardlaw's language, as already quoted, when treating of another part of the subject.

'It says little for the validity of a system, when, instead of presenting us with plain facts, and precepts, and Divinely accredited principles, its supporters direct us for its foundation to *little scraps* of the phraseology of obscure prophetic symbol.'<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Wardlaw, however, will probably reply, that he *has* presented us with 'facts, and precepts, and Divinely accredited principles,' in the four other

<sup>1</sup> *Wardlaw's Lectures*, p. 136.

texts, quoted before he adduced the favourite ‘*John xviii. 36.*’ Let us then calmly address ourselves to the consideration of these four texts.

They are, as already cited, 1 *Corinthians* ix. 11, 14. *Galat.* vi. 6. and 1 *Thessal.* v. 12, 13. And the uniform tenor of them all, is,—to enjoin it upon the members of the Christian churches, “*to communicate unto them that taught in all good things.*”

Nothing can be clearer than the ordinance, “*that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel.*” But we again ask, When have churchmen shewn the least desire to evade or to refuse obedience to this law?

Upon the plain and obvious sense of these passages, then, all Christians are agreed; and they are agreed, too, as to their permanent obligation. In what, then, are they disagreed?

We part company with Dr. Wardlaw, when he insists on going beyond the plain and obvious meaning of these texts, and extracting from them, what even the warmest advocates of ‘*Voluntaryism,*’ five years since could not discern,—*a law positively inhibiting Christian rulers and legislators from lending their aid in the propagation of the truth!*

Such a law, too, if it existed in these texts at all, would be a law repealing and cancelling that which had been the declared will of God for above four thousand years. It is not denied—Dr. Wardlaw does not deny it, but passes it over in silence—that Abraham, and Melchizedec, and Job, acting and writing under God’s immediate guidance, believed that the civil ruler had to do with the religious interests of those under his charge. Dr. Wardlaw, again, does not deny, but passes over in silence the

fact, that David and Solomon, Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah—acting not in mere conformity with the Levitical economy, but *extra* and beyond it—did all of them hold themselves bound to take cognizance of the religion of their people, and were approved of God in so doing. Further, Dr. Wardlaw, with an equally convenient memory, forgets, but cannot deny, that heathen kings, such as Cyrus and Artaxerxes, taxed their heathen subjects to re-edify the temple at Jerusalem, and were ‘fulfilling God’s pleasure’ in so doing. A great principle of Biblical ethics being thus established, by the practice of four thousand years, under the repeated approbation of God himself, we must require some very clear and explicit repeal of this law, before we can admit the change.

It is a maxim among British jurists, that a statute, once passed into a law of the realm, cannot be removed from the statute-book, or deprived of its legal force, but by an express and explicit ordinance of repeal. Such a rule is necessary, even in human legislation, in order that men may not be involved in perpetual doubts and disputations, as to what laws are repealed, and what remain in force. But there is a still higher and stronger reason, why, in the affairs of the kingdom of heaven, a similar rule should obtain. Human legislation is, like every thing else that is human, a series of blunders, and of attempts at rectification. But divine legislation is unerring, and needeth no amendment. Let it once be clearly established—and of this there can be no doubt—that God has at any time approved of the attempts of his servants in regal stations, as Solomon, Jehoshaphat, &c. “*to serve him in their king-*

dom" (Neh. ix. 35.); and we thereby see established a Bible principle of action, requiring an explicit and unquestionable statute of repeal, to remove it from its authority over the believer's heart and conscience.

Now no such statute of repeal has been shewn, or can be shewn. Observe, we are not dealing with 'the Mosaic dispensation,' or the Levitical ritual. We avoid all allusion to the church establishment of the children of Israel, although we should not fear to rest our case upon that alone. Not to plunge into a lengthened discussion on that extensive subject, we turn merely to those other passages in Holy writ, which exhibit pious rulers as caring for the religious welfare of their subjects, and as honoured of God in so doing; and we require, to remove these passages of scripture from their place of authority, a full, clear, and distinct enactment, changing and reversing the law.

And what is it that Dr. Wardlaw offers? He gives us four texts, which tell us of the right of the Christian minister to a decent maintenance, and of the obligation of those taught, to administer to the wants of those who teach them. And these passages, which never mention, never even allude, to the duty of rulers and legislators in the matter, he calls a repeal of the long-established obligation.

A greater misapplication, a more outrageous "wresting" of the scriptures was never seen. The passages in question are not only made to say what they do not say, but they are represented as dealing with matters, towards which they do not even make the least approach. This will be seen, if we try the actual working of these precepts, applied as Dr. Wardlaw wishes to apply them.

The emperor of Russia, who, like the first Christian ruler, Constantine, is absolute in his vast dominions,—passing laws by his own sole authority, and dealing with the powers and revenues of that mighty empire at his will—this ruler, who, at least in a recent instance, was a sincere Christian,—obtains an accession of territory, surrendered to him by Mahometan or heathen powers, and peopled solely by the worshippers of devils, or of the Arabian impostor. Another province is added to his empire. His conscience asks him, Has he no duty to perform towards these myriads of new dependents on his power?

Dr. Wardlaw answers, that he may exert ‘his influence and his example.’ If Dr. W. were himself in the position described, he would find it a difficult matter to quiet his own conscience with vague and empty phrases like these. The practical question is, May he not follow in the footsteps of Jehoshaphat, who “sent Levites and priests; and they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.” (2 Chron. xvii. 9.)

Common sense, submitting itself implicitly to the guidance of God’s word, says, *Yes, he may.* But Dr. Wardlaw says, *No, he may not!* We ask him why; and he refers us to 1 Cor. ix. 14, where we read, “*Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel!*” We look at the text, and then revert to the question, and ask ourselves, What possible connexion can there be between the two?

Let us try again. Imagine,—it is not very difficult—a premier like Spencer Perceval—a sincere believer in God’s word—once more placed at the

helm of government in England. He finds Manchester quadrupled within thirty years, and her 90,000 inhabitants augmented to 360,000. He sees the voluntary principle severely tasked, and rapidly doubling the means of religious instruction ; but, fast as churches and ministers increase, the population increases faster, and the numbers wholly excluded from the possibility of worshipping God in his earthly temples, already exceed 200,000 ! He sees, also, a deadly delusion, masking the most fearful atheism under the new name of ' Socialism,' grasping eagerly at the occasion, and filling the uninstructed and unoccupied minds of these prodigious masses, with notions destructive alike of all social order in this life, and of all hope of happiness in the next.

He naturally asks, Can nothing be done? Does not the church profess to take charge of all these people? Why then are they left to wander as sheep without a shepherd? The answer is, Because the state neglects its duty, and will not do—what the church cannot do—sub-divide these immense parishes, and re-organize them ; supplying each district of manageable size with its pastor and its place of worship.

But why not do all this at once, by an instant vote of the necessary funds? ' Because,' says Dr. Wardlaw, ' it is unlawful for any follower of Jesus to do so.' We ask how this can be, and the doctor refers us to Gal. vi. 6, which commands, "*Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.*" Again we start back astonished, and ask, How does this passage bear upon the case?

Any one, however, gifted with common sense, and whose understanding is not warped by party zeal,

will naturally rejoin,—that the doctor here confounds two things, which have no connexion; *i. e.* the duty of those *who are taught* to acknowledge the valued instructions of their teacher; and the duty of the ruler, to rescue those *who are not taught*, and are sunk in ignorance and sin, from the fearful consequences of a state of darkness and of crime. The first stands in no opposition to the second. In fact, it bears no relation whatever to it.

Yet this is all that the ablest advocate of modern dissent can adduce, as his greatly vaunted ‘Scripture argument.’ We say, of *modern* dissent; for let it not be forgotten, that all these passages have been in the possession of the church for eighteen centuries, without the least suspicion being entertained of any such meaning being hidden below their surface, as Dr. W. now discovers. The comments of the earliest ages of the church, the expositions of Calvin and Melancthon and Luther, and the elaborate treatises of Owen and Goodwin and Calamy, may be ransacked, without a glimpse of such interpretations as these, being found to have ever reached their minds. Not until a recent date has the now well-worn text, “*My kingdom is not of this world,*” been pressed into the service; and as for the remaining four, we doubt if even to the acutest controversialists of these later days had this new-found meaning been revealed, until the eventful moment of the last visit of Dr. Wardlaw to the British metropolis.

And yet it is of novelties like these—of fancied meanings which spring up, like dreams, before the vision of the earnest controversialist—that Dr. Wardlaw can speak in language of the most extraordinary confidence; assuming, not once, but an

hundred times in the course of his lectures, that *he* is for maintaining the laws, the authority of Christ ; and that churchmen are for disregarding and overturning both !

But we must conclude this part of the argument. We fully admit, with Dr. Wardlaw, that "*facts,*" when recorded in scripture with the divine approval, "are of the same authority as precepts ; *examples,* as commands." We have placed before him, in the preceding pages, a multitude of *facts*, none of which have yet been noticed by him, in which we see divers of God's servants, in the regal office, using their official power for the furtherance of the highest interests of their people. To this he opposes one solitary *fact*—that the early Christian church, founded amidst persecution and opposition, was supported wholly from its own internal resources. Upon this one fact Dr. Wardlaw lays the greatest stress ; while as to all the others, his eyes are closed.

But does the latter fact, upon which the doctor so entirely relies, contravene or nullify the former ones ? By no means. There is no opposition between the two. A servant of God, about the year 3090, being placed in authority over Israel, employed his royal power and revenues in establishing a kind of Home Mission, for preaching the word of the Lord throughout the length and breadth of the land. Other servants of God, about the year 4090, being in humble stations, under heathen rule, and having no public power or authority whatever, could only act as a church, and a persecuted church, upon the voluntary system. They followed the apostolic injunctions in this their walk of life. They supported their ministers, they cared for their poor, and there is sufficient



evidence that they also sent forth missionaries to those "lying in darkness and in the shadow of death." But where is the opposition between these two cases? What is there to hinder a Christian of the present day from saying, As a private individual, and a lowly member of a Christian church, I read my duty in the pages of St. Paul; while, should it please God to endow me with political power or authority, I shall then find a bright example in the histories of David, of Hezekiah, and of Jehoshaphat?

A legal provision for the worship of God, and the Christian instruction of the people, Dr. Wardlaw considers to be positively forbidden by Christ and his apostles; inasmuch as they insist upon the obligation under which all Christians are laid, *voluntarily* to contribute to the support of their pastors. Now, for *one* precept of this kind, inculcating the voluntary support of their ministry, we can easily produce *ten*, directing a voluntary contribution for the support of the poor. Of course, then, Dr. Wardlaw must contend, that all 'state interference' with this matter also—all legal enactments for the maintenance of the destitute, the aged, or the orphan, are 'infractio[n] of the law of the divine Head of the church,' 'violating alike the claims of his authority and his love,' 'distrusting and dishonouring her Lord, and doing despite to all the principles of his kingdom.'<sup>1</sup> In what way he can draw a distinction between one class of precepts and the other, we know not. But if their authority be equal and identical, then ought dissenters immediately to commence a systematic opposition to all rates for the poor, as

<sup>1</sup> *Wardlaw's Lectures*, p. 97, 269.

well as to those for the church. That they do not do so; that they deal with the one class of texts in one way, and with the parallel class in another, furnishes a sufficient proof, that their own reasonings, even in their own eyes, if not backed by a lurking feeling of party rivalry and animosity, would possess no force or validity whatsoever.

We must add a few words, before we quit this part of the subject, on Dr. Wardlaw's elaborate argument concerning 'the Mosaical dispensation.'

It is hardly necessary to our case; which we have already declared our willingness to rest upon those passages of scripture, which have no relation to the laws of Moses. But we are well aware of the readiness, with which even an omission of this sort is snatched at; and of the eagerness with which it would be said, that 'we despaired of any effectual reply to Dr. Wardlaw's unanswerable argument.' We shall therefore point out one or two particulars, in which that argument seems to us to fall short of its purpose.

The position which Dr. Wardlaw attempts to overturn, he thus describes:—

'There was a national Establishment in Israel: the God of Israel could not give the sanction of his authority, by direct institution and constant support, to what was, in the very principle of it, wrong: we have therefore, in this recorded case, an example of a national religion, and of a national establishment of that religion, possessing the full weight of divine authority, and more than warranting our imitation.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Wardlaw's Lectures*, p. 101.

This argument Dr. Wardlaw attempts to evade by a very adroit manœuvre. He says,

‘The proposition ought to be, not, ‘There was a *National Establishment* in Israel,’ but, ‘There was a *Theocracy* in Israel.’

There is something very ensnaring, and very imposing to the casual reader, in this sudden change of terms. But there is no reality, no solid weight in it. It merely gives us a *phrase*, instead of an *argument*.

The Dr., indeed, attempts to support his new position by something like reasoning; but here he instantly fails. He says,

‘We deny the resemblance between modern establishments and the Jewish. They are not the same thing; they are essentially distinct. There are two points of difference between them, of which each is by itself sufficient to destroy every pretension to identity. Modern establishments are destitute of what formed the most essential element of the Jewish; and they have in them, as one of their own essential elements, what the Jewish never at any time admitted.’

These two points he afterwards explains:—

‘I grant that Jehovah instituted a national church; but then he instituted such a church, *with himself as the supreme head* of ecclesiastical and civil government in the nation; conducting his administration, in both departments, by a system of supernatural interposition and immediate manifestation of his presence and authority, such as we mean by a theocracy.’

‘I observe, secondly, the *absence* of another ingredient, which is one of the very principles, on which every human establishment of religion must be con-

sidered as resting—there was, under the Jewish economy, no such thing as *human legislation* in regard to religion.<sup>1</sup>

It is on these two points of difference that Dr. Wardlaw rests his conclusion—that modern establishments and the Jewish have no resemblance or identity. Now the least examination will shew that both of them are mainly the fictions of his own imagination.

It is true that the Jewish system of faith and worship was founded by God himself; and carried on, for a considerable period, by ‘supernatural interpositions and immediate manifestations.’ But these manifestations were ‘the medicine of the constitution, not its daily bread.’ Only at intervals was a prophet sent to the church. In the later periods, Dr. W. can point out neither ‘supernatural interpositions nor immediate manifestations.’ How can he maintain, then, that these formed ‘the most essential element in the Jewish establishment’? And the Christian system, too, opened, like the Mosaical dispensation, with Divine manifestations. We had God speaking to man in the person of Jesus Christ; we had inspired apostles who were greater than the prophets; and we had miraculous proofs of their mission and authority. But under both systems, the Jewish and the Christian, these ‘interpositions and manifestations,’ after a time, ceased; inasmuch as they were not essential parts of either system. The exaggerated view which Dr. Wardlaw takes, in order to prove the Jewish church to be wholly distinct from modern establishments, quickly melts away,

<sup>1</sup> *Wardlaw's Lectures*, p. 102—105.

when compared with the facts recorded in the sacred history.

And his second point is as much an exaggeration as the first. *Human legislation*, he tells us, is *essential* to all modern establishments; but there was no such thing as *human legislation* in the Jewish economy. Now the truth is, that in one sense human legislation appears in both systems; and in another sense it is excluded from both. And the facts of the case, when carefully examined, only prove resemblance, where Dr. Wardlaw would exhibit an opposition.

Human legislation, in matters of detail, existed in the Jewish church. This we see in a variety of cases, such as Exod. xviii. 19—22; 1 Kings ii. 26; 2 Kings xii. 7—10; xvi. 10—15; 1 Chron. xiii. 1—4; xxv. 1; 2 Chron. vii. 7; viii. 12—14; xxiv. 9; xxx. 2, 3; Nehem. x. 32. And it is only in like matters that human legislation is admitted, in the system of modern establishments for which we contend. That ambitious and worldly rulers may have often transgressed this limit, and usurped an authority to which they had no just claim, forms no argument against the true principle of a national church. The *abuse* of a principle—we are obliged perpetually to repeat,—can form no just ground of objection to the principle itself.

In both of these points, then, the Divine Headship of the Jewish church, and the human legislation imputed to modern churches, Dr. Wardlaw has created, by exaggerated statements, that contrast or opposition on which he relies.

But why, let us ask, did not Dr. Wardlaw look into the *New Testament*—for which he shews such a preference—for a truer view of this part of the sub-

ject? He would have found a Jewish establishment *there*, as well as in the books of Moses; and he would also have seen the light, in which it was viewed by Christ and his apostles.

He describes the Jewish church as being distinguished by ‘ a system of supernatural interposition and immediate manifestation of the divine presence.’ Can he shew us any traces of these things in the days of our Lord’s own appearance? On the contrary, is not the whole aspect of the Jewish church, in the gospels, totally different from that which it bears in the Old Testament? The synagogues; the rulers and the scribes; the pharisees and sadducees, all exhibit a totally altered system of ecclesiastical economy.

Yet it is to this *new* and altered state of things that our Lord conforms himself. “ *The scribes and pharisees,*” says he, “ *sit in Moses’ seat: all therefore, WHATSOEVER they bid you observe, that OBSERVE AND DO.*” (Matt. xxiii. 2, 3.) Is it possible for an injunction to be more explicit? And his practice was equally in conformity with the church system of the time. “ *Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching IN THEIR SYNAGOGUES, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom.*” (Matt. iv. 23.) “ *And when he came to Nazareth,—as HIS CUSTOM WAS,—he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read.*” (Luke iv. 16.) And his apostles followed in his steps. Immediately upon Paul’s conversion, “ *he preached Christ IN THE SYNAGOGUES; that he is the Son of God.*” (Acts ix. 20.) At Salamis, Paul and Barnabas “ *preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews.*” And the like is recorded in various places throughout the book of the Acts of the Apostles.

Now Dr. Wardlaw's main objection to the introduction of the case of the Jews into the present argument, is—that the Jewish establishment was wholly incapable of being imitated. 'It will not do,' he says, 'to call that *imitation*, in which the very essence of the thing imitated is of necessity wanting.' And that very essence he describes to be, 'a system of supernatural interposition and immediate manifestation of the divine presence.' We reply, that these did not form 'the very essence' of the Jewish church. So far from it—they did not even exist in it in our Lord's days; and yet by Him and his apostles was the legitimate authority of that church fully recognised. (Matt. xxiii. 2; Acts xxiii. 5.)

But further; were we even under the necessity of admitting that the Jewish church was so entirely *per se*, that all imitation was wholly out of the question, we should still be prepared resolutely to deny Dr. Wardlaw's further and most illegitimate conclusion; that, because we cannot copy this system as a *model*, therefore we are precluded from studying it, as a *fact*, and a fact fraught with instruction.

There are, in the Old Testament, a multitude of narrations conveying *principles*. The deeds cannot be imitated; but the governing motives may. And we wonder that it has never occurred to Dr. Wardlaw, that in divers of his anathemas against the principle of an Establishment, he "*reproacheth the Lord*;" (Numb. xv. 30.) and must either prove to us, that the eternal laws of right and wrong have experienced a change, or confess that he has 'spoken presumptuously' in the vehemence of his censures.

When, for instance, he indulges in such language as this;—

‘ That the church’s cause must be indebted for its support to extortion from his enemies—that the subjects of the god of this world must be taxed, and their coffers forcibly unlocked, for the replenishing of the treasury of the God of Zion—This is the church’s shame—her burning shame!’—‘ the church distrusting and dishonouring her Lord, and doing despite to all the principles of his kingdom.’ (p. 97.)

‘ We aim at *justice between man and man*, in the most sacred of all the departments of human relation; for the duty of every man to maintain his own religious principles, in his own way, and by his own resources; and the right of every man to have full freedom in doing so, and full exemption from every interference with his conscience in the appropriation of his property.’ (p. 227.)

‘ We do not thank a thief for restoring our stolen goods. As little do we thank a despot, or a bigot, for conceding to us a right, which he had no more title to withhold, than the thief had to abstract our property.’ ‘ No bounty in favour of one sect; and no unjust exactions in its support from others.’ (p. 254, 5.)

‘ The languor of Christian charity has been induced, in no small degree, by the soporific of an Establishment. It is the hand of the state, that has strewed the poppies over the church.’ (p. 298.)

‘ The native and necessary result of all Establishments is—an immensity of merely nominal Christianity, and the consequent prevalence of false confidence and self-deception. They necessarily operate as a bounty on simulation,—a premium on conformity.’ (p. 318.)

All these hard things Dr. Wardlaw quietly writes



down, and deliberately repeats, *after* he had admitted that 'there was a national Establishment in Israel'!

He concedes—for he cannot deny—that God himself established a church in that nation; and yet he ventures to assert *of all establishments alike*—that 'they necessarily operate as a bounty on simulation;' that they 'induce a languor on Christian charity;' that they 'unjustly exact' what it is 'theft' to 'abstract;' that they violate 'justice between man and man,' 'extorting support from the enemies of religion,' and thereby 'dishonouring God, and doing despite to all the principles of his kingdom.' All these evil qualities and evil deeds are laid to the charge of all establishments alike; and yet it is admitted, in the same breath, that God himself sanctioned and approved a National Establishment in Israel! How can Dr. Wardlaw escape the edge of his own rebuke?—

'Had he only reviled what was human, it might have been presumption on our part to find fault,' but 'my heart has been heavy at the thought of a minister of Christ treating in a manner so bitterly contemptuous a Divinely-sanctioned principle. I should think I needed for it the virtue of the blood of sprinkling, had I the charge of such presumption upon my conscience.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Wardlaw's Lectures*, p. 263.

## IV.

OF CHURCH ESTABLISHMENTS IN GENERAL : THE  
RESPONSIBILITY OF RULERS.

WE have already cheerfully admitted all that Dr. Wardlaw could desire to assert—as to the supreme authority of holy scripture, and as to the obligation under which the Christian inquirer lies, to draw his principles of action from that source, in the first instance, and even to the exclusion, when any discrepancy appears, of all seemingly opposing judgments.

There is, however, another source, to which, when scripture is silent, the student may recur for a decision ; and when scripture speaks, for a confirmation of its sentence. We allude to Christian ethics, properly so called.

The reader will instantly comprehend our meaning, when we say, that could it have so happened, that the whole of God's word furnished no single sentence of definite instruction, nor one solitary fact by way of example, in this matter—it would then have been safe and justifiable, in that silence, to

have listened to the voice of fair ethical deduction, when it taught us, that *rulers*, like other men, *were responsible to God for all the talents committed to their charge, and were therefore bound to honour and glorify Him in their official capacities; by promoting His worship, and instructing their people in His fear, to the full extent of their magisterial and legislative power and authority.*

But we have already seen this principle established by the express word of God. Our present inquiry, therefore, is only subsidiary, and intended to shew, that the moral law, written in every man's conscience, would have enforced this duty, even had scripture itself been silent.

We must prefer, however, at the very opening of the subject, a serious complaint against Dr. Wardlaw. He cannot be entirely ignorant of the principle generally asserted by churchmen. Why, then, does he—instead of fairly meeting *that* principle—invent an absurdity of his own; ascribe it to his opponents indiscriminately, and then proceed with the greatest earnestness and warmth, to batter to pieces the fiction he himself had framed?

In one page he tells us, 'that a more extraordinary and self-contradictory anomaly cannot be imagined by the human mind, than that of a community placing over themselves a governor, one of whose official prerogatives it shall be, *to dictate to them their religion!*'<sup>1</sup>

In another, he speaks of 'that insufferable outrage on the reason and common sense of mankind, —the investiture of the civil magistrate with the

<sup>1</sup> *Wardlaw's Lectures*, p. 154.

prerogative of authoritatively *choosing a religion for his people.*'<sup>1</sup>

And throughout the whole of his fourth Lecture, the same misrepresentation is persevered in—that churchmen claim for the civil ruler the prerogative of *choosing a religion* for his subjects.

Now Dr. Wardlaw may think it a very fit and proper thing, to charge his opponents with 'all but infinite absurdity,' and with 'outraging the reason and common sense of mankind,' when the doctrine he attributes to them is the mere creation of his own fancy;—but for our parts we must call for proof, that the said 'absurdity' has ever been maintained by any one writer on behalf of establishments, possessed of the least credit. Till this proof is furnished—and it ought to have accompanied the charge—we can only meet the imputation with a direct and an indignant denial.

We know nothing of any right, possessed or claimed by any civil governor in this part of the world, to 'choose a religion' for his people. And more, we not only concede no such prerogative to the ruler, but we deny the right altogether, whether claimed by ruler or by people. To 'choose a religion'!—there is an irreverence, a lurking infidelity in the phrase, which is quite repulsive. What living man is there, be he prince or peasant, that has any right to 'choose a religion?' The word, indeed, is apparently employed in a similar sense, in Josh. xxiv. 15. and 1 Kings xviii. 21. but it is only *apparently*. And preachers may not unfrequently be found to adopt the same form of speech, and to call

<sup>1</sup> *Wardlaw's Lectures*, p. 155.

upon their hearers to 'choose between heaven and hell.' But they do not thereby mean to imply, any more than did Joshua, that the people have indeed a *right* to reject God if they thought proper, and to adopt idols in his room.

But enough of these exaggerations. In one thing Dr. Wardlaw is at least consistent;—to wit, that he *never* fairly meets the arguments of churchmen, as stated by themselves, and without misrepresentation. He constantly either misunderstands or misstates them. Their scripture argument he appeared never to have heard of, and therefore invented one for them, of a very convenient kind for his own purposes. In like manner he now puts an hypothesis into their mouths, of which they are wholly guiltless; while the principle which they do constantly assert and maintain, is scarcely alluded to in his pages. That principle is,

*The responsibility of rulers, to employ their power and influence, efficiently and decidedly, for the glory of God, and the best interests of their people.*

The only argument worth the least consideration, advanced in Dr. Wardlaw's fourth lecture, which is devoted to this topic, is, that rulers may be, and in fact, often are, irreligious men, and of course not properly capable of acting on this principle.

But we must always bear in mind that the word of God, and Christian ethics generally, can only lay down rules for men as *Christians*. The Bible enjoins nothing upon Mahometans, remaining such, or upon heathens, continuing in heathenism. Dr. Wardlaw, in fact, admits the real force of our reply, when he observes, that,

'The absence, indeed, of Christian principle in

others, does not obliterate the obligation ; any more than the obligation to aught that is good is obliterated by the want of moral principle, or a right disposition of heart towards the doing of it.'<sup>1</sup> And Baxter had already made a similar remark :—

' It is aptitude to do the duty of his place which a heathen wanteth ; and he wanteth it *culpably*. The question is of the like nature with that, whether an ignorant minister be bound to preach, who is unable or heretical. It is *aptitude* that he wanteth, and not authority or *obligation*. His obligation stands in this order, first to get abilities, and then to preach. And so in the other case.'

And, this apparent difficulty being removed, there is no other objection of the slightest validity, to our full principle. That principle is drawn from the Bible ; and, as we have already remarked, the Bible can only prescribe laws for Christians, as such ; not for heathens, or for infidels.

The Bible, then, speaks to a Christian ruler, as such ; and the Christian ruler, as such, opens the Bible for instructions as to his peculiar duty, under his peculiar circumstances. The modern nonconformist, indeed, would tell him, that the word of God says nothing to rulers, *as such*. But his own senses will quickly convince him of the contrary, for it is scarcely possible for him to open any one book of scripture, in which some direct reference is not made, or example afforded, as to the duty of persons in his station.

The key to the whole question, however, will be found in a proper appreciation of the character and

<sup>1</sup> *Wardlaw's Lectures*, p. 152.

obligations of the gospel. The main thing is, to bear in mind, that Christianity is the one all-important and paramount concern, whether individuals or nations are in question. It is to every single member of the commonwealth a matter of far more real interest than all other things taken together; for in it is involved nothing less than *eternal life!* and in its rejection nothing short of eternal destruction. And to the community at large it has that lower but still momentous importance, which arises from its inevitable influence on morals, order, peace, and civilization. A single glance over the earth's surface, and a moment's comparison of the state of England with that of Turkey, or Burmah, or Ashantee, will sufficiently establish this point. The language of Dr. Dwight is abundantly borne out by incontestible facts, when he says, that 'religion is the only great preventative of crime, and contributes more, in a far more durable manner, to the peace and good order of society, than the judge and the sheriff, the gaol and the gibbet united.'

A ruler, then, being bound to use the best and most effectual means in his power to promote the morals, and, by consequence, the happiness of his people, is bound to adopt and promote, as beyond all comparison the most effectual means—the knowledge of the only true religion.

A ruler being bound to care for his people in all respects, in their greater as well as in their lesser interests, is consequently under an unquestionable obligation to place before them, in a large and sufficient manner, that religion upon which the eternal happiness of every individual among them depends.

And lastly, a ruler who knows the real nature of

his own position—that he is placed in the station which he fills by Him who is “the Prince of the kings of the earth”—and that he must assuredly one day yield up to Him an account of *all* the ten talents which have been committed to his charge—must feel, that his first and most incumbent duty is to “do all to the glory of God:” and that that glory is best promoted by spreading the knowledge of the gospel of Christ.

Under these three clear and unquestionable laws of action, it surely seems an irresistible duty on the part of every sovereign professing to believe the Bible, to act in his regal capacity, as a Christian. And thus did the first Christian sovereigns view the question. How, indeed, could they do otherwise? It is pleaded, in the present day, by some dissenting writers, that “the monarch may patronize religion without establishing it, in the same way as he patronizes any other good cause.” But this way of supporting religion, by an annual subscription from the privy purse to the Home Missionary Society, never occurred to Constantine, nor to Theodosius, nor to any other of the first Christian emperors. How, indeed, should it? They were emperors, nor were they accustomed to assume a private character. And when they perceived the Divine authority of the scriptures, they received the dictates of those inspired writings in the plain and obvious sense of the words. They there found Christ declaring, that it is by Him “kings reign, and princes, yea, all the judges of the earth.” They also found that to be the nursing father of the church was the highest honour of a crowned head. They also found, that every ruler or prince, who, in those writings, received the



approbation of the Holy Spirit, was in some way or other active in promoting, by his sovereign authority, the interests of the church. What could be more clear, then, than the line thus marked out before them?

They could not but observe, also, that in the Jewish church a sufficient maintenance was provided by law, —a law, too, dictated by God himself—for the ministers of the sanctuary. They would further perceive, that in the New Testament church prophesied of by Ezekiel, a similar provision was made. And in St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians, (1 Cor. ix. 8.) they would find the great apostle of the Gentiles referring to these very points in the former dispensation, and quoting them as of binding authority on the Christian church.

With all these things before their eyes, is it not difficult to conceive, how the first Christian emperors could have acted otherwise than as they did act? The refinements of the present day they could not anticipate. They knew nothing of the 'privy purse,' or of 'votes of the House of Commons.' If it seemed to be their duty—and that it did so seem we are well aware—to provide for the Christian instruction of their people, they had but to issue their mandates, and the provision was made. A dissenting writer already quoted is obliged to admit, that 'there can be no doubt that a ruler ought, like any other person, to devote the means which he possesses to the establishment and support of the cause of religion.' Constantine and Theodosius did so devote the means which they possessed. But those means were, the imperial authority and the imperial revenues. If they had been told, that it was their duty not to em-

ploy *these* means, they would have been quite at a loss to comprehend the objector's meaning.

In fact, these hair-splitting theories never have been, nor ever can be, even attempted to be carried into effect. They are utterly without foundation, either in scripture or in common sense, and they have never yet entered into any scheme of government that the world has yet seen.

Nor can we omit to remark, that the plain, obvious, and common-sense view of the matter, is supported by two authorities which ought to have weight with Dissenters. They are these:—

1. *All the fathers of non-conformity, in its earliest and brightest days.* Take a few instances of this kind:—

Dr. Owen—perhaps the very first name that the non-conformists can boast—when preaching before the long parliament, delivered himself, on this point, in the following language:—

‘Some think,’ says he, ‘if you (the parliament) were well settled, you ought not, as rulers of the nation, to put forth your power for the interest of Christ. The good Lord keep your hearts from that apprehension! Have you ever, in your affairs, received any encouragement from the promises of God? Have you in times of greatest distress been refreshed with the testimony of a good conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity you have sought the advancement of the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you believe that he ever owned ‘*The cause*,’ as the Head of his church? Do not now profess you have nothing to do with Him: had he so professed of you and your affairs, what had been your portion long since?’ Again: ‘If it once comes to this, that you shall say,

you have nothing to do with religion as rulers of the nation, God will quickly manifest that he hath nothing to do with you as rulers of the nation. Certainly it is incumbent on you to take care that the faith which was once delivered to the saints, in all the necessary concernments of it, may be *protected, preserved, propagated*, to and among the people over which God hath set you. If a father, as a father, is bound to do what answers this, in his own family, unto his children; a master, as a master, to his servants: if you will justify yourselves as fathers or rulers of your country, you'll find in your attempt this to be incumbent on you."

John Howe, also one of their greatest names, in his sermons on the yet future but expected prosperity of the church, looks to see this prosperity brought about—"First, by means of the kings and potentates of the earth. And think how it will be if such scriptures come to have a fuller accomplishment than they have ever yet had; when in all parts of the Christian world kings shall be nursing-fathers, and queens nursing-mothers; when the church shall suck the breast of kings; when the glory of the Gentiles shall be by them brought into it. Think whether this will not do much to the making of a happy state, as to the interest of religion in the world," &c.

Entertaining exactly the same view, Flavel, whose rank as a Christian classic is scarcely inferior to that of Owen or Howe, in his exposition of the Assembly's Catechism, replies to the question, "What is the duty of political fathers or magistrates, to their political children, or subjects?" in the following words: "It is to rule and govern the people over whom God hath set them, with wisdom; carefully providing for

their souls, in every place of their dominion. “ *And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about through all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.*” (2 Chron. xvii. 9.)

And the leading dissenting commentator, Matthew Henry, in his remarks on the same passage which Flavel had quoted, observes of Jehoshaphat, “ What a useful man he was; not only a good man, but a good king:—he was not only good himself, but did good in his generation. First, he took away the teachers of lies; and, secondly, he sent forth teachers of truth.”

Lastly, Baxter, another of their most eminent men, in his *Christian Directory*, when addressing civil rulers, says, “ Let none persuade you you are such terrestrial animals that you have nothing to do with the heavenly concernments of your subjects. There is no such thing as a temporal happiness to any people, but what tendeth to the happiness of their souls: and it must be thereby measured, and thence be estimated. Let all things in God’s worship be done to edification; decently, and in order; but see that the ornaments or the garments of religion be never used against the substance. The very work and end of your office is, that under your government the people may live quietly and peaceably, in all godliness and honesty.”

So entirely opposed, then, were all these truly great men, in whose well-earned reputation the dissenters of modern days delight to clothe themselves, to that notion which has of late been promulgated, of the “ antichristian nature of the alliance between church and state.”

But further, we must observe that exactly the same view of the matter is taken:—

2. *By modern dissenters themselves*, when they happen to be removed out of the sight and hearing of the present controversy.

The directors of the London Missionary Society, among whom are found nearly all those writers and preachers who are now so actively denouncing all ‘connexion between church and state,’ and all ‘interference of rulers in matters of religion,’—these very directors found no difficulty in writing to the sovereign of a Polynesian state, “advising him to *banish the national idol*, and to attend to the instruction of the missionaries.”<sup>1</sup> And when two of their body were deputed to make an official visit to these islands, they report, “We had a long interview with the king (of Hawaii), in which we *urged upon him the propriety of publicly adopting Christianity as the religion of his dominions.*”<sup>2</sup> And we find that one of the sovereigns ordered the headmen of all the districts under his command to have it proclaimed, by a herald, “All people must regard the Sabbath; where schools are established, all the people must learn.” Nay, these same gentlemen cannot conclude their view of the state of New Holland without observing that “The want of *regular* means of grace among our own countrymen and their families (colonists as well as convicts) throughout the greatest part of the immense tracts of land in the course of clearance, and where population is rapidly increasing, must be accompanied by evils, daily growing more inveterate and difficult to remedy; even when

<sup>1</sup> *Ellis's Polynesian Researches*, vol. ii. p. 528.

<sup>2</sup> *Tyerman's and Bennet's Travels*, vol. i. p. 439.

greater exertions shall be made to maintain and propagate Christianity among the progeny of those who are in courtesy called Christians, who constitute no small part of the aggregate community here. Scattered, however, among the remote villages and farms, there are numbers of young people who would be glad to hear the gospel, had they the opportunity. We merely state the fact, laying the shame at no man's door. It is, however, *deeply to be lamented that Protestant governments take so little care to convey the knowledge of the true religion, wherever they carry their arms, their commerce, or their arts in colonization.*"

It would seem, then, that even nonconformists themselves, when placed in circumstances which allow them to take a rational view of the question, quickly abandon all their refinements and distinctions, and talk no more of monarchs '*patronizing religion, without establishing it.*' They can see then, when no petty jealousies dim their sight, that the chief means possessed by a sovereign,—the main part of the "ten talents" intrusted to his care, consists in his regal power, and influence, and authority; and that to place all these means in abeyance when any subject connected with religion came before him, would be as irrational and as blameable as any sin of omission could possibly be.

But there is one objection more, on which it may be advisable to add a few words. It is said by Mr. James, "If the obligation of the monarch to provide a religion for his people, rests on his regal relation to them, then it is the duty of all sovereigns to do this; and the sultan of Turkey must establish Mohammedanism; the emperor of China, Paganism; and the emperor of Austria, Popery."

The objector has here fairly perplexed himself, as multitudes before him have done, in the maze of modern "liberality." His whole argument is founded on the assumption (which like most "liberal" assumptions, is false)—that there are a multitude of religions in the world, of nearly equal value and authority; and that, as Lord Brougham once argued,—"a man ought no more to be blamed for his religious belief, than for the colour of his skin."

But a Christian minister is highly censurable who permits himself thus to tamper with the truth of God. He ought to know that there is, in fact, but one true religion in the world, and that that religion is founded on God's own revelation, and has a right to demand every man's assent and obedience.

The argument from external circumstances, or from facts around us which seem to present difficulties, more commonly leads to dangerous than to safe conclusions. The doubt, for instance, touching the ultimate fate of the heathen, is one which Satan and his emissaries are very fond of proposing; and the only satisfactory conclusion to which we can come is, that as we ourselves are not heathen,—so *we*, at least, have had the Bible put into our hands, and must be judged at last, by our obedience or disobedience to its injunctions. And the present objection is a very similar one. The kind of obligation that may rest upon a heathen ruler, as to the religious instruction of his people, it may be difficult to define; but it is not at all difficult to understand, that a ruler or legislator who has had the word of God put into his hands, has thereby come under its authority, and must yield obedience to its laws, or abide the fearful consequences.

This difficulty, however, although even Dr. Wardlaw has condescended to make use of it, will hardly be urged by dissenters, if they are compelled to follow it out to its full and legitimate results. The instruction of the young, for instance, in the faith of the gospel, is not denied by Dr. W. or any of their writers, to be a duty incumbent on all parents, and Dr. W. expressly admits, that "the absence of Christian principle does not obliterate the obligation."

Now when we extend this principle, and allege that it is also the duty of rulers and legislators to provide for the Christian instruction of all their people, it is objected, that "if this be the duty of kings and rulers, it must be equally the duty of *all* kings, for all think, or profess to think, their own religion to be the true one." Apply, then, the same principle to education. Will you say that if it be the duty of parents to instruct their children in religion, this duty must be universal, and irrespective of creeds; so that it would be a *duty* in a Turkish parent to instruct his children in all the blasphemies of the Koran; and a *duty* in the Indian parent to teach his son all the obscenities of Hindooism?

The vice of this mode of reasoning is, that it places truth and falsehood on a level, and assumes the equality of their pretensions. Starting thus, with a fundamental error, it is impossible that we should arrive at any other than the most perplexing conclusions. The only way out of the confusion is, to call to mind that "duty" and "obligation" are terms which are connected with *truth* alone, and that till we have discovered this, and thus fixed upon a safe starting-point, it is idle to think of reasoning to any satisfactory result.



The remainder of Dr. Wardlaw's fourth lecture is filled with the usual objections touching the personal characters and acts of Henry the VIIIth, Mary, and Elizabeth. The only weight that these objections can have, arises solely from the unjustifiable assumption that churchmen propose to place the right of "choosing a religion" in the hands of the sovereign. But as, in fact, the advocates of establishments propose or desire nothing of the kind, it follows, of course, that the doctor's arguments against this fiction of his own mind, are of little real interest or value.

We concede, without the slightest hesitation, all that Dr. W. can assert, as to the fact, that many rulers, mistaking or exaggerating the limits of their authority and obligation, have attempted "to choose a religion for their subjects," and have employed coercive means for the enforcement of that which they had chosen. But is it not pitiable to see so eminent a man as Dr. W. resorting to the vulgar error, of arguing from the *abuse* and distortion of a principle, against its *use* and its legitimate authority! What single precept of God's word may we not neutralize, by adopting such a line of argument? It is precisely in this way that the Papists endeavour to set aside what is called "the right of private judgment;" that is, by thrusting into the foreground a multitude of cases in which men have outraged and caricatured the principle. In fact, there is no one principle or rule of conduct contained in God's word which may not be shewn to be both absurd and dangerous, if we form our judgment of its character from the misapplication and misuse of it by erring and sinful men.

But we turn from all such criteria of right and wrong. The word of God plainly declares to us the

path of duty ; and the voice of conscience, if listened to with sincerity and submission, confirms the declarations of the written word, and warns every man, that in *all* situations, and under *all* circumstances, he is bound to exert his whole power, and influence, and authority, whether personal or official, in the promotion of the glory of God, and the best interests of all dependent on him.

## V.

OF CHURCH ESTABLISHMENTS GENERALLY :  
THE LESSONS OF EXPERIENCE.

HAVING now considered the subject with reference to the two chief guiding principles, the written word, and the voice of conscience,—we next descend a step lower, and enter on the question, What have been the actual results of such experiments as have yet been made, of the efficiency, respectively, of the two modes of propagating Divine Truth, by Establishments, and by the Voluntary Principle?

Fully admitting, with Dr. Wardlaw, that “the previous question is,” “*What saith the scripture?*”—and having, we trust, placed that inquiry in its proper position in the present discussion, we now feel at liberty to complete our view by a reference to certain facts, as presented to us in the world’s history. But in order to prosecute this investigation in an appropriate spirit, we ought to endeavour, as far as possible, to place ourselves in the situation of one to whom the result was a matter of deep personal interest.

The question is one that belongs to a ruler. Let us imagine such an individual, then, endeavouring, amidst the conflicting statements of controversialists, to discover and ascertain, for the peace of his own conscience, his own path of duty.

He admits, we must suppose, the paramount authority of scripture; and it is to God's word that he first applies. But a candid and impartial study of holy writ seems to him to lead to a very decided conclusion, that his duty is, to be active, not neutral; and to exert his official power and influence to the uttermost, in this matter. Such appears to have been the course taken by every devout ruler whose history is given in holy scripture, and in every such case he finds God's own express approbation following such a line of conduct.

Although this appears to him to decide the question, yet, fearful of a wrong determination, he pauses and looks inwards, and around him, for such other aids as conscience and experience may supply, towards fixing his ultimate resolve. He confers with his own heart in the matter. Probably there is already a settled provision of some sort, in the greater portion of his dominions. But new provinces are added, or new colonies spring into existence, or new towns arise, in various parts of the realm; and what is his duty with reference to these?

Can it be *his duty*, he asks himself, to behold, without interference, the coming together of large masses of his people, either in new resorts of manufactures or trade, at home, or in infant colonies abroad,—without any means being provided for their continuance even within the outward pale of Christianity?

The growth of factories, he soon perceives, will not, on the voluntary system, induce the growth of churches,—nor do the settlers in a colony, even by thousands, think it their duty, spontaneously and unassisted by the state, to raise places of worship for their own use. Can he then, he asks, witness such cases as these, and satisfy his conscience with remaining careless and inactive, while his people are falling by thousands into positive and unavoidable heathenism? Conscience answers, without hesitation, No.

But there is one more source to which he may apply, and the information deduced from which he cannot reasonably reject. This is, *the lessons of experience*; the history of what has been the actual progress of Christianity, at various periods, and under different systems. And this is the matter to which we have now to devote our attention.

The first period to which our attention is necessarily directed, is that of the primitive ages of the church. And here there is a remarkable discrepancy in the statements of the opposing parties. Dr. Wardlaw, in his sixth lecture,—which is, perhaps, the most declamatory and the weakest of the whole series,—touches this point very rapidly and cursorily; but with even more than his usual amount of *assumption*. He says of the voluntary principle in the early age, that, “While there are proofs abundant of the irregularity and corruption of its exercise, it is remarkable that, amidst the anxiety that has by some been betrayed to muster and blazon those proofs, no attempt has ever been made to prove the one thing that required to be established, its *insufficiency*.” But to this passing remark he adds not ano-

ther word! Yet how could he forget the observation of Dr. Chalmers on this identical point? For a long period, now, have Dr. C.'s statements been before the world; they could not possibly be unknown to Dr. Wardlaw; why, then, does he wholly evade and apparently forget them? Dr. Chalmers had said:—

“ It is a far mightier achievement than may appear at first view, completely to overtake the length and breadth of a land. All the devices and traverse movements of the many thousand missionaries who, during the first three centuries, lived and died in the cause, failed in their accomplishment. I beg you to recollect that fact, because it is one of chief importance in the argument for a religious establishment—that, notwithstanding the high endowments, the political endowments—notwithstanding the advantages of highly-gifted men, though bordering on the ages of inspiration—yet all the movements in the three first centuries did little more than plant Christianity in the cities of the Roman empire. And that is the reason why the term ‘ heathen ’ is synonymous with that of ‘ pagan,’ which signifies ‘ countryman ;’ it was because the great bulk of the countrymen (and those who lived in the country) were still in this state of heathenism. These men did much in the work of spreading the gospel externally, but they left much undone in the work of spreading it internally. They had Christianized the thousands who lived in cities; but the millions of pagans, or the peasantry, who were yet unconverted, evince the country to have been everywhere a great moral fastness, which, till opened up by an establishment, would remain impregnable.

“ Now, this very opening was presented to the ministers of Christ when the Roman emperor, whether by a movement of faith, or of philanthropy, or patriotism, made territorial distribution of them over his kingdoms and provinces, and assigned a territorial revenue for the labourers of this extensive vineyard ; and so enabled each to set himself down in his little vicinity, the families of which he could assemble to the exercise of Christian piety on the Sabbath, and among whom he could expatiate, through the week, in all the offices of attention and Christian kindness. Such an offer, whether Christianly or politically made on the one side, could most Christianly be accepted and rejoiced in by the other. It extended inconceivably the powers and the opportunities of usefulness ; it brought the gospel of Jesus Christ into contact with myriads more of imperishable spirits : and, with as holy a fervour as ever gladdened the breast of the devoted missionary when the means of an ampler service in the Redeemer’s cause were put into his hands, might the church in these days have raised to heaven her orisons of purest gratitude, that kings at length had become its nursing-fathers, and opened up to us the plentiful harvest of all their population.”

Was it candid of Dr. Wardlaw thus conveniently to *forget* this statement of the writer who he had especially set himself to refute ; and to glance over the question at issue with the remark, that “ *no attempt had ever been made to prove the one thing required to be established, the insufficiency* ” of the Voluntary Principle.

But possibly some one may say, ‘ Well, but here is merely assertion against assertion, Dr. Wardlaw

against Dr. Chalmers, but nothing proved on either side.' We answer, that the statement of Dr. Chalmers is far more distinct, and definite, and positive than that of his opponent; but that it should be remembered that it is upon Dr. Wardlaw that the *onus* lies. He devotes a lecture to prove the 'efficiency of the voluntary principle.' It is for him to *establish*, not to *assume* this fact. He is not to call upon us to prove a negative. Yet not an iota of proof does he adduce. He *asserts*, indeed, that under the immediate eye of the apostles, "the gospel evinced its inherent, expansive energies." It did so, and we shall be ready enough to admit, that if we had apostles among us now, needing no education for their work; preaching by immediate inspiration, and enforcing their mandates by supernatural deeds,—it might be needless to talk about national establishments. But we do *not* live in such times. We live in times essentially different. Hence it is that it becomes necessary that Christian ministers "should have an education which costs much, instead of an inspiration which costs nothing;—that instead of toiling with their hands, like Paul, and like Paul preaching by impulse, they should toil with their understandings and with their hearts, in their studies and on their knees, giving themselves to meditation, and prayer, and reading; and that while so doing they should have the endowment of the now friendly and fostering state."

And it is enough to mention this immense difference, to shew that an argument drawn from the experience of *that* particular period can be worth very little in the present controversy. Dr. Wardlaw proceeds, in the next place, to the centuries immediately



following the apostolic era, with reference to which he offers merely the remark already quoted, that 'no attempt has ever been made to prove the insufficiency' of the voluntary principle,—and instantly passes on: And this is the whole amount of the *proof*, which he can adduce in favour of his favourite theory? A clearer, a more decided failure it has never been our lot to witness.

But we must continue our search. With the ceasing of the days of persecution, the reliance on the voluntary principle ceased. We say not that the principle itself became inoperative; for the extinction and departure of that principle would be the decease of the church itself; but the rulers of the earth had now assumed their appropriate place, and, becoming Christians, had undertaken their admitted obligation. The rapid extension of the visible church is indisputably owing to this circumstance. Mosheim writes as follows:—

“The zeal and diligence with which Constantine and his successors exerted themselves in the cause of Christianity, and in extending the limits of the church, prevent our surprise at the number of barbarous and uncivilized nations which received the gospel. It appears highly probable, from many circumstances, that both the Greater and the Lesser Armenia were enlightened with the knowledge of the truth not long after the first rise of Christianity. The Armenian church was not, however, completely formed and established before this century: in the commencement of which, Gregory the son of Anas, who is commonly called the Enlightener, from his having dispelled the darkness of the Armenian superstitions, converted to Christianity Tiridates, the king

of Armenia, and all the nobles of his court. In consequence of this, Gregory was consecrated bishop of the Armenians, by Leontius, bishop of Cappadocia, and his ministry was crowned with such success, that the whole province was soon converted to the faith.”<sup>1</sup>

“A certain woman was carried into Iberia as a captive, during the reign of Constantine the Great; and by the grandeur of her miracles, and the remarkable sanctity of her life and manners, she made such an impression on the king and queen, that they abandoned their false gods, embraced the faith of the gospel, and sent to Constantinople, for proper persons to give them and their people a more satisfactory and complete knowledge of the Christian religion.”<sup>2</sup>

The narratives of the establishment of a Christian church in Britain, under the fostering care of Ethelbert and Bertha his queen; in France, under Clovis; and in Germany, under Charles Martel, would too much extend this chapter. But in these and a variety of other instances, it was clearly seen that the power and authority of the civil ruler was uniformly called into exercise by God in his providence, to do that which could scarcely, under existing circumstances, have been otherwise done.

Let it then be distinctly understood, that the efforts of the first preachers of the gospel succeeded only thus far, that they ‘established’ Christianity, as a sect, or persuasion, in most of the great cities of the Roman empire. But all the myriads inhabiting the open country still remained pagans; as were all the

<sup>1</sup> *Mosheim's Eccl. Hist.* cent. iv. ch. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

nations beyond the limits of the empire. And thus did matters continue, till the civil power, becoming Christian, recognized its obligations to use the means at its disposal, both in covering the territory under its own dominion with an organized system of Christian instruction, and also in spreading the knowledge of the gospel through other lands. All this appears to the advocates of the voluntary system to have been wrong and injurious. But to this error, if it were an error, do we owe, under God, the spread of Christianity over the world, and its establishment in our own country. Up to the era of the Reformation, then, at least, do we find no proof whatever of the sufficiency of the voluntary principle; but, on the contrary, we find the general spread and establishment of Christianity throughout the world, resulting chiefly from the aid afforded by friendly sovereigns and rulers, both within and without the limits of the empire.

Ancient history yielding no evidence in favour of "voluntaryism,"—let us see what the annals of modern times may present. But here, too, the scope of our investigation will be exceedingly limited, and the facts available comparatively few. In truth, this theory, which Dr. Wardlaw and his coadjutors now so vehemently uphold, has been, till of late, scarcely heard of in the church. The scriptures, as we have already shewn, do not prescribe it; the early church exhibits no preference for it; to the reformers it was almost, if not entirely, unknown; the puritans and early nonconformists strenuously abjured it;—and not until the age of revolutions, commencing with the revolt of the United States, and continued through all the Gallican horrors, down to the present

day, has this same voluntary principle,—as the sole and exclusive reliance of the church,—been even so much as spoken of among us.

We do not advance this objection as absolutely conclusive on the point, but it affords at least a strong presumption against a theory,—that it is altogether one of modern days, and even in those days confined to one or two small sections of the professing church. A system so put forward ought at least to be able to adduce the strongest evidence from the word of God itself, to shew us that, whatever men might have thought or said, the favour and support of the great Head of the church was pledged in its behalf. This, however, we have already seen to be entirely wanting.

We come, then, to modern times, and ask, What have been the results of experience in this matter? But here our enquiry is confined within very narrow limits. Dr. Wardlaw does not even attempt to point out a single instance of his theory having been brought into full operation, during the whole period from the commencement of the Reformation down to the close of the last century. A great effusion of divine influence is admitted by all evangelical historians to have taken place in the sixteenth century. Under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, twelve different confessions of faith were then drawn up, in the various churches of the Reformation, framed by different minds, in far distant lands, and in various tongues; and, as it has been justly remarked, “the harmony of these declarations of belief is truly surprising, and constitutes an extraordinary event in the history of man. The annals of religion and philosophy supply no other example of such agreement.” And that

harmony is as visible in this point as in any other,—that not a vestige of the voluntary principle, *as opposed to establishments*, is to be found in any one of them.<sup>1</sup>

But to what quarter, then, shall we turn for the prosecution of our present enquiry? Whither shall we look for *the results of experience*, as to the efficiency of this now favourite theory? We know not to what quarter our attention can be directed, except to the United States of America, and to the British empire in modern times. Let us take each of these in its turn.

I. AMERICA—designating by that term the United States—was, about seven years back, the favourite theme with all dissenting writers. Nothing was easier than to refer to her “great and good deeds” in the missionary work; and, arguing from this point, her Christian maturity and ripeness, and the completeness of her spiritual cultivation, to assume that all this had been the result of the natural and unfettered operation of “the voluntary principle.” The argument was a fair and a most cogent one, *on the*

<sup>1</sup> Touching the duty of the ruler or magistrate, the *Helvetic Confession* says:—“He shall, after the example of most holy kings and princes of the people of the Lord, advance the preaching of the truth, and the pure and sincere faith; and shall root out lies and all superstition, with all impiety and idolatry.” The *Bohemian*: “By this authority of his he shall set forth the truth of the holy gospel; be a defender of the ministers and people of Christ; and suffer not, so far as in him lies, idolatry, or the tyranny of Antichrist.” And that of *Belgium*: “It is their duty, not only to be careful to preserve the civil government, but also to endeavour that the ministry may be preserved; that all idolatry and counterfeit worship of God may be clean abolished; that the kingdom of Antichrist may be overthrown, and that the kingdom of Christ may be enlarged. It is their duty to bring to pass, that the holy word of the gospel may be preached everywhere, that all men may serve and worship God purely and freely, according to the prescribed rule of his word.” The Confessions of Augsburg, Saxony, Wirtemberg, &c., run in the same strain. See the *Harmony of the Protestant Confessions*, p. 578—588.

*supposition that the facts alleged were true*; and there can be no doubt that, if these statements had been able to bear investigation, the advocates of the voluntary principle would have been greatly strengthened in England.

Unfortunately, however, for this argument, a little further inquiry shewed that there were great and manifold errors in this account of the American churches. Upon a search into the writings of the highest American authorities, it turned out that "the case of America," instead of *establishing*, was sufficient, of itself, utterly to destroy the pretensions of the voluntary principle, so far as they might rest upon the lessons of experience. One of their very first theological writers, Dr. Dwight, at once corrected, in the fullest manner, two grand errors in the current dissenting statements,—to wit, 1. That America had maintained no religious establishments; and, 2. That in the absence of such establishments, religion had flourished.

Dr. Dwight first assisted our researches by a most powerful argument, which, not to interrupt the present inquiry, we shall add in an appendix.<sup>1</sup> He also confirmed his reasonings by a most important array of facts, proving most irrefragably, that in those districts of the Union in which the worship of God had been established, religion, morals, and the public welfare had been secured and advanced; while in those in which all had been left to voluntary efforts, the result was exactly the reverse.

The production of Dr. Dwight's arguments, and of his testimony to the real facts of the case, entirely

<sup>1</sup> See note A.

staggered the advocates of voluntaryism. They shewed their consciousness of defeat, first, by their altered tone; but, after a short delay, in a still more decided manner; namely, by confessing that a further investigation of the facts was required, and by specially deputing two ministers of some note among them, to visit the United States, on a mission of inquiry as to the real state of the case.

The parties so deputed proceeded to America: but, whether biassed by a secret desire to "make out a case," or drawn aside by the blandishments of their transatlantic friends, they so conducted the investigation as to destroy all hope of any really valuable results. Instead of a searching inquiry as to the real condition of those districts which had been left to the sole charge of the voluntary principle, they chiefly sojourned in the large and flourishing towns, in which Christianity had originally been planted *by an Establishment*; and which were now enabled, by their opulence and their inherited piety, to maintain a supply of clergy which might compare with any similar towns in the 'old country.' Entertained in such localities as these, and supplied with such details as were agreeable to American vanity, the prevailing passion of our transatlantic brethren,—the embassy returned with a report that America was the most Christian and most highly cultivated spot, in religious matters, that could be found on the face of the earth.

Probably the hope was for a moment entertained, in some quarters, that now the desired fact had been established, and the case made out, of the complete efficiency and superiority of the voluntary principle. But a very short time sufficed to dissipate this fancy. On a closer inspection, the report of Messrs. Reed

and Matheson was found not to be a document which could safely be produced or relied upon, in any court or in any cause. Instances of extravagant exaggeration, and of palpable determination to "make out a case," were so frequent in its pages as to render it impossible to quote such statements as of the least authority.<sup>1</sup> And, in fact, after a few months of partial and sickly popularity, the report of these commissioners of inquiry has fallen into complete forgetfulness, and is now never named, or referred to, even among the warmest advocates of the system it was intended to support.

The chief proof, however, of its utter worthlessness, was derived from the authoritative statements of many persons of the highest credit in the United States; whose reports and other narratives, appearing about the same time, gave a totally different account of the state of religion in America, from that which Messrs. Reed and Matheson had furnished.

The latter had laboured, and with some *apparent* success, to shew that America, *without* any ecclesiastical establishment, was better provided with religious instruction, than England, *with* one. The fact was an important one, *if true*; but it was only made to appear to be true, by a long series of suppressions of what was lamentable, and of exaggerations of what was commendable, in the voluntary churches of the United States.

The statements given by American ministers of

<sup>1</sup> In one case it was gravely stated, that a town of 1000 inhabitants had 950 regular attendants at church, and 560 communicants; and in another, in a town of 10,000 people, 'more than 9650' were set down as regular attendants! Making the necessary allowance for infants, &c., both these statements involved physical impossibilities. See '*Reed and Matheson's Visit*,' vol. i. p. 223; vol. ii. p. 523.



various denominations, without collusion, and with no conceivable motive to slander or misrepresent the character of a country of which they are all so proud, were to the following effect :—

1. The *Report of the Domestic and Foreign Episcopal Missionary Society* for 1830, which says—

“From its first institution this society has contemplated, with the deepest sympathy, the *utter destitution* of thousands of families of our people, scattered over the wide and fertile regions of the west, or collected in flourishing villages on its countless and magnificent water-courses. For Christian people, in a land called Christian, to live for years destitute of Christian privileges, and to rear their children where *the voice of public prayer is never heard*, and where the benediction of the ministers of the sanctuary is seldom pronounced, even over the grave of the lamented dead, is shocking to our better feelings.”

2. The *Report of the Massachusetts Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge*, tells us that—

“A few years since, in New Hampshire, the towns of Newington, Greenland, Streatham, Newmarket, and Durham, had all settled congregational ministers. Now they are in a destitute and broken state. There yet remain a considerable number who are disposed to maintain religious order, and a few friends to evangelical truth, who are famishing for the sincere milk of the word. *But only a small proportion of the people are disposed to raise money to support pious, regular, and well-instructed teachers.* \* \* \* In the counties of Rockingham and Strafford, . . . . . there are forty-five towns, which, with their inhabitants, 40,286 souls, are destitute of the stated means of grace. Of these forty-five towns, some have been destitute ten, some

twenty, some thirty, some forty years. \* \* \* In some towns, where churches exist, the Lord's Supper has not, for ten, twenty, or thirty years, been once administered. Most of these churches are also much reduced in number; one, from sixty-two members to two females; several to *but one male member*; and in one town, containing 1063 souls, the visible church of Christ, *after a stated ministry of twenty-eight years*, has been many years totally extinct."

3. In the Report of the *American Baptist Home Missionary Society*, dated May 1833, the following statement occurs.

"In New England, the number of ministers, compared with the churches, is five to eight; New York, two to three; the other middle States, one to three; the south, seven to thirteen; and the western, as nine to nineteen, (that is, ten out of every nineteen churches are vacant, or more than *one-half*.) These numerical calculations fail to exhibit the whole truth. For, among one thousand nine hundred and ninety-six Baptist churches in the great valley, including near one hundred thousand members, the utmost effective supply is not more than equal to two hundred pastors in the eastern States. This destitution of ministers, then, in the south, and especially the west, is alarming."

4. In a circular issued by the *Presbytery of Winchester, Virginia*, August 1833, it is said,—

"Within the limits of our presbytery there are *nineteen* counties, and a population of about 250,000. We are not able to state the exact number of ministers, including all denominations, who labour in the gospel amongst this population, but suppose that it is less than one hundred; and of these *a very large*

*proportion are not devoted exclusively to the work of the ministry, but are engaged in various secular pursuits.*

“ With a population as scattered as ours is generally, it is supposed that 1000 is quite enough for the pastoral charge of one minister. This will leave *one hundred and forty-five thousand* destitute of the regular ministrations of the gospel. But the number on each Sabbath-day who do not hear the gospel is far greater. We may assume *five hundred* as the average size of the congregations within our bounds on the Sabbath-day. Giving to each minister this number of hearers, will make *fifty thousand* who hear the gospel on the Sabbath-day, and leave *two hundred thousand* who do not.”

5. And, to come up to the very period of the visit of the dissenting deputies, we may take a few words from the *Circular of the Western Baptist Education Association*, dated Dec. 1, 1834,—

“ In the populous states of Ohio and Kentucky, it appears from authentic accounts that one-third of the children are entirely destitute of education. In the State of Illinois we are assured *that not one female out of ten can read*. In the West there are a thousand destitute Baptist churches, and *more than a thousand towns and villages in which there is no stated worship.*”

6. *The Reports of the American Tract Society*, however, are, of all these documents, the most complete and the most important. In the report of 1832 the following passage occurs :—

“ Ministers of the gospel to supply the destitute millions of our country are not to be found ; and yet, by the foolishness of preaching, God will save them

that believe.'—Again, ' The census of 1820 extended, within a small fraction, over 600,000 square miles. If from this we deduct 60,000, embracing portions of the country where the privileges of the gospel are most richly enjoyed, we have remaining 540,000 square miles of inhabited territory, probably embracing nine millions of our population, *more than half of whom* (or nearly *five millions, twice the population of Scotland*) it is estimated by those best acquainted with the subject, are *unsupplied with stated evangelical preaching.*"

In another report it is said—

" In all the states west of the Alleghany mountains, together with Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana, occupying more than half the territory of all the states in the Union....a large portion of the population *have not the Bible, nor any places of public worship, nor any stated preaching of the Gospel*; and are in a great measure destitute of the other means of grace."

But the Report of 1833 is most full and most important. At the very outset of this document it is stated that—

" It is estimated by those who have the best means of judging, that not far from 5,000,000 of our population are now unblest with the means of grace."

On a farther examination, we find that this Society has actually placed no less than 16 intelligent agents in different districts of the States, part of whose duty it is to report generally on the religious condition of their respective neighbourhoods. From their reports we select the following passages:—

" One agent states: ' My field embraces 13 counties; population about 360,000, who are compara-

tively supplied with the means of grace; but many parts of the field are now like the heath of the desert, and exhibit a state of moral desolation, over which not only the Christian, but the philanthropist and the patriot might shed tears of blood."

"Another agent says of his district, The churches are few and feeble. Of one denomination there are but two churches, I am informed, within 100 miles of —, one of the largest towns in my field, and neither of them are able to support a stated ministry.' 'Some thousands of families have not an individual in them who can read; and *probably not more than one-fifth of the population hear the gospel preached.*"

"Another agent says, My field embraces 10 counties, and 110,000 inhabitants. From sources to be relied on, I have evidence *that less than one-third of this population stately enjoy gospel privileges, and that a large majority of the remaining two-thirds rarely hear a gospel sermon for many years.*"

"Another says, My field comprises 26 counties, and about 250,000 inhabitants, *one-third of whom, perhaps, have evangelical preaching within their reach, either on every Sabbath, or one Sabbath in every two or three.*"

"Another agent, in a field 150 miles by 100 in extent, and containing nearly 500,000 inhabitants, says, At least two-thirds of the population neglect the stated means of grace. The Sabbath is greatly profaned."

"Another says, My field embraces 33 counties and 13,000 square miles. In the heart of the territory where I reside, I suppose *that not more than one-eighth of the adult population hear evangelical preaching on any given Sabbath.* The fact is, *this field is about as much*

*missionary ground as Burmah*; and if any thing efficient is done here, it must be done for some time by foreign aid."

"Another, occupying a new and destitute field, 200 miles by 175, containing about 130,000 inhabitants, says, *Not more than one-sixth part of the population is supplied with evangelical preaching*; and in some instances it is almost *wholly neglected*."

"Another, My field contains 33 counties and nearly 100,000 inhabitants. It is my opinion, that in the counties I have visited, *not more than one-fourth part of the population have evangelical preaching within their reach*, and that *not more than one-half of that one-fourth attend*."

And the general result is thus given by the Committee:—

"So far as these statements accord with facts, they give pain to the hearts of the committee." "The question of the *diffusion of ministerial talent, and moral power* throughout our country, appears to the committee to *claim the most serious consideration*. Who can deny the fact, that while many of our congregations are enjoying a profusion of religious privileges, *to some millions of our population the gospel of Jesus Christ is scarcely proclaimed at all*? Can the churches expect the divine blessing, while thus appropriating to themselves the means of grace, and *leaving millions in our own land to perish*?"

7. The *American Baptist Home Missionary Society*, in their report for 1833, thus state the whole case:

"In entering on an enterprise so momentous as that of home-missions in this country, the executive committee felt it their duty to survey the field to be cultivated, the instruments for doing the work, and the

pecuniary means necessary for its accomplishment. They have occupied a high moral eminence, from which they have descried the land in its length and breadth. This survey has evinced a wide and fearful moral destitution in the country, calling loudly on all members of the Christian community to aid immediately and liberally in efforts for its supply. To supply a population of 13,000,000 with religious instruction, there are about 9000 ministers. Now, if it be admitted that one able and faithful minister, devoted exclusively to the spiritual interests of 1000 souls, is no more than a common supply; and on the supposition, too, *which we by no means admit*, that all who *profess to be Christian teachers* are competent ministers of the gospel,—there *would be a deficiency of 4000 ministers* to meet the present wants of the country.

“But a large deduction from this must be made for Romanists, and such sects of professed Protestants as are *propagating error*; for those who, though labouring with the best intentions, are *too ignorant of Christianity* to teach its doctrines with advantage to others; for those who are employed as teachers in theological institutions, colleges, and academies; and those who are necessarily so *engaged in secular occupations* as to prohibit their devoting time to the preparation for much usefulness in the ministry. These and others amount, in the aggregate, to *several thousands*. *These facts evince a great and alarming destitution of Christian instruction.*”

And the same society, in their report for 1834, still further enlarge their view, telling us, that

“This committee are of opinion, that only a very inadequate idea exists among the churches, of the

*vast* amount of the destitution of the preaching of the gospel within the limits of the denomination, and *throughout the country*; and they are desirous that the facts of the case should be before them. It is, then, a fact, that the number of our ministers is but little more than *one half* of the number of our churches; that only about *one half* of these ministers devote themselves exclusively to the work of the ministry: that a great proportion of these ministers would gladly preach the gospel all the time, if they could be *relieved from the necessity of labouring in some secular employment* for the support of their families; that around these churches are *multitudes of souls* almost totally destitute of preaching, to whom these ministers would be able and disposed to publish salvation, if they were assisted in doing so. While there is so much destitution of the saving knowledge of the truth, *infidelity is becoming rife and unblushing* in various sections of the country. *Error*, in its multiform character, is propagated. Others rely on a sound creed and cold orthodoxy, *the weightier matters of the moral law being neglected*; and worse than all, perhaps, *popery* is rapidly on the increase. It already includes a *tenth* part of our free population."

In the face of all these unanimous declarations, of eminent men of all denominations in America, uniting to describe the religious state of their country as fraught with alarm, rather than with satisfaction, it was obvious that the representations of the English deputation could not possibly keep the field. Accordingly, therefore, whether from a sense of its own deficiencies, or from a consciousness of the absurdity of alleging the country to be in a prosperous state, Christianly considered, when all the Christians in it



united to declare its condition to be far otherwise,—or from both of these feelings, united and mingled, perhaps, with some subsidiary ones,—it has so happened, that for the last two or three years, we have scarcely heard a word, from dissenting lips, of the religious prosperity of America, and not a syllable of the dissenting deputation. And the result of the whole investigation, as far as that country is concerned, is this:—

The United States of America, as originally constituted, consisted chiefly of states in which some kind of an ecclesiastical establishment had long existed, and in which, by means of that establishment, the Christian faith had been extensively implanted in the hearts of the people.

Of late years, the progress of “liberal opinions” has gradually thrown down all these religious institutions; while, at the same time, many new states have been added to the confederation, in none of which has any church establishment been so much as thought of.

And, on the whole, it appears that wherever Christianity was originally planted and fostered under an establishment, it took such root as to be still flourishing, even after all national support has been withdrawn: but, in districts where no such provision was ever made; and in those recently added to the union, without any such provision, there exists a vast and lamentable destitution of religious instruction, creating the very opportunity which Romanism most eagerly seeks, and of which she is now availing herself, with the declared hope and intention of making all America Popish!

Thus, the whole experience of America is in favor

of a scriptural church establishment; and against the voluntary system.

II. There only remains to be examined, the state of GREAT BRITAIN, and its experience, so far as this can be ascertained, of the efficiency and sufficiency of the voluntary principle.

Here, however, the facts of the case are so involved and interwoven, that it becomes a matter of extreme difficulty to see our way. A question is immediately started, as to the real effect of an Establishment upon the growth and efficiency of the voluntary principle. Dissenters say, that it is unfair to judge of the efficiency of that principle by its working under the shade of an establishment; such an institution having a powerful influence in checking and reducing to inertness, that which, if left to itself, would be energetic and all-powerful; while churchmen, on the other hand, reply, referring to America for proof, that it is chiefly where an establishment has prepared the way and brought the soil into cultivation, that the voluntary principle is seen to flourish; and that it is, in fact, an admirable subsidiary, but quite incapable of standing alone.

Now our opponents cannot refuse to admit, that their own assertions rest wholly on an *assumption*. They very confidently tell us, that if the Establishment were removed, the instant growth and new energy that would be displayed by the voluntary principle, would be so prodigious as to fill, almost immediately, and more than fill, the void which had been made. These are their anticipations;—but many other anticipations, as bright and as promising, have been grievously contradicted by the actual results. Our own

impression is, that the issue of so rash an adventure, could it ever be tried, would exhibit the most lamentable of failures. And we arrive at that conclusion by the safest course that is open to us,—namely, by a calm and close examination of such facts as are within our reach.

We have already drawn such a conclusion from the state of religion in the United States. We will now come nearer home, and scrutinize, as closely as possible, the case of our own metropolis.

The fact is now pretty generally known, that a population has of late years gathered together, in the suburbs of the metropolis, of an amount which leaves all existing provision for their Christian instruction far behind. It was stated in the *Second Report of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners*, that in thirty-four of the great suburban parishes, containing in 1831 a population of 1,137,000, there was only accommodation in the parish churches for 101,682. We may assume that,—as in such neighbourhoods as these, dissent, as a natural consequence, flourishes,—there are probably sittings in chapels of various descriptions for an equal number. Even suppose the accommodation to be equal to 250,000 sittings, we must also remember that, since 1831, the population must have grown to 1,400,000. We have thus, allowing 250,000 sittings to be sufficient for 600,000 or 700,000 people,—at least 700,000 left destitute of all means of religious instruction.

Now, let us ask,—What is it that checks or keeps down the efficiency of voluntaryism in this case? In what way is it that,—as we are told is the case,—the existence of a national establishment prevents voluntaryism from grappling with this prodigious evil?

We have never seen the least attempt to support this assumption by argument; and, unsupported, we cannot admit the fact.

This chilling and enervating influence, which is alleged to flow from an establishment, if it has any existence, must operate in one of two ways;—it must act either upon Dissenters or upon Churchmen. Which of these two classes are we to understand to have been lulled into carelessness or indifference by the existence of the national church?

Shall we be told that it is the dissenting body that has thus been paralyzed? Will it be said that those who question the purity and healthfulness of the instruction dispensed by the church, and who deny the right of the church to assume the guardianship of the whole population,—can it be alleged that *these* have been rendered careless in regard to the destitute population around them, by the reflection that the establishment professes to undertake the charge of these myriads of perishing souls, and that it is therefore no part of their duty to strive for their rescue or amelioration? Can this view of the case be asserted by any reasonable person? Surely not.

But if the other supposition be preferred, and it is alleged that not dissenters, but churchmen, are lulled into apathy and forgetfulness by the reflection that the establishment has taken upon itself the duty of providing religious instruction for all,—we meet this allegation with a direct negative. No one who is in the least degree awake to what is passing around him, will venture to say, that churchmen generally are slumbering at their posts, and leaving the care of their destitute fellow-countrymen to the state.

We may recur to the case of the metropolis, as already described, and review the efforts of the last five years. The public attention having been called to the state of the out-districts of London, and the facts of the case extensively made known, both churchmen and dissenters have met and deliberated, and determined upon an effort to relieve this destitution. And so far from the professed and admitted obligation of the state, to provide for the religious instruction of the people, having been pleaded as a ground for inaction; such obligation was repudiated by the dissenters; while by the friends of the church it was spoken of, we think, too hastily, as a thing practically hopeless. The chief ground of the voluntary effort set in motion by the Bishop of London, was plainly declared to be, the impossibility of obtaining from the government the means required. So far, therefore, as this particular case is concerned, nothing can be clearer than that the supposed paralyzing influence of an establishment was wholly inoperative,—was, in fact, entirely absent in the whole transaction.

The voluntary principle, then, being allowed its full force in this instance, what has been the result? It has been of this kind: The church has raised, by the free contributions of her members, about £150,000,—or enough to build *thirty* churches.

The dissenters, on their part, have raised about £8,000 or £10,000, or enough to build *two* or *three* meeting-houses. Altogether we may reckon upon new accommodation being provided for about 40,000 people, a supply sufficient, in fact, for a population of about 100,000.

But the deficiency was, of a supply for 700,000! *One-seventh*, then, is all that the voluntary principle

has been able to reach, even by an effort quite unparalleled in the history of the church. Nay, even this is too favourable a view of the case—for this work occupies several years in performing—during all which time the population goes on silently, but prodigiously increasing. This is remarked by the committee of the Metropolitan Churches' Fund, in their second report, in which they say—

“ While we are computing the hundreds of thousands for whom church room is required, and endeavouring in some measure to supply their wants, a new population is springing up, whose spiritual destitution has not entered into our calculations. To do the work effectually, we have not only to overtake the population, but we have to keep pace with it; otherwise, although we may prevent the increase of the evil, we shall not lessen its positive magnitude. The fund is pledged to build twenty-six new churches (1838), by which, under God's blessing, no inconsiderable portion of the spiritual waste of the metropolis will be reclaimed; but presuming that the population will increase in the same ratio that it has done in the last ten years, by the time these churches are completed, there will be a greater number of persons destitute of the means of worship, than there were when this fund was first established.”

Such, then, is the result of one grand experiment,—an experiment made under more favourable circumstances than can ever again be expected to occur. A prodigious case of want was clearly made out;—all hope of aid from the government was entirely laid aside;—the parties appealed to for voluntary efforts were numerous and wealthy; the perishing souls requiring help were dwelling around and

among them on every side. A voluntary effort was made, to an extent far beyond all precedent; the funds so accumulated have been most carefully and judiciously applied, and the result of the whole is,—vast benefit to the metropolis, upon which has been conferred a benefit fully commensurate with the money expended;—but, as respects the point of *removing* the religious destitution of the metropolis, an utter failure. Thirty or forty churches will be raised,—an immense number of families previously sunk in heathenism will be reclaimed; but after all, the aggregate of souls left without instruction, in the metropolis of this professed Christian country, will remain, in consequence of the silent growth of population, almost entirely undiminished.

In saying this, we shall hardly be considered, we trust, to do injustice to this noble effort. No language of ours could properly describe its importance, or the gratitude due to the distinguished prelate with whom it originated. Yet one of its chief fruits will be, the proof it will afford, that the reclaiming from heathenism to a religious profession, a destitute population of 700,000 people, in one single locality, is a work beyond any power but that of the state.

Other cases might be adduced, and a variety of details given, shewing the same results in many smaller districts, and under varying circumstances. But we are inclined to rest the question on these two instances, the western states of America, and the metropolis of England.

It was with reference to the former, that the young men educating for the ministry at Pittsburgh, in America, addressed, in 1830, the following earnest call to the students of divinity at Edinburgh :—

“ It is to the great valley of the Mississippi, from the head of which we now address you, that we would more especially invite your attention. \* \* \*  
 Forty-six years ago, this whole region did not contain more than 500 white inhabitants : it now contains nine independent states and two organized territories, with a population of more than 4,000,000. The provision that is made for the spiritual wants of these immortal beings *is most deplorably deficient*. Throughout the whole extent of the territory above defined there are no more than 500 Presbyterian ministers and licentiates, and probably little more than an equal number of all other denominations, who we can in our utmost charity believe teach the doctrines of the Bible in *any kind* of purity. It is not unusual for the pioneers of the gospel to set themselves down at a distance of fifty or a hundred miles from any of their brethren, and to ride some twenty or fifty miles weekly, dispersing the bread of life among their little flocks. But with all the exertions of the friends of Christ, the tide of population rolls on faster than they can follow it. In the mean time Satan has no lack of emissaries. *Errors of every name take root, and spread with all the luxuriance of the native forests.*”

Thus does the voluntary principle fail, even in this its chosen field,—a country professedly Christian, and yet not “ lapped into quiet slumbers ” by the (alleged) soporific influences of an establishment. In London it is seen to be equally inefficient, or rather *insufficient*, under different circumstances. Yet these are two of the most extensive and most favourable fields for its exertion, that the world could furnish. When opposed to such facts as these, the *assumptions*, for they are nothing more, of Dr. Wardlaw, that religion only



requires to be "LEFT TO ITSELF,"<sup>1</sup> must surely, with any candid and inquiring mind, seem light as nothingness itself.

But there is another, and a very strange conclusion to which Dr. Wardlaw comes, when such cases of destitution are placed before him. He is greatly aggrieved when Dr. Chalmers argues from the religious destitution of Glasgow the incompetency of the voluntary system, and retorts, that it would be just as fair to argue from the same facts, the incompetency of the establishment principle. "To the extent," he says, "in which the destitution really exists, *both systems have failed.*"<sup>2</sup>

We have seldom seen a stronger instance of the lamentable manner in which, even in the most acute and intelligent minds, controversial prejudice will sometimes obscure and distort the clearest facts.

What is the real state of the case, in such instances as London, Glasgow, and our other great towns? Dr. Wardlaw says, "both systems have been in existence," and "both systems have failed." But there could not be a greater misrepresentation.

The outline, the system of an established church, necessarily includes a principle of expansion. To suppose a state deliberately saying, We are bound to furnish a church and a pastor for that town, having 5000 inhabitants, but we are not bound to do any more, even should it become a town of 50,000,—is obviously to suppose a government and a legislature capable of enacting the most senseless absurdities. No such position has ever been deliberately taken by the British government and legislature.

<sup>1</sup> *Wardlaw's Lectures*, p. 256.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 271.

Even Lord Melbourne, a year or two back, declared that if a case of destitution were made out, with reference to Scotland, it would then become the duty of the government to interfere. But although guiltless of such an absurdity, the English Parliaments and Cabinets of late years have nearly fallen into this indefensible position from sheer forgetfulness and neglect. The "*failure*" of the endowment principle, of which Dr. Wardlaw speaks, has arisen solely from this circumstance, *that the endowment principle has been suffered to fall into almost entire abeyance.* The engineers have gone to sleep, no fuel has been supplied, and the engine has sometimes appeared to come to a stand. But do not commit the absurdity of condemning the machine, for that which has been solely the result of the carelessness of its managers!

It is *not true*, then, that, as Dr. Wardlaw says, "both systems have been in existence," and "both systems have failed." On the contrary, both systems having been fairly started, side by side, the one has been suffered to fall asleep, and the result ought to have been, had the voluntary principle possessed the innate power which Dr. W. ascribes to it, that the whole land should have been possessed and covered by voluntaryism. That the latter should have failed,—and Dr. Wardlaw confesses that *it has failed*,—under such favorable circumstances, is the clearest and strongest proof that could be adduced of its real insufficiency.

The more rational way to judge of these two principles, not naturally opposed, but now set in opposition to each other, is this: We have seen the voluntary principle essay the work of the proper instruction of the whole people: It has failed; Dr. W. cannot

avoid confessing that “to the extent to which the destitution really exists,” and this extent is fearful,—the system “has failed.” Now, during this trial, the establishment principle has stood by in almost entire inertness. Let the state, then, now take up the work. Let the proper supply of the population with pastors and places of worship be taken in hand, and “the endowment principle” will soon be seen to be as efficient, as the voluntary principle is otherwise.

For the metropolis, now in actual peril, as left in the hands of seven hundred thousand intemperate, unchaste, dishonest sabbath-breakers, who have no opportunity of being otherwise, a grant of the small sum (small for the people of England) of one million, would effect a mighty change. Drawing forth fresh contributions from the people, it would speedily give being to three or four hundred new churches; and, allowing for the arduous nature of the work, and the frequent failure of the workmen, there is yet no room to doubt that in an exceedingly short space of time the fruits of the labours of three or four hundred additional labourers, giving their whole time to the task of reclaiming the hitherto heathen population of our crowded suburbs, would be seen to be a character yielding the richest return that any government could require, or legislature seek after. Let such an experiment as this be once tried, and if the results, in a very few years, are not unspeakably beneficial, *then*, indeed,—but not till then,—will we give Dr. Wardlaw leave to assert that “*both systems have failed.*”

## VI.

OFFICE AND FUNCTIONS OF AN ESTABLISHED CHURCH:  
MARKS OR NOTES OF A TRUE CHURCH.

WE have now arrived at the conclusion, from a consideration of the dictates of scripture, conscience, and experience,—that “it is the duty of rulers and legislators to establish the public worship of God.”<sup>1</sup> But the moment we assert this principle as a rule of action, we are drawn into a fresh discussion, and are compelled to vindicate it from the misrepresentations and exaggerations alike of friends and foes.

In this matter, as in many others, extremes are found to meet, and voluntaries and high-churchmen agree in ascribing to our theory a character wholly opposed to its real nature. Each, for the furtherance of purposes of his own, refuses to allow the principle to be seen in its just and scriptural simplicity, and persists in clothing it with attributes which render it positively antichristian.

The two nearly similar misrepresentations of which

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Dwight.* See Appendix, A.

we complain, are these.—1. Dr. Wardlaw and his friends perseveringly ascribe to us the doctrine,—That “the civil magistrate has the prerogative of authoritatively *choosing a religion* for his people.”<sup>1</sup> 2. Mr. Palmer, and those who think with him, make a trifling change, and then adopt the monstrous notion which Dr. W. had ascribed to us. They invest not the ruler, but the church, with the “prerogative of choosing a religion for the people.” In opposition to both of these, we deny, alike to the ruler and to the church, all power, right, or authority, to choose, decide, or otherwise interfere with, that one, definite, perfect, and only true faith which God has been pleased to reveal to us in his own word.

Let us consider, for a few moments, each of these theories apart.

1. Dr. Wardlaw is most pertinacious in his misrepresentations. Surely he cannot be altogether ignorant of that very necessary canon of controversy, which teaches us to notice an opponent’s own exposition of his principles, and, as far as possible, to give them in his own words.

Yet, in the writings of what defender of established churches that ever lived, would Dr. W. have found such notions as those he thus describes?

“A more extraordinary and self-contradictory anomaly cannot be imagined by the human mind, than that of a community placing over themselves a governor, one of whose official prerogatives it shall be *to dictate to them their religion.*”<sup>2</sup>

“That insupportable outrage on the reason and common sense of mankind,—that all-but infinite ab-

<sup>1</sup> *Wardlaw's Lectures*, p. 155.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 154.

surdity,—the investiture of the civil magistrate with the prerogative of *authoritatively choosing a religion for his people.*"<sup>1</sup>

"A right is demanded and pleaded for, on behalf of civil magistrates, under the Christian dispensation, such as never belonged to any magistrate under the Jewish;—the right, namely, of *determining the religion of the community* over which, in providence, they have been called to preside."<sup>2</sup>

"I cannot help regarding it as a very great inconsistency, to uphold *the right and duty of governors to choose their people's religion,*" &c.<sup>3</sup>

Thus again and again does Dr. Wardlaw deliberately ascribe to his opponents a doctrine which he must know they would earnestly disclaim, and which he can furnish no proof that they have ever taught. Nor can he allege ignorance in his justification. In his direct charges he thus states the doctrines of the defenders of church establishments; but when he happens incidentally and in passing to allude to them, he describes them with tolerable accuracy. In a few words at the close of his Lectures he says,—

"Could I be convinced, *that the maintenance and propagation of Christianity are really the province and the incumbent duty of the state,* I should unite," &c.<sup>4</sup>

Now between the right and duty of governors to "*choose their people's religion,*" and "*the right and duty of governors to maintain and propagate Christianity,*" there is all the difference in the world. To prove the two things to be identical,—or even to establish the least resemblance between them, would require a larger volume than Dr. Wardlaw has already written.

<sup>1</sup> *Wardlaw's Lectures*, p. 155.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 373.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 107.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 389.

And yet, knowing the *latter* to be the 'position really maintained by churchmen, he scruples not, again and again, to ascribe to them the *former* !

The first misrepresentation, then, of which we complain, and against which we protest, is,—the ascribing to us the doctrine that rulers possess the right and prerogative of *choosing* a *religion* for their subjects.

The doctrine really held by churchmen is well described by Abp. Usher, in the following terms :—

The duty of the civil magistrate is “to see that God be honoured in his dominions: That abuses in religion be reformed, and the truth promoted and maintained; after the example of David, Solomon, Hezekiah, Josiah, and the other good kings. (2 Chron. xiv. 3, 4; xv. 12—15; xvii. 6—9.)”

“He should plant the sincere preaching of the word among his subjects, so that they may be more obedient unto him: and take care that the good things already taught and established may be done as God hath appointed. *He is not to make new laws of his own* for religion; but to see those ordinances of religion which are grounded on the word of God, duly established: that so God may be truly served and glorified, and the churches within his realms, and under his government, may “lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty.” 2 *Tim.* ii. 2.”<sup>1</sup>

Or, as Dr. Wardlaw had himself quoted from the Scottish Confession of Faith,—

“The civil magistrate may not assume to himself the administration of the word and sacraments, or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven; yet

<sup>1</sup> *Usher's Body of Divinity*, fol. 1677, p. 265.

he hath, and it is his duty, to take order, that unity and peace be preserved in the church; that *the truth of God* be kept pure and entire, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline prevented and reformed, and all *the ordinances of God* duly settled, administered, and observed."

Such, then, is the ground taken by the highest authorities among churchmen. No right is here claimed, no duty asserted, but as growing *directly out of God's own word*. But this brings us to the second class of misrepresentations or erroneous views,—namely, those of certain writers who would claim, not for the ruler, but for what they term 'the church,' a right very much resembling that spoken of by Dr. Wardlaw,—a right not perhaps of *choosing*, but of framing or prescribing a religion for the people.

Mr. Palmer argues as follows:—"The church of Christ is *divinely authorized* to judge whether controverted doctrines are those of the gospel, or contrary to the gospel, and to provide for the security of religion, by separating from her communion those who obstinately contradict the revealed truth."<sup>1</sup>

"Christ cannot have authorized two contradictory judgments or actions; therefore, when the universal church has manifested her judgment, *individuals cannot be authorized to oppose their judgment to hers.*"<sup>2</sup>

"Such a judgment is irrevocable, irreformable, never to be altered." "All individuals are bound to submit to such a judgment."<sup>3</sup>

*The Tracts for the Times* thus teach:—"Sectaries commonly give up the church's doctrines, and go by

<sup>1</sup> *Palmer's Treatise*, vol. ii. p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 110.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 114.



the church's Bible; but if the doctrines cannot be proved true, neither can the Bible; they stand or fall together." "Why should not the church be *divine*? The burden of proof surely lies on the other side. I will accept her doctrines,<sup>1</sup> and her rites, and her Bible,—not one and not the other, but *all*."<sup>2</sup>

"The *two* great foundations of religion,—the Bible and the Articles; for the Bible is *included* in the Articles."<sup>3</sup>

"From the very first, the rule has been, as a matter of fact, for the church to teach the truth, and then to appeal to the Bible in vindication of its own teaching."<sup>4</sup>

In these passages it is sufficiently clear that *the teaching of the church* is made, to all practical purposes, the Rule of Faith; and the Bible is reduced to the rank of *one* of the possessions of the church, ("her doctrines, and her rites, and her Bible,") and a document by which she proves and establishes the faith which she teaches.

Now let us consider this matter for a few moments, and see if this theory is consistent with itself, and will bear examination.

"The church Catholic," says Mr. Newman, "is ever *divinely guided* to teach the truth; her witness of the Christian faith is matter of *promise* as well as duty; her discernment of it is secured by a *heavenly* as well as human rule. She is *indefectible* in it, and"—"not only transmits the faith by human means, but has a

<sup>1</sup> The '*Church Doctrines*' had been previously alluded to, as 'Baptism, the Lord's Supper, Church Union, Ministerial Power, Apostolical Succession, Absolution, and other rites and ceremonies.' (p. 5.)

<sup>2</sup> *Tracts for the Times*, No. 85, p. 115.

<sup>3</sup> *Sewell on Subscript*. p. 37.

<sup>4</sup> *Newman's Arians of the Fourth Century*, p. 49.

*supernatural gift* for that purpose.”<sup>1</sup> “The church Catholic is *unerring* in its declarations of faith or saving doctrine.”<sup>2</sup>

But how are we to hear “the church Catholic,” for our own comfort and guidance? On this point we are thus instructed:—

“Our own church is the immediate, the church universal, the ultimate visible authority. Our own church is to us the representative of the universal church, as the universal church is of her Lord.”<sup>3</sup>

“Our own branch may surely be considered among us as the voice of her who has been in the world, even one and the same since Christ came. Surely she comes up to the theory; she professes to be the Catholic church, and to transmit that one ancient Catholic faith, and she does transmit it.”<sup>4</sup>

Hence we are told, that as “to suppose that the universal church *could* determine what is contrary to the gospel revealed by Jesus Christ, would be inconsistent with the promises of Christ himself,”—it follows, that “individuals cannot be justified in opposing their private opinions to it.”<sup>5</sup>

“They are *bound*, if they would remain her children, as far as their minds attain to her doctrine, to take it *on the ground of her Catholicity*.” “Her members must believe or *silently acquiesce in the whole* of it.”<sup>6</sup> “We receive as articles of faith what our church delivers to us as fixedly the universal church; what she has by her private judgment deduced from the holy scripture, we teach because we also think it to be so de-

<sup>1</sup> Newman on Romanism, p. 232, 233.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 59.

<sup>3</sup> Pusey's Letter to the Bp. of Oxford, p. 52.

Newman on Romanism, p. 320.

<sup>5</sup> Palmer's Treatise, v. ii. p. 111.

<sup>6</sup> Newman on Romanism, p. 312, 313.

ducible; *if we did not think so, WE SHOULD OBEY, must belong to her, but could not teach.*"<sup>1</sup>

Here, then, we have the Romish rule of faith, THE DECISIONS OF THE CHURCH, as opposed to the Protestant rule, HOLY SCRIPTURE, most explicitly and entirely adopted. But its advocates are in a most disadvantageous position. The Romish doctors are at least consistent and intelligible; whereas those who have not yet publicly joined what they term 'the Roman obedience,' and yet contend for the Romish principle, are involved in an inextricable maze of contradictions and absurdities.

Rome acknowledges but one church, herself; and having a visible head as well as a visible body, she finds no difficulty in presenting an external semblance of unity, consistency, and doctrinal agreement. But with those who are not within her pale, the case is widely different. In endeavouring to imitate Rome, with distinction, division, and opposition marked on our very front, we find ourselves immediately involved in the difficulties of a rule, which is self-contradictory and self-opposed.

Try this rule on a practical question. Dr. Pusey tells us, that "our church is to us the representative of the universal church;" and that, even in matters in which we think her at variance with scripture, we are bound to "obey her." And Mr. Newman adds, that we "must *believe* or silently *acquiesce* in the whole of her doctrine." But our obligation thus to "obey" and to "acquiesce" arises out of the fact, that she is "a branch of the church catholic;" which church catholic is "*unerring*" in its decisions.

<sup>1</sup> *Pusey to the Bishop of Oxford*, p. 52, 53.

Well; this “branch of the church catholic” solemnly declares, and compels all her ministers to subscribe the declaration, that

“Transubstantiation is repugnant to the plain words of scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.” (Art. xxviii.) And that,

“The sacrifices of masses, in the 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.*”

But the moment we pass a few miles of sea, we find ourselves in the midst of the nations belonging to “the Roman obedience.” These constitute, according to Mr. Palmer,<sup>1</sup> Dr. Pusey, and others, another “branch of the church catholic,” and to the inhabitants of those countries that branch is as fully as our own, “the representative of the universal church, as the universal church is of her Lord.” Nay, Mr. Palmer even argues that the myriads of Englishmen who visit those countries ought to be “willing to communicate with those churches,” if only they will receive them as brethren, and not “*exact* a condemnation of their own church.”<sup>2</sup>

But these churches hold and insist upon the doctrine of transubstantiation, and never allow a sabbath to pass without the celebration of the mass. So that we find this same rule—the decisions of the church—denouncing transubstantiation at Dover, and adopting it at Calais,—declaring the mass to be “a blasphemous fable” at Canterbury, and yet prescribing attendance on it at Rouen! And amidst all this confusion

<sup>1</sup> *Palmer's Treatise*, vol. i. 282—318.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid* p. 318.

and contradiction, we find Mr. Palmer asserting, that the judgment of the church "is irrevocable, irreformable, never to be altered," inasmuch as "Christ cannot have authorized two contradictory judgments or actions!"<sup>1</sup>

And this is but a single example out of many that might be adduced. In a variety of points of immense importance, such as justification by works, instead of by faith; the worship of dead men and women in the stead of the Saviour; a supposed change in the destiny of the departed, by means of purchased prayers; and will-worship of every variety of form and mode,—the church of England and "the Roman obedience" stand in direct opposition. To talk of a rule of faith, then, which enjoins the one system in England and the other in France, is to assert that truth is not one, or even at harmony with itself; but multifarious in its views of the same question, and varying in its decisions according to the degrees of latitude to which they are adjusted.

This notion, then, is clearly untenable. The only mode in which it can be made to assume even a plausible appearance, is that adopted at Rome. Advance the pretensions of a single society, united under a visible head, and acting at least with a semblance of unity; and you may *assume*, without any sufficient grounds, indeed, but still without any glaring logical impropriety, that this one visible body is "the church," and that to her and in her, alone, are all the Saviour's promises realized. Such a society may talk of its "decisions," without talking absolute nonsense. But to speak of "the church

<sup>1</sup> *Palmer's Treatise*, vol. ii. p. 110, 114.

catholic," as embracing the English and the Romish, the Greek and the Abyssinian, the Russian and the Coptic communions, and to ascribe to such an heterogeneous mass as this the power of "judging and deciding," "indefectibly," "supernaturally," and with "divine authority," is certainly one of the most astonishing instances of a baseless and impracticable theory that modern times have produced.

Nothing can be more indisputably clear, than that such an incongruous mass is wholly incapable of any decision or judgment whatever. Equally obvious is it, that one branch or section of the aggregate cannot assume to itself the rights and privileges of the whole, be those privileges what they may. Even those who argue that Christ's promise to be "ever with" his disciples, belongs to the visible church universal, cannot extend the full force of that promise to every branch, without going in direct opposition to our Lord's own words to the churches of Ephesus and Laodicea. (Rev. ii. 5; iii. 16.) And in practice, as we have already seen, it involves the absurdity of a man's being *bound to believe* one system of doctrines while he resides in England, and a totally different and contradictory system, if his affairs should lead him to remove to Belgium.

A *rule of faith* like this may indeed serve to betray us into Romanism, which is far more rational and consistent with itself; but it can answer no other purpose. The theory is as untenable, as contrary to the doctrines of the church of England, and as mischievous, as that unjustly ascribed to us by Dr. Wardlaw. The Protestant will no more consent to take his creed implicitly from "the church," apart from the Bible, than he will take it from the civil

magistrate. Neither his civil nor his ecclesiastical superiors have any rightful authority to “prescribe to him his religion.” God himself has most graciously condescended to reveal to him His will in His written word; and the founders of the reformed church of England have taught him, that neither “*against* the same,” nor yet “*besides* the same,” may anything be lawfully taught as of necessity to salvation.

This exaggeration, then, of the powers and functions of the church, is neither justifiable in itself, nor consistent with the declarations of our own Establishment. The church of England most emphatically and explicitly declares, that “Holy scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.” (Art. vi.) And that, although every church must have a certain power of internal regulation, as to rites and ceremonies, and those controversies which are ever springing up, “yet it is not lawful for the church to ordain anything that is contrary to God’s word written; neither may it so expound one place of scripture, that it be repugnant to another. Wherefore, although the church be a witness and a keeper of holy writ; yet, as it ought not to decree anything against the same, so besides the same ought it not to enforce anything to be believed for necessity of salvation.” (Art. xx.)

Here, then, is the church’s office and duty. She is “a witness and keeper of holy writ.” To her, as to the Jewish church of old, is committed the care

of "the oracles of God." Her chief function and duty is, to maintain them in their purity, and to minister them to the people. A very important duty is contained in the first of these points, "*Every word of God is PURE: Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.*" (Prov. xxx. 5, 6.) The great enemy of Christ's church is ever trying to find entrance at this point. Sometimes the necessity of "tradition" is pleaded; sometimes "the right of interpretation." Of the first point we shall presently speak. On the second head, our own church has been admirably explicit. Nothing, she declares, is "to be required of any man," as "an article of faith," or as "requisite to salvation," except what is "read therein or may be proved thereby." Nor may the church herself "so expound one place of scripture, that it be repugnant to another." These limitations, it is clear, reduce the church's authority within safe and scriptural bounds. She is "an ambassador for Christ," and she has her instructions and her message legibly set forth. All that is therein contained she is bound to inculcate, and she is equally bound to preach, as "of necessity to salvation," nothing that is not.

Connected with this subject is another, which divines have been accustomed to treat of, under the title of "the Notes or Marks of the Church." If a church of Christ exists in the country wherein the providence of God has placed me, it is my duty to join myself to it. But the question may be started, Whether it be indeed a church of Christ? And this must obviously be decided by a consideration of the marks which belong to a Christian church.



"Surrounded," says Mr. Palmer, "by a vast multitude of contending societies calling themselves Christian, and all alike claiming to be churches of Christ, there is an apparent necessity for the discovery of some method, by which, without any extreme difficulty or labour, we may discriminate the church of God from its rivals."

"Christ and his apostles predicted that, after their departure, there should be false Christs and false prophets, antichrists and false teachers, who should privily bring in damnable heresies; and that many should be deceived by their arts. These evils were to continue even in the latter days of the world; and therefore there is a very great probability, that some of the communities calling themselves Christian, may have arisen in this manner, and are not to be reckoned any part of the church of Christ."

"By what means, then, can we determine with certainty, which, among these communities are indeed portions of the church of God?"<sup>1</sup>

"Theologians in various ages, have endeavoured to lay down rules for the discrimination of Christ's church, by a comparatively short and intelligible process; and these rules are styled *notes* or *signs* of the church. By notes of the church are meant some of its more prominent attributes, which may be ascertained and applied to all existing communities of professing Christians, without any very lengthened discussion on obscure and difficult points."<sup>2</sup>

In the propriety and expediency of this inquiry all will agree. The "notes of the church" occupy a prominent place in all systems of theology, Romish

<sup>1</sup> *Palmer's Treatise*, vol. i. p. 22, 23.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 24.

or Protestant. But the moment we advance another step, we part company with Mr. Palmer. There are two very distinct and perfectly opposite views, or modes of treating this subject,—the one adopted by all Romanists, the other by all Protestants, (the exceptions to each class being quite insignificant)—and it has pleased Mr. P. on this, as on various other points, to range himself on the side of the divines of “the Roman obedience;” more properly called “the great Antichristian Apostacy.”

These two views or schemes may be described as the *genealogical* and the *theological*. The one discovers the church by her *pedigree*, the other by her *character*.

I. The first scheme, that of the Papists; is thus described by Milner, in his “*End of Controversy*.”

“The chief marks of the true church, which I shall here assign, are not only conformable to reason, scripture, and tradition, but (which is a most fortunate circumstance) they are such as the church of England, and most other respectable denominations of Protestants, acknowledge and profess to believe in, no less than Catholics. Yes, dear Sir, they are contained in those *creeds*, which you recite in your daily prayers, and proclaim in your solemn worship. In fact, what do you say of the church you believe in, when you repeat the Apostles’ Creed? You say, *I believe in the holy catholic church*. Again, how is this church more particularly described in the Nicene creed, which makes part of your public liturgy? In this you say: *I believe in one catholic and apostolic church*. Hence it evidently follows that the church which you, no less than we, profess to believe in, is

possessed of these four marks: *unity, sanctity, catholicity, and apostolicity.*"<sup>1</sup>

It must be observed, however, that while the Romish controversialist adroitly refers us to the creeds we use, he freely admits that his "notes" are not those generally adopted by Protestants. "Luther," he says, "Calvin, and the Church of England, assign as the characteristics or marks of the true church of Christ, Truth of doctrine, and the right administration of the Sacraments."<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Wiseman, in his Lectures, follows exactly the same line of argument as Milner. He says, "I am content to take the question upon common grounds. We are all agreed, at least the great majority of Christians in this country, in the acceptance of a common symbol of faith or creed; and all profess in it their belief in *One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic* church. I willingly stand on this admitted principle."<sup>3</sup>

And, after traversing this ground, the Romish writer comes to the following conclusion: "Thus, therefore, adopting those guides which creeds or symbols of faith can give us, we come to this important conclusion,—that on principle, the Catholic church alone maintains possession of those different characteristics; that the rule of faith of other churches, so far from supposing these to be in their possession, entirely excludes them, and allows them not to be held as ground of adhesion to those churches."<sup>4</sup>

Mr. Palmer, however, although both these Romish writers admit and declare the Protestant notes of the

<sup>1</sup> *Milner's End of Controversy*, p. 176.

<sup>3</sup> *Wiseman's Lectures*, p. 316.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 174.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 322.

church to be wholly different from the Romish,—insists upon being admitted into their society, and allowed to adopt their system. He says,

“The Constantinopolitan creed gives to the church the attributes of ONE, HOLY, CATHOLIC, and APOSTOLICAL;” and as the notes of the church may in fact be included under these four heads, and as *Romish theologians generally make use of them* for the purpose, I shall for the sake of convenience adopt this arrangement.”<sup>1</sup>

It might have been thought that the mere circumstance of finding this scheme “generally adopted by Romish theologians,” and as generally repudiated by all Protestant writers, would have made Mr. Palmer cautious of at once assenting to Dr. Wiseman’s and Dr. Milner’s mode of carrying on the argument. This preliminary question is not an immaterial one. *It is vital*, in the controversy between the papacy and its opponents. Only let the test to be applied, be limited to *external marks*, and Rome is secure of victory. But bring that apostacy to the only sure criterion—“to the law and to the testimony”—and its detection is immediate. In yielding this point, then, Mr. Palmer has, perhaps not very unwillingly, ensured the triumph of the Romanists, so far as *he* is concerned. It is not very often that we find controversialists, who are *sincere* in the cause they profess to advocate, at once yield to an adversary all the *data* he requires to establish his case.

II. So much for the Romish theory. But the whole of the Reformed churches, and all their divines, in the sixteenth century, with one voice refused this

<sup>1</sup> *Palmer’s Treatise*, vol. i. p. 27.

view, and adopted the test of *character*, in preference to that of *pedigree*. This might be shewn by proofs innumerable; but a few will suffice. We shall arrange them in three classes.

1. The decisions of the Church of England; in all her standards and authorized declarations.

In her Articles she defines the visible church of Christ to be, "a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same." (*Art. xix.*)

In her homilies she thus enlarges the same statement:—

"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." (*Homily for Whitsunday, part ii.*)

Again, in the *Catechism of Edward VI.* written by Dean Nowell, revised by Bishop Ridley, and approved and set forth in 1570 by authority of Convocation,—the following description of a visible church of Christ is given:—

"The marks, therefore, of this church are: first, pure Preaching of the Gospel; then brotherly love, out of which, as members all out of one body, spring goodwill of each to the other: thirdly, upright and uncorrupted use of the Lord's Sacraments, according to the ordinance of the gospel; last of all, bro-

therly correction and excommunication, or banishing those out of the church that will not amend their lives.”

These three plain declarations leave no room to doubt, that the church of England, at the Reformation, wholly refused to admit the marks proposed by the Romanists; “unity, sanctity, catholicity, and apostolicity;” and adhered to a totally different scheme—the recognition of a true church by her *doctrine* and her *sacraments*; i. e. by her internal character and her Christian obedience.

2. And the whole Reformation, throughout Europe, entirely concurred in this view. The confessions of the various churches most explicitly declare this.

The *Helvetian Confession* says—“We teach that to be the true church indeed, in which the marks and tokens of the true church are to be found. First and chiefly, the lawful or sincere preaching of the Word of God, as it is left us in the writings of the prophets and apostles.” “They do withal communicate in the Sacraments ordained by Christ, and delivered unto us by his apostles, using them in no other manner than as they received them from the Lord himself.”

The *Bohemian Confession* follows, in these words:—“The true church may be known by these signs that follow; namely, wheresoever Christ is taught in holy assemblies; the Doctrine of the gospel is purely and fully preached; and the Sacraments are administered according to Christ’s institution and will.”

The *Confession of France* proceeds thus:—“We affirm, out of the word of God, that the church is a company of the faithful, which agree together in fol-

lowing the Word of God, and in embracing pure religion." "And we condemn the papistical assemblies, because that the pure truth of God is banished from them; and the Sacraments of faith corrupted, counterfeited, and falsified, or altogether abolished."

That of *Scotland* is still more emphatic. It runs thus:—"The notes, signs, and assured tokens, whereby the immaculate spouse of Christ Jesus is known from the horrible harlot, the church malignant, we affirm are neither antiquity, title usurped, lineal descent, place appointed, nor multitude of men approving an error. For Cain in age and title was preferred to Abel and Seth: Jerusalem had prerogative above all places of the earth; where also were the priests, lineally descended from Aaron; and greater numbers followed the scribes and pharisees, than unfeignedly believed Christ Jesus and his doctrine. And yet we suppose no man of sound judgment will grant, that any of the forenamed were the church of God. The notes, therefore, of the true church of God, we believe, confess, and avow to be, first the true preaching of the Word of God, in the which God hath revealed himself unto us;"—"secondly, the right administration of the Sacraments of Christ Jesus;"—"lastly, ecclesiastical discipline, uprightly ministered, as God's word prescribeth."

The *Belgian Confession* follows:—"The true church may be discerned from the false by these notes. If the pure preaching of the Gospel do flourish in it; if it have the lawful administration of the Sacraments, according to Christ's institution; if it do use the right ecclesiastical discipline for the restraining of vice; finally, if it do square all things to the will of

God's word, refusing whatsoever is contrary to it, acknowledging Christ to be the only head of the same: by these notes it is certain that the true church may be discerned."

The *Confession of Saxony* thus argues:—"Therefore, chiefly by the word of doctrine, we may and ought to judge, which and where the true church is; which, by the Word of true Doctrine, and then by the lawful use of the Sacraments, is distinguished from other nations."

Lastly, the *Confession of Sueveland* agrees, that "wheresoever the holy Gospel and the Sacraments be exercised, thereupon it may easily be known, where and who be the Christian church."

Thus is it indisputably clear, that among the churches of the Reformation but one judgment prevailed—that the marks of a true church were, pure and sound Doctrine; and the right administration of the Sacraments; to which were sometimes added, sound discipline and brotherly love. But the popish "marks," to which Mr. Palmer gives the preference, were with one consent universally repudiated.

3. Descending from churches to individuals, it is equally clear and certain, that all the chief divines of the Reformation, in their theological writings, maintain the same view which we have found in the confessions of their churches. Not to encumber the argument with a multitude of proofs, we will limit ourselves to the leading divines of our own church.

Bishop Ridley, in his second conference, thus handles the question:—

"The marks whereby the Catholic church is known unto me in this dark world, and in the midst of this crooked and froward generation, are these:—



the sincere preaching of God's holy Word—the due administration of the Sacraments—charity—and faithful observance of ecclesiastical discipline according to the word of God." <sup>1</sup>

Bishop Jewell, in his Apology, says:—

"But now, whereas they pretend to be in possession of the whole Catholic church, and call us heretics because we do not agree with them; let us see what mark that church hath of the church of God." St. Augustine saith, "The church is to be shewn out of the sacred scriptures; and whatever cannot derive itself from them, is not the church." He then enters into a variety of charges against the Papacy, and sums up thus;—"We have forsaken a church in which we could neither hear the pure Word of God, nor administer the Sacraments, nor invoke the name of God, as we ought." (Apol. iv. v.)

Archbishop Whitgift, writing a few years after, is still more explicit:—

"The essential notes of the church be these only: the true preaching of the Word of God, and the right administration of the Sacraments." "Such is the judgment of the reformed churches, as appeareth by their confessions. So that notwithstanding government, or some kind of government, may be a part of the church, touching the outward form and perfection of it; yet is it not such a part of the essence and being, but that it may be the church of Christ without this or that kind of government; and therefore the kind of government of the church is not necessary to salvation." <sup>2</sup>

But Archbishop Usher gives, on this, as on most other questions, the most profound and convincing

<sup>1</sup> *Foxe*, vol. vii. p. 412.

<sup>2</sup> *Whitgift's Defence*, p. 81.

judgment. To the question,—“What are the marks and notes whereby to discern a true visible church, with which we may safely join?”—he replies,—

“First and principally, the truth of Doctrine which is professed, and the sincere preaching of the Word; together with the due administration of the Sacraments, according to the commandment of Christ our Saviour. (Matt. xxviii.) Secondly, the right order which is kept; with a sincere and conscionable obedience yielded to the word of God.”

But this great prelate, as his custom is, refutes the error as well as asserts the truth. To the further question:—“What say you to the other Notes that are commonly given of the church?”—he replies,—

“Either they are accidental, and in great part separable; or utterly impertinent, and forged for the upholding of the Romish synagogue.”

“But is not Antiquity a certain note of the church?”

“No; for errors are very ancient; and the church, when it began, was a church, yet had no antiquity.”

“Is not Multitude a note?”

“No; for Christ’s flock is a “little flock; and Antichrist’s very great.” Rev. xiii. 3, 4, 8.

“Are not Miracles a mark of the church?”

“No; for beside that wicked people may work them, (Matt. vii. 22, 23.)—the church of Christ hath been without miracles; and the enemy of antichrist is foretold to be “with all power, and signs, and lying wonders.”

The church of England, then, in its authoritative declarations; the sister churches of the reformation; and the greatest divines of that or any other day, all unite in asserting the essential marks of a true church

<sup>1</sup> *Usher’s Body of Divinity*, fo. 1677. p. 376.

to be, that soundness of Doctrine, and right use of the Sacraments, which Mr. Palmer refuses to accept as marks; and in repudiating those Romish notes which he, in preference, adopts.

But we may proceed yet further, and allege two other grounds for rejecting his scheme. These are—

4. Reason and common sense. Mr. Palmer is more ready on this than on other points, to appeal to these criteria. He says, “The precepts of Christian *prudence* require, that we should take the briefest course;”—and argues, that “we are in no degree bound to sustain a line of argument which *we* may not *judge* to be well founded.”<sup>1</sup>

Let us, then, examine his own scheme, together with his own reasons for adopting it.

The two grounds for preferring the course recommended by Drs. Milner and Wiseman, are these: “1. As Romish theologians generally make use of these notes for the purpose, I shall, for the sake of convenience, adopt this arrangement.”<sup>2</sup> 2. The other scheme, (truth of doctrine and right administration of the sacraments) “would demand too lengthened a process.” “Christian *prudence* requires that we should take the briefest course.”<sup>3</sup>

Now with a sincere Protestant, the first of these circumstances, instead of *attracting*, would have *repelled*. Had Mr. P. been inimical, instead of friendly, to Popery, he would never have thought of adopting a certain line of argument, *because* “Romish theologians generally use it.” It is not that he follows the Papists through their own reasonings, in order thereby the more effectually to defeat them. On the

<sup>1</sup> *Palmer's Treatise*, vol. i. p. 24—27.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 27

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 24, 25.

contrary, he here concedes to them the *data* on which their system rests ; he concedes to them a *foundation* for their whole platform. If the true church is to be discovered by external and historical marks, then will Popery, without much difficulty, resolutely maintain its ground ; but if the appeal be made, not to genealogies, but to scripture, the apostacy is instantly detected and unveiled. Mr. P. in conceding this first great point, has yielded more than half of the question at issue.

His other reason rests upon an error in fact. He chooses to assume that the simple comparison of the doctrines and sacraments of a church with the word of God would be “ a lengthened process,” and that a briefer course is essentially necessary.

Now how stands the fact? The Romanists themselves are not of Mr. P.’s opinion, that the discovery of the true character of the church of Christ, and the detection of their impostures, by a simple reference to the word of God, would be “ a lengthened process,” for which, according to Mr. Palmer’s view, life itself would scarcely suffice. Dr. Wiseman, on the contrary, in his opening Lecture, thus describes a conversion to Protestantism.

“ The history, in every case, is simply this ; that the individual, by some chance or other, probably through the ministry of some pious person, became possessed of the word of God, of the Bible ;—that he perused this book ; that he could not find in it transubstantiation or auricular confession ; that he could not find in it one word of purgatory, or of worshipping images. He perhaps goes to the priest, and tells him that he cannot find these doctrines in the Bible ; his priest argues with him, and endeavours

to convince him that he should shut up the book that is leading him astray ; he perseveres, he abandons the communion of the church of Rome, and becomes a Protestant.”<sup>1</sup>

Here we have a plain and simple sketch of how the pretensions of a church ought to be investigated, and of the sure and immediate consequences to the interests of the Papacy of such an investigation. In this view it is obviously natural enough, that the priest should endeavour to persuade his wandering disciple “to shut up the book that was leading him astray ;” but we are at a loss to conceive why a sincere Protestant, if Mr. Palmer were one, should consent to the Romish mode of investigation, and turn from “the law and the testimony,” to “fables and endless genealogies.”

It is not true, that the Protestant mode of examination, by “truth of doctrine and the right administration of the sacraments,” would be “a lengthened process ;” nor is it true that the Romish plan would prove “the briefest course.”

How long would it take any simple, sincere, and earnest inquirer, carefully to compare the decrees of the council of Trent with the epistles of St. Paul, and to satisfy his own mind on the point of the agreement or disagreement of the two ?

Or how many hours would be necessary to enable a searcher after truth to compare the institution of the Lord’s supper, as recorded by the evangelists and by St. Paul, with the ritual of the mass, and to determine whether or not, in the Romish church, this sacrament be “duly administered according to Christ’s ordinance ?”

<sup>1</sup> *Wiseman’s Lecture*. i. p. 19.

But, if this seem to Mr. Palmer “a lengthened process,”—how much more lengthened must be the investigation which he prefers. The question, practically, to a man residing in England, thus shapes itself:—Is the church of England a true church of Christ?

And Mr. Palmer gravely recommends him, in the prosecution of this inquiry,—not to ask whether “the pure word of God is preached and the sacraments duly administered according to Christ’s ordinance,” (Art. xix.)—in this church of England; but, whether the said church be “One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic.” Now let any man quietly and dispassionately read over these, proposed as “Notes of the church,” and say what kind of an inquiry this would promise to be.

To prove the church of England to be “One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic!” Why, this is precisely the ground, on which the Romanists always desire to rest the controversy! It is conceding to them fully half the question at issue between us. The unity of the church,—the fact being that England is at variance and dissonance with the professedly Christian churches of half the world;—and the apostolicity of the church, the greater proportion of the nominally Christian churches looking upon us as impostors, and we ourselves not knowing whether we trace our succession through St. Paul or through Gregory;—how endless are the controversies into which we thus cast ourselves! And how contrary to every dictate of reason and common sense is the whole proceeding.

Well has Chillingworth argued on this point,—“How shall an unlearned man, whom you have supposed now ignorant of scripture, how shall he know which of all the societies of Christians is indeed the

church? You will say perhaps, *He must examine them by the notes of the church, which are perpetual visibility, succession, conformity with the ancient church, &c.* But how shall he know, first, that these are the Notes of the Church, unless by scripture, which, you say, he understands not? You may say perhaps, he may be told so. But seeing men may deceive, and be deceived, and their words are no demonstrations, how shall he be assured that what they say is true? So that at the first he meets with an impregnable difficulty, and cannot know the church but by such notes, which whether they be the notes of the church he cannot possibly know. But let us suppose this *Isthmus* digged through, and that he is assured, these are the notes of the true church: how can he possibly be a competent judge, which society of Christians hath title to these notes, and which hath not? Seeing this trial of necessity requires a great sufficiency of knowledge of the monuments of Christian antiquity; which no unlearned man can have, because he that hath it cannot be unlearned. As, for example, how shall he possibly be able to know whether the church of Rome hath had a perpetual succession of visible professors, which held always the same doctrine which they now hold, without holding any thing to the contrary; unless he hath first examined, what was the doctrine of the church in the first age, what in the second, and so forth? And whether this be not a (more) difficult work, than to stay at the first age, and to examine the church by the conformity of her doctrine with the doctrine of the first age, every man of ordinary understanding may judge.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Chillingworth's Works*, fol. 1704. p. 71, 72.

Bishop Ridley, in his second conference, quotes Chrysostom to this effect:—"In times past, there were many ways to know the church of Christ, that is to say, by good life, by miracles, by charity, by doctrine, by ministering the sacraments. But from the time that heresies took hold of the churches, it is *only known by the scriptures which is the true church*. They have all things in *outward* shew, which the true church hath in truth. They have temples like unto ours, &c. &c., Wherefore only by the scriptures do we know which is the true church."

But may we not appeal to the common sense of mankind? Apart from the lessons of the schools, or the dogmas of scholastic divines, the general usage of the world repudiates such a course as is pressed upon us. How are other things universally tested? A diamond is offered to the merchant: its exterior is that of a genuine stone: its colour is corroborative: its brilliance is all that could be desired. Abundant evidence is offered as to its history; whence it came, of whom it was received, &c. But the experienced merchant knows that this is not sufficient:—imitations have been contrived which can offer all these recommendations. He has a test to apply; and that test searches into its *intrinsic character*.

To go one step higher, and name the only earthly thing that transcends the diamond: a man, educated, accomplished, ingenious, insinuating, offers himself to the service of the merchant or the statesman. He exhibits, apparently, the most entire qualification: and he is received upon trial. But what his employer chiefly looks for, and what he endeavours above all to ascertain, is, not his birth, or education, or training, but his personal, his *intrinsic character*.



Common sense, if we could banish the schoolmen, the councils, and the system-makers, would dictate the same course in the far higher question of the marks of a true church. It would tell us—Rest not in long descent, or in indubitable succession from the apostles, or in general concurrence with the whole body of Christians, or in any other external marks: Christ founded a church; he commissioned a body of preachers of his gospel, and he left them a few plain and simple rules. Try every church, then, that professes to be following his injunctions, by the records and injunctions he has left, “*To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.*”

5. And such is the course distinctly pointed out in scripture. Not a syllable is there to tell us, that a divine commission, regularly transmitted in strict succession, or an external unity of profession, is to be our chief guide in reposing our confidence in a priesthood or a church. Nothing could be clearer than the divine institution of the Old Testament priesthood; and yet how many threatenings and reproaches does God himself direct against these, his commissioned ministers.

“*The priests said not, Where is the Lord? and they that handle the law knew me not: the pastors also transgressed against me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit.*” Jer. ii. 8.

“*The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?*” Jerem. v. 31.

“*The priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts. But ye are departed out of the*

*way ; ye have caused many to stumble at the law ; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the Lord of hosts."* Malachi ii. 7, 8.

The priesthood of the old dispensation, then, led the people astray, and the Jewish church is consequently spoken of as an adulterous and apostate church. The ministry of the New Testament succeeds. Less stress is now laid upon the commission and the succession than before : is it probable that doctrine is to become a minor point, and the externals of the ministry be made the sole or principal test of a true and faithful church ?

Assuredly not. Every word in the apostolic writings, connected with this subject, has a totally opposite bearing. The apostle Paul could bear to have his authority set at nought, and a rival ministration set up "of envy and strife,"—yea, he could even rejoice at it, so that Christ and his gospel were but preached. But if not his own authority merely, but the doctrines of the gospel be assailed, instantly comes forth his strongest anathema :—

*"Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."* Gal. i. 8.

In the very same spirit writes the beloved disciple, the tender and gentle St. John. "*If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed.*" 2 John 10. Thus, with both apostles, the test is not an apostolic commission, but the apostolic doctrine.

Many other passages might be adduced, if space permitted, (as Acts xiii. 43 ; xv. 22. 2 Tim. i. 12 ; iii. 14. Titus i. 9, and Jude's epistle) to shew that the grand point pressed by all the apostles, was,

*continuance in sound doctrine.* This was, with them, the chief note or mark of a true or faithful church.

Our Lord himself, in his last words to the Christian church, abundantly confirms this view. In writing, by his beloved apostle John, to the Asiatic churches, he more than once threatens the removal of the candlestick, or the spiritual extinction of the church. But for what offence or unfaithfulness is this greatest punishment threatened? *For departure from sound doctrine.* This is the one grand test, adopted by the Lord himself, as well as by his apostles. See Rev. ii. 15, 16, 24, 25; iii. 8, 13, 11.

In fact, both in the Old and New Testaments,—especially in Ezekiel, Hosea, and the Apocalypse,—the fall of a church into false doctrine, which is always connected with idolatry, in every case leads to a total change in the standing and character of that church in the sight of the inspired writers. From being spoken of as a wife, such a church instantly falls into the condition of a harlot. The love with which she was regarded is turned into abhorrence, and the most dreadful threatenings are directed against those who are seduced by her.

The *one question*, then, in the scriptures, touching any church, is, Is it *faithful*? Faithful to the *doctrine* intrusted to its care? Is the gospel preached, the same gospel which the apostles declared; or is it “another gospel;” against which St. Paul fulminated his anathemas? *This* is the chief and almost the only point suggested in holy writ as the mark or note of a true church. And this is the test applied by all the reformed churches; but very naturally disliked by Dr. Wiseman, Dr. Milner, and Mr. Palmer.

## VII.

ON SOME EXAGGERATED VIEWS OF THE CHURCH'S  
AUTHORITY AND FUNCTIONS.

WE have already referred to the careful self-denial of the English church, in putting from her all power to enunciate as "of necessity to salvation," any doctrine which is not visibly contained in holy scripture. There are those, however, among recent writers on this subject, who admit these renunciations, in form, but immediately proceed to nullify them in practice.

The sixth article enjoins upon every minister of the church of England, that he shall "not require of any man to believe, as an article of faith, or as requisite or necessary to salvation," anything which "is not read in holy scripture or may be proved thereby."

Well, but,—it is immediately remarked,—the very wording of the article shews that "it is probable that our church means that things *may be required* to be believed which are not proved by holy scripture, provided it be not upon peril of salvation."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Pusey's Letter*, p. 28.

Here, at once, the door is thrown open ; and a co-adjutor of Dr. P.'s proceeds as follows,—

“The church of Christ is *divinely* authorized to judge whether *controverted doctrines* are those of the gospel, or contrary to the gospel, and to provide for the security of religion, by separating from her communion those who obstinately contradict the revealed truth.”<sup>1</sup>

“She is ever *divinely* guided to teach the truth ; her witness of the Christian faith is a matter of promise as well as duty ; her discernment of it is secured by a heavenly as well as human rule.”<sup>2</sup>

And then comes the climax :—“When one or more professing Christians separate themselves from the communion of a particular church, and from that of the great body of Christians, or are cut off from it by a regular and legitimate judgment, they are *totally separated from the church of God.*”<sup>3</sup>

And thus, by three steps, the point is reached. A certain doctrine, such as “Apostolical Succession,” or the “Real Presence,” is wished to be insisted on, as a “Church Doctrine.” But the church has left her members at liberty on a variety of controverted questions ; declaring those only to be rightfully required of any man to be believed as necessary to salvation, which are “read in scripture, or may be proved thereby.” A circuitous course, therefore, becomes necessary. The enquirer is first taught, that “the British churches form a portion of the Catholic church of Christ ; and that every individual within their district is *bound* to unite himself to them, as being

<sup>1</sup> *Palmer's Treatise*, vol. ii. p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> *Newman on Romanism*, p. 232.

<sup>3</sup> *Palmer's Treatise*, vol. i. p. 52.

*exclusively and solely* the way of salvation established by divine authority amongst us.”<sup>1</sup>

Next he is told, that “the power of “expounding,” “decreeing,” “ordaining,” which belongs to the church, implies that her children are to receive her expositions, and obey her decrees, and accept her authority in controversies of faith : and the appeal lies not to their “private judgment ;” they are not the arbiters, whether she pronounce rightly or no.”<sup>2</sup>

“The church has always believed that the whole Christian faith is contained in the Bible : but the church is *authorized to judge*, WHETHER any controverted doctrine *is* taught by the Bible.”<sup>3</sup>

And *thus* it is made to appear that any doctrine which the church teaches,—or rather, which it may be *alleged* that the church teaches,—is made “of necessity to salvation,” whether “it is read in scripture” or not. It is said to be “of necessity to salvation to belong to the church ;”—then to be needful, if we would belong to the church, to receive all the “especial church doctrines ; such as the apostolical succession, the efficacy of the holy eucharist, the details of the ritual,” “ministerial power, absolution,” &c.<sup>4</sup> And, thus, circuitously and almost imperceptibly, the rule of faith is changed, and it is not what scripture teaches, but what the church teaches, that becomes the main question with one who is led astray by these devices.

Against these ensnaring reasonings it becomes needful to enter our protest. And we shall, accordingly, endeavour to shew, 1. That nothing may be

<sup>1</sup> *Palmer's Treatise*, v. i, p. 214.

<sup>2</sup> *Dr. Pusey's Letter*, p. 30.

<sup>3</sup> *Palmer's Treatise*, vol. ii. p. 131.

<sup>4</sup> *Tracts for the Times*, No. 85, p. 5, 49.

added to the plain sense of holy scripture, by the Church, in matters of faith, in virtue of any supposed divine right or authority, inherent in herself:—

2. That nothing may be added, under the denomination of “the decisions of General Councils.”

3. That nothing may be added, under the denomination of “Tradition,” or “the Voice of Antiquity.”

Under one or other of these three heads, and frequently under all of them together, continual attacks are made upon the simplicity of the Protestant rule; and a perpetual struggle is carried on, to draw us away, if possible, from the only safe and trust-worthy foundation,—the written word of God.

1. The first and most common device in which the mischief is concealed,—is that of *the Authority of the Church* to decide controversies, to interpret scripture, and to bind the consciences of all her children.

And here it is again necessary to discriminate between the various senses in which the term “church” is used. We are speaking of the church of England;—of that church with which we have to do. And so are the writers with whom we are contending; but they find it very necessary for their purposes to mix up with this simple idea, another and a very complex one,—namely, the universal or Catholic church.

Mr. Newman, for instance, tells us, that “the church Catholic is ever *divinely guided* to teach the truth; her witness of the Christian faith is a matter of promise as well as duty; her discernment of it is secured by a *heavenly* as well as human rule.” And “such being her office towards her children, they are bound, if they would remain her children, as far as their minds attain to her doctrine, to take it on the

ground of its Catholicity." "Her members must believe, or silently acquiesce in *the whole* of it." <sup>1</sup>

In these passages, let it be observed,—the acting of the church Catholic is spoken of in the *present* tense. She "declares";—she "*is* guided";—"is secured," &c.

But this language naturally leads us to ask, "*Where is* this church Catholic, by whose decisions and declarations we are thus to be "bound?" It is obviously impossible for any one act, decision, or declaration, within the last thousand years, to be adduced, as done by the "church Catholic." Divided first into eastern and western; the eastern again split into two or three great sections, the western divided between reformed and papal, how entirely impossible has it been, for at least ten centuries past, to produce any one authentic act, decision, or declaration, made by that universal or visible church, which Mr. Newman calls "Catholic!"

Why, then, is this "church Catholic" now introduced, as speaking and acting; and exercising authority at the present moment? The intent is sufficiently discernible. A silent transition is easily made to our own national church, and it is hoped that the reader, awed by the vastness of the authority claimed for the universal church, will imperceptibly transfer whatever feelings of veneration and submission may have been raised,—to the mere local body, the church of England. "Our own branch," says Mr. Newman, "may surely be considered among us as the voice of her who has been in the world, even one and the same since Christ came. Surely she comes up to the

<sup>1</sup> *Newman on Romanism*, p. 232, 311.



theory; she professes to be *the Catholic church*, and to transmit that one ancient Catholic faith, and she *does* transmit it.”<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Newman must have been in an incautious mood, when he made such an assertion, as that the church of England “professes to be *the Catholic church*.” It is almost needless to say, that there is not a shadow of foundation for so monstrous an assertion. A local church profess to be the church universal! One is at a loss to conceive how Mr. Newman could have written down such a sentence.

“Our own branch,” as Mr. Newman himself rightly calls her, is but a branch; she is not the parent stock. Even if the latter were admitted to be indefectible; still the branches “stand only by faith.” They stand only “if they continue in His goodness, otherwise they shall be cut off.”<sup>2</sup> Our Lord uses another figure, that of a “candlestick,” and he warns one of his earliest and brightest conquests, to “Repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place.”<sup>3</sup> In fact, in no point of view is it possible for a moment to maintain the proposition, of the indefectibility of a local church. All scripture and all experience are alike against it.

The church of England, then, is nothing more than a branch of the visible church. She is venerable, truly, in point of age; and might boast of harder struggles and greater success in her contests with the papacy, even in the gloom of the middle ages, than most of her sisters of the west. But still, reviewing her whole history, we must admit it to be

<sup>1</sup> Newman on Romanism, p. 320.

<sup>2</sup> Romans xi, 20—22.

<sup>3</sup> Revelations ii. 5.

stained with many a crime. Full many of the saints of God did she put to cruel deaths; and long and dark was the reign of Rome, when her foul dominion was at last established. Idolatry quenched the flame of true devotion; and monkery and clerical celibacy corrupted the public morals; and the reformation, when, through the mercy of God, it visited the land, discovered many "a chamber of imagery," and opened many a "nest of unclean birds." The change, however, was total, and it is important to bear this in mind; since those who insist upon our obligation to "obey" and to "acquiesce" in all that "our own church teaches," inasmuch as she "represents the universal church," are, at least, called upon to explain how we could be bound to obey and to acquiesce in, one set of doctrines in 1552, and a totally different set in 1568? "Christ," says Mr. Palmer, "cannot have authorized two contradictory judgments or actions." Hence, it would seem to be sufficiently clear, that when the church of England, in its synods under Elizabeth, contradicted its synods under Mary, one of the two decisions, at least, must have been contrary to the mind of Christ.

Nothing, then, in the least approaching to the authority claimed for the English church, by Messrs. Newman and Palmer, can be reasonably asserted. The church, indeed, according to the xxth Article, "has power to decree rites and ceremonies, and authority in matters of faith." This interpolated passage in our Articles—for it is nothing more<sup>1</sup>—defines

<sup>1</sup> The words in question are not found either in the Latin MS. original, signed by the archbishops and bishops in the convocation of 1562, which MS. is now in Corpus Christi library, Cambridge; nor in the English MS. original, signed in the convocation of 1571; nor in

the utmost length to which the church's authority can be extended. She has the common power which all religious communities must necessarily possess, of ordering or deciding upon her own rites and ceremonies. As the Bible furnishes us with but scanty directions in these matters of form, it is sufficiently clear that every church must regulate these things by its own discretion. The Thirty-fourth Article, therefore, unobjectionably states, that "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."

But the Twentieth proceeds: "And authority in controversies of faith." *What* authority, or to *what* extent, is not stated *positively*; but the limitations of this authority are stated *negatively*, and in such sort as to remove all ground for misapprehension.

"And yet it is not lawful for the church to ordain anything that is contrary to God's word written, neither may it so expound one place of scripture, that it be repugnant to another. Wherefore, although the church be a witness and a keeper of holy writ, yet as it ought not to decree anything against the same, so besides the same ought it not to enforce anything to be believed for necessity of salvation."

Upon this Dr. Pusey remarks:—"The power of "expounding," "decreeing," "ordaining," implies that her children are to receive her expositions, and obey her decrees, and accept her authority in controversies of faith:—and the appeal lies not to their

the English edition published under the direction of bishop Jewell in the latter year. The clause is supposed to have been inserted by Queen Elizabeth, in some copy given to a printer, *after* the signatures of the convocation had been affixed.

“ private judgment ;” they are not the arbiters, whether she pronounce rightly or no ; for what sort of decree or authority were that, of which every one were first to judge, and then, if his judgment coincided with the law, to obey ? Who would not see the absurdity of this in matters of human judgment ? ”<sup>1</sup>

Rather, “ who would not see the absurdity of *any other course*, in matters of human judgment ? ”

If Dr. Pusey had a suit of vast moment to him, now depending in the Court of Queen’s Bench, what would be his course ? He would not say, “ It is useless for me to attempt to understand the matter. I submit it to the court, and whatever that court decrees to be the law, I must receive as such. ”

If he were really and deeply interested in the issue, he would take a widely different course. He would study the law bearing upon the question at issue : he would carefully examine what the decision of the court *ought to be*. And if, after a laborious investigation of the case, making all reasonable allowance for his own personal bias, he came to the conclusion that the court had decided erroneously, he would immediately intimate to that court, respectfully but explicitly, *that he did not acquiesce in, or submit to, its decision*, but should appeal to a higher tribunal.

We may go even further than this. Carrying the cause to the highest court in the realm, he might still find the decision against him, and might yet feel more and more convinced that that decision was not according to law. He would then have this option : he might submit, without acquiescing ; he might plainly declare his sense of the injustice done him ; his assurance of the inconsistency of the judgment

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Pusey’s Letter*, p. 30,

with the law, and his submission merely to abstract power,—merely to government as such,—although protesting against that specific act of injustice;—or he might even do as many have done—namely, at once withdraw himself from the community in which justice could not be obtained. In all these points, prudence, and a proper submission to the powers that be, would be the chief rules for his guidance. But even the most entire and passive submission would not extend to the judgment. Nothing could bind Dr. P.'s conscience to admit that to be just, which he felt persuaded to be unjust.

And similar in many respects is the authority of the church, although Dr. P. endeavours to place it in so different a light. Our church, a merely local church, is not infallible. She is liable to error, and has often erred in past ages, unless it can have been right to decide a question affirmatively in one reign and negatively in the next.

Now we owe a degree of deference and submission to her, just as we do to the courts of law, or to any other of the constituted authorities of the land. But whatever is not infallible, whatever is liable to error, must be open to appeal, must be open to scrutiny, examination, and censure. *Implicit, unenquiring, ever-acquiescent* submission belongs only to what is unerring and divine.

An infallible authority would have no need of rules and standards, limitations and restrictions. These involve a confession, that the transgressing them is a thing possible, and such transgression a thing blameable. Why does the church of England voluntarily limit herself within the bounds of God's word? Why does she admit that "it is not lawful" for her "to

ordain anything contrary to God's written word," but from a long and bitter experience that other churches, and even herself in past ages, *had* so transgressed?

Her own proviso, that she shall neither "decree anything contrary to holy writ," nor yet "*besides the same*" shall she "enforce anything to be believed for necessity of salvation," is an explicit disclaimer of the "divine guidance" and "supernatural gift" claimed for her by Mr. Newman. Were she thus inspired, thus divinely preserved from error, it might indeed be right that she should teach nothing "*contrary* to holy writ," but there would be no ground for precluding her from teaching and enforcing "*anything besides the same.*" It is because she is erring and fallible, that she must neither overrule, nor even *attempt to add to*, the divine word of truth.

She therefore consents to take the law of God for her rule, just as the law of the realm is the rule for our courts of law. And in both cases those who are interested in their decisions will study the codes thus submitted to, and will detect any variation that may take place. To say to the suitors,—'You need not study the written law; you cannot understand it: the court is the only judge of its real meaning; the court will tell you its true purport, and the court is the only arbiter of its own decisions,'—would be neither more nor less than to shut up the true rule, the statute law of the realm, and to make the court absolute and irresponsible.

And with such an implicit acquiescence as this, Rome herself would be entirely satisfied: in fact, it is this at which she chiefly aims.

Dr. Wiseman, her latest advocate in England, eagerly quotes from Mr. Newman this passage:—

“ Surely, the sacred volume was never intended, and was not adapted, to *teach* us our creed; however certain it is, that we can *prove* our creed from it, when it has once been taught us. From the very first, the rule has been, as a matter of fact, for the church to teach the truth, and then to appeal to the scripture in vindication of its own teaching.”

Upon which the Romish controversialist remarks:

“ This is *more than sufficient* for my purpose; it not only admits the premises which I have laid down, but goes *as far as I can wish*, in the consequences it draws.” (Lect. v. p. 139.)

There can be no question that it does. Only establish it as a first principle,—that the people are not to take their creed, their religion, from the Bible,—that they are to receive it implicitly at the lips of “the church,” she professing indeed to prove it from the Bible, but arrogating to herself the sole right of determining the meaning of the passages she adduces, and popery is safe. Clearly, it is impossible for Dr. Pusey’s doctrine of the church’s infallibility to be confined to the limits of a single island. To Christendom at large he announces the principle, applicable alike to all churches admitted to be Christian, and to all their members,—that, with reference to every church, “her children are to receive her expositions, and obey her decrees, and accept her authority in matters of faith: and the appeal lies not to their “private judgment,”—they are not the arbiters whether she decides rightly or no.”

Now we can easily conceive that Dr. Pusey would not desire, for his own part, to induce a single Romanist in Spain or Italy to abandon that communion and embrace the faith of the reformation. Not only,

however, has he disqualified himself from attempting all such proselytism, but he has done what he can to prevent the success of any such attempts by others. He has furnished every Papist with a full and complete reply, under the hand of a doctor of the English church, to all who may attempt to shake his allegiance to Rome. What can be more exactly calculated to repel all Protestant reasonings from scripture than this Oxford admission ;—“The church’s children are to receive her expositions, and obey her decrees, and accept her authority ; and the appeal lies not to their private judgments ; they are not the arbiters, whether she pronounce rightly or not.

“This is my own view of the case,” a Papist will naturally rejoin. “The church tells me that Christ, when he said, *“This is my body ; this do in remembrance of me”*—thereby empowered the apostles and their successors to the end of time, to change the bread into his body, in the sacrament of the altar. She so interprets ; she so decides ; I am not to set up my private judgment against hers ; I am not the arbiter, whether she pronounce rightly or no. And so it is with the doctrines of purgatory, penance, the adoration of the blessed Virgin, and the other points of belief which you wish me to surrender. The church proves them all from scripture ; she also (see Dr. Wiseman’s Lectures) adduces a long line of Fathers in support of every one. You admit that I am bound to “receive her expositions, and obey her decrees, and accept her authority.”

“You also tell me that “the church is a witness of the doctrine, which she herself received in continued succession from the primitive church.”<sup>1</sup> This ex-

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Pusey’s Letter*, p. 30.



actly agrees with what my priest tells me. He maintains every one of these doctrines on this very ground, "that the church has received it in continued succession from the primitive church." *I* am not the judge, you admit, whether she pronounce rightly or not. Consequently, I am clearly bound to rest upon her assurances, and leave my salvation to her care."

On Dr. Pusey's principle, then, the controversy with Popery in "the churches of the Roman obedience" is at an end. They are irrevocably bound up in the system, and are utterly precluded, according to his view, from ever escaping from it.

But we should like to understand a little better, how this principle applies to the English church: for here, as before, we are perplexed to understand, how truth can be one thing in Belgium; and yet a totally different thing in Great Britain.

Dr. Pusey thus sums up his doctrine:—"In brief, then, my lord, the meaning of our church (as we conceive) in these Articles is, that the scripture is the sole authoritative source of the faith, i. e. of "things to be believed in order to salvation;" the church is the medium, through which that knowledge is conveyed to individuals. She, under her responsibility to God, and in subjection to his scriptures, and with the guidance of the Spirit, testifies to her children, what truths are necessary to be believed in order to salvation; expounds scripture to them; determines, when controversies arise; and this, not in the character of a judge, but as a "witness" to what she has herself received."<sup>1</sup>

Now this rather ambiguous statement is capable, in many of its parts, of a good and true interpreta-

<sup>1</sup> *Dr Pusey's Letter*, p. 31.

tion; but other parts, and the conclusions finally drawn, shew that its drift is to establish a false rule of faith.

The description given of the scripture, “the sole authoritative *source* of the faith,” presents nothing objectionable; but when the next idea is added, “the church is the *medium* through which that knowledge is conveyed to individuals.”—the whole assertion becomes dangerous. If nothing more were meant, than that the church, as a minister, published and preached the word of God, and placed the scriptures in every man’s hand,—the sense would be blameless; but it is sufficiently clear that the intent is, to represent the scriptures as *silent*, as a closed treasury;—the church as *speaking*, and as unlocking that treasury.

This device, however, is as old as Popery itself. Bishop Jewell says, “Our Lord, knowing that there should be such confusion of things in the latter days, commandeth that Christians, who live in the profession of Christian faith, and are desirous to settle themselves upon a sure ground of faith, should go to *no other thing but the scriptures.*” “But whereas they (the Papists) make the holy scriptures like silent masses, *dumb* and useless; and appeal rather to God himself, *speaking in the church* and in councils; that is, *to their own senses and opinions*; that is a very uncertain and dangerous way of finding out truth, and in a sort fanatical.”<sup>1</sup>

But Dr. P. proceeds:—“The church testifies to her children, what truths are necessary to be believed in order to salvation, and expounds scripture to them.”

<sup>1</sup> *Jewell's Apology*, book iv.

The use of the present tense is somewhat perplexing. We must suppose that Dr. P. means, "The church *has testified, has expounded.*"

In her Articles and Homilies she has so done; and perhaps such subsidiary works as Nowell's Catechism and Jewell's Apology—both of them published by authority—may be included in the same statement.

But is it not strange, that theologians who lay such unusual stress upon "the church's voice," "the church's testimony," and the like, are never found to exhibit any remarkable zeal either in a reference to, or in the promulgation of, the standards of the Reformation. Surely consistency would demand that they should at least render the same service to the fathers of the English church, which they are now performing for the Greek and Roman divines.

The next, however, is the most perplexing clause. The church, it is said, does all this, not as a judge, "but as a 'witness' to what she herself has received." In another place it is said, "as a witness to the doctrine which she herself received in *continued succession* from the primitive church."

What, then, was the Reformation?

The doctrine which our reformers, Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, "received in a continued succession" from their predecessors, and those predecessors from *theirs*, and so on for many centuries upwards, included Transubstantiation, Idol Worship, Penance, Purgatory, Forced Celibacy, and a multitude of other "doctrines of devils." If the church of England, in 1552, was bound *not* to act as a judge, but merely "as a witness to what she had *received*" from the generation immediately preceding,

how came we by an English Bible, an English Service-Book, a Communion of the Lord's Supper, freedom from penance and purgatory, and all the other deliverances of that blessed era of our release?

And again we ask,—If the duty of the church's children was, “to obey her decrees, and accept her exhortations and decisions,”—was it not equally so in 1530 as in 1563? At either period the doctrine must hold good,—that “the appeal lay not to their “private judgment;” they were not the arbiters whether she pronounced rightly or not.” Consequently, it was a *duty* incumbent on all her children to believe transubstantiation, and to worship the Virgin, in 1530, and equally a *duty* to reject transubstantiation, and to declare the worship of Mary to be idolatry, in 1563! Such appears to be one perplexing result of setting up, as a Rule of Faith, the erring and fluctuating decisions of changeable and fallible human beings, instead of the simple unchanging word of the all-wise and eternal God!

But another question arises: a plain and positive duty is here asserted, of *implicit* obedience to the church's decisions;—and of willing acquiescence in her expositions and determinations. “Private judgment” is distinctly shut out; no one is to think himself qualified to judge “whether the church pronounce rightly or no.” Such is the *principle* asserted by these writers:—does their practice accord with its demands?

It will not be disputed that the last great occasion on which the church of England “expounded,” “decided,” and “determined controversies,” was at the period of the Reformation. Then it was that all our chief standards,—our Articles, Homilies, and Litur-

gical forms,—were framed. Do these writers, then, who insist so strongly on our submission to “the church’s teaching,” and our resignation of all idea of “private judgment,” or of constituting ourselves arbiters of the church’s decisions,—do they exhibit this spirit in their own published writings, as to the standard established at that period? Let us see.

We quote the *Remains of the Rev. R. H. Froude*, chiefly because in them we have the combined opinions of three of the chief writers of the *Tracts for the Times*. Mr. Newman and Mr. Keble, the editors, have declared “their concurrence in his sentiments as a whole,” though not in “every shade of opinion or expression;” and they have guarded themselves in such cases as they thought necessary, by appended notes.

But such passages as the following are left without any disclaimer on their part.

“Really I *hate* the Reformation and the Reformers more and more.” (Vol. i. p. 339.)

“I am more and more *indignant* at the Protestant doctrine on the subject of the eucharist; and think that the principle on which it is founded is as proud, irreverent, and *foolish* as that of *any heresy, even Socinianism.*” (Vol. i. p. 391.)

“I have been reading a good deal about the Reformation in Queen Elizabeth’s time. It is *shocking indeed!*”

“The Reformation was a limb badly set. *It must be broken again* in order to be righted.”<sup>1</sup> (Vol. i. p. 433.)

May we not ask, if this is the sort of “obedience;” of “acquiescence;” of surrender of our “private judgment;” which these gentlemen, in other parts of

their writings, so peremptorily demand of us? Her children, says Dr. Pusey, speaking of the church, "are not the arbiters, whether she decide rightly or no." What mean, then, all these rebellious complaints, which sound so exactly, to common men, like an appeal to private judgment, and a preference of the writer's own opinion to the decisions of the church?

But this is not a solitary instance of this inconsistent conduct. Mr. Newman, being publicly reproved for his share in this publication, thus defends and justifies Mr. Froude's language:—

"Let me allude to two statements in Mr. Froude's volumes,—to the effect that our present Communion Service is 'a judgment on the church,' and that there would be a gain in replacing it by 'a good translation of the Liturgy of St. Peter.' 'The state of the case is this:..... '.... at the time of the Reformation, we, in common with all the west, possessed the rite of the Roman church, or St. Peter's Liturgy,—called also 'the Canon of the Mass.' 'This sacred and most precious monument, then, of the apostles, our reformers received whole and entire from their predecessors; and they *mutilated the tradition of fifteen hundred years.*' 'Now the first feeling which comes upon an ardent mind, on mastering these facts, is one of *indignation and impatient sorrow.*'"<sup>1</sup>

Again we ask, is *this* what the Tract-writers mean by "acquiescence," and entire obedience, and the surrender of the private judgment? If so, then words have lost their meaning, and reasoning can be of little use.

But possibly it may be replied, that this language

<sup>1</sup> *Letter to Dr. Faussett*, p. 47.

relates merely to a liturgical form ; to the question whether this or that communion service was preferable, and it may be argued, that in so trifling a matter as this, every one must surely be left at liberty to form and express his own opinion. But “trifling matters” and “immaterial forms” are not sufficient to account for such language as—“I *hate* the Reformation and the Reformers more and more.” The truth is, that the question between “the Canon of the Mass,” and our “Communion Service,” is not a light or immaterial one. The greater part of the papal system is involved in this said *Canon of the Mass*, which Mr. Newman would fain believe to have been the work of the apostles themselves, although it is well known that no written liturgical forms existed for several centuries after the departure of the apostles. The said Canon is thoroughly corrupted with the Romish idolatry, and one grand point with Cranmer, Ridley, and our Reformers was, to cleanse it from these defilements. The passages they excluded, were, those involving a change in the elements of bread and wine, or an incipient transubstantiation; a sacrificial offering of the elements to God the Father; and a prayer for the dead. All these did the English Reformers deliberately and of fixed purpose exclude; for which Mr. Froude “*hates* them;” and Mr. Newman talks of “*indignation* and impatient sorrow.”

But, amidst all this, what has become of “the church’s authority in “expounding,” “decreeing,” and “ordaining;” and of our alleged duty “to receive her expositions, and obey her decrees, and accept her authority in matters of faith,” without thinking of an “appeal to our own private judgment?”

Are we not forcibly reminded of those words of our Lord, "*Ye bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, but ye yourselves touch them not with one of your fingers?*"

In truth, for real *use*, this fancy of "the church's teaching," is utterly nugatory. Its secret but purposed drift, is, not so much to send men to the Articles and Homilies, in preference to the Bible; but to get them to surrender the plain sense of the holy scripture for any superstitious or idolatrous notions, which, by the help of "tradition," and "the church's voice," might be foisted upon them. Those, however, who are brought under this temptation, have only to scrutinize and try to understand the real character of the imposition attempted to be practised on them, and the delusion will in all probability vanish away, and leave them to that voice of conscience and of common sense, which, if rightly used and obeyed, will quickly bring them to the only unerring rule, the written word of God.

2. But next we are to shew, that it is equally unlawful to attempt to add anything to the written word, under the denomination of "the Decisions of General Councils."

Mr. Palmer's doctrine is, that the decree of a lawful general council, legitimately adopted and received throughout the church, "is absolutely binding on all individual Christians."<sup>1</sup> He asserts, of the first six general councils, that the doctrine set forth by them "is irrefragably true, unalterable, irreformable; nor could any particular church forsake or change this doctrine without *ceasing to be Christian.*"<sup>2</sup>

And Dr. Pusey says,

<sup>1</sup> *Palmer's Treatise*, vol. ii. p. 110.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 188.



“ We receive as *articles of faith* what our own church delivers to us *as fixed by the universal church.*”<sup>1</sup>

Here, then, we have another standard or rule of faith added to the Bible. Our creed is to be built, not upon the word of God alone, but upon the word of God *and* the decisions of men. We are to “ receive as articles of faith,” what “ our church delivers to us as fixed by the universal church ;”—not as fixed by the Holy Spirit in the written word. But although Dr. Pusey and Mr. Palmer may assert this doctrine, the church of England admits nothing of the kind.

Let her Thirty-nine Articles be carefully studied. In almost every one of them it would have been the easiest and most natural thing in the world, for the writers to have appealed to the early councils, or fathers, or the primitive church. Never once is such an appeal made. But on the other hand, perpetually, and at every turn, “ Holy Scripture ” is the standard appealed to. Even the three creeds, which the writers whose opinions we are considering always speak of as such “ a precious deposit ;” and as something the value of which chiefly consists in this, that they have been handed down to us by the early church ;—even of the three creeds, all that the church of England says, is, that “ they ought thoroughly to be received and believed : *for they may be proved by* ”—what?—the general consent of Catholic antiquity ? No, but “ by most certain *warrant of Holy Scripture.*”<sup>2</sup>

And of general councils, of which Mr. Palmer unhesitatingly assumes, that when properly convened and held, they are “ *divinely* authorized to judge in religious controversies,” — the twenty-first Article

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Pusey's Letter*, p. 52.

<sup>2</sup> *Art. viii.*

distinctly affirms, that “they may err, and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining to God.” “Wherefore,” continues the Article, “things ordained by them as necessary to salvation, *have neither strength nor authority*, unless it may be declared that they be taken out of *Holy Scripture*.”

Never was a difference of tone and feeling more strongly marked, than that which is discernible, when we turn from the study of the Articles and Homilies of our church, and take up the writings of the authors of the “*Tracts for the Times*.”

But we must say a word as to the historic character and standing of these greatly vaunted councils. We cannot help thinking, that a very brief enquiry into the facts of the case, will shew that those who rest with so much confidence on the acts and decisions of these ecclesiastical assemblies, are building upon very precarious and untenable ground.

In the first place, these writers, who would lead us to place so much reliance upon the “Œcumenical councils,”—have not yet fully agreed even upon the first point of fact,—namely, *which* councils they are, that are worthy of such reverence. The Romanists assert that there were *eighteen*;—the Greeks, *seven*, and our own writers vary between *four* and *six*,—of councils deserving the rank of Œcumenical, and whose decrees are binding upon the consciences of men.

“Several of our theologians, as Hooker and Andrews,” says Mr. Palmer, “seem to acknowledge only four Œcumenical synods.” “Dr. Hammond teaches that there are only six, and that the rest so called, are of no binding authority.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Palmer's Treatise*, vol. ii. p. 171, 2.

So that we hear of a "binding authority," and yet of a doubt as to where it exists! Hooker is of one opinion; Hammond of another! This is a strange commencement of the establishment of a new rule of faith.

But if we look a little further, we shall find that the selection either of the *six*, or the *four*, is governed by no consistent rule, but springs chiefly or solely from caprice or some external bias.

The six synods which Mr. Palmer seems disposed to admit as Œcumenical, are these: I. *Nice*, A.D. 325, —attended by 318 bishops. II. *Constantinople*, A.D. 381, attended by 150 *Eastern* bishops. III. *Ephesus*, A.D. 431, attended by 200 bishops. IV. *Chalcedon*, A.D. 451, attended by 630 bishops. V. *Constantinople*, A.D. 553, attended by 165 *Eastern* bishops. VI. *Constantinople*, A.D. 680, attended by 170 bishops.

Now here are six synods selected, and declared to be Œcumenical, and "of binding authority." But in other lists we find no fewer than *nine* more, held before the division of the eastern and western churches; and the whole of these are rejected by Mr. Palmer, upon grounds wholly untenable.

For instance, the synod of *Ariminum* in A.D. 359, was regularly summoned by the emperor Constantius, and was attended by 400 bishops. The editors of the councils, Labbè and Cossart, reckon this as one of the Œcumenical class. But Mr. Palmer excludes it, and thus argues:—

"The synod of *Ariminum*, consisting of 400 bishops, was not the universal church; for I have already shewn that there were upwards of 2000 episcopal sees in the east and west."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Palmer's Treatise*, vol. ii. p. 193.

This synod, then, is degraded from the rank of Œcumenical, because it was attended by *only* 400 bishops. And yet a single glance shews us, that of the six councils which Mr. Palmer reckons Œcumenical, *only one*, Chalcedon, was attended by so many as 400 bishops! Nice had only 318, Ephesus, 200, and the other three, fewer than 200 each.

The fact is, that the council of Ariminum favoured Arianism, and therefore to have admitted it in the class of Œcumenical councils would have been fatal to Mr. Palmer's theory; that with such councils, Christ was always present. And thus it is rejected from the list, on the pretext that 400 bishops could not speak the sense of the whole church! Supposing that this were a valid objection, what authority could belong to the councils of Nice, of Ephesus, or of Constantinople?

Another synod at *Ephesus*, in A.D. 449, was regularly convened by the emperor Theodosius, and was attended by the four eastern patriarchs, the legates of the see of Rome, and 128 bishops. But this synod is rejected from the list, on the score of the violence manifested in its proceedings. It was recognized, however, by Gregory the Great, as a general council, and if 'violence' is to exclude a council from a place on the list, that list would soon become a very brief one.

Besides these, we find another synod, held at Constantinople, in A.D. 692, and attended by the legates of Rome, the four patriarchs in person, and upwards of 200 bishops: also, one of 338 bishops, at Constantinople, A.D. 754: and another at the same place, in A.D. 787, attended by 350 bishops: and yet another in A.D. 861, of 318 bishops. All these, however, under one pretext or another, are rejected from the

list. But if any consistent principle of selection were laid down, and adhered to, we should either be obliged to receive the whole of these synods into the Œcumenical rank, or to reckon none whatever of that character. The present scheme is in the highest degree arbitrary and fallacious. The facts are made to bend to the theory; not the theory built upon the facts. But to talk of the acts of councils thus partially selected, being "binding on the conscience," is a positive outrage upon common sense.

As to the figment of a "general reception," that is as mere a phrase as "public opinion," or the "voice of the people," which, as every one knows, is just what the reasoner himself thinks *ought to be* the voice of the people. "General reception," when it is a real fact, must be an unquestionable one. But in this case, the Romish writers themselves,—the maintainers and assertors of the authority of general councils, are divided into three or four different opinions, each presenting a different list of councils as containing those which have obtained this "general reception."

From amidst all this confusion, we rejoice to escape back to the plain and simple word of God, in which, to use the expressive language of the Homily, "is *fully* contained what we ought to do, and what to eschew; what to believe, what to love, and what to look for." And we thank God most especially for this his great care and guidance of our church, in that our Reformers were preserved from the least concession to human authority, and sustained in a dutiful allegiance to the only infallible rule,—the written word.

Their sentiments, on this point, we have in divers of their writings. It will suffice to quote two brief

passages, from the most distinguished of their number.

Archbishop Cranmer says, in his *Reply to the Articles of the Devonshire rebels*:—

“As for the general councils, you say you will have them all kept; but you be not so destitute of all reason, that you would have spoken such words, if you had known what you said. For the greater number of councils repugn one against another. How should they then be all kept, when one is contrary to another, and the keeping of one is the breaking of another.”<sup>1</sup>

Bishop Jewell is still more explicit, and says:—

“Touching the unlucky success of general councils, Gregory Nazianzen saith thus: ‘To say the truth, I am utterly determined never to come to any council of bishops; for I never yet saw good end of any council. For councils abate not evils, but rather increase them.’”—“Certainly, after the great council of Nice, the Arian heretics waxed more and more mighty than ever they had done before.”—“Liberius, bishop of Rome, and Hosius, that famous bishop of Spain, gave their hands unto the Arians. Ten several provincial councils gave their voices unto the Arians.”—“Therefore Nazianzen saith, He never saw council, provincial or general, that ended well; for that, as one said, The *greater* side often outweighed the *better*.”<sup>2</sup>

Most clearly, then, do our reformers adhere to the opinion, so eloquently expressed by Chillingworth in a later age; which opinion greatly annoys Mr. Palmer:—

“For my part, after a long and, I hope, impartial search after eternal happiness, I do profess plainly

<sup>1</sup> *Todd's Life of Cranmer*, vol. ii. p. 78.

<sup>2</sup> *Jewell's Defence*, p. 600.

that I cannot find any rest for the sole of my foot, but upon this rock (scripture) only. I see plainly, and with mine own eyes, that there are popes against popes; councils against councils; some fathers against others; the same fathers against themselves; a consent of fathers of one age against a consent of fathers of another age; the church of one age against the church of another age; traditive interpretations of scripture are pretended, but there are few or none to be found: no tradition but only of scripture can derive itself from the fountain, but may be plainly proved, either to have been brought in, in such an age after Christ, or that in such an age it was not in. In a word, there is no sufficient certainty but of scripture only, for any considering man to build upon. This, therefore, and this only, I have reason to believe: this I will profess; according to this I will live; and for this, if there be occasion, I will not only willingly, but even gladly lose my life, though I should be sorry that Christians should take it from me. Propose me anything out of this book, and require whether I believe or no, and seem it never so incomprehensible to human reason, I will subscribe it with hand and heart, as knowing no demonstration can be stronger than this, God hath said so, therefore it is true. In other things, I will take no man's liberty of judgment from him; neither shall any man take mine from me." <sup>1</sup>

3. But there is a *third* phrase or pretext, under which submission to the Bible alone, is endeavoured to be evaded. This is, "*Antiquity*," or, as it is sometimes varied, "*Tradition*;"—or, as it is amplified and

<sup>1</sup> *Chillingworth's Works*, 1704, p. 290.

expounded by Dr. Pusey,—“ genuine apostolic tradition, to be established by the consent of all times, all churches, and the great doctors of all those churches.”<sup>1</sup> This scheme, as it appears to us, is even more impracticable and less capable of application than the last.

The Bible, nominally, is to be submitted to. “ We wish to teach,” says Dr. Pusey, “ what is agreeable to the doctrines of the Old and New Testament.”

But it is *assumed*, for the obvious purpose of escaping from the decisions of the word of God, in its pure and unmitigated strength,—that we cannot tell, cannot understand, “ *what* is agreeable to the doctrine of the Old and New Testament,”—and must therefore call in the aid,—not of the Great Teacher of the church,—but of certain old writers of twelve or fifteen centuries back. “ As the *test* of its being thus agreeable, we would take, not our own private and individual judgments, but that of the universal church, as attested by “ the catholic fathers and ancient bishops.” ”<sup>2</sup>

We shall see at once the drift and the inevitable consequence of thus quitting the safe ground of the plain words of scripture, in a single instance: any others might be given if necessary:

The simple and clear words of Christ and his apostles give us the only safe and authoritative canon of the Lord’s supper. We there find, that our Lord, on the last evening spent with his disciples before his crucifixion, “ *took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.*” (Luke xxii. 19.) And St. Paul, instructing the

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Pusey’s Letter*, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 31.



Corinthians, thirty years after, uses the same language, and continues, "After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, *This cup is the new testament in my blood; this do ye, as often as ye drink it, IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME. For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.*" (1 Cor. xi. 25, 26.) Not one syllable is there here of 'a sacrifice,' or of an 'offering to God of the body of his Son.' On the contrary, the apostle, when writing to the Hebrews, most explicitly denounces all idea of any other or further sacrifice or offering for sin, after the one propitiation of the cross. Christ, he says, "*when he had offered ONE sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down at the right hand of God.*" "*For by ONE offering he HATH PERFECTED FOR EVER them that are sanctified.*" "*Now where remission of these (iniquities) is, there is NO MORE offering for sin.*" (Heb. x. 12—18.)

Yet Dr. Pusey does not hesitate to call the Lord's supper, "The true commemorative sacrifice, representing to God the death and passion of his Son, and so acceptable unto him;"—as, he says, "*the church Catholic ever held it.*"

Here we see how conveniently expansive is this assumed power of interpretation. "The English system," says Dr. Pusey, "being founded on holy scripture, *as interpreted by Christian antiquity*, possesses a deep reverence for Scripture as the source of the faith, and for Antiquity, as its witness and expositor."<sup>1</sup> And thus we are to believe, according to this system, when required by the church, "that the sense of scripture is not that which it seemeth to rea-

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Pusey's Letter*, p. 61.

son and understanding to be," but that which the fiction called "antiquity" shall declare it. "The church," says Mr. Palmer, is the proper authority to decide, "*whether* any controverted doctrine is taught in scripture or not."

Now the first difficulty which will strike every one who impartially considers this system is, How this supposed "voice of antiquity," or "general consent of the ancient fathers" is to be ascertained to any practical end?

The Romish theologians would gladly draw us from the impregnable ground of holy scripture into the fastness and jungle of human opinions. They thereby escape from the inevitable decision of a short, simple, and infallible rule, into the maze of the notions of five hundred erring mortals. They get away from the one book, which cannot err, and which, honestly read, cannot be misunderstood,—to the thousand folios of the "great doctors of all ages." Dr. Pusey may sincerely believe that he could shew "the voice of antiquity" to be against the papal system; but were he fairly embarked in such a controversy, he would find that his life would end, before it could be brought to any rational termination.

But let us draw a little closer to this theory of "antiquity," and try if we can discover its real form and figure. The very phrase is full of obscurity and uncertainty: let us see if it be capable of any rational elucidation.

Holy scripture is, *in form at least*, admitted to be "the sole authoritative source of the faith." But for the *meaning* of holy scripture we "are not to take our own private and individual judgments," "but that of the universal church, as attested by the Catholic

fathers and ancient bishops." Now let us see if it be possible to understand, and to act upon, this principle.

Who or what are the persons described under this term, "the Catholic fathers and ancient bishops?" In another place they are called, "the great doctors of all those churches."

The greatest obscurity hangs over this first and obviously necessary question. In one page, Dr. Pusey says, "our divines appeal to the church, anterior to the division of east and west." In another he talks of "the church universal, for nearly *thirteen centuries* of her existence." And when we turn to the collections made in the *Tracts for the Times*, we find large quotations from Ambrose as well as from Clement; from Bernard as well as from Ireneus. The whole range of the ecclesiastical writers, from the very days of the apostles down to the time of Hildebrand, is taken by the advocates of their united authority.

This preliminary question, then, is anything but a merely speculative or hypercritical one. The difference between the theology of the second century and that of the sixth is immense. That of the ninth is still further deteriorated. The "stream of antiquity" of which Dr. Pusey speaks, grows more and more turbid every century of its progress. It begins with the followers of the apostles,—it loses itself in the morasses of popery. To speak of it as offering one and the same "water of life" is a gross misrepresentation of fact. But it is found most convenient to be cautiously obscure and indefinite. In this way, a controversialist is enabled to pick out a string of sentences from writers scattered over a thousand years, and then to assert that "the real presence," or any other of what

he is pleased to call "the peculiar church doctrines," rests upon "the general consent of antiquity."

A clear understanding, however, on this point, we ought to have; not only that we may understand, to *whose* decisions "our private and individual judgments" are to be subjected; but also because the errors which are admitted on all hands to have sprung up in the church, are to be only thus avoided. Dr. Pusey himself thus speaks of the Romish apostacy:—

"Like him who was high among "the sons of God," but would be higher than his Creator made him, she fell." "Her claim is the invention of man, not the promise of Christ; it bears upon it the stamp of man's contrivance, in its lust of authority;"—"it has the print of man's contrivance, leading that unhappy church into presumptuous definitions of questions, against the voice of scripture and antiquity."<sup>1</sup>

Thus we see that there is something to be avoided, as well as something to be obeyed. On all accounts, therefore, we ought to have it clearly defined, who and what those "great doctors of all the churches" are, to whose "interpretations of scripture" we are to submit our own private judgments. To believe "that the sense and meaning of scripture is not what it seemeth to be," but something quite different, at the dicta of one who is himself a part of "a fallen church," and subject to "a lying spirit,"<sup>2</sup> would obviously be an act, not of Christian submission, but of religious lunacy. The apostle's commands, even to *a lady and her children*, were to "look to themselves,"—inasmuch as "many deceivers were entered into the world." They were to "try the spirits;" and "if there came any unto

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Pusey's Letter*, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 47.

*them not bringing the apostle's doctrine,"* they were to "receive him not." With this warning before our eyes, what excuse can be made for us, as a church, if, instead of trying the doctrine of Bernard or Ambrose by the word of God, we go to Ambrose or Bernard, resigning our own private judgment, and asking them to tell us what the sense of scripture is?

But we shall get no answer to this question, Which are the Catholic fathers and great doctors, by whose interpretations of scripture we are to be bound? No rational answer,—no answer that will bear the least scrutiny, can be given. If we are told of "the church anterior to the division of east and west," what is this but an arbitrary and merely human distinction? What had "the division of east and west" to do with the interpretation of the holy scriptures? Why should a doctor, who lived in the year A.D. 500, be authorized to interpret scripture for the church in all ages, while one of a few centuries later is denied any such distinction? Such a scheme is evidently untenable.

But there is another fact to be borne in mind. Dr. Pusey admits the church of Rome to have fallen into grievous error, to have "received a lying spirit," and to be, apparently, reserved for "a sorrowful doom."<sup>1</sup> Now Dr. Pusey will not assert, that all this fearful change passed upon her suddenly, or in the course of a few years. History proves the growth of the papal system to have been going on for centuries before the final assertion of her entire supremacy, and the full accomplishment of her apostacy. In fact, from the very days of the apostles, the greatest of whom had

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Pusey's Letter*, p. 47, 48.

declared that "the mystery of iniquity doth *already* work," the great ecclesiastical usurpation of the gospel dispensation was gradually developing itself. The growth was, like that of the works of God, "*first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.*" This gradual and perpetually advancing growth is witnessed by one of the writers of the *Tracts for the Times*.

"Three centuries *and more* were necessary for the infant church to attain her mature and perfect form and due stature. Athanasius, Basil, and Ambrose are the fully-instructed doctors of her doctrine, morals, and discipline."<sup>1</sup>

Here, then, we see the fact of a constantly advancing growth, distinctly asserted. And, in fact, no one in the least acquainted with ecclesiastical history can doubt, that the church in the days of Ambrose no more resembled the church in the days of Clement, than Rome resembles Geneva. A growth was always perceptibly going on, *and that growth ended in the maturity of Romanism.*

Now a state of growth is a state of silent but constant *change*. The councils of the church begin with Nice and end with Trent; and the whole system of Trent, if proposed at Nice, would have been unanimously execrated. The intermediate councils exhibit the successive steps in the apostacy.

But this being the real history of the church—a history of continually advancing deterioration, ending in utter apostacy—what meaning can we attach to the phrase, "*a genuine apostolic tradition; to be established by the consent of all times, all churches, and the great doctors of all those churches?*"

<sup>1</sup> *British Magazine*, vol. ix. p. 359.

The operation of such a scheme is this: the errors of popery stole forth, like the leaves of spring, imperceptibly and by an unseen progress, but unceasingly. Until they were visibly apparent, they could not be condemned. And thus it comes to pass, that in the apostolic fathers, those who were nearest to the fountain head, and whose authority ought to be the highest, we find little or no allusion to the points afterwards contested. "The peculiar church doctrines," as they are called in *the Tracts for the Times*—those doctrines which exhibit popery in its incipient state—find little or no support in the earliest writers of the church. Hence it is that we are referred to later authors, as better instructed, and are told that "three centuries were required for the *infant* church to attain her perfect form and due stature." And in these later writers we find many germs of the outbursting system of Rome. The sacraments begin to be spoken of in exaggerated language; the power of the priesthood is magnified; and rites and ceremonies are perpetually multiplied.

And thus it is that the appeal to antiquity comes to be, at last, an appeal to popery in its infancy. The early fathers are comparatively silent; the later abound with symptoms of the growing superstitions.

But, with these facts in our view, what encouragement have we, or what reason can be assigned, for the demanded submission to "the voice of antiquity." We desire to treat with due respect the names and the memory of the saints of old. But that respect ought to be rendered with discrimination. We ought to bear in mind that the "doctrines of men" were constantly encroaching on the simplicity of the gospel, until, at last, the great apostacy was manifested, in

the fallen church of the western empire. We ought also to observe, that this evil was apparent and was visibly advancing, for a long period before its perfect maturity. Consequently we ought to be more watchful and guarded in our reception of the later writers, in contrast to the earlier. And thus we shall come to understand, that the idea of a general aggregation of "all the great doctors of all the churches," in a chaotic doctrine called "the voice of antiquity," is a senseless figment; and that the surrender of our own understandings to the teaching of such a chimera, is an irrational abrogation of an indefeasible right, without the accompaniment of a release from an indispensable duty.

On the ground, then, of a perpetual and visible change and deterioration, constantly proceeding, in the theology and the writings of those called "the fathers," we protest against the least submission to their *judgment*, while we readily concede the vast importance of their *testimony to matters of fact*. As we know, with a certainty which nothing can shake, that such persons as Alexander and Julius Cæsar lived, and fought, and conquered,—while at the same time we never think of taking our opinions or creeds from those, on whose testimony we undoubtingly believe these facts,—so we reckon at the great possible value the certainty we gain from the early Christian writers, as to the truth and authenticity of the inspired writings, without for a moment dreaming of adopting their false constructions or fanciful interpretation of those writings. The single reason we have already assigned is abundantly sufficient to justify this refusal; but, if it were needful, we might assign many others; such, for instance, as the hete-



rodoxy of some fathers, such as Origen and Tertulian,—the frequent changes of opinion visible in the writings of others, and the interpolations and corruption which are common to all. Hence is Milton's description scarcely too strongly worded, "Whatsoever time, or the heedless hand of blind chance, hath drawn down from of old to this present, in her huge drag-net; whether fish or sea-weed, shells or shrubs, unpicked, unchosen, *these be the fathers!*"

We are aware of the plea attempted to be set up, in answer to this indubitable fact,—that it is not the individual opinion of this or that ancient writer, but the general concurrence of *all* in certain great principles, that is sought to be established and obeyed. But those who advance this theory have never yet fairly answered the question,—How many fallible opinions are required to form one infallible judgment? Nor have they attempted in the slightest degree to meet or reply to Bishop Taylor's admirable summary of the whole argument, which he gives in the following terms;—

“ Since the Fathers, who are the best witnesses of traditions, yet were infinitely deceived in their account; since sometimes they guessed at them, and conjectured by way of rule and discourse, and not of their knowledge, not by evidence of the thing; since many are called traditions which are not so, many are uncertain whether they were or no, yet confidently pretended—and this uncertainty, which at first was great enough, is increased by infinite causes and accidents, in the succession of sixteen hundred years; since the church had been either so careless or so abused, that she could not, or would not, preserve traditions with carefulness and truth; since it

was ordinary for the old writers to set out their own fancies and the rites of the church, which had been ancient, under the specious title of apostolical traditions; since some traditions rely but upon single testimony at first, yet, descending upon others, come to be attested by many, whose testimony, though conjunct, yet in value is but single, because it relies upon the first single relater, and so can have no greater authority or certainty than they derive from the single person; since the first ages, who were most competent to consign tradition, yet did consign such traditions as be of a nature wholly discrepant from the present questions, and speak nothing at all, or very imperfectly, to our purposes, and the following ages are no fit witnesses of that which was not transmitted to them, because they could not know it at all but by such transmission and prior consignation; . . . . . and, lastly, since besides the no necessity of traditions, there being abundantly enough in scripture, there are many things called traditions by the Fathers, which they themselves either proved by no authors, or by apocryphal and spurious and heretical;—the matter of tradition will, in very much, be so uncertain, so false, so suspicious, so contradictory, so unproved, that if a question be contested, and be offered to be proved only by tradition, it will be very hard to impose such a proposition to the belief of all men, with any imperiousness, or resolved determination; but it will be necessary men should preserve the liberty of believing and prophesying, and not part with it, upon a worse merchandise and exchange than Esau made for his birthright.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Liberty of Proph.* sect. v.

## VIII.

ON PRIVATE JUDGMENT: THE INTERPRETATION OF  
SCRIPTURE: AND A LEGITIMATE APPEAL TO AN-  
TIQUITY.

WE have described, and attempted to repel, in the last chapter, certain efforts recently made, and still making, to break down the Rule of Faith established by the church of England; and to set up, in its place, a system of belief and of authority almost identical with that promulgated by the church of Rome. But apart and distinct from these attempts, a course has been taken by a few writers of a very different and much higher class, which, if apparently less dangerous, is still, it appears to us, unsatisfactory and unsafe. Some allusion to their scheme is justly due, and is clearly necessary; for among their number we find at least two names of the very highest order,—Mr. Faber and Mr. Gladstone. Yet we could not confound them with the semi-Romanists of the *Tracts for the Times*. Their system is, by Mr. Faber at least, carefully distinguished from that of the Oxford-Tract-writers; and it unquestionably deserves a separate consideration.

Mr. Faber is at great pains to distinguish between what he terms “a *legitimate* and an *illegitimate* appeal

to antiquity.<sup>1</sup> The latter he considers (and in fact *proves*) to have been made in the *Tracts for the Times*. The former he exalts to a high rank among the foundations of our faith; and is exceedingly fond of exemplifying and extolling.

Now we shall not be guilty of the absurdity of denying that there *is* such a thing as a legitimate appeal to antiquity; nor shall we attempt to depreciate its value. We are not aware that any writer of credit has denied its importance. The external evidence of Christianity plainly rests upon it. Our argument with the freethinker and the infidel mainly depends upon *historic fact*, established by *ancient testimony*. This, we imagine, has never been denied. It is not then, a just appreciation of "antiquity," against which we have now to contend; but a recent, an almost new, an exaggerated view of its value. Hence the present bishop of Calcutta, when protesting against the almost Tridentine views of Tradition espoused and defended by some of the Oxford writers, demands;—

"Why this new school, as it were, of divinity? Ancient testimony, in its proper place, who had undervalued? The dignity and grace of the Sacraments, who had denied? The study of primitive antiquity, who had renounced? The witness of the early fathers, who had disparaged? Wherefore weaken, then, by pushing beyond its due bearing, the argument, which all writers of credit in our church had delighted to acknowledge? The testimony of the apostolical and primitive ages, for example, to the genuineness, authenticity, and divine inspiration of

<sup>1</sup> *Prim. Doct. Justif.* ed. 1839. App. xi. p. 487.

the canonical books of the New Testament, as of the Jewish church to those of the Old, who had called in question? Or who had doubted the incalculable importance of the witness of the universal ancient church at the Council of Nice to the broad fact of the faith of the whole Christian world, from the days of the apostles to that hour, in the mysteries of the adorable Trinity and of the Incarnation, as there rehearsed and recognized? Or who had called in question the other matters of fact which are strengthened by Christian antiquity—as the Divine authority and the perpetual obligation of the Lord's-day—the institution and perpetuity of the two, and only two Christian sacraments—the right of the infants of the faithful to the blessings of holy baptism—the apostolical usage of confirmation—the permanent separation of a body of men for sacred services—the duty of willing reverence from the people for them—the threefold rank of ministers in Christ's church—the use of liturgies—the observation of the festivals of our Lord's birth, resurrection, ascension, and gift of the Holy Ghost—with similar points; to which may be added, their important negative testimony to the non-existence of any one of the peculiar doctrines and claims of the modern court and church of Rome? These and similar facts we rejoice to acknowledge, as fortified by pure and uncorrupted primitive tradition or testimony.

“ We rejoice also to receive, with our own Protestant Reformed Church, the universal witness of the Catholic Fathers and ancient Bishops, expressed in the three Creeds, as a most important method of guarding the words of Revelation from the artful ambiguities of heretics, and as rules and terms of

communion; just as we acknowledge our modern Articles, Liturgy, and Homilies for the same purpose. We rejoice again in tracing back almost the whole of our most sublime and scriptural Liturgy to a far higher period than the rise of Popery—to the primitive ages of the Church in our own and every other Christian country. We thus admit, in its fullest sense for its proper ends, the rule of Vincentius *Lirinensis*—*Quod semper, quod ab omnibus, quod ubique traditum est.*

“And we receive such tradition for this one reason—because it deserves the name of just and proper evidence. It is authentic testimony. It is a part of the materials from which even the external evidences of Christianity itself are derived. It furnishes the most powerful historical arguments in support of our faith. It is amongst the proofs of our holy religion.”

But then we must go on to protest, with the bishop, against the undue exaltation of this evidence from antiquity. For, to continue our quotation,—“Evidence is one thing; the rule of belief another. Not for one moment do we, on any or all these grounds, confound the history and evidences of the divinely-inspired rule of faith, with that rule itself. Not for one moment do we place tradition on the same level with the all-perfect word of God. Not for one moment do we allow it any share in the standard of revealed truth. Scripture and tradition taken together are not—we venture to assert—‘the joint rule of faith;’ but ‘holy scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith.’ And tradition is so

far from being of co-ordinate authority, that even the ecclesiastical writers who approach the nearest to them, and are read in our churches—which not one of the fathers is—‘for example of life, and instruction of manners;’ are still, as being uninspired, not to be applied to establish any one doctrine of our religion. Against this whole system, then, as proceeding upon a most false and dangerous principle, and differing from the generally-received Protestant doctrine, I beg, reverend brethren, most respectfully to caution you.”<sup>1</sup>

To most of this, perhaps to every word of it, Mr. Faber would yield his hearty assent. But there are two phrases in common use, to which he seems to attach an undue importance. We cannot but believe, that their use often serves to obscure the truth. These phrases are, “*Interpretation*,” and “*Private Judgment*.” We should be glad, if it were possible, to banish both of them from the present controversy, and to look at the facts of the case without reference to these imaginary creations.

God has mercifully vouchsafed to us a revelation of his will concerning man, in a written volume. This precious gift is not of a brief or stinted character; for no fewer than from five and thirty to forty different prophets and evangelists were employed to compose it. It has depths and mysteries, unquestionably; but it has also an abundance of the plainest and simplest instructions for a holy and a happy life; and above all, it has a full and clear manifestation of the way of salvation. A long life, indeed, might well be spent in its study; but a single evening devoted to

<sup>1</sup> *A Charge, &c:—By D. Wilson, D.D. Bishop of Calcutta, 1838.*

its perusal, with prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, would suffice to make any human being "wise unto salvation." We hear in it the thunders which roll around the throne of God; but we also hear "the still small voice" which the babe and the ignorant can understand, "*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*" It is glorious, magnificent, wonderful; but it is also, on every essential point, plain, distinct, emphatic: and above all, it is *entirely* and *infallibly* TRUE. What hinders, then, our full and absolute repose of mind on its statements, or our implicit reliance on its decisions?

But Mr. Faber has a word to say in this matter. A simple reliance on the bare word of Holy Scripture does not seem to him either a just, or a rational, or a practicable thing.

"Those who repudiate an appeal to antiquity," he says, "under the specious claim of honouring the Bible, really do nothing more, than, in the matter of interpretation, invite us to reject *the human authority of the Fathers* in favour of *their own individual equally human authority*. For, since it is quite clear that the Bible cannot be used *practically* as a RULE OF FAITH, until by interpretation we annex to its words *some sense or other*; they, who profess to honour its autocracy by despising the concurrent interpretations of the early Fathers, most unaccountably seem not to perceive; that, while they *profess* to appeal to *the Bible alone*, they *really* appeal only to *the particular sense which they put upon it by their own private interpretations*; instead of appealing to *the particular sense which is put upon it by the interpretations of the Early Witnessing Church*: and how by any modern it can be *consistently* said, that an appeal to the inter-



pretation of *the Fathers* is an appeal *from* the authority of the Bible *to* mere human authority, while yet an appeal to this same modern's *own* interpretation is NOT an appeal *from* the authority of the Bible *to* mere human authority; is certainly, in no wise, very easy of comprehension. For, unless the modern in question be prepared, with a grave face, to maintain, that *his* projected interpretation of the Bible is NOT a human interpretation, it is difficult to understand how such an assertion can for a single moment be sustained."<sup>1</sup>

Here we have the chimera "Interpretation:" and our reply to Mr. Faber's theory consists in denying that it is anything more than a chimera. We shall again recur to the arguments of those, who are better qualified to contend with Mr. F. than ourselves.

"The gospel histories were written, that those who read them "*might believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and that, believing, they might have life through his name.*" (John xx. 31.) The epistles were sent to those who already believed in the name of the Son of God, that they "*might have fellowship with the Father and the Son, and that their joy might be full;*" that they might be guarded against such as would seduce them into errors of opinion or practice, and that they might remain in the truth, and so continue in the Son and in the Father. (1 John i. 3, 4; ii. 21, 24.) The object of the gospels and the epistles is, consequently, similar. Both have been communicated to us, that the man of God may be perfect, and, by the due use of both, be "*thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*" But if such be the object of

1 *Prim. Doct. Justif.* 1839. p. 372.

the whole of the New Testament, it is impossible, with any respect for the characters of its holy and divinely-enlightened authors, to imagine that it should have been so constituted as to leave the careful, and qualified, and diligent inquirer under any insuperable difficulty or doubt, *in ascertaining the meaning* of its expressions—at least so far as to comprehend the things which are essential for the attainment of its great end.”

“ And there is a clearness in the declarations of scripture upon the fundamental duties and doctrines of our religion, which it must be extremely difficult to obscure or overlook. By the Word which was made flesh, we are taught that all things were made, and that without Him was not anything made that was made. By Him, it is said, God made the worlds, and by Him all things consist. Christ once suffered to bear the sins of many, the just for the unjust, to bring us unto God; and through His blood we have the forgiveness of sins. The Spirit helpeth our infirmities, and our heavenly Father will give the Spirit to them that ask Him. These sentences are so written, that he who runs may perceive them; and when brought to his mind, either by hearing or reading, the least educated among the sons of men would confess their meaning to be plain, unless their understanding had been previously confused and misguided by the subtlety of their teachers.”<sup>1</sup>

To us, then, it appears like a misapplication of terms to say, as does Mr. Faber, that “ the Bible cannot be used practically as a rule of faith, until

<sup>1</sup> *Rev. C. Benson's Four Discourses*, p. 9—11.

by *interpretation* we annex to its words some sense or other." Take, as an instance, the "*faithful saying*," that "*Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.*" Does not the meaning of the words come into the mind at the same instant with the enunciation of the words themselves? What interpretation is needed? Enlarged and confirmed the doctrine may be, by adding to this one text others equally clear, showing how He came into the world, and in what way sinners are saved by his coming. But this is no more "interpretation," than the discovery of the second series of facts in chemistry or any other science is an interpretation of the first series.

But even were we to admit the startling proposition, that scripture cannot be taken as a rule, until by interpretation we *annex* to its words some sense or other,—we should then only find ourselves at the beginning of a mazy round of difficulties, the termination of which would be perfectly hopeless. Scripture and the interpretation of antiquity are often spoken of, as if the first were a system of hieroglyphics, over which we might pore hopelessly and in vain, until the second came to our aid with its perfect and infallible key, and disclosed the secret. Whereas the fact is almost the reverse. God has spoken to man, distinctly, fully, and clearly; and man is constantly trying to darken and obscure this word, by his "interpretations."

Whence then, came this strange and altogether unfounded notion,—that although the Scriptures cannot be used, without an interpretation is first found for them, yet that the writings of the Fathers are free from any such difficulty, and carry their own sense and meaning visibly on their very front?

But perhaps it will be answered, that this is not thought or said ; but that it is admitted to be as true of the Fathers as of the Scriptures, that “ we can make no practical use of them, *until* by an *interpretation* we annex to their words some sense or other.” At what point have we then arrived? We have, first, the scriptures, for whose sense we are to refer to “ the interpretations of the early church ;” but in order to “ use practically” these interpretations, we are to find for them another interpreter! And thus we may go on, till our system resembles the fable of “ antiquity,” of the earth resting upon an elephant,—the elephant on a tortoise,—and the tortoise on—*nothing*!

“ If the unanimous testimony of Christian antiquity, as it may be gathered from the writings of the earlier Fathers, be an authority which we cannot elude, the only sufficient guide to the whole revealed faith, the surest and safest guardian against the errors which a rational interpretation of scriptural language is liable to introduce ; we are bound to receive and use this admirable instrument as our only chance of uniting believers in one common creed, by pointing out to them one common explanation of God’s word.

“ But what reason have we to suppose that this mode of endeavouring to ascertain the truth is really likely to lead to the establishment of an essential unanimity among professing Christians? If men are to judge for themselves concerning what Catholic tradition means and declares, is there any better hope of an universal agreement upon that, than upon the sense of the inspired scriptures ? ” <sup>1</sup>

“ For it is not true to say, that the appeal to the

<sup>1</sup> *Rev. C. Benson’s Four Discourses*, p. 13.

testimony of antiquity is nothing more than a reference to an historical fact which none can deny. It is, indeed, a reference to the fact that certain statements are contained in the writings of the fathers. But it is furthermore a reference to the notions they are presumed to contain, and the meaning they are intended to convey." "What claim, then, have the statements of Catholic tradition to be regarded as free from that difficulty which hangs upon the expressions of the divine word? None. The works of the fathers are written, like God's revelation, in languages which have long been disused. Like the apostles of Jesus, the fathers lived in a remote age, in distant and dissimilar countries, and under circumstances very different both from those of each other and from our own. Their modes of thinking and speaking partook largely of their times, habits, and places, and cannot easily be understood without some considerable knowledge of all these points. Like the scriptures, the works of the fathers can be known to the generality of Christians only through the medium of translations, which are infinitely more imperfect than those of the Bible, and very frequently and flagrantly erroneous." <sup>1</sup>

"But we may proceed still further than this. There are circumstances belonging to an inquiry into the testimony of antiquity, which render it a far more difficult task to ascertain its uniformity than to understand God's word. The word of God is comparatively small in extent, and conveys its fulness of all wisdom with a pregnant brevity which neither absorbs our whole time, nor overloads the memory.

<sup>1</sup> *Rev. C. Benson's Four Discourses*, p. 15.

The fathers are voluminous, and it is admitted that it would require a whole life to read them, in order to see how far they agree or differ. The scriptures are inspired; and the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth cannot fail to convey its blessed communications with as much accuracy as the nature of the case will allow. The errors, therefore, into which we fall in studying the scriptures can arise only from our own misunderstanding of the sacred text; and a single clear and definite passage affords sufficient authority for the belief of any doctrine. The fathers were confessedly without inspiration, so that in what they utter concerning heavenly things we are in danger of error from a double source; both from the inaccuracy or impropriety of their manner of expression, and from our own wrong interpretation of their meaning. Besides all this, it is necessary, after having examined the entire writings of each, to go on to reconcile, and combine, and harmonize them all. This, however, is a task involving such a series of complicated arrangements, and multiplied comparisons, that few would be able to accomplish it with any degree of satisfaction to their own minds. But when, as it is usually maintained, we are to form our opinion of what is the teaching of Catholic antiquity, not by the consent of all who have written, but only by the general voice of the most eminent of the early Fathers, we so add to the delicacy of our operations, and open such a door for partiality or prejudice to intrude, that it must be almost impossible to attain a satisfactory result. For who are the most eminent of the Fathers? Through how many centuries must our investigations be extended? Or, how many of those writers we examine may be al-

lowed to differ, or to be silent, on any matter of doctrine or of discipline, without destroying what is improperly called the universality of the traditional faith?"<sup>1</sup>

"If the circumstances which I have thus briefly touched upon have been truly stated, if Christians are to make the testimony of the ancient Fathers the rule by which to judge for themselves of the doctrines and meaning of God's word, it is in vain to say, that it is an easier, a safer, or a surer mode of attaining to a uniform creed, than when our opinions of Gospel truth are formed by a diligent investigation into the language and statements of Scripture itself. It would rather seem to be the more difficult method of the two."<sup>2</sup>

A simple, intelligible, and authoritative "interpretation," then, relieving us from the responsibility of using what is called "our private judgment," does not exist. *Aids* to the better and clearer understanding of the sacred text, derived from a comparison of scripture with scripture; from the illustrations furnished by history and natural philosophy; and from a chastised pursuit of philology;—*aids* like these no humble-minded Christian will condemn or undervalue. But, after all, his faith must rest upon the divine record itself;—not upon a "sense put upon it" by a series of ancient writers, but upon the innate and visible meaning of the record. Here, however, Mr. Faber's warning meets us, against relying upon our own "insulated private judgment."

His dread of this second chimera seems to lead

<sup>1</sup> *Rev. C. Benson's Four Discourses*, p. 16, 17.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 18.

him to much earnestness in its deprecation. He speaks of "the wildness and uncertainty of insulated and uninformed private judgment,"—of "the vain upstart plea of insulated, and independent, and uninformed private judgment,"—of "arrogant self-sufficiency, and inflated self-dependance," and of the "mere insulated and totally unevidential *speculation* of any modern respecting the sense of doctrinal scripture."<sup>1</sup>

But after reading these vehement expressions, we are forced to turn from fancies to facts; and to ask, Who, and where are the parties who have so absurdly magnified this thing called "private judgment?"

For our own part, we will, with the greatest readiness enter into a compact with Mr. Faber, never to mention the word again, and more than that, never even to allude to the *thing*. We are perfectly content to be bound up and concluded by the terms of our church's article, which asserts, that "holy scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not *read therein*, nor may be *proved thereby*, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."

Here is not one word of "interpretation;" nor yet of "the concurrent voice of antiquity;" nor yet of "the witness of the early church;" nor yet of "private judgment." It leaves all these human devices in mid air, and soars at once to the source and fountain of truth. It asserts with the greatest plainness, that "*all things necessary to salvation*" are *contained* in holy scripture. Nor does it leave us to sup-

<sup>1</sup> *Primitive Doctrine of Justification*, 1839, App. p. 364—369.



pose that they may be hiddenly or darkly contained, for it proceeds to assert that nothing ought to be inculcated as “an article of the faith,” except it “may be read therein, or proved thereby.”

Some, perhaps all, then, of the great fundamental doctrines of the gospel may be read in holy scripture. Not deduced therefrom, by means of “interpretation,” but read therein; as a man reads a finger-post—“TO NORWICH,” and at once takes it in its whole meaning without an *interpreter*. And others, *all* the others that are essential, may be proved *thereby*. Not proved to exist in scripture by dint of evidence fetched from uninspired ancient writers; but proved *by scripture itself*. And proved by it alone; for we can never believe, that the framers of our Articles were so careless, or so unable to express their own meaning, as to say distinctly, “may be proved *thereby*,” if they really meant, “may be proved by scripture, as interpreted by the unanimous consent of primitive antiquity.”

But without this “primitive antiquity,” it seems to be Mr. Faber’s impression that nothing can be proved. He tells us that “when Primitive Antiquity from the very beginning is unanimous in deducing a given doctrine from the *words* of Scripture, we are bound, even on the principles of plain common sense, to receive that deduction as the undoubted *mind* of Scripture, instead of resorting to the strange wild scheme of *Insulated Private Judgment*, which inevitably places, on the same footing of authority, the sound doctrine of *Christ’s Essential Godhead*, and what of old was termed the *God-denying Apostacy*. For if the process of *Insulated Private Judgment* (a Judgment, which may freely set the unanimous testimony of Antiquity at defiance) is to

be adopted: I see not, how even the Orthodox himself, if he has the good fortune to be Orthodox *only* on *such* a plan, can consistently refuse to the Socinian that same right and privilege which he claims for *himself*. So far as I can understand the merits of the case, he *must* admit the Socinian's *principle* of interpretation to be just as valid as his own: for, in simple verity, they are neither more nor less than *identical*. In short, if we adopt the plan of theologising on the basis of mere *Insulated Private Judgment*, we may indeed deduce *Opinions* from scripture; for what we simply *think* or *opine* to be the sense of Doctrinal Holy Writ, is simply an *Opinion*: but, on *this* plan, it is absolutely impossible, that we should, *legitimately* at least, deduce any binding *Articles of Faith*; because, if, on scriptural authority, we would *fairly* lay down a binding *Article of Faith*, we must not idly talk of what we *think*, but we must bring some tangible and intelligible *proof* that it is really contained in scripture."<sup>1</sup>

We would not hastily mingle Mr. Faber's name with that of bishop Jewell's Romish antagonist, Harding; but, unfortunately, their arguments are identical. "The heretics," (Arius, Nestorius, Eutyches) says Harding, "boasted, as ye do, much of the scriptures," and he then proceeds to argue, that the ancient councils always passed from the scriptures to the judgment of the Fathers, as the preferable and only successful line of argument. Again, he says, "We (the Papists) esteem and understand the scriptures to be the *sense* and the *word*. If they (the heretics) can pretend the bare *word*, they think them-

<sup>1</sup> *Prim. Doct. Justific.* 1839. *Pref.* p. xliv—xlv.

selves good enough to make a *sense* of their own." "If it were lawful for us to use scripture after our own interpretation, as they do, we should not lack sufficient matter in the holy books to overthrow by our own applying, all their false opinions and heresies. But we are bound to that religious awe and reverence of them, that, *except we have an author to avouch the sense*, whereof we take hold, we dare bring forth nothing."<sup>1</sup>

Obviously the doctrine of Harding and Mr. Faber is nearly identical. No man can draw from scripture, in their view, by his own "private judgment," any thing beyond "*an opinion.*" Nor is he to be referred to the Heavenly Teacher for conviction and certainty. The "ancient authors," the "testimony of antiquity" is the only source indicated, by which we may obtain "*proof*, that such or such a doctrine is *really* contained in scripture."

Now we would not dwell so long on this point, were it not that this principle—which is likely to obtain extensive credence under such a sanction as that of Mr. Faber—appears to us to be fraught with the most fatal consequences. Let us consider, for a moment, its practical operation in the case of a seeker after truth, of average character and only moderate learning—one, in short, who may stand as a sample of the thousands of sincere enquirers whom we may believe to exist among us.

Such an one first satisfies his mind, by the treatises of Leslie and Paley, or the more recent works of bishops Wilson and McIlvaine, that the scriptures are, unquestionably, the inspired word of God. He

<sup>1</sup> *Harding*, in *Jewel's Defence*, p. 56, 465.

has thus obtained a fulcrum, a firm resting-place, upon which his mind may lean, and revolve.

He proceeds, next, to study with honesty of mind these divine records. Among the very first of the questions on which his mind will naturally turn, will be that of the true character and dignity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Having heard something of the Socinian hypothesis, he soon perceives that the doctrine he adopts with reference to this great person, must immediately become the centre and turning-point of his religious system.

Studying the word of God, then, on this subject, he soon finds a multitude of passages, such as *Psalms* xlv. 6. *Heb.* i. 8. *Isaiah* ix. 6. *Isaiah* vi. 3. *John* xii. 41. *Zech.* xiii. 7. *Matt.* i. 23. *John* i. 1, 4. *Acts* xx. 28. *Rom.* ix. 5. *Col.* ii. 9. *1 Tim.* iii. 16. *1 John* v. 20. *Jude* 25, &c. &c.; in which, in every variety of phrase, by a multitude of witnesses, and with the greatest possible explicitness, Christ is declared to be *the Mighty God: the Lord of Hosts: the True God: the Only Wise God*, and the possessor of all the attributes and perfections of the Godhead.

Here, then, his mind begins to rest and feel satisfied. He seems to have found that which he sought—a perfect certainty of “*the truth as it is in Jesus.*” But let him now be presented with Mr. Faber’s hypothesis; and, if it gain admittance to his mind, what a change takes place! He is informed, and that by an elder in Israel, that all that he has yet attained, “is simply an *opinion,*” and that he “cannot consistently refuse to the Socinian the same right and privilege which he claims for himself:” That, in fact, “the Socinian’s principle of interpretation is just as valid as his own; for, in simple verity, they

are neither more nor less than *identical*." And, finally, that "if he would *fairly* lay down a binding *Article of Faith*, he must not only talk of what he *thinks*, but must bring some tangible *proof* that it is really contained in scripture."<sup>1</sup>

Now it is highly probable, and is fervently to be hoped, that his heart and his judgment will alike rise in rebellion against this assumption. He will be prompt to exclaim, "I wish to have no *opinion*; to lean in no degree upon *private judgment*, in this momentous concern; but to cast myself wholly upon the written word of the Most High. I find it there declared, that the child of the Virgin should be "*the mighty God*." I find him called by Isaiah, "*the Lord of Hosts*." I hear His own voice declare, that He is "*the First and the Last*," and that "*he that hath seen Him hath seen the Father*." (Isaiah ix. 6; vi. 3. Revelations i. 17. John xiv. 9.) I find a multitude of such passages, all of which are as plain as words can be framed; not to mention others less explicit. Now, if I cannot understand these declarations; if I can only form an *opinion* as to their meaning, which opinion is no better than the opinion of one who attaches to the whole an exactly opposite meaning,—how, or in what way, am I ever to arrive at a certainty in the great concerns of eternity?"

The answer of Mr. Faber is, that he can only "*fairly* lay down for himself a binding article of faith," by searching out "the unanimous consent of primitive antiquity."

This is, at once, enough to cast an ordinary inquirer into the depths of despair. "How am I to

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 203.

learn," he will ask, " what is ' the unanimous consent of primitive antiquity ? ' " It may be replied, that Mr. Faber will himself guide and assist him in this search. But he then naturally asks, Is Mr. Faber himself infallible? or may there not be other writers, who may give another and a different account of " the voice of primitive antiquity ? " He must then be told that it is indeed so, and that Dr. Priestley, and commentators of his stamp, will exhibit quite a different representation of " the early witnessing church." What can he do, then, but sink down into hopeless despondency?

But suppose him to recover, and to remember that " it is no light thing, for it is his life ; " and let him resolve to commence the inquiry. He is presented with a collection of certain passages, drawn from the writings of Irenæus, Clement, Justin, Tertullian, and others. By the help of these, he is told, he may "*fairly* lay down a binding *article of faith*." But he soon perceives, that they are generally far more obscure, more verbose, and more enveloped in mystic phraseology, than those " words of light " in the apostolic writings, of which he had previously been assured, that he could not possibly form more than an *opinion*. The doubt necessarily crosses his mind, " If I could not safely feel assured of the meaning of St. Paul or St. John, how am I to feel a greater degree of certainty as to the meaning of Clement or of Justin ? " And what is the answer which is to dispel this doubt ; or how are the gathering clouds of gloom and scepticism to be driven from his mind?

Only by some such words as the church of England addresses, to men so perplexed by the errors of

Rome: She exhorts them, in the very opening of her Book of Homilies:—

“Forsaking the corrupt judgment of fleshly men, which care not but for their carcase, let us reverently hear and read Holy Scripture, which is the food of the soul (Matt. iv. 4); let us diligently search for the well of life in the books of the New and Old Testament, and not run to the stinking puddles of men’s traditions, devised by men’s imagination, for our justification and salvation.

“For, in holy scripture, is contained what we ought to do, and what to eschew, what to believe, what to love, and what to look for at God’s hands at length. In these books we shall find the Father from whom, the Son by whom, and the Holy Ghost in whom, all things have their being and keeping up; and these three persons to be but one God and one substance. In these books, we may learn to know ourselves, how vile and miserable we be; and also to know God, how good he is of himself, and how he maketh us and all creatures partakers of his goodness.

“We may learn also, in these books, to know God’s will and pleasure, as much as, for this present time, is convenient for us to know. And, as the great clerk and godly preacher, St. John Chrysostom saith, Whatsoever is required to the salvation of man, is fully contained in the scripture of God: he that is ignorant, may there learn and have knowledge; he that is hard-hearted and an obstinate sinner, shall there find everlasting torments, prepared of God’s justice, to make him afraid, and to mollify or soften him; he that is oppressed with misery in this world, shall there find relief in the promises of everlasting life, to his great consolation and comfort; he that is

wounded by the devil unto death, shall there find medicine whereby he may be restored again unto health. If it shall require to teach any truth, or reprove false doctrine, to rebuke any vice, to commend any virtue, to give good counsel, to comfort, or to exhort, or to do any other thing requisite for our salvation, all those things, saith St. Chrysostom, we may learn plentifully of the scripture. There is, saith Fulgentius, abundantly enough, both for men to eat, and children to suck. There is whatsoever is meet for *all ages and for all degrees and sorts of men.*

“And the scripture is full, as well of low valleys, plain ways, and *easy for every man to use* and to walk in ; as also of high hills and mountains, which few men can climb unto.

“Although many things in the scripture be spoken in obscure mysteries ; yet there is nothing spoken under dark mysteries in one place, but the self-same thing in other places is spoken more familiarly and plainly, to the capacity *both of learned and unlearned.* And those things in the scripture, that be plain to understand, and necessary for salvation, every man’s duty is to learn them, to print them in memory, and effectually to exercise them ; and as for the dark mysteries, to be contented to be ignorant in them, until such time as it shall please God to open those things unto him.”

Thus speaks the church of England, at the very first lesson in her book of Homilies. She there declares, what, in her view, is “the fountain and well of truth.” And not one word does she utter, concerning “the consent of primitive antiquity,” or “the interpretations of the early church,” or of “the



right of private judgment." Her view is wholly irrespective of these modern entanglements. She finds no difficulty in the way; but simply directs her children to "apply their minds to know holy scripture," by which they will "know God and his will, their office and their duty."

We conclude, then, with Archbishop Usher, that in Holy Scripture itself, without any human interpretation, "all the fundamental doctrines of faith, and precepts of life, are plain and perspicuous:" are "set forth most clearly and plainly, even to the capacity and understanding of the simple and unlearned."<sup>1</sup> And further, that "the true sense and meaning of the scriptures must be learned out of the scriptures themselves; because the Spirit of God alone is the certain interpreter of his word, written by his Spirit. For no man knoweth the things pertaining to God, but the Spirit of God. 1 Cor. ii. 11. And, no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation: for the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. 2 Pet. i. 20, 21."

"The interpretation therefore must be by the same Spirit by which the scripture was written: of which Spirit we have no certainty upon any man's credit, but only so far as his saying may be confirmed by Holy Scripture. Therefore no interpretation of Holy Fathers, Popes, Councils, Custom or Practice of the Church, either contrary to the manifest words of scripture, or containing matters which cannot necessarily be proved out of scripture, are to be received as an undoubted truth. Scripture, then, is to be

<sup>1</sup> *Abp. Usher; Body of Divinity*, p. 16.

interpreted by scripture, according to the *analogy of faith*, (Rom. xii. 6.) and the scope and circumstances of the present place, and conference of other plain and evident places, by which all such as are obscure and hard to be understood, ought to be interpreted. For there is no matter necessary to eternal life which is not plainly and sufficiently set forth in many places of scripture ; by which, other places, that are abused by the devil or his ministers, may be interpreted." "As our Saviour Christ giveth us example (Matt. iv. 6, 7), when the Devil abused the text of scripture ; (Psalm xci. 11), declaring that this place must be so understood, as that it may agree with that most evident and express commandment written in Deut. vi. 16, "*Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.*"<sup>1</sup>

We adhere, then, to the conclusion that holy scripture, *alone*, and *interpreting itself*,<sup>2</sup> is not only a far more *safe*,—or rather the *only safe* Rule of Faith ; but is also a greatly more intelligible, simple, and practical guide than that which Mr. Faber would substitute for it. It is more safe, because it is the word of God, and not the word of man ; because it was given expressly to make us "*wise unto salvation*,"—instead of arising, as do human writings, out of a multitude of other views and motives ; and, further, because it is the work of *one* divine mind, and consequently harmonious and consistent ; instead of being formed from the ever-varying and *ever-deteriorating* opinions of sinful mortals.

On this latter point, perhaps enough has not been

<sup>1</sup> *Abp. Usher: Body of Divinity*, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> An admirable development of the manner in which scripture is interpreted by scripture, will be found in *Bishop Horsley's Sermons on 2 Peter i. 20, 21*. See his *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 209—278.

said. We are sometimes reproached as though we set up our "private judgment" against the views and determinations of men who were themselves instructed and disciplined by the apostles. But this is a perversion of the facts of the case. Offer us merely the writings of those who sat at the feet of the apostles, and no difference of opinion is likely to arise; for, in fact, their remains are so trivial as to furnish scarcely any ground for dispute. But what is asked of us, is something far different. We are called upon to receive, as something almost, if not quite apostolic, the notions of men who lived *three, four, and even five hundred years* after the apostles! Can any thing be more obviously irrational?

Let Mr. Faber consider the following nearly parallel case. The founders of the reformed church of England, in rooting out the corruptions of Rome, took especial pains to extirpate what they rightly judged to be the chief and central of those errors,—the making the Lord's Supper *a propitiatory sacrifice*. In a subsequent essay we shall aim to establish this fact,—if, indeed, it can need establishment,—by abundant evidence. And, were the formularies and standards of the church at all obscure on this point, the works of the Reformers themselves, Cranmer, Ridley, Jewell, and others, are accessible, and available for the purpose of fully elucidating their meaning.

But, in this case, what course do those, who would re-establish that fundamental doctrine of Popery among us, take? They compile a *Catena Patrum* (being No. 81 of the Oxford Tracts,) in which they have collected together a long array of passages, some dubious, some unquestionably semi-Popish,

from the works of such as Laud, Bilson, Taylor, Hammond, Heylin, Brett, Sancroft, and Ken. And this they offer us, as clearly establishing the sense of the church of England in this matter.

Now, what is our answer?

We repel the attempt by at once referring to the unquestionable historic fact,—that during all this period, whose successive authors they quote, the theology of the church, so far as it is found in the writings of her distinguished men, was undergoing constant changes and *deteriorations*. Between Parker, for instance, the first primate of England under Elizabeth, and Laud, who filled the same place under Charles, there was a prodigious discrepancy. And each represented, in a great degree, the theology of his own times, which in eighty years had greatly fallen. Another eighty years carries us on to Tillotson; in whom we find a divine totally different from both the former. Who, then, with this broad and undeniable fact in view, would think of turning to Laud or to Tillotson for an explanation of what Parker, or Grindall, or Jewell meant in their Articles or Homilies, instead of taking the sense of the Reformers from a careful examination and collation of their own writings?

The same question might be asked with reference to every other church in the world. Who would appeal to the divines of Geneva, at the present day, for a faithful development of the principles of Calvin, or ask an “interpretation” of the doctrines of Luther, from the neologians of Germany?

In like manner, when we are desired to submit our own “private judgment” to the “interpretations of the early church,”—and when, on examination,

we find that this "early church" is carried on from Clement, in A.D. 70, to Justin, in A.D. 140, and to Cyprian, in A.D. 250, and to Hilary, in A.D. 360, and to Theodoret, in 430, and even to Gregory, in A.D. 600, and Bernard, in A.D. 1130,—we are compelled to pause, and to remember, that the system of Cyprian was filled with errors and corruptions, of which Clement never dreamt ; and that in the times of Hilary and Theodoret the foundations of Popery were already firmly laid. Of what use is it to refer us to these writers, as in any way capable of giving us with certainty the sense and meaning of the apostles ? Grant that it is not this or that individual upon whom we are required to rely, but a whole succession ; still the question is obvious,—How can a series of fallible, and, in fact, erring writers, furnish an unerring standard ? Or how can a series of constantly deteriorating progress, justly indicate and expound the true position from which its declension commenced ?

Nor can we clearly understand how Mr. Faber would escape from the manifest difficulties of his own hypothesis. The sense, for instance, attached by "the early witnessing church" to Gen. vi. 2, 4. Does he submit to it, or repudiate it ? If he rejects it, how does he escape the edge of his own rebuke, as preferring "the particular sense put upon it by his own private interpretation," or by the private interpretation of some later writer or writers, to "the interpretations of the early witnessing church ?"

Or, again, how does he meet the argument of Chillingworth, drawn from the millenarian theory, which he shews to have been "believed and taught by the eminent fathers of the age next after the apostles, and by none of that age opposed or condemned ?"

He proves this position from Papias, Justin Martyr, Melito, and Ireneus. And he shews the disbelief of this doctrine to have arisen in a later age. Again, therefore, we ask, Will Mr. Faber prefer "his own private interpretation to the interpretation of the early fathers."—or will he arbitrarily elect to abide by the private interpretation of those later fathers, who had set aside, on their own "merely human authority," "the concurrent interpretation of the early witnessing church?"

We have not left ourselves space for a distinct notice of Mr. Gladstone's views of this subject; but he appears in the main to concur in Mr. Faber's principle; and our objections, if valid, will equally apply to both.

## IX.

OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND :  
ITS VIEW OF EPISCOPACY.

WE have now brought the argument down to the point at which our attention may be directed more exclusively than heretofore, to the church of our own country,—the English ecclesiastical establishment. We have discussed the fundamental principles, on which such an institution may safely rest; avoiding the extremes on either side; the one which declares all such establishments to be opposed to the general tenor and spirit of the New Testament;—the other which exalts them to a divine rank and authority, making them the sole judge of the propriety of their own acts, and declaring their decisions, whether founded on scripture or not, to be binding on the consciences of all within their jurisdiction. We have concluded, from various precepts and examples in the Old Testament, and the absence of any repealing enactments in the New,—that the duty of all Christian rulers is, and ever has been, to take the most effectual means in their power for the re-

ligious instruction of their people. And this leads inevitably to some sort of national institution, or establishment, for those objects. But we have denied the right, alleged by some persons to be inherent in a national church, of authoritatively interpreting scripture, or of affixing to her economy of rites and observances, any higher than human sanctions and temporal penalties. To ordain things not commanded in scripture; to make obedience to such ordinances a term of communion; and then to declare that non-submission to such terms, and separation from the body exacting them, "is a sin which, unless repented of, is *eternally destructive of the soul*,"<sup>1</sup> would seem to us a direct violation of the sixth Article of our church, which declares, that "whatsoever is not read in Holy Scripture, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man to be believed as an Article of Faith, or be thought *requisite* or necessary to *salvation*." And it is one of the distinguishing excellences of the English church, that while she is most clear and decided in her own views of church government and ritual observance, she is entirely free from the least imputation of imposing upon men, *on peril of salvation*, those things which are merely human inferences and deductions, either from some outlines "*faintly traced*,"<sup>2</sup> in the apostolical epistles; or from the recorded practices of the early church. Those who have been recently employed in "planning a reform of the hearts and minds of churchmen,"<sup>3</sup> are frequently obliged to confess their dissatisfaction with her on this very point.

<sup>1</sup> *Palmer's Treatise*, vol. i. p. 54.

<sup>2</sup> *Tracts for the Times*, No. viii. p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Quarterly Review*, vol. lxiii. p. 542.



They not unseldom murmur their regret at the omission, in her standards, of any claim to infallibility or indefectibility. As, for instance; “The remark may seem paradoxical at first sight, yet *surely it is just*, that the English church is for certain deficient in particulars, because it does not profess itself infallible.”<sup>1</sup> Nor are even the highest churchmen of former days high enough for these modern aspirants. Mr. Froude says, “I am shocked to see Jeremy Taylor so heretical about excommunication. He says, that when unjust it is no evil.”<sup>2</sup> And Mr. Keble, to account for Hooker’s shortcomings, observes, that “he (Hooker) shrunk from the legitimate result of his own premises.” “He did not feel at liberty to press unreservedly, that part of the argument which others regarded as most *vital and decisive*; the *necessity*, namely, of the apostolical commission to the derivation of *sacramental grace*, and to our mystical communion with Christ.”

No, Mr. Keble and Mr. Froude confess the truth. Not only did the Reformers themselves,—those who made our church, humanly speaking, what it is,—but even their successors for a century after, down to Hooker and Jeremy Taylor, all alike refused to “press unreservedly this part of the argument.” And their reason was akin to that given by bishop Ridley for similar caution in another question; namely, that in these matters they judged it safest to venture nowhere but where the text of holy scripture did, as it were, lead them by the hand;—a caution never more needful than in this case, in which they were required, without the warrant of holy writ, to declare

<sup>1</sup> *Tracts for the Times*, No. 71, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> *Remains*, vol. i. p. 322.

whole churches, in other parts of the world, to be destitute of "the apostolical commission," of "sacramental grace," and of the "mystical communion with Christ."

The church, however, makes no such declaration. On the contrary, she has carefully, and of set purpose, abstained from any such decision or judgment. And the excellence and wisdom of her conduct in this matter is especially seen in this, that her ritual and ordinances and standards of faith, present, on this question, a most correct transcript and resemblance of the Divine word.

The perfection of the Christian character, as seen in individuals, consists in a likeness to Christ. His image is imprinted on the believer's heart and life, by the operation of the Holy Spirit, as the original die gives its every line to the softened wax. And in like manner, in visible churches, the institution should take its character from the lineaments beheld in the written word. The degree of its conformity to this exhibition of the Divine mind, will be the degree of its purity and excellence. All that in scripture is clear and distinct, should be clear and distinct in the church; all that is left undecided, should so remain. This is the only safe course for a church to adopt; and this course, most carefully and most admirably, has the church of England followed.

I. *She entirely and unhesitatingly adheres to the Episcopal form of Church Government.*

On former occasions we have stated the reasons for this adherence at considerable length, but there appears, at the present moment, very little occasion to dwell with any emphasis on this point. The grounds on which she decidedly maintains this form of church

government, have been so frequently explained, of late years, and so little has been advanced in contra-vention of them, that we do not feel it to be necessary at present to trouble our readers with more than a very brief sketch of the argument.

The institution of Episcopacy, at least in some places, by the apostles, is clearly seen in scripture. The epistles of St. Paul to Timothy and Titus furnish us with the instructions given by the great apostle of the Gentiles to two of his pupils, appointed by him to the charge of the churches of Ephesus and Crete. In each case we see a selected minister *set over* the elders of the church, as their superintendent, and as one bearing rule and authority among them.

“In writing to the former of these, St. Paul gives him a variety of directions, which imply that an authority was committed to him, not only to exhort and teach the truth like any ordinary minister of Christ, but to charge some who were perverting the gospel, that they should teach no other doctrine than that which had been delivered to them, and to judge also of the qualifications of those who were hereafter to be admitted into the ministry. He was, also, specially ordered to commit the doctrine he had learned to such faithful men as should be able to teach others also. In a word, the regulation of the church and the ordaining of its elders were in a great measure intrusted to his care, and in these things he was authorized to supply the place of the apostle himself. The very same powers are likewise intrusted, and in still plainer terms, to Titus. Of him St. Paul distinctly affirms, that for this cause he had left him in Crete, that he might set in order the things that were wanting, and ordain elders in every city as he had

appointed him. Thus does it appear, that when the apostle could not in his own person superintend the affairs of the churches he had planted, he twice selected an individual who might execute the duties of that superior office which belonged strictly to himself, and exercise the authority which was attached to it in his stead.”<sup>1</sup>

“ During his temporary absence, he thought it expedient to assign to one wise and faithful individual, the arrangements of the church and the admission and regulation of its teachers, so that order and subordination, which are so essential to edification, might suffer no interruption or injury by the removal of his apostolic authority for a time. Surely, then, it must be allowed that the longer that absence was to continue, the more necessary did it become to adopt some measures for the prevention of those contests for the superiority, and those divisions in doctrine, which, amongst a number of teachers, all equal and all wishing to recommend themselves to their followers, must inevitably arise. And what measure could more wisely and religiously be adopted, than the humble imitation of that plan upon which, by the general consent of all the apostles, the church of Jerusalem appears to have been built; which had afterwards, in two separate instances, been formally sanctioned by St. Paul, as a model for the Gentile churches; and for the execution of which he had, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, laid down a variety of precepts and rules? The elevation, therefore, of one particular minister to what we now call the episcopal office, and the

<sup>1</sup> *Rev. C. Benson's Four Discourses*, p. 84.

appropriation to him of the chief place and authority in the regulation and ordination of the other ministers of Christ, appears to be as much sanctioned in perpetuity by the perpetual removal of the apostles through death, as was the temporary appointment of such officers by their occasional absence whilst they lived.”<sup>1</sup>

“Such is the conclusion which may most reasonably be drawn from the practice of the primitive church as recorded in the New Testament. It is a conclusion also which, with scarce a single exception, continued for ages to regulate both the opinions and conduct of the whole body of Christians. The episcopal government may not have been established in every community of believers from the very first; but in those principal cities where the apostles themselves had planted the faith of the gospel, history informs us that it had always prevailed; and persuaded by their example, and taught by experience the evils which resulted from a different course, we know that it was soon universally introduced, and that for fourteen hundred years there never was a kingdom or people converted unto Christ, who did not, with the form of sound words, receive also, and persevere in, this form of church government. It remained for some followers of the reformation to break this bond of external uniformity, and to condemn it as unscriptural, in order to defend their novelties.”<sup>2</sup>

Most entirely and unreservedly, then, may we assent to the decisions and the practice of the church of England, with reference to the episcopal form of church government. But with equal satis-

<sup>1</sup> *Rev. C. Benson's Discourses*, p. 86.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 88.

faction may we accompany her in her cautious abstinence from dogmatism, as well as in her simple following of the footsteps of the apostles.

Using her own liberty with the greatest discretion, she was not inclined to refuse the same freedom to other churches; or to prescribe rules of Christian communion of a stricter kind than those set forth in holy writ. And therefore it is, that, while she adopts and prefers the episcopal form herself,—

II. *She carefully abstains from making episcopacy an indispensable requisite in a Christian church.*

Her cautious abstinence on this point cannot be ascribed to inadvertence or the absence of occasion. When the articles of the church of England were drawn up, discussed, and finally settled, the question of episcopacy was one of the most prominent topics of discussion among theologians. In the neighbouring kingdom of Scotland, and in several of the Protestant churches of the continent, the government by bishops had been discontinued. The English church adopted a different course, and adhered to that form of church order. In forming her articles, or confession of faith, the question must needs have occurred, “whether episcopacy was to be regarded as *essential*, and therefore to be included in that formulary; or as merely *expedient*, and therefore passed over in silence?” This question, we know, *did* occur; *was* brought under the consideration of the framers of our confession; and was decided according to the latter of these two views. We learn from bishop Burnet, that in framing the 23d Article, which describes *those* ministers to be “lawfully called and sent, which be chosen and called to this work”—*not by bishops of*

*the apostolic succession, but “ by men who have public authority given unto them in the congregation, to call and send ministers into the Lord’s vineyard,”*—we learn from bishop Burnet, that “ those who drew it, had the state of the several churches before their eyes, that had been differently reformed ” from our own. He adds, “ The general words in which this part of the Article is framed, seem to have been designed on purpose *not to exclude them.*”<sup>1</sup>

And herein we can unreservedly approve the judgment of our Reformers ; inasmuch as it exactly coincides with that of holy writ. The church leaves the question precisely where the Bible leaves it. For, “ When we look back on the evidences which have been produced, we find, that though they are fully adequate to sustain the scriptural and apostolic origin of episcopacy itself, they are not so positive as to authorize us unreservedly to condemn every other form of ecclesiastical polity. We have found neither any express commandment, nor any example, which prescribes as universal and unchangeable, one particular system for the regulation of the church and its ministers. Our arguments consist only of inferences deduced from the practice of the apostles—of inferences deduced, not from their invariable practice in every place,—for upon that point we have no certain information,—but upon their practice in a few particular and recorded instances alone. The conclusions we have deduced from the New Testament, in favour of episcopacy, are, indeed, not confined to the advocates of our own establishment, but were those of the church at large for fifteen centuries after

<sup>1</sup> Burnet, Art. XXIII.

the death of Christ. Still they are intimations, rather than proofs, which the scriptures afford for the maintenance of episcopacy. We can produce no single text so clear as to compel us to conclude, that the apostles deemed any one peculiar form of government to be indispensable and unalterable in the church.”<sup>1</sup>

And, “whatever be the affection which our form of sound doctrine, our holy form of prayer, and our scriptural and apostolical method of government demand for our own church, they demand no judgment or condemnation from us upon that form of government which prevails in others. There are some truths proclaimed so loudly, and delineated so clearly in the gospel, that we cannot permit any to renounce or corrupt them, without shewing them their iniquity, and telling them that their heresies cut them off from Christ’s favour. But the mode of regulating the ministry of the church is not one of these. It is too faintly delineated to afford more than a sufficient ground for us to act upon in our own case. Nowhere in the gospel is a perfect uniformity of ecclesiastical polity so indispensably required, as to make it meet for any Christian to pass an absolute sentence of excommunication upon a brother who differs from himself. To his own master he standeth or falleth, and our duty lies rather in persuading him to agreement, than in urging condemnation, because he disagrees with ourselves. For we have no right, and we should have no inclination, to make the gate of the gospel more strait, or the way to God’s favour

<sup>1</sup> *Rev. C. Benson’s Discourses*, p. 91.



more narrow, than the express revelations of the Redeemer imperatively demand." <sup>1</sup>

This moderate and cautious view of the question, however, is not at all palatable to the modern race of high churchmen. With them episcopacy is nothing less than a divine law, a positive and distinctly-enunciated institution of Christ; an institution, too, of universal obligation, under all possible variety of circumstances; and, in fact, an indispensable condition, an essential point, in the very being of a Christian church. And, of course, if it be of this rank, it follows that disobedience to it is not only criminal, but highly dangerous.

Thus argues Dr. Pusey: "If episcopacy be apostolic and an ordinance of God, Presbyterianism is not; if Presbyterianism is, then episcopacy is not," "they cannot be true together, any more than any other two opposites." <sup>2</sup> "Since episcopacy is an ordinance of God, to abandon it is sin; the degree of that sin, or its effects, we are not called upon to pronounce on, nor would we." <sup>3</sup>

But some of the consequences of this "*sin*" are thus hinted at, in the matter of the sacraments:

"The eucharist administered without apostolic commission, may, to pious minds, be a very edifying ceremony, but it is not that blessed thing which our Saviour graciously meant it to be; it is not a "verily and indeed taking and receiving" the body and blood of Him, our Incarnate Lord." <sup>4</sup>

"To make deductions from a doctrine, is not the safest way of understanding it. Men, in these days.

<sup>1</sup> *Rev. C. Benson's Discourses*, p. 95.

<sup>2</sup> *Dr. Pusey's Letter*, p. 145.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 150.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 162.

are not apt to infer, that because there is no salvation except through the name of Jesus Christ, therefore all the heathen must be condemned:—people are content to stop short, resting in the positive revealed truth, that salvation is through Christ alone; but not enquiring “who then shall be saved?”<sup>1</sup>

Thus, under an apparently mild and charitable phraseology, we are led to conclude, that only those bearing the episcopal commission can administer in the communion, “that blessed thing which our Saviour meant” to give; and that,—referring to “non-episcopal societies,”—as (at least so Dr. Pusey thinks) there is hope for the unconverted heathen,—there may also be a *similar hope* for the Presbyterians and Lutherans. In words only, not at all in spirit, does this view differ from the startling decision uttered a few years back, which consigned all dissenters “to the *uncovenanted mercies of God.*”

But such is not the language of our church, nor of her founders, because it is not the language of the Bible. Our reformers could stedfastly maintain episcopacy, without asserting it to be “an ordinance of God,” as explicitly revealed, and as universally obligatory, as baptism itself.

Mr. Keble himself is obliged to confess, speaking of Jewell, Whitgift, and the divines of their age,—that “It is enough with them to shew that the government of archbishops and bishops is *ancient and allowable*; they *never venture* to urge its *exclusive claim*, or to connect the succession with the validity of the sacraments.”<sup>2</sup> And Mr. Palmer admits that “the opinion that a mere Presbyter might confer

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Pusey's Letter*, p. 169.

<sup>2</sup> *Preface to Hooker*, p. 59.

every order except the episcopate, by commission from the church, has been held by several writers of the English church, whose orthodoxy is unquestionable, amongst whom may be mentioned Jewell, Hooker, and Field.”<sup>1</sup>

The last writer, Dr. Field, whose authority seems to be highly estimated by Mr. Palmer and his coadjutors, is very decided on this point. He says, “The best learned are of opinion, that bishops are not greater than presbyters in the *power* of consecration or order, but only in the *exercise* of it.”<sup>2</sup> He argues also, that “when the fathers make ordinations void which are made by presbyters, it is to be understood according to the strictness of *the canons in use in their time*; and not absolutely, of the nature of the thing.”<sup>3</sup> He likens it to the rule, that ordination without a title should be void; a law which any church might make, modify, or repeal at pleasure. Thus it might be the custom or law of a particular age or country, that bishops only should ordain; but without such a law, or on the ceasing of such a rule, then the original and fundamental law would be in force, that presbyters were ordained by the presbytery, of which the bishops were but the rulers or superintendants.

Holding these views, which, as Mr. Keble confesses, both Jewell and Hooker, as well as Field, avowed, it followed of inevitable consequence, that their estimation of churches governed on the Presbyterian principle, must differ widely from those which have latterly been broached among us. We have

<sup>1</sup> *Treatise on the Church*, vol. ii. p. 411.

<sup>2</sup> *Field on the Church*, book v. c. 27.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* book iii. c. 39.

remarked that the church herself, in her public confessions, cautiously abstained from pronouncing any decided judgment on this point. Not one syllable do we find, asserting the “*exclusive claims*” of episcopacy. This of itself would sufficiently indicate the individual opinions of her leading divines. But we shall find no difficulty in learning those opinions from their own writings.

Archbishop Whitgift, whom Fuller styles “the worthiest man that ever the English hierarchy did enjoy,” the pupil of Bradford, the favourite of Elizabeth, the earliest and the ablest opponent of the Puritans, may be allowed to speak the sense of the church of his own day. He thus writes,

“It is well known, that the manner and form of government used in the apostle’s time, and expressed in the scriptures, neither is now, nor can, nor ought to be observed, either touching the persons or the functions; for we have neither apostles, prophets, workers of miracles, &c. &c. all which pertained to the government of the church in the apostolic time.” “We see manifestly, that in sundry points the government of the church used in the apostolic time, is, and hath been of necessity altered,” “whereby it is plain, that any one certain form or kind of external government, perpetually to be observed, is no where in scripture prescribed to the church; but the charge thereof is left to the Christian magistrate, so that nothing be done contrary to the word of God.”<sup>1</sup>

Such was the judgment of Whitgift; nor was it merely his private or individual opinion. The work in which it appears, was written at the request of his

<sup>1</sup> *Whitgift's Defence against Cartwright*, p. 659.

predecessor, Parker, the first archbishop of the resuscitated English church. That prelate imposed the task upon Whitgift, who seems, from his letters, to have been accustomed to submit his writings, in MS. to his friend and patron. We have, therefore, in this remarkable passage, the judgment of the heads of the church of England at the very period of the final settlement of the thirty-nine articles.

Archbishop Parker was succeeded by Grindal, who, in 1582, issued a circular to the bishops, inciting them to make a collection in aid of the distressed Protestants of Geneva, whom he designates as "*so notable and sincere a church.*" But in the same year, this prelate gave a still more decided proof of the Catholic spirit that animated him. We find in Strype a copy of a license issued under his authority, to a Presbyterian minister of the church of Scotland, which runs thus:—

"Since you, the said John Morison, about five years past, in the town of Garvet, in the county of Lothian, in the kingdom of Scotland, were admitted and ordained to sacred orders and the holy ministry, according to the laudable form and rites of the reformed church of Scotland; and since the congregation of that county of Lothian is *conformable to the orthodox faith and sincere religion* now received in this realm of England, and established by public authority;—we, therefore, as much as in us lies, and as by right we may, approving and ratifying the form of your order and preferment done in such manner as aforesaid, grant you a license and faculty, with the consent and *express command* of the most reverend the Archbp. of Canterbury, that *in such orders* by you taken, you may, and have power, throughout the

whole province of Canterbury, to celebrate divine offices, *to minister the sacraments, &c. &c.*"<sup>1</sup>

Such was the decision of the third Protestant archbishop of Canterbury. Cranmer was the first;—who went further than a catholic opinion, or a license to preach; for, so impressed was he with the importance of an union of all the Protestant churches against Rome, that he, upon a proposition from Melancthon, “hastened to invite the most eminent reformers on the continent to hold a meeting in England for that purpose.”<sup>2</sup> And Whitgift himself was the fourth. Thus for half a century consecutively, and under four successive primacies, we find the voice of the church of England unvarying on this point,—that churches which were, as Grindal describes that of Scotland, “conformable to the *orthodox faith and sincere religion* now received in this realm of England,” were to be accounted as sisters, notwithstanding differences in discipline or church government. To use the words of their own nineteenth article,—they recognized as “a visible church of Christ” every “congregation of faithful men, in the which *the pure word of God* was preached, and the sacraments duly administered,”—without intermingling with these fundamental points, the lower questions of church government.

We might carry on this line of archiepiscopal testimony; but it seems of more importance to refer next to Whitgift’s great disciple, Hooker. The archbishop’s sentiments we have already exhibited; and whoever will turn to the third book of the *Ecclesiastical Polity* will find the spirit of that passage carried

<sup>1</sup> *Strype’s Life of Grindal*, b. ii. ch. xiii.

<sup>2</sup> *Preface to Cranmer’s Works*, Oxon, 1833. p. 104.

out in a fine train of reasoning, declaredly intended to prove, both that "Christ never intended to set down particular and positive laws for his church," like those of Moses; and that even such laws as we find in scripture, concerning church government, are not of that kind, that "all churches should for ever be bound to keep them without change."<sup>1</sup>

Of the same period is the work of Cosins, Whitgift's chancellor, who argues that "all churches have not the same form of discipline; neither is it necessary that they should; seeing it cannot be proved, that any certain particular form of church government is commended to us by the word of God."<sup>2</sup>

The next century, indeed, introduces us to the Laudian era, when the adoption of a totally different strain, eschewing Protestantism and favouring Popery, plunged both church and state into a sea of perils. But even in these disastrous times, those men, whose names have descended to us with the brightest lustre, maintained unsullied the Catholic spirit of Whitgift and of Hooker.

Bishop Hall, in his "Peacemaker, sect. 6," thus writes:—"Blessed be God, there is no difference in any essential matter, betwixt the church of England and her sisters of the reformation. We accord in every point of Christian doctrine, without the least variation: their public confessions and ours are sufficient convictions to the world, of our full and absolute agreement. The only difference is, in the form of outward administration: wherein also we are so far agreed, *as that we all profess this form not to be essential to the being of a church*, though much

<sup>1</sup> *Ecclesiastical Polity*, b. iii. ch. x.

<sup>2</sup> *Cosins' Answer*, p. 58.

importing the well or better being of it, according to our several apprehensions thereof; and that we do all retain a reverent and loving opinion of each other in our several ways; not seeing any reason why *so poor a diversity* should work any alienation of affection in us one towards another; but, withal, nothing hinders, but that we may come yet closer to one another, if both may resolve to meet in that primitive government, whereby it is meet we should both be regulated, universally agreed on by all antiquity; wherein all things were ordered and transacted by the consent of the presbytery, moderated by one constant president thereof. . . . But if there must be a difference of judgment in these matters of outward policy, why should not our hearts be still one? Why should such a diversity be of power to endanger the dissolving of the bond of brotherhood? May we have the grace but to follow the truth in love, we shall in these several tracks, overtake her happily in the end; and find her embracing of peace, and crowning us with blessedness."

Of the same age, one of the greatest lights was the profound Usher, probably the wisest man ever given to the church of these islands. His judgment is thus framed:—

"I have ever declared my opinion to be: That *Episcopus et Presbyter, gradu tantum differunt, non ordine*: and consequently that in places where bishops cannot be had, the ordination by Presbyters standeth valid."

"And howsoever I must needs think, that the churches which have no bishops are thereby become very defective in their government," . . . "yet for testifying my communion with their churches, *which I*



*do love and honour as true members of the church universal, I do profess that with like affection I should receive the blessed sacrament at the hands of the Dutch ministers, if I were in Holland, as I should do at the hands of the French ministers at Charenton.*"<sup>1</sup>

And the acts of the state, and the opinions of statesmen, in those days, when under such sovereigns as the first James and the first Charles, theological studies were encouraged at court,—were in entire accordance with these decisions of the leading divines. To the Presbyterian synod of Dort, James the First despatched five representatives of the church of England; and three of our best and ablest prelates, Hall, Davenant, and Carleton, hesitated not to go. Bacon, too, the only intellect worthy to be named with Usher, thus writes:—

“For the second point, that there should be but one form of discipline in all churches, and that imposed by necessity of commandment and prescript out of the word of God; it is a matter volumes have been compiled of, and therefore cannot receive a brief redargation. I for my part do confess, that in revolving the scriptures I could never find any such thing, but that God hath left the like liberty to the church government as he hath done to the civil government; to be varied according to time, place and accidents, which nevertheless his high and divine providence doth order and dispose . . . . So likewise in church matters the substance of doctrine is immutable; and so are the general rules of government; but for rites and ceremonies, and for the particular hierarchies, policies, and discipline of churches, they

<sup>1</sup> *Judgment of the late Archbp. of Armagh, 1657.* p. 135.

be left at large ; and, therefore, it is good we return to the ancient bounds of unity in the church of God : which was, one faith, one baptism ; and not, one hierarchy, one discipline.”<sup>1</sup>

Who shall be named after Usher and Bacon ? We will only glance very briefly, in passing, at the recorded sentiments of some of our most distinguished prelates ; such as Archbishop Wake, who observes that “ he should be unwilling to affirm, that where the ministry is not episcopal, there is no church, nor any true administration of the sacraments :” Archbishop Sancroft, who directs his clergy to exhort their people to join in daily fervent prayer to the God of peace, for the universal blessed union of *all reformed churches, both at home and abroad*, against our common enemies :” Archbishop Syngé, who declares, in his “ Essay on a right character of a faithful son of the established church,” that “ there is no principle that I have here ascribed to the true churchman, that will lay him under the necessity of absolutely refusing the communion of a church that wants nothing but episcopacy to render it agreeable to the apostolic model :” Archbishop Secker, who says, “ The catholic church is the universal church spread throughout the world ; and the catholic faith is the universal faith ; that form of *doctrine* which the apostles delivered. Every church or society of Christians that preserves this catholic or universal faith, accompanied with true charity, is a part of the catholic or universal church. And in this sense, churches that *differ widely* in several notions or customs, may, notwithstanding, *each of them be truly catholic churches* :”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *On the Pacification of the Church*, (Works, vol. vii. p. 68.)

<sup>2</sup> *Secker's Works*, vol. iv. p. 327—329.

And Bishop Andrews, who observes, “ that though Episcopal government be of divine institution, yet it is not so absolutely necessary, as that there can be no church, nor sacrament, nor salvation without it. He is blind, that sees not *many churches flourishing without it.*”

To bring down the chain of evidence to our own day, we need only adduce Archdeacon Welchman on the xxiiiird Article, who says,

“ We know that this power (of ordination) was granted to the bishops only from the age of the apostles to the time of the Reformation ; but that from thenceforward some churches, who in other things were rightly reformed, have allowed it also to Presbyters ; whether justly or not, we leave to themselves to consider. *We neither judge nor despise them :—*

And Bishop Tomline’s admission, that “ there is no precept in the New Testament, which commands that every church should be governed by bishops.” He adds,—“ No church can exist without some government ; but though there must be rules and orders for the proper discharge of the offices of public worship ; though there must be fixed regulations concerning the appointment of ministers ; and though a subordination among them is expedient in the highest degree ; *yet it does not follow that all these things must be precisely the same in every Christian country ;* they may vary with the other varying circumstances of human society ; with the extent of a country, the manners of its inhabitants, the nature of its civil government, and many other peculiarities which might be specified.”<sup>1</sup>

Nor have the highest prelates now living shrunk

<sup>1</sup> *Elements of Theology*, vol. ii. p. 380—382.

from avowing the same principles. Even to the unquestionably erring Genevan church, the present Archbishop of Canterbury lately wrote, expressing "the highest respect" of his brother bishops for the Protestant churches on the continent, and their sincere concern for their welfare. And in their places in the House of Lords, both his grace and the bishop of London have, more than once, asserted the right of the present "church of Scotland," presbyterian though it be, to the support and aid of the state, as the national establishment. We might go still further, and adduce the case of a prelate of the most elevated character and unsuspected orthodoxy, who, when on a visit in the northern division of the island, practically asserted archbishop Usher's principle, and received the sacrament at the hands of a presbyterian minister. And thus, from Cranmer down to the present hour, we find one unbroken line of witnesses to the fact, and of supporters of the principle, that the church of England, to use Mr. Keble's own words, "thinks it enough to assert that the government of archbishops and bishops is *ancient and allowable*; without attempting to assert its *exclusive* claim, or to connect the succession with the validity of the sacraments."

And this is the wisest, because the safest, ground to take. The moment stricter and more lofty pretensions are urged, difficulties and questions begin to open upon us. Human nature, indeed, blind to its own innate and irremovable imperfection, is very fond of seeking that unattainable possession,—a perfect human institution. When the circle has been squared; when the atmosphere has been brought under rule; when the musical scale shall be perfected, then

may we begin to dream of an human society of faultless symmetry. Meanwhile let us be sure, that the admission of a Judas among the apostles of our all-seeing Lord, and of a Demas among the fellow-labourers of the chief of the apostles, were both designed to yield instruction to future ages. Above all, let us remember, that the only "laying-on of hands" recorded to have been received by Paul himself, was that of "a certain disciple" (Acts ix. 17); and that while he evidently places the preaching of the word above baptism, as the higher and more important function (1 Cor. i. 17), we find it said, that "*they*" without any distinction, "*which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen, travelled,—preaching the word.*" (Acts xi. 19.) Finally, let us never forget the corresponding lessons recorded under both dispensations, on that very point. "*And there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Moses, one of his young men, answered and said, My lord Moses, forbid them. And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them.*" (Numb. xi. 27—29.)

Thus spake Moses, and "a greater than Moses" gave the same judgment.

"*And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbid him, because he followeth not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is on our part.*" Mark ix. 38—40.

What say we then?—that the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments should be left declaredly open to every man who imagines himself qualified thereto?—By no means. Moses, who refused to silence Eldad and Medad, was the expositor of a system of the strictest discipline. The Lord himself, while he said, of an irregular adherent, “*Forbid him not,*” himself appointed a limited and settled number, one apostle for every tribe,—seventy preachers of the gospel, answering to the seventy elders of the Mosaical dispensation;—and when the fall of Judas had made a vacancy, that vacancy must be immediately supplied. Paul also, while he could rejoice at the preaching of the gospel, even when carried on in “*envy and strife, thinking to add affliction to his bonds,*”—is yet most distinct in his injunctions,—“*Let all things be done decently and in order*”—“*for God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.*” 1 Cor. xiv. 33, 40.

The principle, then, should be, ORDER; the regulator, a CATHOLIC SPIRIT. Those who would strain matters to extremity, and strive to frame, out of human weakness, folly, and infirmity, a perfect system, are merely copying the builders of old, who essayed, out of Babylonish bricks and the slime of Shinar, to build a tower “*whose top might reach unto heaven.*” The Allwise rebuked their over-weening pride and arrogant attempt, by “*confounding their language;*” and a like fate attends the efforts of those who, in our own times, would rather side with Bonner and Gardiner, two prelates in “*the holy apostolic line,*”—in “*making havoc of the church,*” than with the presbyterian Knox, in building up a spiritual temple of

God, by the instrumentality of which, “*there were added to the church daily, of such as should be saved.*”<sup>1</sup> Let us give a specimen or two of the “confusion of tongues” which accompanies and is inseparable from, this absurd attempt.

1. The greatest contenders, of course, for the strict line of succession, are the Romanists. Here they are at home;—this is their stronghold; and truly their consistency and (at least external) unity enable them to maintain a far better fight than Protestant apostolicals. But what say they of the “apostolical succession” enjoyed by the church of England? We quote their own words,—

“Elizabeth expelled the bishops who were in peaceable possession of their sees, with the consent of the holy see and of the crown; and so substituted, by her own private authority, other so-called bishops, from whom the present *pretenders* to apostolical succession follow and succeed.” Hence it follows, that these latter “are not the inheritors or successors of those who held the sees until that time: and consequently they are, in the eyes of the church Catholic, intruders, usurpers, and illegitimate holders of the same.”

Therefore, “believe there is benediction in their blessing more than any other man’s, order or consecration in the laying-on of their hands, more than of a layman’s, we do not and cannot, without renouncing all respect for antiquity, and all veneration for our fathers in the faith.”<sup>2</sup>

Thus much of the *appointment* of the English

<sup>1</sup> I think better than I was prepared to do, of Bonner and Gardiner.” *Froude*, vol. i. p. 252.

<sup>2</sup> *Dublin Review*, vol. v. p. 297—305.

bishops at the time of the Reformation. But we meet also with a second objection, touching the validity of their *consecration*. The Romanists bring up, from the stores of "antiquity," certain canons or decrees of the early councils, prohibiting any bishop from exercising his episcopal functions, except in his own proper jurisdiction. Such, therefore, as might happen to have resigned, or to have been deprived or suspended, would have no *ordaining power*, until again called into active service.

Now, it is well-known that when the English church was re-organized by Queen Elizabeth, on her succession to the crown, there was a difficulty in procuring the requisite number of bishops to consecrate Parker archbishop of Canterbury. In this emergency one or two deprived bishops were called in, and assisted in the consecration; they having, at the time, as the Romanists urge, no episcopal *power* or *function*, although the episcopal character still was theirs. Hence, according to this view, the first Primate of the church, after its resuscitation, was himself only illegitimately consecrated; and consequently, in strictness, neither himself nor any of those deriving their orders from him, could be looked upon as fully and rightly commissioned and ordained.

2. We may add a second instance of this sort of conflict and contention.

Dr. Bernard, the friend of archbishop Usher, while giving the judgment of that prelate, already quoted, on the character of the foreign churches, fortifies it by the following illustration.

He says, that, when King James the First, in 1609, resolved on introducing episcopacy into Scotland, and had selected three distinguished Scotch preachers



for that purpose, “ when the Scottish bishops (elect) came to be consecrated by the bishops of London, Ely, and Bath, it was objected that they must first be ordained presbyters, having as yet received no ordination from a bishop. But the archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Bancroft, then present, maintained, “ that there was no necessity, seeing that where bishops could not be had, the ordination given by the presbytery must be esteemed lawful. This was agreed to by all the other bishops, and the consecration proceeded.”

Now, what is to be said to this? Is it admitted, that the Archbishop was right, and that where episcopal ordination may not be had, presbyterian is to be deemed equally valid? Or must we abide by the strictness of the doctrine, and hold that for forty years the church of Scotland had *altogether* “ lost the holy apostolic line,” and “ the grace of the sacraments;” there being in it no priests, but those made by the presbytery, or those ordained by men who had never received valid orders themselves?

3. Once more, a third difficulty is started, and has recently appeared in print.

In the *Tracts for the Times*, Nos. 74 and 76, two series of testimonies are collected together, on the doctrines of apostolical succession and baptismal regeneration. The names of the authors cited are given, together with their designations. As for instance—

Hooker, presbyter and doctor.

Andrews, bishop and doctor.

Ken, bishop and confessor.

Hammond, presbyter and doctor.

*Hickes, bishop and confessor.*

*Collier, bishop and confessor.*

Asserting the same fact, a late writer in the *Quarterly Review*, defending the *Tracts for the Times*, speaks of "Bishop Hicke" and "Bishop Collier." Now who were these two alleged prelates?

They were two clergymen of the sect of the non-jurors, to which body belonged Ken and several other respectable but mistaken men, during the reigns of William, Anne, and George I. They reckoned among their number several bishops, who, refusing to take the oaths of allegiance, were deprived of their sees.

Now these prelates had two courses open to them. "Obeying the powers that be," they might have regarded themselves as bishops still, but bishops denuded of functions and jurisdiction. This would have been the course pointed out alike by the word of God, and the practice of the ancient church.

Or they might "*resist the power*," and thus resist the ordinance of God. They might claim to themselves functions, jurisdiction, and episcopal authority. But in thus doing they would declare their late sees to be still rightfully theirs, and their successors to be illegitimate, and intruders.

For nothing can be clearer or more unquestionable than this, alike from the dictate of common sense and the concurrent judgment of the ancient church,—that there cannot be two bishops acting, legally, at the same time, for the same see;—and that a bishop having no see, or place of jurisdiction, could not validly consecrate or ordain. These two men, therefore, Hicke and Collier, either were not bishops at all, or else those deprived bishops by whom they were consecrated, had been wrongfully and illegally deprived, and their places filled by successors who were illegitimate and usurpers.

But the *Tracts for the Times*, and their advocate in the *Quarterly Review*, deliberately assert, that Hicke and Collier were bishops. They therefore maintain, of necessity, that the deprived prelates were unlawfully deprived; that their places were unlawfully filled by others; and that these latter usurpers *irretrievably tainted and vitiated* the apostolical succession in the church of England.

Such are a few of the difficulties and dilemmas,—of the “confusion of tongues,” into which we are plunged, by attempting to construct and maintain a strict and perfect system. Let us, therefore, take the wiser course adopted by the church of England, and content ourselves with asserting, in general terms, that “the 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.”

And let those who cannot be content with this general and catholic view, take care, in their further inquiries, to discriminate carefully between two things, which are often very irrationally intermingled; namely, the *unbroken succession*; and the *form of church government*. These two things are perfectly distinct from each other; and yet the question is often argued as if they were so conjoined that the decision of either must decide both. But the erroneousness of this supposition is seen in the fact, that many firm supporters of an unbroken, apostolic succession, are also staunch maintainers of the Presbyterian scheme of government. They tell us that the apostles constituted the Christian church, ordaining elders (or presbyters) in every place, and that each

local church was governed by these elders or presbyters. The existence in some cases of an overseer, or delegate of an apostle, as in the cases of Timothy and Titus, they do not admit to establish a general rule. But still, while they adhere to presbyterianism; they maintain, as firmly as the highest episcopalian, the necessity of a ministerial *commission*, handed down in regular and unbroken *succession* from the apostles, to enable any man lawfully to exercise the ministerial office.

The number, then, of those who contend for the *succession*, is much larger than of those who consider that such succession can only exist in the line of *episcopacy*. And this was to be expected. Every man's reason, and the obvious fitness of things, is against the idea, that the Christian ministry is an office and function which it is at any man's option, at any moment, and under any circumstances, to confer upon himself. The church of England, therefore, in this matter, speaks clearly and decidedly: "It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching, or ministering the sacraments in the congregation, before he be lawfully called and sent to execute the same." (Art. XXIII.) But when she comes to define the term "lawfully called," she is far less positive. She says, that "We ought to judge those to be lawfully called and sent, which be chosen and called to this work by men who have public authority given unto them in the congregation, to call and send ministers into the Lord's vineyard." Here she deliberately refuses,—for there is no other view to be taken of it,—she *refuses* to assert that those only are lawfully commissioned who have received episcopal ordination. Adopting episcopacy itself, as

the best system of church government, and as a system the foundation of which she can trace in the apostolic writings, she yet refuses to assert, that it is only from episcopal hands that the commission to preach the gospel can be lawfully received. It was the judgment of her founders, perhaps unanimously, but at all events generally,—that the bishop of the primitive church was merely a presiding elder; a presbyter ruling over presbyters; identical in order and commission; superior only in degree and in authority. Cranmer's recorded "opinion and sentence" (though on this, as well as on other questions, his mind underwent various changes,) was, "that bishops and priests were not two things, but were both *one office* in the beginning of Christ's religion."<sup>1</sup> The judgment and the practice of archbishops Parker, Grindall, and Whitgift, we have already noticed; and Mr. Palmer, as we have seen, confesses that it was the opinion of Jewell, Hooker, and Field, "that a mere presbyter might confer every order except the episcopate;" in other words, that the *apostolic succession* of the presbyters might be continued *by presbyters*, the episcopate being laid aside or lost.

Nor has the church herself wholly lost sight of this view; for she especially enjoins that in every ordination, the bishop shall be assisted in the imposition of hands by three priests at the least, which priests, together with the bishop, shall lay their hands on him that is to be ordained:<sup>2</sup> an injunction in which there is an evident reference to the "laying-on of the hands of the presbytery" spoken of by St. Paul in 1 *Tim.* iv. 14.

<sup>1</sup> *Bp. Stillingfleet: Irenic.* p. 392.

<sup>2</sup> See *Ordin. Service* and *Canon XXXV.*

Nor will those, who would maintain for the episcopate a more exclusive claim, find it easy to establish, from the earliest Christian writers, the sole right of bishops to ordain. What, for instance, have we of higher authority than the history of *Eusebius*; who tells us, speaking of the first ages of the church, that “the greater part of the disciples then living, affected with great zeal towards the word of God, first distributed their substance among the poor, and then taking their journey, fulfilled the work and office of Evangelists, preaching Christ among them which had not yet heard the gospel.” “And these men, having planted the faith in sundry new and strange places, *ordained there other pastors*, committing unto them the tillage of the ground and the oversight of the newly-converted, passing themselves unto other people and countries, being holpen thereunto by the grace of God.”<sup>1</sup>

Now, without contending for the literal and extreme accuracy of this sketch, we cannot avoid seeing in it the impression of Eusebius, himself a bishop of the Nicene age,—that ordination might be given by evangelists, or missionaries, who themselves were not of the episcopal rank. The disciples of whom he speaks, and whom he describes as very numerous, evidently were not bishops, for it is an essential feature in the character of a bishop, that he is set over a church already existing, and requiring an overseer to rule its various elders and deacons. But these evangelists went forth among the heathen, to preach the gospel, and to found infant churches; and wherever they went, “they *ordained*,” says Eu-

<sup>1</sup> *Eusebius: Ecc. Hist.* lib. iii. c. 33.

sebius, "other pastors" from among their converts, and thus filled the world with the Christian faith. Such is the fact which this Nicene bishop relates, and which excites in his mind no surprise or displeasure, as if the episcopal functions had been usurped. The conclusion is obvious, that such a practice was not unknown, nor even uncommon, in the primitive times.

Such glimpses of the practice of the early church make us shrink from the high pretensions of the modern exalters of episcopacy. Rather would we urge, with good bishop Hall, that all sides might "resolve to meet in that primitive government, whereby it is meet that both should be regulated, universally agreed upon by all antiquity; wherein all things were ordered and transacted by the consent of the presbytery, moderated by one constant president thereof."

Of the invalidity, then, of non-episcopal orders, and of the nugatory character of the sacraments so administered, we say nothing, because neither in the Bible, nor yet in the formularies of the church, do we find any conclusive decision in this matter. But of the form of *church government* by bishops, we can feel no doubt. Without making it "of necessity to salvation," that every man should draw the same inferences from the epistles of St. Paul to Timothy and Titus, that we do,—we yet find the grounds of our opinion so distinctly written in those inspired productions, as to leave us in no doubt as to our own duty. For here it is, that the just distinction between an *express command* of God, and certain lineaments, "faintly traced," of an apostolical practice, properly comes in. He who would put the two on

a level, would fain improve upon the word of God. But we shrink from appending the authoritative—"Thus saith the Lord" to an inference gathered merely from the recorded transactions of some of the apostles, in their settlement of certain of the churches. Such indications may fully suffice for our own justification, in treading in the footsteps of St. Paul and St. John. But they do not warrant our excommunicating, without any express command, those who do not admit the inferences we draw. Therefore, of churches not episcopally governed, we must say, with Whitgift and with Usher:—

"It is plain that no one form or kind of external government is anywhere in scripture *prescribed* to the church;" and that although the episcopal form is both plainly suggested by the apostles, and confirmed by the practice of the early church, and therefore "we must needs think, that churches which have no bishops are very defective in their government;" yet "we cannot deny, that in places where bishops are not, the ordination by presbyters standeth valid;" and that wherever we find "the orthodox faith and sincere religion" of God's word, there we are bound to "love and honour the true members of the church universal." In fine, to repeat again Mr. Keble's words, we will contend, with Hooker, with Jewell, with Cranmer and his three immediate successors, that "the government by bishops and archbishops is *ancient* and *allowable*; but we will not venture to urge its *exclusive* claim, or to connect the succession with the validity of the sacraments."

Doubtless this moderate view will be objected to by many, as indefinite and unsatisfactory. We have already said, that in our view the only safe ground to



be taken in this matter must be such as would lie open to this objection; and *that*, because the word of God may equally be charged with this want of decision and positive command. But if our conclusions be condemned as unsatisfactory on this score, will those of the ultra-churchmen supply a clearer and more absolute enunciation of truth? We trow not. It seems to us extremely difficult to ascertain from their several publications, exactly what their system is, touching the indispensable necessity of episcopal ordination. Often their tone is moderate and almost scriptural; then, anon it is dogmatical and intolerant as the decrees of Trent. Dr. Pusey, for instance, quotes from archbishop Bramhall,—and apparently with entire approbation,—such sentiments as these:—

“ But because I esteem them (the foreign churches) to be churches *not completely formed*, do I therefore exclude them from all hopes of salvation, or esteem them aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, or account them formal schismatics? *No such thing.*”  
 \* \* \* \* “ Secondly, I cannot assent to his minor proposition, that either all or any considerable part of the episcopal divines in England, do unchurch either all or most part of the Protestant churches.” “ They unchurch none at all, but leave them to stand or fall to their own Master.” \* \* “ Episcopal divines do not deny those churches to be true churches, wherein salvation may be had.” \* \* “ If our form (of episcopacy) be of divine right, it *doth not follow from thence*, that there is no salvation without it, or *that a church cannot consist without it*. He is blind who does not see churches consisting without it: he is hard-hearted who denieth them salvation. We are

none of these hard-hearted persons; we put a great difference between these things. There may be something absent in the exterior regimen, which is of divine right, and yet salvation to be had. This mistake proceedeth, from not distinguishing between the *true nature and essence of a church*, which we do readily grant them, and the integrity and perfection of a church, which we cannot grant them.”<sup>1</sup>

If this were the uniform tone of the Oxford writers, we should have not a word of difference with them on the present question. We fully admit, alike with archbishop Usher and archbishop Bramhall, “that churches which have no bishops are *very defective* in their government;”—and that, consequently “we cannot grant them to have the integrity or perfection of a church.” Only let it be added, as both these prelates do add,—that we may yet “love and honour them as *true members of the church universal*,” and “readily grant them to have *the true nature and essence of a church*,” though not its perfect order on highest integrity; and all parties, among English churchmen at least, will be agreed. But what, then, are we to say to such sentiments as the following, issuing, too, from the very same parties whom Dr. Pusey, in his letter, embraces, and speaks of under the general term “we,” and defends from every imputation of impropriety or error?

“The societies of Lutherans and Calvinists, in Germany, &c., could not have been considered as churches of Christ, properly speaking.”<sup>2</sup>

“The Presbyterians in Scotland separated themselves from the church: their rejection of the autho-

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Pusey's Letter*, p. 163—168.

<sup>2</sup> *Palmer's Treatise*, vol. i. p. 3·8.

riety and communion of the existing successors of the apostles in Scotland, marks them out as schismatics; and all the temporal enactments and powers of the whole world could not cure this fault, nor render them a portion of the church of Christ.”<sup>1</sup>

In the preface to the last two volumes of Mr. Froude's *Remains*, the members of the church of Scotland are denominated “the adherents of the *State Religion* there”<sup>2</sup>—a phrase borrowed from the political dissenters, who generally so speak of the church of England. And in the body of the work we are presented with the following startling conclusion:—“The attempt to substitute any other form of ordination for the episcopal, or to seek communion with Christ through any non-episcopal association, is to be regarded, *not as a schism merely*, but as an *impossibility*.”<sup>3</sup>

Here, then, we have the sentiments of Mr. Palmer, Mr. Froude, and Messrs. Keble and Newman, the editors of Mr. Froude's *Remains*. How are these notions to be reconciled with the entirely opposite conclusions of archbishop Bramhall, which are put forth by Dr. Pusey with apparent approbation? We know not; but this question is rather for the Oxford Tract-writers to decide than for us. At least we ought to be informed, how these apparent contradictions are to be reconciled;—or if not reconciled, which of them they mean to adhere to, as a constituent portion of their system.

<sup>1</sup> *Palmer's Treatise*, vol. i. p. 576.

<sup>2</sup> *Preface to Froude's Remains*, Part ii. p. xviii.

<sup>3</sup> *Froude's Remains*, P. ii. v. 1. p. 43.

## X.

OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND :  
IN THE PREACHING OF THE WORD ; AND IN THE  
ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS.

HAVING treated of the views of the church of England touching the various modes of church government ; and having seen that, while she regards episcopacy as both lawful and expedient,—and as, in short, of apostolic origin ;—she does not exalt it to the rank of a test, or prescribe it as an essential characteristic of a true church ; our next step must be, to apply to herself those two great criteria, which, in common with all the reformed churches, she declares to be the true, and the only necessary marks or notes, of a faithful church of Christ : we mean, the preaching of the gospel, and the right administration of the sacraments. “ The visible church of Christ,” says the XIXth Article, “ 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." These, therefore, are the "Notes of the church," to which all true churchmen subscribe; and by these, and these only, must the church herself submit to be tried.

The first test,—“the preaching of the word of God,”—will occupy but a small portion of our time. Very seldom, at least in our days, is the church of England assailed on this head. That in *all* her pulpits “the *pure* word of God is preached,” certainly cannot be affirmed; and, consequently, those who require a faultless human institution must still remain dissatisfied with the established church. But that she has taken very great care, and has done, we may almost say, all that *could* be done, in this respect, is quite evident. She has barred the entrance to her ministry, against all who demur to any of the doctrines of scripture, by the enunciation of a set of articles, to which she requires repeated and solemn subscriptions,—of which it is little to say that they exhibit a wisdom the most consummate,—a wisdom, in short, which can only be satisfactorily accounted for, by the belief of a special guidance; and one of the most remarkable features of which is their entire rejection and forgetfulness of all human authority, and their constant reference of every question, to the decision of “the pure word of God.”

She has next provided a course of Liturgical services, of which the chief excellence is, that *at least one half of every service* consists of the simple reading of God's word. And so admirably is the whole contrived, that the admixture of a variety of ancient and most scriptural forms of prayer and thanksgiving, serves to relieve and assist the attention, in listening to the inspired writings. Probably, a mere uninter-

rupted reading of scripture for the space of an hour or an hour and a half, on each occasion of assembling together, would be felt by the great body of attendants on her public services, to be a demand on the attention, of too monotonous a kind to produce any good effect. But the proper and natural interspersion of such beautiful specimens of prayer and thanksgiving as the *Te Deum* and the *Litany*, entirely relieves the lengthened service, and thus aids in rendering the whole *Liturgy* a principal means of "preaching the pure word of God."

One of our transatlantic brethren furnishes us with the following illustration of the utility of this extensive use of scripture in the services of the church:

"In one of the New England states, some ten or fifteen years ago, there lived a very poor but pious woman. When she was near her end, she was visited by a congregational minister, who was delighted with her evangelical views and simple-hearted piety. There was one thing, however, that struck him as peculiar in this woman. Whenever he repeated any passage of scripture, if the quotation was not perfectly accurate, she would modestly correct him, by repeating the passage with *entire accuracy*. At length he said to her: 'My good friend, you must have read the word of God very attentively to have treasured up such large portions of it in your memory.' 'No,' she replied, 'I never read a word in that blessed book—I cannot read.' 'How,' said he, 'you cannot read! how then are you so well acquainted with the scriptures?' 'I have attended the episcopal church,' she replied, 'from my childhood till within a few years, and all that I know of the scriptures I have learned from hearing them read in

the service.' This fact speaks for itself. It needs no enlargement, by way of comment."<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps a hasty reader may be inclined to ask, "Do you mean to lead us to suppose, that the scriptures are not read in the services of other denominations?" We answer, that we suggest no such thought; but that, as far as our knowledge extends, we should say, that the Bible is read to a much smaller extent in most other congregations; and that as one necessary consequence, that there is a far less general and extensive knowledge of its contents, among those of the hearers who rely much on this channel of acquiring scriptural knowledge.

To these provisions our Reformers added yet a third, probably more absolutely necessary in their own times than in ours,—namely, a course of Homilies, or plain Sermons, prepared by archbishop Cranmer, bishop Jewell, and other eminent divines of that time; in which "the pure word of God is preached" in the fullest, most distinct, and most effective manner. Modern sermon-writers, adopting the mixed dialect which has of late years succeeded the English tongue of Shakespeare and of Jewell, imagine it better to write new sermons than to study or to use these old ones. Doubtless, where the preacher is able and experienced, this is really so; but in many others, a frequent recurrence to this treasury of sound theology; as furnishing at least a ground-work for a well-planned course of scriptural discourses; would prove the wisest and safest plan that our young clergy could adopt.

Beyond these three means of providing for the

<sup>1</sup> *Rev. J. Clark's "Walk about Zion,"* p. 215.

preaching of "the pure word of God," it is difficult to say what further safeguard the church could have added. The deficiency which has existed in past times, and which to a smaller degree exists still, is chiefly attributable to the short-comings of the preachers themselves, to whom the church could not avoid leaving a substantial liberty to select both their own topics and their own methods of handling them. No human provisos can entirely exclude the tempter from the church. This lesson, our Lord, in giving up even an apostle to his power, seems to have intentionally taught us. Still, we have reason to be filled with admiring thankfulness, when we remark the measure of success which has attended the precautions of our Reformers.

Observing the fact, given to us on dissenting authority, that out of 258 ancient Presbyterian congregations in England, *all but twenty-three* had, in 1832, fallen into the fatal heresy of Socinianism,<sup>1</sup> and finding in America the same tendency to decay,<sup>2</sup> it ought to arouse a grateful feeling in our hearts, to observe, that though a worldly and careless spirit may have extensively dried up the source of all *present* fruitfulness in many of the churches of the establishment, still, under the operation of those safeguards which our Reformers were divinely instructed to provide, the church of England has been preserved, during nearly three centuries, as far as her public ministra-

1 *Eclectic Review*, Feb. 1832.

2 Boston, (Massachussets) originally the seat of much gospel light, had become, some years back, almost wholly Socinian. And a recent American writer remarks, "I observed that the church in which a venerated ancestor of mine had laboured with success and fidelity, had successively fallen into the hands of an Arian, an Universalist, and a Unitarian."



tions are concerned, from even the least departure from the truth, and continues at the present moment, as sound in the faith, and as loyal to "the pure word of God," as at the first moment of her renovation. To be "the pillar and ground of the truth" is her office and vocation, and under God's providence, she has been kept from either denying or betraying this trust. To the weak and sinful men, who have often, and do still, though we trust in a smaller degree than heretofore, disfigure her fair form by their negligences and ignorances, belong the shame and confusion of face which we must feel when we remember the but half-evangelized condition of the land; but to the institution itself, upon which scarce any of the blame is justly chargeable, let our love flow forth in humble and prayerful determination, that none shall be permitted, if our efforts may avert the attempt, to intrench in the least degree upon her simple adherence to "the pure word of God."<sup>1</sup>

But it is time we proceeded to the second and more debateable part of our present subject. Not very often, now-a-days, is the church of England assailed with the reproach of neglecting or forsaking "the pure word of God." But on the subject of the Sacraments, she has to bear with extensive and serious misrepresentations; and those from every side. Open enemies, and betraying friends, alike agree to mistake and misinterpret the church's judgment and practice in these matters.

<sup>1</sup> The danger here alluded to, may not prove so chimerical as some have supposed. Already we have a distinct suggestion, and that from a powerful quarter, to substitute, in place of the reading of the word of God, lessons, to be read in our public services, from the writings of Pope Leo and Pope Gregory, and from the life of Bishop Ken!—See *Tracts for the Times*. No. 75.

“The Sacraments duly administered according to Christ’s ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.” Is this characteristic clearly perceived to belong to the church of England? Let us commence the inquiry by considering,

I. The initiative rite of BAPTISM. This is the most difficult part of the inquiry; inasmuch as alike from without and from within, the church is unhesitatingly declared to hold the most dangerous errors.

The dissenter, on the one hand, alleges, and puts forward as a chief ground of his alienation,—that the church holds the *opus operatum* of popery; and declares that every one upon whom the outward rite of baptism has been performed, within her pale, is also certainly and inevitably a partaker of the inward grace of the Holy Spirit.

And he is confirmed in his view by a large body of her own divines; who openly maintain, that the doctrine of the church is as follows,—

“The sacrament of baptism is not a mere *sign* or *promise*, but actually a means of grace, an instrument, by which, when rightly received, the soul is admitted to the benefits of CHRIST’S atonement, such as the forgiveness of sin, original and actual, reconciliation to God, *a new nature*, adoption, citizenship in Christ’s kingdom, and the inheritance of heaven,—in a word, Regeneration. And next, baptism is considered to be rightly received, when there is *no positive obstacle* or hindrance to the reception in the recipient, such as impenitence or unbelief would be in the case of an adult; so that infants are *necessarily* right recipients of it, as not being yet capable of actual sin.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Tracts for the Times*, No. 76; and adopted by *Dr. Pusey*, p. 123.

Now both these statements, the ordinary and general allegation of the dissenter, and the more circumstantial explanation of the tract-writer, are equally injurious to the church of England, and alike unsupported by either scripture or the formularies of the church. This we shall now endeavour to shew. But first let us try to ascertain the precise position occupied by the church, with reference to this question.

And rightly to understand this, it is necessary to fix on our minds a proper perception of one thing which is too generally overlooked in theological discussions;—we mean, the *double* character of most of the leading facts connected with the Christian faith.

Man, for instance, is a double being. Even in his natural state, he has a mind and a conscience, which frequently lead him to admire and to aspire after high and noble objects; and at the same time, bound up with this sentient principle, he has an animal existence, differing little in lusts and appetites from the brutes which surround him. Yet many persons, clinging to a *single*, instead of a *double*, idea, are often astonished to perceive the same person, at one time evidently reaching after the elevated and the spiritual, and yet, perhaps in a few hours, reduced to a position which is below the animal creation. They charge such a person with hypocrisy; whereas he was probably as sincere in his perceptions of good in the morning, as in his surrender to the power of evil at night. The solution of the mystery is, that he possesses a double existence,—the soul and the mind predominating at some periods; the lusts and appetites gaining the ascendancy at others.

By a similar error, and from inability to grasp the *whole* fact, some persons are perplexed by the sins of

David, and others of the saints of holy writ; and even many theologians refuse to believe that St. Paul, in the seventh chapter of the Romans, speaks of his *Christian* experience. They cling to a *single* idea; whereas the *fact* is, that man, whether viewed in his natural condition, as sentient and yet animal, or in his renewed state, as spiritual and yet also carnal, always presents a *double* one.

The same truth meets us in various doctrines of the Bible; and the same inability to admit more than *one* idea at a time, still gives rise to varied misconceptions, and prolonged controversies. The ancient story tells of two knights, who approached an equestrian statue from opposite points. "This golden statue"—said the one; "This silver statue!"—said the other; upon which difference they quarrelled and fought, till, as they lay wounded on the grass, a third traveller shewed them, that both were in the right, and both also in the wrong. The figure was golden in one aspect, and silver in the other.

If the fable had not appeared to apply very closely to much of our theological disputation, it should not have interrupted our argument. The matters we have in hand are high and weighty; but yet this little illustration seems to read an useful lesson.

To apply it to one most sacred subject:—"God loveth the world," argues one. And this is undeniable, for so saith *John* iii. 16. *2 Cor.* v. 19. But he loveth his elect with a different and a superior love, says another. And this is true also, for so says *Eph.* v. 25, 26. Christ died for all men, replies the first. Nor may we question this, with such texts before us as *Rom.* v. 18, *1 Tim.* ii. 6. *2 Cor.* v. 25. and *1 John* ii. 2. But he died specially and effectually for

“his own,” for those who were “elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.” And this is equally clear, from *John* x. 15. *Acts* xx. 28. The Holy Spirit, it is rejoined, strives with mankind at large; and this we admit, in the view of *John* xvi. 8. But that He hath a special and constraining operation in the hearts of the elect, is just as certain, from 1 *John* iii. 24; iv. 13. Thus have we a double sense, applicable to nearly identical expressions, and a double truth, running through the whole line of fundamental principles.

And, although the connexion may not be obvious, a similarity may be traced between the first instance we adduced, and the dealings of God with his church. As man has both a body and a soul, so the church has ever had a double aspect and a double character.

There has always been a body,—a visible church; and a soul, or spiritual church. Now for each there are laws, precepts, and rules; and our danger is in persisting in our *one* idea, and in mingling up the different parts of God’s word, which relate to these two entirely different things, instead of “rightly dividing the word of truth,” and assigning to each its own distinct instruction.

“*Except a man be BORN OF WATER and of the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God.*” (*John* iii. 5.) “*According to his mercy he saved us, by THE WASHING OF REGENERATION, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.*” (*Titus* iii. 5.) “*As many of you as have been BAPTIZED into Christ, have put on Christ.*” (*Gal.* iii. 27.)

Dr. Pusey reads these various texts of scripture, and immediately says, that if we will accept these in their plain and literal sense, he is content:—

“For myself, I should be fully content with any

view, which acknowledged in its simple sense the words which our church teaches every child to say of itself,—“wherein I was made a child of God, a member of Christ, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven,”—meaning, of course, really what is there said, a real child of God, and a real member of Christ,<sup>1</sup> not simply an outward member of an outward body of people called Christians.”<sup>2</sup>

In exactly the same spirit does Dr. Wiseman cling to *his* one idea, and urges, in the very same strain of reasoning, his “plain and simple view” of the other sacrament.

“It is impossible for me,” says he, “by any comment or paraphrase that I can make, to render our Saviour’s words more explicit, or reduce them to a form more completely expressing the Catholic doctrine than they do of themselves. ‘*This is my body—this is my blood.*’ The Catholic doctrine teaches that it *was* Christ’s body, and that it *was* his blood. It would consequently appear as though all we had here to do, were simply and exclusively to rest at once on these words, and leave to others to shew reason why we should depart from the literal interpretation which we give them.”<sup>3</sup>

Proceeding on the same plan, the Arian argues, “Here, in John xiv. 28, Christ plainly and distinctly declares, ‘*My Father is greater than I.*’ I simply believe, that this is true, and that Christ is inferior to the Father. It is for those who refuse to submit to

<sup>1</sup> Why does Dr. P. twice misquote this passage? He can hardly need to be reminded, that it is only by being made “members of Christ,” that men become “children of God.” But what means this reversal of the true order?

<sup>2</sup> *Dr. Pusey’s Letter*, p. 121.

<sup>3</sup> *Wiseman, Lecture xv.* p. 174.

this positive declaration of Christ himself, 'to shew reason why we should depart from the literal interpretation.' For myself, I merely take the words as they stand, and believe, that *really*, not conventionally, the Father of all things is above Him whom 'he sanctified and sent into the world' for the work of redemption."

And in like manner, every known sect or heresy will fasten upon some isolated text of scripture, and make "the simple sense" of the bare words the centre and foundation-stone of its system.

Our answer to all these system-makers is, that the only safe canon of interpretation is that in which both scripture and our own church entirely agree. "*No prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation,*"<sup>1</sup> (2 Peter i. 20,) but it is to be judged of, or understood by "*comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*" (1 Cor. ii. 13.) Or, as our xxth Article hath it, "It is not lawful for the church to ordain any thing that is contrary to God's word written; *neither may it so expound one place of scripture that it be repugnant to another.*" Archbishop Cranmer, quoting from Augustine, says, "Dark places are to be expounded by more plain places; for that is the surest way of declaring the scriptures, to expound one scripture by another."

We cannot, therefore, so easily assent to the Romish theory, either of baptism or the Lord's supper. An isolated text or two may indeed be adduced in their favour, just as other isolated texts, taken alone, may seem to give some support to Arianism, Irvingism, or Universalism. But our course in this, as in

<sup>1</sup> "*Separate,*" or "*self*"-interpretation: *Bp. Horsley.*

other difficulties, must be, to follow our Master's example; remembering that He, when the tempter assailed him with, "*It is written,*"—was prompt with his reply, "*It is written again.*"

Dr. Pusey says, he would be "content with any view which acknowledged in its *simple* sense the words which our church teaches every child to say of itself, 'wherein I was made a child of God, a member of Christ, and an inheritor of the children of heaven,' meaning, of course, a real child of God, and a real member of Christ, not simply an outward member of an outward body of people called Christians."

In other words, Dr. Pusey will be content if we will take the church's language in quite another sense than that in which she has used it.

The compilers of our Liturgy and Articles never theorize in forgetfulness of scripture and of facts. They ever keep in view the all-essential circumstance, that they are dealing with a *double* idea,—a spiritual and also an external or visible church. Both are mingled up together; no human skill can separate them; forms and ordinances must be constructed for this complex body; and yet, what is true and applicable to the spiritual portion, is entirely inapplicable to the merely formal worshippers.

Under these circumstances, what can the church do but follow the path marked out for her in scripture? She finds her Lord admitting a Judas among his apostles; sending him forth to baptize and to preach; and putting into his lips a prayer to God under the endearing appellation of "*Our Father,*" which is fully synonymous with the reply in our Catechism, "wherein I was made *a child of God.*" Again,



she finds the apostles, immediately after the descent of the Holy Ghost, baptizing great multitudes, evidently on the simplest profession of their belief (*Acts* ii. 41: viii. 12), and of whom it is scarcely possible to extend our hope so far, amid the continual mention of declensions which follow,—as to conclude that all were “really children of God,” in the large and full sense of the term. In like manner we find allusion to various “sons of perdition,” such as Simon Magus, Demas, Diotrefes, Hymeneus, and Philetus,—all of whom had received baptism, and to each of whom the apostles would address their usual language, “*As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ,*” (*Gal.* iii. 27,) even though they should afterwards add, as does St. Paul in that same epistle, “*I desire to be present with you, and to change my voice, for I stand in doubt of you.*” “*I am afraid of you, that I have bestowed on you labour in vain.*”

The church, therefore, adopts this scriptural course. She attempts not to separate the wheat from the tares. As her Lord, when “*they brought young children to him,*” “*put his hands on them, and blessed them,*” so doth she. Nor dare she treat this matter lightly. One of her greatest divines, and one, too, who is most distinct in his denial of any necessary connection between the inward grace and the outward form, thus dwells on the privileges connected with baptism.

“Every one should consider that it is no customary formality, but an honourable ordinance, instituted by a lawful authority of God himself; who never imposed any service upon his church in vain. It was honoured by our Saviour Christ himself, who sanctified it unto us by submitting unto it in his own sacred

person ; confirmed by his practice, by his precept, &c. 2. Every one should consider, that there are infinite mercies sealed up by it to the faithful, and to their seed. It is a visible admittance of thy child (if thou be a parent) into the congregation of Christ's flock, signifying its interest in the heavenly Jerusalem which is above. Is this a business to be mumbled over in a corner? Christ came from Galilee to Jordan to be baptized. Is the receiving of the child into the bosom of the church in a full congregation, no comfort unto thee? Is it not mercy to see the blood of Christ ministerially sealed up into thy infant, to purge it from that pollution which it hath brought into the world with it; which also thou makest confession of by presenting it to this mysterial washing? Is it not joy to thy heart, to hear the whole congregation of God's saints pray for thy child: and that God hath honoured thee so much, as to count the very child holy and within his covenant? Think on these things. 3. Every one that is present at baptism, should consider, that that being a public action of the congregation, every particular person ought reverently to join in it. Shall the whole Trinity be present at baptism, (Matt. iii.) and we be gone? Join ought every one in prayer to God for the infant; join in praises to God for his mercy, that we and our children are brought forth, and brought up within the pale of his church, (whereas the rest of the world are like a wilderness) and thank God for adding at the present a member to his church. Join every one ought in meditation of the pollution of nature, of the blessed means of redemption by Christ, of the benefits that God seals up unto us in our baptism, even before we knew them; of the vows and promises which

we in our childhood made by those who were undertakers for us: and finding our failings every time we are present at baptism, we should renew our covenant with God, and labour to get new strength to close with his promises, which in our baptism he made unto us. Thus, if we were wise to make a right use of it, we might learn as much at a baptism, as at a sermon. 4. Parents should always bear in mind the promises which their children have made to God by them, and they for their children; labouring to bring them up accordingly to the instruction and information of the Lord, teaching them (so soon as they understand) the meaning of that sacrament; unfolding unto them God's precious promises, and their strict engagements. The negligence of parents herein, is a cause of monstrous profaneness in many: they bring children to receive Christ's badge, but bring them up to the service of the Devil: and God hath not so much dishonour by Heathens and Pagans, as by those who have taken upon them the name of Christians.

“ Lastly, baptism should be a continual use through a Christian's whole life: it is administered but once, but it is always lasting in the virtue and efficacy of it. Baptism loseth not its strength by time. In all thy fears and doubts look back to thy baptism, and the promises of God sealed up unto thee there; lay hold on them by faith, and thou shalt have the actual comfort of thy baptism, and feel the effect of it, though thou never saw it. In thy failings, slips, and revolts, to recover thyself, have recourse to thy baptism: new baptism shall not need; the covenant and seal of God stands firm, he changeth not: only renew thy repentance, renew thy faith in those blessed pro-

mises of grace which were sealed up unto thee in thy baptism.”<sup>1</sup>

But it is this same profound theologian who thus guards against the notion, which Dr. Pusey and the Oxford tract-writers labour to maintain,—that at least *all infants* baptized are actually made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and receive regeneration, or the new birth.

“What is the advantage or benefit of baptism to a common Christian?”

“The same as was the benefit of circumcision to the Jew outward, (Rom. ii. 28; iii. 1, 2); there is a general grace of baptism which all the baptized partake of as a common favour; and that is their admission into the visible body of the church; their matriculation and outward incorporating into the number of the worshippers of God by external communion. And so as circumcision was not only a seal of the righteousness which is by faith, but as an overplus God appointed it to be like a wall of separation between Jew and Gentile: so is baptism a badge of an outward member of the church, a distinction from the common rout of heathen; and God thereby seals a right upon the party baptized to his ordinances, that he may use them as his privileges, and wait for an inward blessing by them. Yet this is but the porch, the shell and outside: all that are outwardly received into the visible church are not spiritually ingrafted into the mystical body of Christ. Baptism is attended upon by that general grace, but not always with this special.”<sup>2</sup>

“But what say you of infants baptized? Doth

<sup>1</sup> *Archbishop Usher's Body of Divinity*, p. 397, 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 391, 2.

the inward grace always attend upon the outward sign?"

"Surely, no: the sacrament of baptism is effectual in infants, only to those, and to all those, that belong unto the election of grace. Which thing though we (in the judgment of charity) do judge of every particular infant, yet we have no ground to judge so of all in general: or if we should judge so, yet it is not any judgment of certainty; we may be mistaken."<sup>1</sup>

And in as explicit a manner does the Church guard against the same error, by declaring in the plainest terms, of both the sacraments, that—

"In *such only* as WORTHILY receive the same, they have a wholesome effect or operation; but they that receive them unworthily, purchase to themselves damnation." (Art. xxv.)

Again, to explain her meaning in the word "worthily," she enlarges in the next Article the term, and speaks of "such as BY FAITH, and RIGHTLY, do receive the sacraments."

And, once more, in the xxviiith, she describes baptism not as in itself being, or conveying regeneration, but as "a SIGN of regeneration or new birth, whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive baptism *rightly*, are grafted in the church."

Now one would have thought that, after all these precautions, scarcely a loophole had been left, by which the doctrines of Popery might re-enter; but the powers of human language are not equal to the task of excluding by words and phrases, "the mystery of iniquity." The tract-writer, as already quoted, thus reasons,—

<sup>1</sup> *Archbishop Usher's Body of Divinity*, p. 392.

“Baptism is considered to be ‘rightly received,’ when there is no *positive obstacle* or hindrance to the reception in the recipient; such as impenitence or unbelief would be in the case of an adult; so that infants are *necessarily* right recipients of it, as not being capable of actual sin.”

Let the subtilty be observed, with which this writer passes over the expression of the article, “*worthily* receive the same;” and the explanation, “*by faith*, and rightly do receive them;” and drops down first to the mere technical expression “a right reception,” and then to an assumption, that this right reception means simply the absence of all “positive obstacle or hindrance.”

The doctrine of the church is far different. She demands “a *worthy* reception;” not by any human or innate worthiness, but by “faith” implanted by the Divine Spirit in the heart. If the baptism of the church be invoked and received *in faith*, she doubts not the performance of the promise; but if no faith is exercised in the whole transaction, she declares the sacrament to have been profaned, the reception to have been an unworthy one, and the result to be *condemnation*.

The church, as her warrant for infant baptism, directly refers to her Lord’s example.

“*They brought young children to Him, that he should touch them: and he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.*” Mark x. 13—16.

Nothing can be clearer, in this case, than the faith of those who presented their infants to be thus early “discipled.” And the church believes and teaches, that the like faith would meet with the like reception at the hands of Christ, at the present moment. But

what we are urged to believe, is,—that the presence of this grace of faith is quite immaterial;—that it is sufficient if the infant, being unconscious, opposes no “obstacle or hindrance.”

The case has been proposed, of an ungodly priest, attended by a pair of profane and vicious parents, who bring, under the inducement of some sordid or compulsory motive, their infant, the offspring, perhaps, of open sin, to the font of baptism. Instances, unhappily, are not of rare occurrence, in which we can entertain no hope, even with the largest exercise of charity, that there is a single spark of faith, a single breath of prayer, in the whole transaction. The question, then, is asked, Are we to believe that the Holy Spirit of God blesses and approves this dreadful profanation; and bestows that grace of regeneration, which *no one* of the parties has either asked or desired?

Dr. Pusey most disingenuously evades the question, by representing us as falling into the Popish error of making “the intention of the priest” essential to the validity of the sacrament; and tells us that we “have apparently yet to learn that Christian baptism is not that of the servant, but of the Lord; that in the language of the ancient church, “It is not man, but Christ, who baptizeth.”<sup>1</sup>

Now really this misrepresentation is not excusable. The case adduced was perfectly distinct from that contemplated in the Romish theory, which makes *the intention of the priest* the turning-point of the whole transaction. Let it be admitted, at once, that a believing parent, offering his child for baptism, ac-

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Pusey's Letter*, p. 114.

ording to Christ's ordinance, is not defrauded of the benefit of the sacrament by the unbelief or sinfulness of the minister who conveys it. But what we are now enquiring is, whether the absence of faith in *all* the parties concerned, makes no difference to the efficacy of the rite.

The word of God clearly contemplates faith as an essential point in Christian baptism. "*He that BELIEVETH, and is baptized, shall be saved.*" The church of England, also, distinctly makes the benefit of the sacraments to turn upon "*a worthy reception;*" and describing a worthy reception to be one "*by faith.*" We then observe an external performance of the rite of baptism, in which it is beyond a doubt that no faith has been exercised, by *any one of the parties* to the transaction. And we ask, how it is possible, with the Bible and the Prayer Book before us, to believe that this was "*a worthy reception*" or that any grace could be looked for from such a profanation?

Dr. Pusey's rejoinder is, "*that the infant is, through the faith of the Church, which brings it unto Christ, accepted by him, and regenerated by his Spirit, whatever be the character of the immediate human agents.*"

Precisely the same argument is used by the Romish champion Harding, in his controversy with Bishop Jewell.

Jewell, in contending against the Romish figment of the *opus operatum*, in both the sacraments, says of certain heretics of old, that "*They thought, the very outward work of baptism itself, only because it was done, without any further motion of the mind, was suf-*

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Pusey's Letter*, p. 112.



ficient to remit their sins. This old error our adversaries of late years have taken up, and made it "catholic;" bearing the people in hand, that their mass itself, *ex opere operato*, only of itself, and because it is said, is available for the remission of their sins."

To which Harding replies—

"The party that offereth (the mass) is of two sorts." "The first is the priest that consecrateth, offereth, and receiveth the sacrament." "The other (party) that offereth mediately, or by means of another, and principally, is *the Church militant*, in whose person the priest offereth, and whose minister he is in offering. For this is the sacrifice of the whole church. The first party that offereth is not always acceptable to God, neither always pleaseth him, because oftentimes he is a sinner. *The second party that offereth, is evermore acceptable to God, because the Church is always holy, beloved, and the only spouse of Christ. And in this respect the mass is an acceptable service to God, Ex opere operantis.*"<sup>1</sup>

Thus the church is represented as a corporate body, whose privileges and immunities flow forth into every act done in her name; rendering faith and love, and all the Christian graces, wholly unnecessary to the individual worshipper. Is he departing this life, and fearing the consequences of his sins in the world to come? She has a store of merits laid up for those who need them, and a portion of these is transferred to him at a fair market-price. *The church's good works* make up the lack of his own. Or does he bring his children to the font, without one

<sup>1</sup> *Jewell: Reply to Harding*, p. 594, 597.

emotion of faith or prayer? *The church's faith* supplies the deficiency, and the grace of the sacrament is as sure, according to Dr. Pusey, as if his affiance on the promises were as firm as that of Abraham!

Is it not strange, is it not really wonderful, that the preachers of this most convenient religion, which imputes the faith of the church to those who have no faith of their own, should sneer at "a modern popular theology" as abusing the doctrine of justification by faith, and offering men an *easier* religion than that of Rome!<sup>1</sup> This religion, which is too "easy" for Dr. Pusey, is simply that of the Bible. "*Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.*" "*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*" "*To him that worketh not, but believeth in Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.*" One thing, and one thing only, this "modern popular theology" requires, and that is what Paul required, and what Cranmer required—"on our part true and lively faith in the merits of Jesus Christ."<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Pusey thinks this "too easy" a religion, and yet even this one requirement he offers to dispense with. Unable to deny that both the scriptures and the Articles of his own church do in some way connect faith with the grace of the sacraments, he is yet ready, with Harding, to excuse the individual, by the substitute of a proxy! "*The faith of the church*" is at hand, to supply the wants of those who have no faith of their own!

Such, however, is not the doctrine of the Church of England. This "faith of the Church," which is

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Pusey's Letter*, p. 83, 85.

<sup>2</sup> *Homily on Salvation*.

made to resemble the freedom of a corporation,—if it is ever present at all, must be always present alike. When is this “faith of the church” wanting in any administration of either of the sacraments? But the church speaks of some cases in which faith is present, and the grace of the sacraments obtained; and of others in which this is not the case. The Articles describe “such as *by faith*, and rightly, do receive the sacrament,” and others who “receive them unworthily,” i.e. without faith. Clearly, then, this faith, which is spoken of as present in the case of some, and as absent in the case of others, must be a faith *dwelling in them*; and not a floating quality, like “the faith of the church,” which is indiscriminately ascribed unto all outward participants.

Dr. Pusey, strangely enough, after adopting Harding’s doctrine of the *opus operatum*, and Harding’s argument also, proceeds to desiderate “a *higher* doctrine of the sacraments,” and “*higher* notions of the sacraments,” than are commonly held. He even appears sincerely to think his own views of the sacraments to be *higher* than the views of his opponents. Whereas, in fact, nothing can be *lower* than his whole system.

The doctrines of scripture, and of the church of England, first fix an elevated standard for recipients of the sacraments; and then, proportionately, promises most blessed results. Dr. Pusey and his abettors, not merely *reduce*, but positively *annihilate* both.

The church of England learns from God’s word, that, in order to any benefit being derived from a divine ordinance or religious service, the existence of *faith*, in the person or persons concerned, is *absolutely indispensable*.

Our Lord's whole course of action and of teaching, while upon earth, inculcated this. His language was, "*According to your faith be it unto you.*" (Matt. ix. 29.) "*If thou canst believe, all things are possible.*" (Mark ix. 23.) "*Believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.*" (Mark xi. 24.) And his last words were, "*He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*" Mark xvi. 16.) The manifest sense of this passage is, "He that believeth not, *whether baptized or no*, shall be "damned."

This sentence, however, Dr. Pusey refuses to receive. His system pronounces, that an infant, in whom faith cannot exist, and presented at the font by parents and sponsors who are utterly unbelieving, and baptized by an ungodly minister, so that there is no word of faith or prayer in the whole transaction, is yet, *ex opere operato*, by the mere performance of the service, spiritually regenerated, and gifted with "*a new nature, adoption, citizenship in Christ's kingdom, and the inheritance of heaven.*"<sup>1</sup> In answer to which, we allege the constant language of scripture, "*Whatsoever is not of faith, is SIN.*" (Rom. xiv. 23.) "*Without faith it is impossible to please God, for he that cometh unto Him must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of such as diligently seek him.*" (Heb. xi. 6.)

The requirements of the church, then, founded upon God's word, Dr. Pusey wholly invalidates. What place sponsorship can hold in his system, except as an ordinance of the church, the meaning of which he cannot tell, we know not. From the very

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Pusey's Letter*, p. 124.

first, this institution has had no other meaning than as bringing into the sacrament that faith which the infant cannot have.<sup>1</sup> And hence the English church ordains, that “no person shall be admitted godfather or godmother to any child at christening or confirmation, before the said person so undertaking hath received the holy communion.” (Can. xxix.) But why, upon Dr. Pusey’s system, it should be necessary for the sponsor to be a professed believer, or wherefore the church should concern herself with his character at all, we know not; for according to his view, the only thing that can prevent regeneration from taking place, is, a “*positive obstacle or hindrance to the reception in the recipient* ;”—“so that infants are *necessarily* right recipients of it, as not being yet capable of actual sin.”<sup>2</sup> Nor is the abolition of sponsorship the only natural and necessary consequence of this line of argument. We offer, without the least levity of mind, the case of a heathen, unacquainted with our language, or of an unbaptized person, about to depart this life, and slumbering under the influence of sedative medicines. Probably neither of these would oppose any “positive obstacle or hindrance,” if it is wished to administer baptism. But can they be thus regenerated, and made partakers of “*a new nature, adoption, citizenship in Christ’s kingdom, and the inheritance of*

<sup>1</sup> “Children are, *by the faith of those who offer them to baptism, accounted worthy of the benefits given through baptism.*” *Qu. & Resp. ad Orth. in Opera Justin*, p. 342, 344. “On the part of *those, through whom* infants are born again, the Spirit of Righteousness, by their own answer, transfers and makes over to the children that faith, which, by their own proper will, they could not as yet possess.” *Augustine Oper.* vol. vii. p. 274. See further, Mr. Faber’s *Primitive Doctrine of Regeneration*.

<sup>2</sup> *Dr. Pusey’s Letter*, p. 124.

heaven?" If so, then some defence might be imagined for the Spanish invaders, who are alleged to have baptized the poor South Americans by myriads, and then to have massacred them. These victims knew nothing of what was done to them, and opposed "no positive obstacle or hindrance." Shall we be told that the Spaniards were right in supposing that they were thus ensuring the everlasting salvation of these poor creatures?

Or will the plea be interposed, that these were actual sinners, neither repenting or believing? The distinction is scarcely sufficient to make the awful difference between "saved" and "lost." Every infant is actually a sinner, though not at first capable of acts of sin. He is "*conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity*;" for "*who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?*" To commit every kind of iniquity, he wants not the will, but merely the capacity; merely mental and physical growth. He is innately, and constitutionally, as much opposed to holiness and to God, as the adult transgressor. His real character, therefore, is intrinsically, though not manifestly, the same with the heathens of whom we are speaking; his want of faith and repentance the same: wherein, then, lies hid the distinction, which makes *him* "*necessarily a right recipient*," and yet denies the same character to the unconscious heathen, or the dying and insensible and unbaptized Englishman?

But not only does Dr. Pusey's scheme entirely do away with the pre-requisites demanded by the church, and proclaim that faith in the parents or sponsors is in nowise essential to the "worthy reception" of baptism by an infant; but having thus

reduced the sacrament to a mere form, in its administration, this scheme next proceeds to depreciate, or rather to annihilate, its effects or results. And it does this most effectually by professing to do the very opposite!

To put an end to a distinction possessed by some persons over the great bulk of their fellows, either of two courses will be equally efficient. The mark or token of distinction may be taken away from them; or a similar token may be conferred on the whole multitude from whom they have been previously distinguished.

A medal, in a school or in a regiment, may be greatly valued, if it is granted to such only as have exhibited merit. But give a medal to *every* scholar or *every* soldier, and he will have no more pride in it than in his knee-buckle.

Dr. Pusey wishes to inculcate "higher notions" of the sacraments than those hitherto prevalent; and he attempts to do it by assuring us that every infant receiving canonical baptism "is *necessarily* a right recipient," and as such "is admitted to the benefits of Christ's atonement;—the forgiveness of sin, original and actual, reconciliation to God, *a new nature*, adoption, citizenship in Christ's kingdom, and the inheritance of heaven." All this, he insists upon it, is conferred on *every* infant baptized in the church of England, "whatever be the character of the immediate human agents" by whom the rite is claimed or conferred.

Hence it follows, that as baptism, even among the poorer classes, has not, to any great extent, been neglected, we are taught to look upon the bulk of our population as having been actually made "new

creatures." At all events, we might go into one of our great theatres, filled chiefly with the middle and upper classes; and while we beheld thousands revelling in profaneness and impurity, we should still have to say, upon Dr. Pusey's system, "These have all been "regenerated;" have all become partakers of a new nature; have all been adopted into Christ's family, and reconciled to God."

Is it not obvious, that this scheme literally makes *nothing* of "regeneration" and "a new nature?" Might not a neophyte reasonably rejoin. "If *this* be all that is meant by what you call regeneration—if this is the *new nature* you profess to obtain by baptism, and if baptism itself produces no other fruit than this, I really do not comprehend its value or utility." Those, however, whose views Dr. Pusey thinks *too low*;—those whose "sense of their privileges" he wishes to *raise*, may at least reply, that they have already far higher views of the benefits and fruits of baptism, *worthily* received, than he himself appears to entertain. Their ideas of the "new nature" which is given to every one who is truly "born of God," are derived from His own word. They there find, that "*whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin;*" "*overcometh the world;*" "*loveth the brethren;*" and "*keepeth himself, and the wicked one toucheth him not.*" In the great mass of the baptized, they discern no such marks of the "new nature;" and they are at no loss to account for this, when they observe, that the great mass of baptisms are unquestionably celebrated without faith and without prayer. In a few cases they discern a remarkable difference. Instances are never wanting of children who appear to be "sanctified from the



womb ;” and in such cases it is seldom difficult to perceive, that baptism has been rightly used ;—that there has been a *worthy* reception ; that is to say, a reception by *faith*.<sup>1</sup> And with these facts before their eyes,—agreeing, as they do, most fully with scripture,—they consent not to either of Dr. Pusey’s propositions—to dispense with the presence of faith in the parties presenting the infant—or to call that “ a new nature,” which has no one feature distinguishing it from the old.

They abide, in short, by the declarations of the church, taken unitedly, and explaining each other. They will no more be concluded by a single expression found in the Prayer-book, taken in an isolated view ; then they will embrace Arianism on the strength of John xiv. 28. But in the general view of the church they entirely coincide. They rejoice to see in baptism the first step, the opening view of a salvation which is entirely of grace,—a salvation freely bestowed upon an unconscious infant, who is wholly and unquestionably incapable of doing a good action, or even thinking a good thought, in his own behalf. They view such an one as taken out of the mass of mankind ; transplanted into the visible enclosure of Christ’s church ; made partaker of all the outward privileges of the gospel ; and thus, at least externally, “ made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.” But amidst all this, they cannot forget that there is a “ court without the temple ;” (Rev. xi. 2.) a professing and *merely* professing church. They find the baptismal service proceeding upon the assumption, (the only

<sup>1</sup> As one of these instances, of late occurrence, see a Memoir of “ *The Infant Brothers*, by the Rev. A. Brown.”

consistent course)—of a genuine profession. The parents and sponsors are first exhorted—"I beseech you to call upon God." Then prayer is made in these terms:—"Give now to *us that ask*; let *us that seek*, find; open the gate to *us that knock*." Then the parties are again addressed, "Dearly beloved, *ye have prayed* that the Lord Jesus Christ would receive this child." Thus throughout the whole service, the prayer of faith is constantly dwelt upon, as a necessary and essential point. When, therefore, we find, in the xxviii<sup>th</sup> Article, mention made of "those that receive baptism *rightly*," what can be a more obvious and inevitable conclusion than this,—that baptism is *rightly* received when prayer is really offered up, and faith exercised. To dispense with both faith and prayer in all the parties concerned, is plainly to set aside the words of our Lord:—"God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him **MUST** worship Him in spirit and in truth." (John iv. 24.) We shall close this part of the subject in the words of archbishop Whitgift; a man perhaps above all others entitled to state the views of those, with whom the standards of the church originated. This great prelate says,

"It is a certain and true doctrine of all such as profess the gospel, that the outward signs of the sacrament do not contain grace; neither yet that the grace of God is of necessity tied unto them; but only that they be seals of God's promises; notes of Christianity; testimonies and effectual signs of the grace of God and of our redemption in Christ Jesus." "And there is such a similitude between the signs and the thing signified, that they are in scripture usually called by the names of those things whereof they be

sacraments;—as bread, “the body of Christ;” and water, “regeneration.”<sup>1</sup>

And, in thus saying, the archbishop repeats and confirms a saying of Bishop Jewell, in his Answer to Harding:—

“The fathers, in their treatises on the sacraments, sometimes use the outward sign instead of the thing that is signified; sometimes they use the thing signified instead of the sign. Notwithstanding, indeed, in precise manner of speech, salvation must be sought in Christ alone, and not in any outward signs.”

II. We pass on, then, to the other sacrament; and ask, Is the LORD’S SUPPER “duly ministered,” in the church of England, “according to Christ’s ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same?”

We believe that it is, and for a clear delineation of the several points in which our Reformers restored this sacrament, and purified it from Romish corruptions, we refer to Bishop Jewel’s authorized and official defence.

“Let them only compare together our churches and their own: and they will then discover, how disgracefully they have departed from the apostles, and how justly, therefore, we have departed from them.

“We, following the example of Christ, and of the apostles, and of the holy fathers, give to the people the whole eucharist.

“They, in direct opposition to all the fathers, all the apostles, and even Christ himself, most sacrile-

<sup>1</sup> *Archbishop Whitgift’s Defence*, p. 378.

giously, as their own Gelasius says, divide the sacrament, and take away from the people one half of it.

“ We celebrate the Lord’s supper, according to Christ’s original institution. We wish as many as possible to be partakers of it, that so it may be in reality, what it is in name, a communion.

“ They, on the contrary, have altogether altered Christ’s ordinance. They have changed the holy communion into a private mass. While, therefore, we give the people the Lord’s supper, they amuse them with an idle shew.

“ We assert, with the most ancient fathers, that the body of Christ is eaten only by pious and faithful men who are endued with Christ’s spirit.

“ They teach, that the very body of Christ may be truly, and, as they express it, really and substantially eaten, not only by the wicked and unbelieving, but, according to their own horrid language, even by dogs and mice.”<sup>1</sup>

We have, however, here, as in the case of the other sacrament, to defend the church against certain of her own children, who either grieve over, and complain of, these proceedings of our Reformers; or else deny the fact, and labour to prove, that our church still clings to the greater part of all the errors of Romanism.

The first of these two classes are the most easily dealt with. The more open and plain-spoken of the new Oxford school are at no pains to conceal their disgust and abhorrence at the cleansing process adopted by our Reformers.

<sup>1</sup> *Jewell’s Apology*, book vi.

Mr. Froude says, "I am *more and more indignant* at the Protestant doctrine on the subject of the Eucharist, and think that the principle on which it is founded is as *proud, irreverent, and foolish*, as that of any *heresy*, EVEN SOCINIANISM."<sup>1</sup>

"I verily believe — would now gladly consent to see our Communion Service replaced by a good translation of the Liturgy of St. Peter, a name which I advise you to substitute for the obnoxious phrase "Mass Book."<sup>2</sup>

These sentiments are published without disclaimer by his editors, Messrs. Newman and Keble. But Mr. Newman gives us his own feelings, very explicitly, in one of his own productions. He says—

"At the time of the Reformation we, in common with all the west, possessed the rite of the Roman church, or St. Peter's Liturgy." "This *sacred and most precious* monument, then, of the apostles, our Reformers received whole and entire from their predecessors; and *they mutilated* the tradition of 1500 years."<sup>3</sup> "Though they broke it up and cut away portions, they did not touch life; and thus we have it at this day, a *violently treated*, but a holy and dear possession, more dear, perhaps, and precious than if it were in its *full vigour and beauty*; as *sickness and infirmity* endears to us our friends and relatives.

<sup>1</sup> *Froude's Remains*, vol. i. p. 391.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 287.

<sup>3</sup> The total disregard of historical accuracy in this statement deserves a passing remark, if it deserves no more. Mr. Newman unhesitatingly assumes "St. Peter's Liturgy" to be, of course, a relic of St. Peter! Bingham, however, who is somewhat better authority, can find no liturgies on which he can place any confidence, of earlier date than the third or fourth centuries (b. xiii. c. 5.) And Mr. Faber unhesitatingly affirms, that none of the ancient liturgies were committed to writing until the fifth century.—*Prim. Doct. Justif.* 1839, App. p. 434.

Now the first feeling that comes upon an ardent mind, on mastering these facts, is one of INDIGNATION and impatient sorrow;—the second is the more becoming thought, that as he deserves nothing at God's hand, and is blessed with Christian privileges only at his mere bounty, it is nothing strange that he does not enjoy every privilege which was given through the apostles; and his third, that we are mysteriously bound up with our forefathers, and bear their SIN; or, in other words, that our present condition is a *judgment* on us for what they did." <sup>1</sup>

In the same tone, in No. 86 of the *Tracts for the Times*, it is seriously argued, that all the changes made in our liturgical services, at the time of the Reformation, were "a taking from us of part of our ancient inheritance;—a *withdrawal* of our higher privileges:—a thrusting us aside, and bidding us to take the *lower place*, the position of suppliants, and to "weep between the porch and the altar." And in this sense, "the substitution of the term "*Table*," "*Holy Table*," &c., for that of "*Altar*," is a strong instance of this our judicial humiliation. For what is this but to say, that the higher mysteries, which this word "*Altar*" represents, are partially withdrawn from view?" <sup>2</sup>

Thus, then, we see that the common language of this class of writers plainly confesses their belief, that a great change was effected by our Reformers, in substituting the Communion Service for "the Liturgy of St. Peter;" and that that change was a lamentable one; a matter giving just cause for "indignation and impatient sorrow;" and only to be submitted

<sup>1</sup> *Newman's Letter to Dr. Faussett*, p. 46, 47.

<sup>2</sup> *Tracts*, No. 86, pp. 25, 26.

to as a heavy "judgment" for our sins and the sins of our fathers.

Such is the tenor of these writers in their more frank and candid statements. There is, however, one remarkable instance of a totally different tone. In Dr. Pusey's Letter to the Bishop of Oxford, it is the learned writer's object to shew, that those holding his opinions are the only true and sincere churchmen; and that those who differ from them are "ultra-protestants," and lukewarm or uncertain adherents of the church. And hence, we suppose, it comes to pass, that throughout that publication we meet with wholly different statements, as respects this Sacrament, from those which pervade the other writings of the school to which he belongs.

Instead of charging our Reformers with "mutilation," or with "heresy as proud and foolish as Socinianism," the whole of Dr. Pusey's argument is directed to shew, that they *preserved* that which Mr. Newman declares they *mutilated*; and eschewed those principles which Mr. Froude declares them to have adopted. We give two or three passages of this kind.

"The teaching of the church" "contains, we are persuaded, the full Catholic truth; we wish neither to add to it nor to take from it." "It is that "the Body and Blood of Christ are *verily* and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper;" that they are conveyed by means of the elements, in that the article says, that "the Body of Christ is *given*, taken, and eaten, in the Supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner;" for the word "given," as opposed to "taken and received," implies, as has been remarked, that It accompanies in some mysterious way, the distribution of the ele-

ments, in that It is "given" by the Priest, and "taken and received" by the communicants."<sup>1</sup>

"On this combined teaching of our Articles, Catechism, and Liturgy, *we* believe the doctrine of our church to be, that in the Communion, there is a true, real, actual, though spiritual communication of the Body and Blood of Christ to the believer through the holy elements ; that there is a true, real, spiritual presence of Christ at the Holy Supper ; *more real* than if we could, with Thomas, feel him with our hands, or thrust our hands into his side ; that this is bestowed upon faith, and received by faith, as is every other spiritual gift, but that our faith is but a receiver of God's real, mysterious, precious, Gift ; that faith opens our eyes to see what is really there, and our hearts to receive it ; but that *It is there. independently of our faith.*"<sup>2</sup>

"We are content ourselves to receive the words "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee," as they were used by the ancient church, from which our own preserved and restored them, *not as denoting something absent*, but as implying the spiritual unseen Presence of that Blessed Body and Blood, conveyed to us through the unchanged though consecrated elements."<sup>3</sup>

"Rome, in this respect, *has the truth*, though mingled with error, and clouded and injured by it ; the Zuingli-Calvinist school *have forfeited it*. In a word, our Church holds with Rome the *reality* of the Communication of the Body and blood of Christ through the Holy Eucharist, but denies her carnal way of explaining it."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Pusey's Letter*, pp. 126, 7.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 131.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 128.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 144.



Here, then, are two statements diametrically opposed to each other; and yet both proceeding from the same party. Mr. Froude, with his editors, Messrs. Newman and Keble; Mr. Newman himself, and the *Oxford Tract*, No. 86, all speak the language of grief, sorrow, and indignation; all deplore the course taken by our Reformers. Dr. Pusey, on the other hand, and not speaking for himself only, but constantly using the plural "*we*," declares his entire satisfaction with the services of the Church as Reformed; and alleges that they have in them all *that* of which the former writers deplore the loss!

Now, in the face of this great discrepancy, we might fairly pause, and call upon these gentlemen to elect which statement they meant to abide by. But as our object is, not merely to notice their errors in passing, but to set forth, as far as we may be enabled, the truth; we shall without further preface, examine their opposing views, and endeavour to shew the church's real standing in this matter.

And, first, we shall observe, that the former class of statements is the more accurate of the two; and that Dr. Pusey, in his recent effort to compass and to manifest entire contentment with the services of the church, has *most grievously misrepresented her*. Feeling, as he himself says, that he "*must belong to the church, must obey her*,"<sup>1</sup> it is quite natural that his mind should strive either to approve the language of the church as it is, or to persuade itself that that language means what he would wish; although all other persons can see that it means exactly the opposite. This mental struggle to obey may be pardoned, and, if its object were not to bend truth to error, might

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Pusey's Letter*, p. 53.

even be commiserated ; but certainly ought not to be imitated.

Mr. Froude and Mr. Newman can see with perfect distinctness, that our Reformers most sedulously excluded, cut out, and cast away, all vestige and trace of “the Real Presence,” from our Communion Service, and from all the declarations of the church concerning it. They see this, and they avow their grief and indignation at it. But Dr. Pusey refuses to see it ; nay, more, he persists in his notion, that the doctrine is still there !

The church teaches, he says, “that the body of Christ accompanies in some mysterious way, the distribution of the elements,”—that it is “given” by the priest, as well as “taken and received” by the communicants ; and that this word “given” is opposed to “taken and received,” as a separate and independent thing ; that there is a real presence and a real communication of the body and blood of Christ ; and that this real presence “is there *independently of our faith.*”

A more remarkable instance of self-delusion than this it has never been our lot to witness. Not once or twice, but times without number, has the church declared that she holds nothing of the kind ; and yet Dr. Pusey, resolved himself to hold it, and resolved also to adhere to her, resolutely persists in his fancy,—in spite of abundant evidence to the contrary,—that the church holds the Real Presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord’s Supper, and that “*independently of our faith.*”

But let us hear the church’s own language :—

“*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." (Art. XXVIII.)

"Such as be void of a lively faith,—are IN NO WISE partakers of Christ, but rather to their condemnation do eat and drink *the sign* or sacrament of so great a thing." (Art. XXIX.)

"No adoration is intended, or ought to be done, either unto the sacramental bread and wine, there bodily received, or unto any corporeal presence of Christ's natural flesh and blood. For the sacramental bread and wine remain still in their *very* natural substances, and therefore may not be adored; and the natural body and blood of our Saviour Christ are in heaven, and NOT HERE; it being against the truth of Christ's natural body to be at one time in more places than one." (*Note at the end of the Communion Service.*)

"Let us prove and try ourselves unfeignedly, without flattering ourselves,"—*whether* God hath purified our hearts by faith,"—"so that at this his table we receive not only the outward sacrament, *but the spiritual thing also*; not the figure, but the truth; not the shadow *only*, but the body." (*Homily on the Sacrament.*)

"The supper is a certain thankful remembrance of the death of Christ; forasmuch as the bread *represents* his body, betrayed to be crucified for us; the wine *instead* and place of his blood, plenteously shed for us. And even as by bread and wine our natural bodies are sustained and nourished, so by the body, that is, the flesh and blood of Christ, the soul is fed *through faith*, and quickened to the heavenly and godly life. And these things come to pass by a certain secret mean and lively working of the spirit, *when we believe*," &c. (*Catech. of Edw. vi.*)

In all these passages, the church herself speaks, by her Articles, Homilies and Catechisms. We may now hear some of those eminent men, and profound theologians, who were raised up by God to settle the church upon her still-enduring foundations.

In the "*Forty-one Articles*," alluded to by bishop Burnet, as probably framed by Cranmer and Ridley,<sup>1</sup> we find this passage :—

"Since the very being of human nature doth require, that the body of one and the same man cannot be at one and the same time in many places, but of necessity must be in some certain and determinate place; therefore the body of Christ *cannot be present* in many different places at the same time. And since, as the Holy Scriptures testify, Christ hath been taken up into heaven, and there is to abide till the end of the world; it becometh not any of the faithful to believe or profess, that there is a real or corporal presence, as they phrase it, of the body and blood of Christ in the holy sacrament."<sup>2</sup>

And Archbishop Cranmer, in the preface to his answer to Gardiner, says,

"I mean not that Christ is spiritually either in the table, or in the bread and wine that we set on the table; but I mean that he is present in the ministration and receiving of that holy sacrament, according to his own institution and ordinance."

"When I speak of Christ's presence in the sacrament, I mean his spiritual presence, of which he saith, "Wherever two or three be gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." And *no more* truly is he corporally or really present in the

<sup>1</sup> Burnet. *Hist. Reform.* Oxf. 1829. vol. ii. p. 343.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* vol. iv. p. 306.

due ministration of the Lord's Supper, than he is in the due ministration of Baptism."

In his *Preface* to his book *on the Lord's Supper*, the archbishop says,

"What availeth it to take away beads, pardons, pilgrimages, and such other like popery, so long as the chief roots remain unpulled up?" "The rest is but branches and leaves; the very body of the tree, or rather the root, is the popish doctrine of transubstantiation,—of the *Real Presence* of Christ's flesh and blood in the sacrament of the altar (*as they call it*) and of the sacrifice and oblation of Christ, made by the priest, for the salvation of the quick and dead."<sup>1</sup>

Bishop Ridley, in his *Treatise on the Lord's Supper*, written shortly before his martyrdom, for himself and his coadjutors, thus for them answers,—

"They deny the presence of Christ's body in the natural substance of his human and assumed nature, and they grant the presence of the same by grace: that is, they affirm and say, that the substance of the natural body and blood of Christ is only remaining in heaven, and so shall be until the latter day, when he shall come again in glory, to judge both the quick and the dead. And the same natural substance of the very body and blood of Christ, because it is united to the divine nature in Christ, the second Person in the Trinity, therefore, hath not only life in itself, but is also able to give, and doth give, life unto as many as are, or shall be partakers thereof. *That is, to all who believe on his name.*" "Even, as for examples, the same sun which, in substance, never removes from his place out of the heavens, is

<sup>1</sup> *Cranmer's Remains*. Oxf. 1833. vol. ii. p. 289.

yet present here by his beams, light, and natural influence, where it shines upon the earth. For God's word and his sacraments are, as it were, the beams of Christ, who is the Sun of Righteousness."

And, in his *Disputation at Oxford*, then in the immediate view of martyrdom, he thus argued against the Real Presence:—

"It destroyeth and taketh away the institution of the Lord's supper, which was commanded only to be used and continued until the Lord himself should come. If, therefore, he be now *really present* in the body of his flesh, then must the supper cease; for a remembrance is not a thing present, but a thing past and absent. And, as one of the fathers saith, "A figure is vain where the thing figured is present." <sup>1</sup>

And in the same faith went all that "noble army of martyrs" to the stake. Bishop Latimer's testimony was, "He gave not his body to be received with the mouth; but he gave the sacrament of his body to be received with the mouth; he gave the sacrament to the mouth, his body to the mind." <sup>2</sup>

Archdeacon Philpot's was, "If any come *worthily* to receive, then do I confess the presence of Christ wholly to be, with all the fruits of his passion, unto the said worthy receiver, by the Spirit of God, and that Christ is thereby joined to him, and he to Christ." <sup>3</sup>

And Bradford's, "I confess a presence, and a true presence, but *to the faith* of the receiver: even of whole Christ, God and man, to *feed the faith* of him that receiveth it." <sup>4</sup> And to this doctrine gave they all assent, sealing their testimony with their blood.

<sup>1</sup> *Fore*, vol. vi. p. 473.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* vol. vii. p. 638.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 506.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 173.

The "seed-time" passed away, and the church of the Reformation arose again from the dust. Her standards of faith we have already cited; let us now refer to the writings of those who were concerned in framing those standards. And first of all to bishop Jewell, the selected champion and defender of the church. Mr. Froude terms this great man "an irreverent dissenter,"—but one thing is perfectly clear, that he was an accredited organ, and spake the sentiments of all the leaders of the English church of that day. And his language on the subject now before us, is too distinct to be mistaken.

"We direct our faith only unto the very body and blood of Christ; not as being there *Really* and *Fleshly Present*, as ye have imagined; but as sitting in heaven, on the right hand of God the Father."<sup>1</sup>

"So great a difference is there between the sacrament and the body of Christ. The sacrament passeth into the belly: Christ's body passeth into the soul. The sacrament is upon earth: *Christ's body is in heaven*. The sacrament is corruptible: Christ's body is glory. The sacrament is the sign: Christ's body is the thing signified."<sup>2</sup>

Whitgift, as we have already seen, pronounces, that "the outward signs of the sacraments do not contain in them grace; neither is the grace of God of necessity tied to them: but they be seals of God's promises; notes of Christianity; testimonies and effectual signs of the grace of God." "And there is such a similitude between the signs and the thing signified, that they are usually in scripture called by the names of those things whereof they be sacra-

<sup>1</sup> *Defence of the Apology*, p. 268.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 222.

ments: as bread, "the body of Christ;" and water, "Regeneration."<sup>1</sup>

Hooker, who follows Whitgift, says, "The real presence of Christ's most blessed body and blood is not therefore to be sought for *in the sacrament*: but *in the worthy receiver* of the sacrament." "I see not which way it should be gathered by the words of Christ when and where the bread is his body, or the cup his blood; but *only* in the very heart and soul of him which receiveth them. As for the sacraments, they really *exhibit*, but for aught we can gather out of that which is written of them, they *are not* really, nor do really *contain* in themselves, that grace which *with* them, or *by* them, it pleaseth God to bestow."<sup>2</sup>

And so Archbishop Usher, who says, that the sacramental elements "are not changed in nature, but in use. For the words "eating and drinking" do properly belong to the outward elements of bread and wine." "And we say that these elements are changed in use; because being separated from a common use, they are consecrate to *sign and seal* to us our spiritual nourishment and growth by the body and blood of Christ Jesus. For as the sacrament of baptism doth seal to us a spiritual regeneration; so the Lord's supper, a spiritual feeding; and even as well the body and blood of Christ is in baptism given us for clothing, as they are given in the Lord's supper for nourishment. Therefore the bread and wine are *not* the true body and blood of Christ, but the *signs and tokens* of them."<sup>3</sup>

But Dr. Pusey has a plea ready for the evasion

<sup>1</sup> *Defence against Cartwright*, p. 738.

<sup>2</sup> *Eccles. Polity*, book v. ch. 67.

<sup>3</sup> *Usher's Body of Divinity*, p. 400.



of all these arguments. It is not, he tells us, a gross or carnal notion of the presence of the *natural* body of Christ, that he advocates; but “a *spiritual* unseen presence;” “there is a true, real, actual, though *spiritual* communication of the body and blood of Christ:” “an immediate, unseen presence of the body of Christ,” and that “independently of our faith.” And while he firmly maintains this notion, he readily gives up to condemnation “the carnal conceptions” of the Romanists; as if transubstantiation, or the change of the substance of the bread, were the chief or the only error of the Romish theory.

Now this way of stating the question, whether so intended or not, offers a direct delusion to the half-informed reader. It leaves him to suppose, that *Transubstantiation* is the one, sole, Romish error in the present question, and that the *Real Presence* is the doctrine of our Reformers and our church. Whereas these two dogmas, taken together, constituted the theme of contention between the Reformers and their Romish antagonists. If the champions of the truth who suffered in the Marian persecution would only have conceded the first,—the real presence, they might frequently have escaped any very severe censure on the score of transubstantiation.

The articles exhibited against bishops Ridley and Latimer, and the questions on which they were examined, always begin with “the Real Presence.” On “the Real Presence” the greater part of the disputation turned. To Bradford his examiners urged, “Nay, but you must believe a *real presence* in the sacrament.”<sup>1</sup> And when we turn to bishop Jewell’s

<sup>1</sup> *Fore*, vol. ii. p. 172.

controversy with Harding, we find whole sections occupied solely with discussions on "the Real Presence."

In one place the Romish advocate exclaims, "But amidst all these fair words concerning the sacraments, we hear never a whit said of the real presence of Christ's body."<sup>1</sup> Again, "Among all these gay words, we hear not so much as one syllable whereby we may understand, that ye believe the very body of Christ to be indeed present in the blessed sacrament of the altar." "When *we* speak of the blessed sacraments, we mean, specially, the thing received to be the very *real* body of Christ, not only a sign or token of his body."<sup>2</sup>

Nor may Dr. Pusey say, that Harding is speaking of a "carnal presence,"—he (Dr. P.) of a spiritual one. Only concede to the Romanists a *real* presence, (rather than which, five of our prelates, twenty-one of our clergy, and nearly three hundred other persons were burned to death between 1554 and 1559,) and they will not be litigious about the mode or terms of description. Harding and Dr. Pusey will very readily coalesce in this matter. The Romanist says, that Christ's body is present, "*not* after a corporal, carnal, or natural wise; but invisibly, unspeakably, miraculously, supernaturally, *spiritually*, divinely, and by way to Him only known." And in another place, "A *spiritual* and deified body is given to us in the blessed sacrament."<sup>3</sup>

With the greatest possible desire not to misunderstand or misrepresent Dr. Pusey, we feel that we run no risk of either, when we assert, that he and the

<sup>1</sup> *Harding*, in *Jewell's Defence*, p. 207.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 219.

<sup>3</sup> *Harding*, in *Jewell's Reply*, pp. 325, 329.

Romish champion are at unity in this matter,—so far as the Real Presence is concerned,—and that both are alike opposed to bishop Jewell, the authorized expounder and defender of the doctrines of the Reformation. Both contend for an indwelling of Christ in the elements,—not to the believer merely;—if *that* were all, we would not stay to contend the point,—but “*independently of our faith.*” The blessing of a priest,—himself, perhaps, as Harding admits, “a sinful man and displeasing to God,”—brings Christ down from above, and places Him upon the “altar;” and this, although there may be no one sincere believer present. His body is “mysteriously given” in the bread, and this without reference to the faith of the receiver. The body is “given,” says Dr. Pusey, even to the wicked. Yet “the wicked,” says the xxixth Article, “eat not the body of Christ in the use of the Lord’s Supper.” How shall these contrary statements be reconciled? Or how can Dr. P. protest his obedience to the church, and yet thus openly impugn her authoritative standards?

Dr. Pusey, having thus adopted the Romish view, naturally proceeds to deprecate and contemn the Protestant one. This he takes care always to describe as “the Zuinglian doctrine,” and “the Zuingli-Calvinist theory,” well knowing that such phrases are well calculated to prejudice the principle to which he is opposed, in the minds of the young and inexperienced. Such readers, therefore, should be reminded, that at the time of the Reformation, the period when our church-system was fixed, and our standards settled, there were but three modes of belief, as to the Eucharist, open to the choice of our Reformers. These were, 1. The Romish theory of the Real

Presence, involving some kind of transubstantiation; 2. The Lutheran, of consubstantiation; 3. The Zuinglian,—that the bread and wine are a *sign* or *sacrament* given here on earth, of Christ's body, which is in heaven. Now the first of these with one voice they rejected, and laid down their lives with alacrity, rather than admit it: The second they utterly refused, though with less indignation: The third they adopted; and upon this principle all our standards and formularies were settled.

If any corroboration of this were needed, we should have no occasion to go beyond the present statement of Dr. Pusey. He sketches what he calls "the Zuingli-Calvinist theory." We shall print side by side with it, archbishop Cranmer's dying testimony, given in to his judges at Oxford, in the examinations which ended in his martyrdom.

*"The Zuingli-Calvinist  
Theory."*<sup>1</sup>

"That the outward elements were not channels or instruments of grace, but that their only office was to kindle the faith of the individual, to set Christ before his eyes, *that so he might in mind ascend into heaven, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, feed on Him there by faith, appropri-*

*Archbishop Cranmer's  
Explication.*<sup>2</sup>

"Lifting up our minds, we should look up to the blood of Christ with our faith; should touch him with our mind, and receive him with our inward man; and that being like eagles in this life, *we should fly up into heaven in our hearts, where that Lamb is resident at the right hand of the Father,*

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Pusey's Letter*, p. 132.

<sup>2</sup> *Foxe*, vol. vi. p. 447.

ate His merits, and thereby become united with Him.”

which taketh away the sins of the world; by whose stripes we are made whole; by whose passion we are filled at his table, and whose blood we, receiving out of his holy side, do live for ever; being made the guests of Christ; having him dwelling in us through the grace of his true nature; and, through the virtue and efficacy of his whole passion, being no less assured and certified, that we are fed spiritually unto eternal life by Christ's flesh crucified, and by his blood shed, the true food of our minds, than that our bodies are fed with meat and drink.”

Perfectly true, then, is it, as the archbishop's biographer informs us, that “Cranmer, as well as Ridley, had espoused the doctrine of Zuinglius, in rejecting all corporal and local presence in the Eucharist.”<sup>1</sup> And equally certain is it, not only that the whole array of those who accompanied Cranmer to the stake, accorded with him in this belief; but that their survivors also, the Parkers, and Grindals, and

<sup>1</sup> *Todà's Life of Abp. Cranmer*, vol. ii. p. 250.

Whitgifts, and Jewells, who re-established the Protestant church in England, built it up in this faith. In other words, they abhorred the Romish dogma of the Real Presence; they could not understand the midway theory of the Lutherans; and no other view remained to them but that which it is now attempted to sneer down, as “the Zuingli-Calvinistic doctrine,” but which it would be more ingenuous to call, the *Scriptural doctrine* of this Sacrament.

But again we have to object to Dr. Pusey, that while he professes to inculcate “higher views of the Sacraments,” he does, in fact, most seriously lower and impair them.

The scriptural, the Protestant, the Church of England view of the Lord’s Supper, is,—that it is a real, beneficial, but wholly spiritual transaction;—a communion between Christ and the soul of the believer; in which visible signs or emblems are used, as in Baptism, mainly out of compassion to the weakness of our faith, and the infirmities of our nature, which often flags in the attempt to reach things *unseen*.

In Christian worship the essence, the value, the vitality, is *faith*, or, as it is sometimes called, *spirituality*. “*God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*” (John iv. 24.) “*Without faith it is impossible to please to God.*” (Heb. xi. 6.) “*According to your faith be it unto you.*” (Matt. ix. 29.) “*If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest*” (*be baptized.*) (Acts viii. 37.) “*We have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him.*” “*Ye are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*”

Thus the constant effort of the inspired writers is to inculcate this great truth, so contrary and so distasteful to the natural heart,—that the worship and service which, and *which only*, can be acceptable unto God, is the service of the heart, not of the lips; the prostration of the soul and spirit, not the bowings and crossings, the “bodily exercises,” with which all false religions are replete. And in this line of teaching the church of England has faithfully followed. Rome, however, and those among us who think Rome *nearer the truth* than Luther or Zuinglius,<sup>1</sup> take the opposite course, and unreservedly declare, that both in baptism and in the Lord’s Supper spiritual benefits may be conveyed, and “a great miracle” wrought, “independently of faith;” or, in other words, without the existence of a spark of faith in the hearts of any of the parties concerned in the service!

This is what Dr. Pusey calls inculcating “higher views,” and a “higher doctrine,” as to the sacraments. But this higher doctrine consists in turning the sacrament into a charm; an external application; something which, if duly *performed*, has a certain supernatural effect. This is exactly what the worldly man would wish the sacraments to be. It was this superstitious feeling, that led Constantine to defer his baptism until near his death, in the vain hope that the rite, and not his faith in the blood of Christ, would wash away his sins. It is precisely the same delusion, that makes many a poor dying creature at the present day *rely* upon some supernatural virtue in the sacramental bread and wine, and wish to die

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Pusey's Letter*, p. 144.

almost with the elements upon his lips; resting on the emblems, and not even endeavouring to ascend in faith to him whose death he has professed to commemorate. And this is the superstition which Dr. Pusey lends his aid to perpetuate; for, contrary to all the standards of the church, he avers, that there is a real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the consecrated elements, and that "it is there *independently of our faith.*"

As opposed as possible to this view is the language of the church. According to Dr. Pusey and Mr. Froude, the performance of the rite involves "a great miracle,"<sup>1</sup> even though there should not be a single believing communicant. This theory obviously magnifies the mere rite, and him who performs it, and makes the faith of the communicant a secondary circumstance. The church, however, entirely reverses this view. She makes faith everything; and the performance of the rite not even indispensable. In her *Order for the Communion of the Sick*, she directs, that "if a man, by reason of any just impediment, do not receive the sacrament of Christ's body and blood; the curate shall instruct him, that if he do truly repent him of his sins, and stedfastly believe that Jesus Christ suffered death upon the cross for him, and shed his blood for his redemption; earnestly remembering the benefits he hath thereby, and giving him hearty thanks therefore; *he doth eat the body and blood of our Saviour Christ profitably to his soul's health*, although he do not receive the sacrament with his mouth."

Dr. Pusey quotes a view of what he calls the

<sup>1</sup> *Froude's Remains*, vol. iii. p. 43.



Zuingli-Calvinist theory, from one who says, that “the faith of the believer is not only the *mean* whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the supper, but is also the true *consecrating principle*,—that which brings Christ down to the heart of each individual.” And while so quoting from this writer, he describes him as “one of a *very different school*” from his own. This is doubtless true, for it will be seen that the description so quoted exactly agrees with the words just cited from the Prayer Book. Our church’s *Order for the Communion of the Sick* clearly describes “the faith of the believer as the true consecrating principle,”—as, in fact, the essence of the whole celebration. But the church’s view, and that of Dr. Pusey, are indeed, to use his own words, “*very different.*”

Connected with this doctrine of “*a real presence, independently of our faith,*”—and being, in fact, a natural corollary of that hypothesis,—is the notion of a *Sacrifice*, offered upon an *Altar*. And so distinctly and emphatically was this notion disclaimed and warred against, by the founders of our Reformed Church, that it is indeed marvellous to see men who vaunt themselves of their elevated churchmanship, contending so vehemently as some have recently done, to set up again this overthrown pillar of Popery.

The 81st No. of the *Tracts for the Times* is a volume of 424 pages. It begins by assuming, that the writers and readers of these Tracts are entitled to be ranked among “the *more faithful* of the sons of the church,”—and then proceeds to vindicate their right to this title, by arguing strenuously against the main principles, respecting the Lord’s Supper, which the church has adopted and asserted! The

prolixity of this dissertation and its appended proofs, furnishes sufficient evidence, that the task which the writer had set himself proved far from being an easy one.

The main object of the volume in question (mis-called a *tract*) is, to establish the position, (however desperate the attempt may appear) that the church of England holds that in the Lord's Supper "an oblation or sacrifice is made unto God;" and that, in accordance with this idea, the Lord's Table may be properly and even preferably called an "altar."

In defence of the church of England we must deny both these positions.

But it will be especially necessary in the present instance, to attend to the sense or definition of the term upon which the question depends;—for seldom is a word used in a religious controversy in so many different senses, as is the term "sacrifice" in this. A variety of different definitions might be easily adduced. The *highest* of these would be that of the church of Rome, which our xxxist Article declares to be "a dangerous deceit;" and which even the Tract-writer surrenders to utter reprobation. The lowest or most general would be that of our own church, when, in the thanksgiving after the communion, she teaches her children to say, "We offer and present unto thee, *ourselves*, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively *sacrifice* unto thee;"—and when in her Homily she quotes from St. Paul the words, "Let us offer to God the *sacrifice* of praise by Christ, that is, the fruit of our lips which confess his name."<sup>1</sup> Another, and a more definite sense, is

<sup>1</sup> *Homily on the Lord's Supper*, Part ii.

that adopted in *Exodus* xii. 27. “*It is the SACRIFICE of the Lord’s Passover.*” The Tract-writers are very ready to refer to this instance, as shewing, that as (which no one will deny) the Lord’s Supper followed and superseded the Passover,—so, if the one was a *sacrifice*, the other must be so also. We might perhaps concede this point; but would the Tract-writers like to carry this parallel fairly through? We apprehend not; for the Passover, *sacrifice* though in one sense it was, was a sacrifice without an altar; without a priest; and of which our Lord himself partook in a reclining posture (*John* xiii. 25.) They will scarcely be satisfied with such a “sacrifice” as this. Of what avail, then, is the instance of the Passover to their argument?

Neither of these senses, then, will satisfy the writers in question. “The doctrine of the early church,” they tell us, “was this;—that in the Eucharist, an oblation or *sacrifice*, was made *by the Church to God*, under the form of his creatures of bread and wine.” “This commemorative oblation or sacrifice they doubted not to be acceptable to God who had appointed it; (?) and so to be also *a means of bringing down God’s favour* upon the whole church.” “It was, they doubted not, regarded graciously by God, *for the remission of sins.*” “The Eucharist, then, according to them, consisted of two parts, a “commemorative sacrifice,” and a “Communion” or Communication; the former obtaining remission of sins for the Church; the Communion “the strengthening and refreshing of the soul,” although, inasmuch as it united the believer with Christ, it indirectly conveyed remission of sins too. The Communion was (to use a modern phrase) the feast upon the sacrifice thus

offered. <sup>3</sup> They first offered to God His gifts, in commemoration of that His inestimable gift, and placed them upon His altar here, to be received and presented on the Heavenly Altar by Him, our High-Priest; and then, trusted to receive them back, conveying to them the life-giving Body and Blood. As being, moreover, appointed by their Lord, they believed that the continual oblation of this sacrifice (like the daily sacrifice appointed in the elder Church) was a benefit to the whole Church, independently and over and above the benefit to the individual communicants—that the sacrifices in each branch of the Christian Church were mutually of benefit to every other branch, each to all and all to each. . . . . Lastly, since they knew not of our chill separation between those who, being dead in Christ, live to Christ and with Christ, and those who are yet in the flesh, they felt assured, that this sacrifice offered by the Church on earth, for the whole Church, conveyed to that portion of the Church, which had passed into the unseen world, such benefits of Christ's Death as (their conflicts over, and they in rest) were still applicable to them.”<sup>1</sup>

Such, according to the writer before us, was “the Apostolic doctrine.” We do not charge him with explicitly declaring, that the whole of this essential Popery is held by the Church of England; but the drift of his argument is to shew, that nearly every important feature is contained, either expressly or impliedly, in our services. He cannot help admitting, that our Reformers cast out with an unsparing hand, nearly the whole of this “doctrine of the early

<sup>1</sup> *Tracts for the Times*, No. 81. p. 6, 7.

church." He mourns over it: their doings, he says, "make a man's eyes gush out with water." But he then proceeds to argue, that in subsequent revisions and additions, this "apostolic doctrine" was gradually re-introduced. As briefly as possible, then, we shall endeavour to shew, 1. That the system advocated by this writer is unscriptural; and we may add,—though that be a very minor point,—that it is not supported by the practice of the early church; 2. That it was wholly contemned and rejected by the divines of the Reformation; and 3. That even the later revisions in no sense countenanced or re-introduced it.

1. This whole theory is entirely opposed to Holy Scripture. We find the institution of the Lord's Supper in *Matt.* xxvi., in *Mark* xiv., and in *Luke* xxi. Not one word of a *sacrifice* or an *altar* do we find in either. On the other hand, the transaction appears to have taken place at table, after the Pass-over, and, as we have already said, when our Lord and his disciples were in the usual posture of the supper-table. We pass on to St. Paul's account of the institution, which, he informs us, he had "*received of the Lord*;" and again we find no allusion whatever to an *altar* or a *sacrifice*. On the contrary, we gather from the rebuke which he administers to the Corinthians, that irregularities and indecencies had arisen, which are only to be accounted for on the supposition that the sacrament had been a supper, and so nearly resembling an ordinary meal as to give room for the irreverence of which he complains, to creep in.

But we have no need to dwell on this point; for all that we would urge is at once conceded by the Tract-writer himself, who plainly confesses of his

doctrine, that "there is no explicit authority for it in Holy Scripture."<sup>1</sup>

We pass on, then, to observe,—not as decisive of the question, which, by the authority of God's word is already decided ; but as a fact worthy of notice, that the early Christian church knew no other *sacrifice* than that which Cranmer, and Hooper, and Zuin- glius, and Calvin would all have readily admitted.

We come not down to the days of Ambrose and Hilary, as exhibiting the early church, any more than we would take modern Geneva as exhibiting the mind and spirit of Calvin. We turn to those fathers who wrote before the corruptions of the fourth and fifth centuries. And we find *Justin Martyr* saying, "I affirm that the prayers and praises of the saints are the *only* perfect sacrifices acceptable to God."<sup>2</sup> *Clemens Alexandrinus* ;—that "the sacrifice of the church is the word ascending as incense from holy souls, their sacrifice and their whole minds being open to God."<sup>3</sup> And *Tertullian*, on Malac. i. 11, "Spiritual sacrifices are meant, and a contrite heart is shewn to be an acceptable sacrifice to God."<sup>4</sup>

2. But our main object, as we are endeavouring to defend the church of England, must be, to clear *her* of the imputation cast upon her by the writer in question ; and to shew that the entire and utter purgation of her services from all the superstitions of the mass, was not, as he would have us believe, a mere "withdrawing (the doctrine) from sight, lest it be misapplied or profaned," but an extirpation, a casting out, as an abomination ; a hearty and entire rid-

<sup>1</sup> *Tracts*, No. 81, p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> *Dialogue with Trypho*. Paris, 1515, p. 345.

<sup>3</sup> *Stromata*, book vii. p. 717. Paris, 1641.

<sup>4</sup> *Advers. Judæas*, c. v. p. 188. Paris, 1675.

dance of a “a blasphemous fable and a dangerous deceit.”

Some two or three expressions of the church, in her public documents, this writer quotes, and endeavours to explain away; but he gives a most inadequate idea of the real history of the case.

In the first place, let us look at the Communion Service. Here the writer before us is obliged to admit, or rather he recounts it as an “unhappy change,” that in the last revision in the reign of Edward VI. there was deliberately and of set purpose expunged,—the act of oblation, or the priest’s placing the elements on the “altar;” the word “altar,” throughout the service, carefully replaced by “table,”—and the form of dedication or offering up of the elements to God.

Concurrently with this revision, there came out what the writer of the Tract calls “an ill-omened letter,” signed by archbishop Cranmer, the bishop of Ely, and others of the council, commanding every where the altars to be taken down, and tables to be placed in their stead. And this was immediately followed by injunctions from bishop Ridley to the clergy of the see of London, assigning reasons for the removal of altars, and the substitution of tables. The bishop says, “The use of an altar is to sacrifice upon; the use of a table is to serve men to eat upon. Now when we come to the Lord’s board, what do we come for? to sacrifice Christ again, and to crucify him again; or to feed upon him that was once only crucified and offered up for us? If we come to feed upon him, spiritually to eat his body, and spiritually to drink his blood;—*which is the true use of the Lord’s*

*Supper*,—then no man can deny that the form of a table is more meet than the form of an altar.”<sup>1</sup>

But we pass on from the first Reformers, about whose views there can be no shadow of doubt; and proceed to their followers, who re-edified the reformed church in the days of Elizabeth. We first hear them speak in the Articles and Homilies then newly set forth.

In the Articles, which rather aim to declare the doctrines of the church than to denounce the errors of other systems, it might be enough to observe, that this said “doctrine of the early church,” touching a propitiatory sacrifice, is wholly omitted. This, of itself, seeing that beyond all doubt it was held by the Romish church immediately preceding, furnishes abundant proof of the mind of our Reformers in this matter. A few words, however, indicative of errors denounced, may be observed; and these few words afford the strongest confirmation of what might be gathered from their affirmative statements.

In Article XXVIII., after explaining the true character and nature of the Lord’s Supper, a few words are added, to this effect:—

“The sacrament of the Lord’s Supper was not, by Christ’s ordinance, reserved, carried about, *lifted up*, or worshipped.”

Now we have already seen, that the two points mainly insisted upon by the ultra-churchmen are,—that Christ is *really present* in the sacramental elements, irrespective of the faith of the communicants,—and that those elements are *offered up* as a *sacrifice* or oblation. The church, then, in denouncing

<sup>1</sup> *Fore*, vol. vi. p. 6.



the practice of *lifting up* the elements, evidently protests against both these points.

But in the XXXIst Article this is still more explicitly done. It is declared that,

“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 *sacrifices* of Masses, in the which it was commonly said, that the priest *did offer Christ* for the quick and dead to have remission of pain or guilt, were *blasphemous fables* and *dangerous deceits*.”

This is the strongest condemnatory passage which occurs in the Articles. And it is important to observe, that it is not levelled, as the ultra-churchmen would represent it, against the abuses and corruptions of the Romish doctrine, but *against the doctrine itself*. Nothing is said as to the extortions practised in the sale of masses, or the other enormities resulting from the theory of a propitiatory sacrifice presented to God by the priest. It is the false doctrine out of which these consequences flowed, that the article so indignantly condemns. It is the supposition, that some other “sacrifice” than that offered up on the cross is still needed; and that such a sacrifice is provided in the Lord’s supper. This, which is the very central point of what the 81st Tract calls “the doctrine of the early church,” is explicitly denounced, and that in language of unusual vehemence and indignation.

But the Homilies, which expound at more length the doctrines which are briefly enumerated in the Articles, and which Homilies every clergyman, in

subscribing the Articles, declares to contain “godly and wholesome doctrine;” these full and explicit statements of the church’s views are especially careful to leave no room for doubt on this point. In the *Homily on the Sacrament*, the Christian is thus taught:—

“But, before all other things, this we must be sure of especially, that this supper be in such wise done and ministered, as our Lord and Saviour did, and commanded to be done; as his holy apostles used it; and the good fathers in the primitive church frequented it. For (as that worthy man St. Ambrose saith) he is unworthy of the Lord, that otherwise doth celebrate that mystery, than it was delivered by him. Neither can he be devout, that otherwise doth presume than it was given by the author. We must then take heed, *lest of the memory it be made a sacrifice*; lest of a communion it be made a private eating; lest of two parts we have but one; lest *applying it for the dead*, we lose the fruit that be alive. Let us rather in these matters follow the advice of Cyprian in the like cases; that is, cleave fast to the first beginning; hold fast the Lord’s tradition; do that in the Lord’s commemoration which *he himself did, he himself commanded*, and his apostles confirmed.”

Again:—“This is to stick fast to Christ’s promise made in his institution, to make Christ thine own, and to apply his merits unto thyself. Herein thou needest no other man’s help, *no other sacrifice or oblation, no sacrificing priest, no mass, no means established by man’s invention.*”

Once more, in the *Sermon on Whitsunday*, the Papists are denounced, for that “neither do they

order the sacraments, or else the ecclesiastical keys, in such sort as He did first institute and ordain them: but have so intermingled their own traditions and inventions, by chopping and changing, by adding and plucking away, that now they may seem to be converted into a new guise. Christ commended to his church a sacrament of his body and blood: *they have changed it into a sacrifice for the quick and the dead.*"

After this, surely not another word need be said touching the views of the founders of the Reformed church of England. One other public act, however, ought to be mentioned. Strype narrates, that in settling externals, as well as doctrinal points, at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, the question of "tables" or "altars" required to be decided. And bishops Cox, Sandys, and Grindal, and probably archbishop Parker, drew up and published, authoritatively, "Reasons why it was not convenient, that the Communion should be administered at an Altar." And among these "reasons," we find the following:—

"1. The form of a table is most agreeable to Christ's example, who instituted the sacrament of his body and blood at a table, and not at an altar." \* \* \*

"3. The Holy Ghost in the New Testament, speaking of the Lord's supper, doth make mention of a table (1 Cor. x.), but in no place nameth it an altar."

"4. The old writers do use also the name of a table: (as Augustine, Chrysostom, &c.) And although the same writers do sometimes term it an altar, yet are they to be expounded to speak *abusive et improprie*.

“ 5. Furthermore, an altar hath relation to a sacrifice, for they be correlative. So that, of necessity, if we allow an *altar*, we must grant a *sacrifice*.”

And accordingly, as the idea of admitting a *sacrifice* was altogether abhorrent to their minds, orders were given for the immediate taking down of all the altars.<sup>1</sup>

The church of England, then, during the whole period of the Reformation, and alike under Cranmer, Ridley, Parker, and Jewell, declared her determination on this point with the greatest possible distinctness. And the only remaining question we have to discuss, is

3. Whether, in any subsequent revision of the Communion Service, the recognition of a sacrifice was intentionally or really reinstated?

The greatest anxiety is shewn by the writer in question to establish this point; but never did we behold such a clinging to straws as his statement exhibits! The “return to the ancient doctrine” of a propitiatory sacrifice, is seen, he argues, in three alterations in the service:—1. At Queen Elizabeth’s accession, the prefatory words on the delivery of the bread and wine were restored; “The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee,” &c. 2. In the last revision, in A.D. 1661, a rubric was restored, enjoining that “when there is a communion, the priest shall then place upon the table so much bread and wine as he shall think convenient.” 3. And, at the same time, in the Prayer for the Church Militant, there was added, after the sentence, “receive these our alms,” the words, “and oblations.”

<sup>1</sup> *Strype. Annals*, vol. i. c. 12.

Each of these three almost imperceptible variations seems to the lynx-eyed Tract-writer to convey the impression of a purpose to return, and even of an actual returning, to the old Romish doctrine of a propitiatory sacrifice! So weighty a conclusion, from such trivial and insignificant premises, we have never before seen achieved. Let us look for a moment at each of these instances.

In the first liturgy of Edward VI. the words, found in old liturgies, on the delivery of the bread and cup, were adopted. "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life." But these expressions, standing *alone*, and at a time when all approach to an admission of the Real Presence was carefully avoided, were soon felt to be ambiguous, and affording entrance to error. In the second Liturgy of that reign, therefore, they were removed, and in their place was substituted, "Take and eat this, in remembrance that Christ died for thee; and feed on him in thine heart, by faith, with thanksgiving."

But now of the change, of which so much is attempted to be made. On resettling the church of England, on Queen Elizabeth's accession, these points as well as others, came under review; and it was easily perceived that the address to the communicant, as it stood, commencing baldly and abruptly, "Take and eat this,"—wanted something of dignity and solemnity. The happy medium between too high and too low a tone was gained, not by going back to the first book of Edward; but by *combining both*. Now, therefore, the communicant was addressed, as in our present Communion Service:—"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."

In this way all the solemnity of the old form, and all the directing of the mind upwards, to Christ, was gained ; without in the least countenancing the Romish doctrine of "the Real Presence." For, "Take and eat *this*," was still retained. And what was "*this*?" The rubric immediately preceding answered this question ; by directing the minister, "When he delivereth *the bread* to any one," so to say. And the explanatory declaration at the end of the service distinctly warned the worshipper, that "the Sacramental bread and wine remained still in their very natural substances," and that no "corporal presence of Christ's flesh and blood" was to be imagined. What, then, do the advocates of the "Real Presence" gain by this alteration? Let the whole address to the communicant be read carefully and dispassionately over, and every word well considered ; and we feel well convinced that not the most vehement Protestant, be he dissenter or churchman, will hesitate a single instant to accept them in their fullest and largest meaning.

But the next point gained, according to the tract-writer, was in the last revision, in Charles the Second's reign, by the insertion of a rubric, enjoining that, "when there is a communion, the priest shall then place upon the table so much bread and wine as he shall think convenient." "Thus," says the writer, "the ancient act of the *προσφορὰ*, or oblation, was formerly (*qu.* formally) directed to be made."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Tracts for the Times*, No. 81, p. 37.

The writer must certainly entertain a very exalted opinion of these revisers of the Liturgy, when he supposes that they intentionally *insinuated* a great doctrine unto the Prayer-book, by stealth, without one word of open or candid declaration! But what is most to be remarked in the matter, is this:—That, if these revisers of the service seriously intended to re-introduce “the ancient act of oblation,” they have, for at least an hundred and fifty years, most grievously failed of their object!

The tract-writer says that this rubric was intended to restore “the ancient act of oblation.” The priest was, from that time forward, to place the elements on the table himself; thus making an oblation or offering to God.

Now nothing can be more notorious than the fact, that through all the five generations which have past away since this rubric was introduced, with their 60,000 or 80,000 ministers of the church,—none of these ministers, or so few as to be next to none, have ever, till the *Tracts for the Times* made their appearance,—so much as thought of “making this offering or oblation.” *Universally*, the practice has been, for the elements to be placed on the table by the servants of the church. So that this doctrine of the oblation is at least a *discovery*; and if it has lain hidden in our service so long, its existence has at least been unsuspected.

But, further, in the prayer itself the words “*and oblations*” was introduced; and this is thought to clench the whole argument. Another of the *Tracts* (No. 86) tells us, that “by this insertion we have *that* which prophets and kings desired to see; what

king Charles the First and bishop Andrews had not!"<sup>1</sup>

One is perplexed by such statements as these,—whether to suppose that the writers really do not believe what they are saying,—or that they have not read the service on which they are commenting. True it is, that the words are there,—“*to accept our alms and oblations.*” But then in the margin of every Prayer-book we read the direction “If there shall be *no* alms and oblations, then these words shall be left unsaid.” This most explicitly distinguishes the oblations from the sacramental elements; for the priest had just before been directed “to place upon the table so much bread and wine as he shall think convenient.” There could not, therefore, be “*no* oblations,” in that sense: consequently the “oblations” meant were of the same kind as the “alms.” And this is confirmed by the rubric just preceding, which directs, that “the churchwardens, &c., shall receive the alms for the poor, *and other devotions* of the people, in a decent basin,” &c.

So much for this preposterous hypothesis; by which the last revisers of the Liturgy are alleged to have foisted into our service the doctrine of “the propitiatory sacrifice,” without the least avowal of their intentions; and, still more wonderful, without making any of the clergy of the church at all aware of the change. But there is one more absurdity in the supposition: If these semi-popish divines had really intended to introduce “the oblation,” must we not take for granted that they would have introduced it *in the right place*? But, upon the present

<sup>1</sup> *Tracts for the Times*, No. 86, p. 26.



hypothesis, it is inserted in the most unfit part of the service! Who would offer an oblation unblessed, unconsecrated? In all the old liturgies, which the tract-writers so highly venerate, the elements are first *consecrated*, and then *offered up*. Instead of which, according to this *newly-discovered* beauty in our service, the priest *begins* by placing mere bread and wine on the table, *without a word of prayer*, and this bare act of placing the elements there, is called “the ancient act of the oblation,” and rejoiced over as a thing “which kings and prophets, like Charles the First and bishop Andrews, desired to see, but saw not.” Why, the “ancient worshippers” would have been shocked at the idea of such an “oblation.” *They* consecrated the elements; changed them into “the body and blood of Christ,” and *then* offered up to God “a pure Host, a holy Host, an immaculate Host.”<sup>1</sup> *We*, according to the tract-writers, are to set mere bread and wine on the table, unblessed, unconsecrated, and to call that “an oblation!”

But enough of these shadows! We have only to mention, in addition, two more snatchings at straws, which are, if possible, even more weak and unworthy than the above! The writer of the 81st Tract endeavours to found an argument upon the expressions used in the Church Catechism. But his reasonings entirely depend on a *partial* quotation of that document. When the *whole* passage relating to the Lord’s Supper is read, his hypothesis, built entirely on a garbled view, at once vanishes away.

Lastly, great stress is laid upon the use of the term “altar” in the *Coronation Service*. But what is

<sup>1</sup> *The Roman Form—Froude*, vol. ii. p. 397.

the Coronation Service? When did the church frame it, or adopt it, or in any way recognize it? It is the mere product of a Committee of Privy Council; and has been altered, from time to time, as the whim of some individual prelate or prime minister might dictate. The term "altar" was probably thrust into it in the times of Charles II., or James II., when Popery made its last grand effort to re-enter. But if that service had countenanced transubstantiation itself, what churchman, beyond the two or three persons concerned in the service, would be in the least degree implicated in that error? The authoritative declarations of the church must be looked for, not in an occasional service, the act of two or three individuals, but in her various doctrinal statements, rubrics, &c. and in her canons. And the language of these latter runs thus :

“ 82. *A decent Communion-table in every Church.*—Whereas we have no doubt, but that in all Churches within the realm of England, convenient and decent Tables are provided and placed for the celebration of the holy Communion, we appoint, that the same tables shall from time to time be kept and repaired in sufficient and seemly manner, and covered, in time of Divine Service, with a carpet of silk or other decent stuff, thought meet by the Ordinary of the place, if any question be made of it, and with a fair linen cloth at the time of the Ministration, as becometh that Table, and so stand, saving when the said holy Communion is to be administered: at which time the same shall be placed in so good sort within the Church or Chancel, as thereby the Minister may be more conveniently heard of the Communicants in his Prayer and Ministration, and the Communicants also

more conveniently, and in more number, may communicate with the said minister," &c.

We rather suppose that it will not be easy for the writers of the *Tracts for the Times* to discover either an *Altar* or a *Sacrifice* in this canon.

Nay, even their especial object of admiration, archbishop Laud himself, will not fully come up to their views in this matter. In that prelate's canons of A.D. 1640, (now no longer in force) the question is thus handled:—

“The standing of the Communion Table sideway under the East window of every Church or Chapel is in its own nature *indifferent*; neither commanded nor condemned by the word of God, either expressly or by immediate deduction;—and that therefore no religion is to be placed therein, or scruple made thereon.”

The Tables are then ordered to stand where, in Popish times, the altars had stood, and the canon proceeds:—

“And we declare that this situation of the Holy Table *doth not imply* that it is, or ought to be esteemed, a true and proper altar, whereon Christ is again really sacrificed; but it is and *may be called* an altar by us, in that sense in which the primitive church called it an altar, and no other.”

The truth is, that archbishop Laud, though his semi-popish leanings were strong enough to ruin, for a while, the church, was yet not half so far advanced in his return to Rome, as are the writers of the *Tracts for the Times*.

The Church of England, then, has, in the matter of the Sacraments, faithfully followed the council of Cyprian, as quoted in her homily,—“to cleave fast

to the first beginning; to hold fast the Lord's tradition; *to do that which He himself did*, which He himself commanded, and His apostles confirmed." She perseveres in a simple and scriptural use of them; and above all, she stedfastly maintains that fundamental principle, without which all is confusion,—that "in *such only* as *worthily* receive the same, they have a wholesome effect or operation." (Art. xxv.)

The contrary doctrine, now, to our great peril, re-introduced among us, is the favourite enchantment of the apostate church. Bishop Jewell observes, that—

"St. Benet caused the sacrament to be laid on a dead woman's breast, thinking that the mere outward ceremony thereof, without faith, or inward motion of the party, might be sufficient to do her good." "Others thought, that the outward work of Baptism, only because it was done, without any further motion of the mind, was sufficient to remit their sins. This old error our adversaries (the Papists) have taken up, and made it "Catholic," teaching the people to believe, that their mass itself, *ex opere operato*, only of itself, and because it is said, is available for the remission of their sins."<sup>1</sup>

Exactly the same series of soul-destroying fictions do we now see revived in the *Tracts for the Times*. Baptism can "work a wonder earth's charmers never knew," without a spark of faith in *any* of the parties concerned. The bread and wine is the body and blood of Christ, not to the believer merely, but "independently of our faith," and as well when there are *no* believing communicants as when there are many.

<sup>1</sup> *Bishop Jewell, Reply to Harding*, p. 594.

The imposition of a bishop's hand confers the power to work these "great miracles,"<sup>1</sup> even upon the man who obtains that imposition by the most dreadful falsehood, declaring himself "inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost," when he hardly believes that there is any Holy Ghost! The ordination, *ex opere operato*, because it is done, confers supernatural powers;—the baptism, *because it is done*, absolutely regenerates the infant;—the blessing, *because it is pronounced*, changes the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ! And all this is alleged to be most truly and really effected, without the necessity for the presence of *faith*, in any one of the parties!

Such is not the doctrine of the church. "Such as receive" these sacraments and rites, she tells us, "unworthily, (i. e. without true and lively faith) purchase to themselves damnation."

<sup>1</sup> *Froude*, vol. iii. p. 43.

## XI.

## ON SCHISM: AND LATITUDINARIANISM.

WE have now arrived at something like a natural rest, a period in the argument. We have seen, in the first place, that it is accordant to the will of God, as set forth in Holy Scripture, that a national provision should be made, wherever Christians have any rule or influence in the state, for the maintenance of His worship, and the instruction of the people in His fear. Thus arriving at the conviction, that National Establishments for religious purposes are lawful and expedient, we next inquired, How any person, seeking the truth, should be able to know, whether the Establishment existing in his own country, was a church of Christ, or not. And we answered, according to the decision of the Church of England, and all the other Reformed churches of Christendom; —“ By the preaching of the pure word of God; and the right administration of the sacraments.” Proceeding, then, to apply this double test, we found the Church of England fully answering this description,

and realizing the theory, derived from scripture, of a sound and genuine Church of Christ.

But now arises the question, which proves a stumbling-block to many,—“Why is it, that, if you have a pure church of Christ established among you, there have sprung up such a multitude of sects, all professing to derive their faith from the same unerring and unvarying standard; and yet all contemning both the national church, and also each other?” And thus are we brought to the serious consideration of the subject which will occupy the present Essay.

The topic which we have placed at the head of this chapter has latterly been made the subject of much discussion;—the object of many of those who have handled it being evidently not so much to explain it, as to “explain it away.” That “Dissent is not Schism” has been the general theme of their arguments; and in their eagerness to establish this point, they have often approximated too closely to the dangerous conclusion,—that all the division and strife, the alienation and opposition, which at present distract and disfigure the Christian world, is according to the will of God, and a proof of our close resemblance to the primitive church!

The circulation which has been given to such notions as these, on the one hand; and the assertion, on the other, of such doctrines as that “the wrath of God,” and “eternal punishment” threaten all who are not within the visible pale of the English church; these two extremes, of liberalism and papal intolerance, both now unhesitatingly advocated among us, seem to call for an attempt to describe the true nature of SCHISM, and to delineate, by scriptural rules, its

character and its consequences. To this task, then, let us now address ourselves.

1. The importance and the obligation of UNION are set forth in God's word in the strongest terms; and the correlative evil and sinfulness of DIVISION perpetually insisted on.

In the last prayer of our Lord, on his parting with his disciples, immediately before his last sufferings, he thus shews them the path of peace and of duty, by the petitions he offers.

*“Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be ONE, as we are.” “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me.”* (John xvii. 11, 20—23.)

And, when the Holy Ghost descended, after our Lord's ascension, we find the fruits of his influence to be exactly correspondent to these prayers. *“The disciples continued with ONE accord in the temple.” “And the multitude of them that believed were of ONE heart and ONE soul.”* (Acts ii. 46. iv. 32.) Nor did the apostles, in their instructions to the churches founded by them, omit continually to inculcate the same principle. *“So we, being many, are ONE BODY in Christ, and every one members one of another.”* (Rom. xii. 5.) *“By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body; and have all been made to drink into ONE SPIRIT.”*



(1 Cor. xii. 13.) “*Ye are all ONE in Christ Jesus.*” (Gal. iii. 28.) “*There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling ; ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM.*” (Ephes. iv. 4, 5.) “*Stand fast, in one spirit, with ONE MIND, striving together for the faith of the gospel.*” (Phil. i. 27.) “*Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in ONE BODY, and be ye thankful.*” (Col. iii. 15.) “*Finally, be ye all of ONE MIND, having compassion one of another ; love as brethren.*” (1 Peter iii. 8.) What, indeed, can exceed the earnestness of St. Paul’s entreaty ? “*If there be any consolation in Christ ; if any comfort of love ; if any fellowship of the Spirit ; if any bowels and mercies ; fulfil ye my joy ; that ye be like-minded, having the same love ; being of ONE ACCORD,—of ONE MIND.*” (Phil. ii. 1, 2.)

And, in proportion to their constant solicitude for unity, must have been their abhorrence of strifes, divisions, and whatever led thereunto. And of this we find abundant proofs in the apostolic writings. “*I beseech you,*” says St. Paul, “*mark them that cause divisions,—and avoid them.*” (Rom. xvi. 17.) Again he uses the same entreaty, with increased earnestness, “*I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you ; but that ye be perfectly joined together, in the same mind, and in the same judgment.*” (1 Cor. i. 10.) “*Whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions ; are ye not carnal, and walk as men ?*” (1 Cor. iii. 3.) “*I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not ; lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes,*” &c. (2 Cor. xii. 20.) “*It hath been declared unto me, brethren, that there are*

*contentions among you.*" "*Is Christ divided?*" (1 Cor. i. 11, 13.) "*I hear that there be divisions among you, and I partly believe it.*" "*Now in this I praise you not.*" (1 Cor. xi. 17, 18.)

Such is the language, in all the epistles, in which the inspired writers speak of even the *first beginnings* of division in the church. Of such a maturity of schism as that which presents rival baptisms and rival communions, they had not then heard, and we know not, if it had pleased God to give them any distinct foreknowledge of it. At least it is clear, that so far from imagining, or approving a state of absolute, permanent, declared division in the church, they were most express in their injunctions for the repression of everything, that could lead to such a state of things.

But we may be allowed, in such a question as this, to draw a confirmation of the scriptural rule from the undeniable records of history and of existing facts."

"*That they all may be ONE,*" was the prayer of our Lord himself, and he immediately assigns as a reason, "*that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*" (John xvii. 21.) And who, that knows any thing of the state of civilized society, can be ignorant, that one of the most common reasons assigned for all shades and degrees of unbelief, is,—*the dissensions and contradictions prevailing among Christians.*

That union is strength, and division weakness, is perhaps the most universally-admitted of all axioms. And a strange exhibition of human perverseness and self-will it is, by which, from a bias in favour of a divided state of the church, and a wish to justify the Babel-confusion of modern sects,—some persons are actually found to question or to qualify this axiom;

and that in a matter which furnishes, of all others, the most abundant and lamentable proofs of its entire truth. The want of unity in the Christian church, injures it most extensively, both in *external* and in *internal* things. This is sufficiently visible, even if we limit our view to our own ecclesiastical history.

Externally, the melancholy effects of disunion abound on every side. Looking back to the great division which took place in the reign of Charles II, when the ruling powers propounded terms of communion, perhaps too stringent, and when a similar intolerance of the opinions of others drove a large body of the clergy of the church into dissent:—how deplorable, in every point of view, was that first great separation! Into what a state of decrepitude and decay did it precipitate the church! For more than half a century afterwards, what desolation seemed to fall upon both parties! The seceding party unquestionably carried out with them a large proportion of the spiritual life and strength of the church: but if we search for it among themselves, forty years afterward, we shall find but very inconsiderable remains of that mass of living piety, which must have existed among them on their first secession.

And, to come to the present day. Not many, surely, even among Dissenters themselves, can have imbibed so entirely their modern theory, as to consider it a desirable thing, that the millions of our destitute poor, now wholly excluded from all means of grace, should continue in that state, until by private subscriptions and “voluntary efforts,” the deficient number of places of worship and of pastors can be supplied. Few, we believe, would look upon it in any other light than as a great blessing, if, by an

act of the government, Christianity were brought at once to the doors and hearths of these now desolate creatures. But then comes in the selfish objection,—“ We must not be called upon to support or provide for, a religious establishment, of which we do not ourselves approve.” A false notion of what is called “ liberty of conscience ” is brought in aid ; and all efforts on the part of the government are protested against ; simply because the religious instruction which the legislature would provide, would differ, in a few shades, from that which these dissidents would themselves select.

Now it is obvious at a glance that we have here one of the evils of a state of disunion. Were there no dissent, this objection would be at an end. But because Dissenters and Churchmen differ as to the form of church-government ; as to Liturgies, and a few other non-essential things,—the state is almost paralyzed as to the efforts it ought to be making, to remove the alarming want of religious instruction which is now seen to exist, in many parts of the land.

The other evil, however,—the internal or theological one,—that denoted in our Lord’s own words, is of a still more disastrous character. The grand excuse of all the unbelievers in Christendom,—and their number, when all shades of unbelief are included, is immense,—their chief and main plea is,—that Christians themselves cannot agree, as to what their religion really is.

Who has ever had any converse with persons, whose minds had imbibed any of the poison of Scepticism, without finding *this* the favourite and never-failing refuge of their minds, when pressed in argument on the proofs of Christianity ? And so current is this

argument, and so unanswerable is it deemed, that we now find men who assume to themselves the name of Christians, boldly protesting in the legislature against the public recognition and furtherance of any creed, and exclaiming, "You tell us that the state ought to maintain and propagate "the truth:" but who is to tell us what "the truth" is? Do we not see, at home and abroad; now, and in past times, learned and pious men at bitter variance with each other; every one contending that *his* hypothesis is "the truth;" and that all others are falsehoods?"

The argument, though not conclusive, is at least plausible. And fearful is the view which it presents, of the responsibility of those,—if such there be,—who, for the gratification of their own self-will, thus nullify God's gracious dealings with man, and give the Tempter the opportunity of persuading myriads of perishing human beings, that it is *not true*, that their Creator has given them a clear and sufficient explanation of his mind and will, by obeying which they may be saved; but by neglecting which they must be lost!

Surely, a few moments' consideration must satisfy any dispassionate inquirer, that this state of Division;—to which unhappily, we have now grown inured,—is a truly lamentable one; and one which instead of faintly regretting, or scarcely regretting at all,—a sincere disciple of Christ should rather contemplate with the liveliest emotions of disquietude, and with the most earnest wishes for its termination. What! are our brethren perishing around us on every side; and is it essential, in the very outset of an attempt for their recovery, to convince them of the fact, that God has graciously vouchsafed to give

to men a revelation of his will concerning them; and shall we cast a doubt upon this fact, and enable the Tempter to suggest to them—"The *Truth!* why no two of these Christians can agree about what this thing that they call "the Truth" is!" Shall we be separating and falling into sects and parties, upon disputes about a black gown or a white one? about this mode of leading the public prayers, or that mode?—about a government of the church by presbyters without bishops, or by bishops without presbyters; both of which are alike departures from the primitive custom?<sup>1</sup> Are things like these to rend the body of Christ, to yield a temporary triumph to the church's great Enemy; and to frustrate, in our day at least, the Saviour's gracious prayer, "*That they all may be ONE,—that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*"

No: this state of Division in the Church of Christ is nothing else than a great evil. It is the necessary cause of lamentable weakness to the church herself, as a community; but it is still more to be regretted, inasmuch as it gives manifold "occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme."

Let us endeavour, then, to search out,—and may we be enabled to do so without any bitterness of spirit,—the causes of Division in the Church of Christ in this country, and the means by which it may be brought to an end.

And first, let us clear the way by a few simple de-

<sup>1</sup> In *theory*, the church of England does not establish a government of bishops without presbyters, but in *practice*, while the convocation continues silenced, she does. The church of Scotland, decidedly inferior to our own establishment in the matter of a diocesan episcopacy, must yet be admitted to have the advantage in her *General Assembly*.

finitions, which we will borrow from the discourse of a leading dissenter.

“A schismatic *must* be a sinner, on which ever side he stands: a separatist *may* be “more sinned against than sinning.”

“For separation not being necessarily schism, it follows, that it is a thing to be judged of in each case according to its merits. It may appear under many forms. It may be faithless departure from the church of *Christ*, and then it is apostacy; or it may be factious departure from a *particular* church, and then we consent to call it schism; or it may be compelled departure *on account* of sin, and then it is excision and ignominy; or it may be unavoidable departure *from fear* of sin, and then it is virtue and praise. The circumstances connected with it, and the disposition and temper of the parties concerned, must determine in every case, whether separation be schism or not; and, if it be, whether the sin rests on one party, or on neither, or on both.”<sup>1</sup>

Admitting, generally, the truth of these statements, we will add a few further particulars.

A church may *apostatize*; may turn from the worship of God to the worship of idols; and may so interweave this idolatry with her whole system, as to render it impossible for the worshipper to keep himself clear of this great sin. This has been the case with the fallen church of Rome; and therefore it is that the people of God are distinctly commanded, in the last words of St. John, to “*come out of her, that they be not partakers of her sins, and that they receive not of her plagues.*”<sup>2</sup> She had publicly made to her-

<sup>1</sup> “*Dissent not Schism.*” By T. Binney, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> *Rev.* xxiii. 4.

self false gods; deifying numbers of dead men and women; ascribing to them the incommunicable attributes of Deity; omniscience, omnipresence, the hearing and answering of prayer. In such a case as this there can be no "schism." The church has apostatized;<sup>1</sup>—she has committed spiritual whoredom; and all who remain within her precincts do so at their own infinite peril, and can be saved, only "as by fire."

To come out of Babylon is not schism; for Babylon is not Jerusalem. But Jerusalem should dwell "*as a city which is at unity with itself.*" Where God is truly known, and worshipped; where His word is preached, and his sacraments duly administered, there "*the brethren should dwell together in unity.*" Is division, or separation, among Christians of one country, or one city, *ever* allowable; and if so, under what circumstances?

These are difficult questions, if proposed in the abstract. To declare, beforehand, or without reference to any known facts, that separation might sometimes be allowable; or peremptorily to decide the contrary, would partake somewhat of rashness. It will be better, perhaps, to touch upon the practical questions which have actually arisen, and which still continue to exist among us.

Let us begin with the lamentable occurrences of 1662.

It is impossible to acquit the leaders in the church of England at that time, of party, political, and selfish feelings, in that controversy. They had been themselves subjected to persecution, for nearly twenty

<sup>1</sup> "Nothing is apostacy, if idolatry be not."—*Bishop Newton on the Prophecies*, p. 402.



years ; they had been ejected from their benefices, driven into poverty and exile, and their places filled by others ; and now that power had again returned to them, they did not disguise their willingness to use it for purposes of retaliation. The existing laws, which, in many cases, would have sufficed, seemed to them too tardy in operation. A new and stringent test was devised, which should at once make a quick riddance of the puritans. The Act of Uniformity was meant so to operate ; and it did so operate. “When Lord Manchester told the king, while that measure was under debate, that he was afraid the terms of it were so rigid, that many of the ministers would not comply with it ; Sheldon replied, “I am *afraid* they will.” Nay, we are credibly informed he should say, “Now we know their minds, we’ll make them knaves, if they conform.”<sup>1</sup> Excited party spirit might justify this, as an expedient for weeding out of the church those, whom (it would be said) were no true churchmen ; but the event has proved, beyond all doubt, that the said weeding left the church almost a barren wilderness ; and injured the state in a degree beyond all calculation.

We lament, then, the result of the Act of Uniformity, whether intended or not ; and we shield not its authors from deserved reprobation. But all this does not amount to a justification of the conduct of those among the puritans, who proceeded to erect rival churches, and to set up opposing communions, and thus to establish and render permanent a state of schism and division, which has ever since yielded the strongest argument to the enemies of the Chris-

<sup>1</sup> *Calamy's Barter*, p. 170.

tian faith. No momentary pressure of opposing circumstances, however grievous, can justify an act in itself directly violating a divine command.

The church, collectively, may have acted with harshness and rigour; and certain persons in the church, with rancour and party spirit. But these are not the grounds on which a division or separation may be justified.

She may not be deserted, and a rival worship established, on any lighter grounds than actual, positive, palpable apostacy. And this, not the apostacy of this or that person *in* the church, but of the church *herself*, as speaking by her standards and formularies. If she continues to worship the Triune Jehovah; to preach the word of life, both from pulpit and desk; and to administer the sacraments without any distinct departure from Christ's institution therein,—she is not to be condemned for the misconduct of certain of her children, nor may we depart from her communion without manifest danger.

But a subscription was demanded, by the Act of Uniformity, from all persons holding, or intending to hold, preferment within her pale. Granted: and let us admit also, that this was a harsh and indefensible proceeding; at least in its *ex post facto* operation. But what was the penalty? It was not, as in the days of Mary, the stake or the dungeon. It was merely loss of the benefice; a severe infliction no doubt, but a very natural one, had the circumstances been otherwise, and the test less stringent. For it must be conceded that a church ought to possess *some* kind of “uniformity;” and ought to enforce it upon all those who minister in her name.

To be silenced, then, and to lose their benefices,

might be hard ; but such inflictions could yield no justification for the act of commencing a new sect. So long as schisms and divisions were clearly deprecated and forbidden in scripture, so long it would need some far higher and stronger reason than personal suffering, to justify any one in at once disregarding all those injunctions.

Nor are we now asserting "high church doctrines." Authorities of the first rank may be adduced in support of the principles we are asserting. Beza himself, "Zuingli-Calvinist" as he was, entirely concurs in this opinion. At the first appearance of dissent in England, about the year 1567, this great man, who was then at the head of the Genevan church, was appealed to by the discontented in this country, concerning their duty in the predicament in which they were then placed. The ecclesiastical habits, and some other things, they greatly disliked. "And what," said they, "is it fit that we should do, on whom these things are obtruded?"

Beza answers with a wise distinction, that "many things may, and ought to be borne, which nevertheless are not rightly commanded." "Therefore," he continues, "we answer, that although those things in our judgment are not rightly brought back into the church again; yet, since they are not of the nature of those things which are wicked in themselves, we do not think them of so great moment, that therefore, either the pastors should leave their ministry, or that the flocks should omit the public food." "Those things which they cannot change, *let them bear*, rather than for this cause forsaking the churches, by greater and more dangerous evils, to yield an occasion to Satan, who seeks nothing else."

And, finally, he adds, "we exhort, therefore, and humbly beseech with tears, our right good brethren of the English churches, that all bitterness of mind being laid aside, *the truth of doctrine remaining safe*, and conscience safe, men patiently bear with one another; heartily obey the Queen's majesty, and all their bishops; and constantly resist Satan, who seeketh all occasion of tumults and infinite calamities; men's minds agreeing together in the Lord, though they are not of the same opinion in other things."<sup>1</sup>

Beza, then, counsels submission as far as possible; and earnestly deprecates divisions and strifes. But he ventures not to recommend subscription to things deemed unlawful; and here is the chief ground of regret, in the proceedings of the leading churchmen of those days. They sometimes demanded *positive assent and consent*, when submission was all that could be yielded. They thus drove many out of the pale of the church, and greatly weakened their own array. But even this stretch of power formed no justification for open division, while "the truth of doctrine" remained in the church, and the dispute concerned non-essentials only.

Nor was this advice of Beza's lost upon the early Puritans. It is expressly recorded of many of the most eminent among them, that, submitting to deprivation, poverty, and disgrace, they were kept from falling into schism. Of Greenham we are told, that "He was a special instrument and means under God to encourage and train up many godly and learned young men in the holy service of Christ, in the work of the ministry: and to restrain, and reduce not a

<sup>1</sup> *Strype's Life of Grindal*, App. b. i. 16.

few from errors and schism, striving by all means to retain them in *obedience to the laws of the land*, and to provoke them, *highly to prize, and precious to esteem, the peace of the church, and people of God.*"<sup>1</sup> Of Bradshaw, that, "to *separation* he was ever very adverse, and to withdrawing from the publick places of assembly, or *from any part of God's worship there used.*" In a sermon preached at Longford, he said, "It is the great mercy of God towards us, that we have no cause to seek the word in deserts and wildernesses, in woods and caves and desolate mountains, but such worthy edifices as these to assemble in, dedicated only to this use. And where God's people have by public authority such places as these appointed and allowed ordinarily to assemble and meet in, we are fowly at least to *suspect those assemblies, and the worship done therein, which forsake those places*, and fly into woods and deserts. It is true, that among the Jews at this time, there was the temple, and besides synagogues answering to these churches of ours; and which is more, the doors of the pulpits were generally open to Christ himself; and yet our Saviour often taught in other places; but this was upon extraordinary occasions, such as seldom or never fall out with us; and so carried by our Saviour, *that there was no schism or separation made by him, or any of his special disciples or followers, from the assemblies then ESTABLISHED.*"<sup>2</sup> Of Ball, that "He called the ways of separation a labyrinth, wherein men tire themselves and grow giddy, as in a maze; but when all is done, there is no way out, but that whereby they entered." "He much lamented

<sup>1</sup> Clarke's *Lives of English Divines*, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 73.

in his prayers before God, the first breaking out of Independency in England, both in respect of the present offence, and the woeful consequences thereof, whereof he was much afraid: yea, he did very often tell his friends, (both in the time of his health and last sickness) that if God should give opportunity and hopes of church reformation, that we might be eased of our present grievances, the Brethren of the new Separation, would be found to be the greatest obstructors thereof.”<sup>1</sup> And of Herring, that he said, “It is a sin of a high nature, to unchurch a nation at once, and *that this would become the spring of many other fearful errors*; for separation will eat like a gangrene into the heart of godliness. And he did pray, that they who would unchurch others, might not be un-Christianed themselves.” And “because his suspension from preaching was a burthen to his active spirit, and he espied no ground of hope that he should ever be suffered by the prelates to enjoy his much-desired liberty in England any more, and when every door was barred, and no hope left to enjoy his public liberty, he left the land of his nativity, and on a clear call went into the Netherlands.”<sup>2</sup>

A century later, too, than Beza’s days, the greatest divines of the foreign churches, although not episcopalians themselves, still adhered to the same views of the paramount duty of Unity. Claude, Le Angle, and Le Moyn, being consulted on the subject of the divisions in England, all concurred in deprecating disunion. Claude writes as follows,—

<sup>1</sup> *Clarke’s Lives of English Divines*, p. 178.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 191, 195. For these and other passages, see *Rev. H. Budd on Baptism*, App. p. 506, 511.

“We do not believe that a single difference of government and discipline, nor even a difference of ceremonies, innocent in their own nature, is a sufficient occasion to break the sacred bond of communion.”

“I could wish with all my soul, that those that are gone so far, as to break the external bonds and mutual dependence of your flocks, would consider well whether what they pretend to do be not directly contrary to the spirit of Christianity, which is a spirit of union, and not of division.”

“When St. Paul forbid us to forsake the assembling together, he did not only condemn those that staid at home, but those too, without doubt, that held other assemblies in opposition to the public ones. For this is to break the bond of Christian charity, which does not only join us with *some* of our brethren, but with *all*; to receive from them, and to yield to them, edification, by living together in the same communion.”

“The question is not about the *esse*, or the *bene esse*, but only about the *melius esse*; and this being so, justice, charity, and the love of peace, will never allow of division.”<sup>1</sup>

This view of the subject appears to us to be the true and scriptural one. If that which was the church, in any country, has fallen away from the faith; has become idolatrous and apostate; and affords neither “the pure preaching of the word, nor the administration of the sacraments,” then the path of duty is clear. The sincere Christian *must* worship God; must confess him before men. He cannot join in idolatrous ser-

<sup>1</sup> See Bp. Stillingfleet's *Unreasonableness of Separation*, p. 403—447.

vices, he must, therefore, separate himself, and erect an altar<sup>1</sup> to God, the God of his salvation. This is not schism, inasmuch as the worship from which he withdraws, is in itself sinful, and such as he is bound to protest against.

But, if this debasement and perversion cannot be alleged; if the visible church existing in any place, be not idolatrous and apostate; if the worship of the true God be really found in it, with the preaching of His word and the right administration of His sacraments, then separation and division is not allowable: no sufficient ground exists for it: it is sinful.

Things not *essential*, and respecting which good men of all ages have differed, and will continue to differ, may not be alleged, as affording a sufficient justification for schism. The use of forms of prayer; of certain garments; or of divers customs which all may not approve,—none of these things ought to be held sufficient to justify so grave and serious a thing as *separation*.

The form of church-government is no sufficient ground. This follows from archbishop Bramhall's distinction; quoted in a former chapter. "If episcopacy be of divine right, it doth not follow from thence, that there is no salvation without it, or that a church cannot consist without it. He is blind that does not see churches existing without it; he is hard-hearted who denieth them salvation."

"This mistake proceedeth from not distinguishing between the *true nature and essence* of a church, which

<sup>1</sup> We know not that the figurative use of the term "altar" ought to be given up, merely because it is by some abused. We do not here mean a communion-table.



we do readily grant them, and the integrity or *perfection* of a church, which we cannot grant them.”<sup>1</sup>

Consequently, as Union is a clear and unquestionable duty; while this or that form of church-government is a non-essential (however high among non-essentials it may rank), it follows that the duty of a Christian, going to reside in Holland or in Germany, would be, to join himself to the visible church of the country, whether Lutheran, Zuinglian, Presbyterian, or Episcopal,—provided always that such community had the marks of a true church, the preaching of the pure word of God, and the right administration of the sacraments;—rather than to any sect or party, which had erected a rival communion.

And now we turn to the English dissenters; and say to them, How does this view of the case affect you? We admit, that your forefathers were harshly and unjustly dealt with, in 1662. We do not justify the party zeal and revengeful severity, with which that measure was framed and carried into execution. But we do not admit, that these faults in that particular enactment, and in the persons who were its authors,—removed the church of England from its position as a true church, or released the puritans from their obligation to preserve Unity. A parent may be severe and unjust to some of his children, and partial and capricious in his general conduct. But this misbehaviour on his part does not cancel the filial duties of his offspring. Obedience is still due, even to his arbitrary and unjust decisions, until they actually and clearly interfere with the divine laws. The sounder spirits among the Puritans felt this,

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Pusey's Letter*, p. 168.

and countenanced submission, though they could not cordially acquiesce. Had this been the general rule, far happier would have been the state of England at the present day.

Now you, the existing race of dissenters, are maintaining and perpetuating this original error. Many of your number, doubtless, err from ignorance or thoughtlessness. But there are those among you, who perfectly understand the question; and to them we may address the warning, "*Cease to do evil, learn to do well.*" Division is an unquestionable evil; sufficient ground to justify your separation there is none: beware, then, how the present weakness of the visible church, and the scoffs and triumphs of the infidel, are justly laid to your charge.

We claim not, for the churches of these lands, any superhuman perfection or freedom from error. We accept your own statement, as nearly approaching the truth. "In the word of God, there is more of episcopacy than is quite palatable to the presbyterian and the independent; there is more of presbyterianism than the independent and the episcopalian can easily digest; and there is more of congregationalism than either the priest or the presbyter can manage to get rid of."<sup>1</sup> Such is the statement of a leading dissenter; and although we cannot admit the justice of placing these three forms almost on a footing, as if equally apparent in scripture; *which is not the case*;—yet we can turn to our own Cecil, for a very similar sentiment: "Truth must never bow to fashion or prejudice; but her garb may be varied. \* \* \* She is somewhat different from the picture which the

<sup>1</sup> *Dissent not Schism: by T. Binney*, p. 60.

Churchman draws of her. The Dissenter misses her perfect figure. A Frenchman distorts her features in one way, and an Englishman in another. Every one makes his own cast and colour too essential to her.”<sup>1</sup>

In fact, not the highest advocate of episcopacy can go so far as to contend, that the existing system of our own establishment,—which leaves the nomination of bishops practically in the hands of a prime minister, such as a Duke of Grafton at one time, or a Lord Melbourne at another;<sup>2</sup> and which places the prelates so made, not merely at the head of, or over the presbyters, but absolutely in another sphere,—no one will allege, that this is the episcopacy of the primitive church.

But, admitting all this,—conceding the existence of much human infirmity and error, we still may boldly and unhesitatingly contend, that the church of England is, in the main, a pure and faithful church, “holding forth the word of life;” preaching the word of God, and rightly administering the sacraments. And we cannot admit that trivial differences, concerning forms, and rites, and internal regulations, (none of which affect any vital doctrine,) can constitute any valid defence for those, who rend the body of Christ, weaken the church by strifes and divisions, and “give great occasion to the enemies of God to blaspheme.”

We must utterly deny, then, that any valid ground of separation exists; which may justify a dissenter in remaining in a state of alienation from the church. The *degree* of guilt attaching to such alienation we

<sup>1</sup> *Cecil's Remains*, 12mo. p. 203.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Froude calls this “the real seat of the disorder of the church.”—*Remains*, vol. i. p. 370.

shall not attempt to define ; but of its *reality* we can entertain no doubt. The church not being apostate ; not having violated her allegiance, ought to be the home and rallying point of all true Christians. That she is not so ; that the seamless robe is rent, must, in the first and principal place, be imputed to those who have made, and still perpetuate, schismatical divisions among the disciples.

Let us not, however, for a moment refuse to take to the church's share, all the blame which may justly attach to the ruling party, on the score of harsh demands, and enactments provoking separation. Touching the past, we have already admitted and lamented, the party spirit shewn in the Restoration-days. This, however, chiefly concerns the past. Much of that controversy has now gone to sleep, and modern dissenters grieve little about gowns, or anthems, or other externals. The chief cause of disunion which it is in the power of the church to remove, consists in a few dubious and disputable phrases in one or two of her services. A word or two in her baptismal service, a phrase in her visitation of the sick, and another in her burial of the dead, are the chief stumbling-blocks with thousands. "Let me remove twenty words from the Prayer-Book," said one of the best of modern bishops, "and in one day I will re-unite to the church *twenty thousand* dissenters!" If this be so—and the fact is at least probable—why have we not more of that spirit which led an apostle to exclaim, "*If meat lead my brother to offend, I will eat no meat while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend?*"

There is, however, another erroneous principle, more widely diffused than that of SCHISM, inasmuch

as it infects not only some of the more lax among professing Christians, but almost the entire mass of those who neglect or lightly regard all religion. We allude, of course, to that offspring of modern infidelity, **LATITUDINARIANISM.**

The most common form in which this error is now presented to view, is that of an exaggerated estimation of what is called "private judgment." We very frequently find, especially in the journals of the "liberal" school, an exaltation of what is termed "the great Protestant principle of the right of private judgment;" to such an extent, as to make it evident, that in the writer's view, the assertion of this principle constituted the entire value and importance of the Reformation. Not the slightest concern is evinced, as to the revival of this or that scriptural doctrine by the Reformers; in fact, it is frequently asserted that we have no right to assume one doctrine to be better than another. The only point possessing the least value in their eyes, seems to be, that *then*, according to their view, the "bigotted" assertion of one set of doctrines, as "infallible," was put down; and the liberty of every one established, to read the Bible for himself, and to deduce any meaning he chose from its pages! The putting down of that "infallibility" previously claimed, is described by them as the chief subject of their delight; but a little closer scrutiny shews us that it is not only the human assumption which they rejoice to throw off, but the divine authority also. The certainty and the obligation of the words of holy writ, is as much repudiated by them, as the authority of fathers and of councils. "*License* they mean, when they cry liberty," and the "bigotry" against which they con-

stantly rail, is the bigotry displayed in the words of Him, who was "full of grace and truth," and who yet declared that "*he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved ; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*" Mark xvi. 16.

Against all such declarations as these, the disciples of "liberalism" rage and fume. To say that the worship of dead men and women is idolatry, is declared to be "disgusting bigotry ;" to question the Christianity or the safety of those who pronounce the Lord Jesus Christ to be nothing more than a creature, is "arrogant intolerance ;" and to deny the right, morally and religiously, of men to set up as many forms and fashions of worship in a country as their fancies may suggest, is "an audacious interference with the rights of conscience." If it were necessary, we might fill a volume with specimens of this sort of language ; but those who know any thing of the daily and weekly press in general, and, we may add, of the common language of some of our legislators, will be fully aware that this is their daily, their constant mode of treating these subjects.

We have already said, that this kind of spirit has been too much fostered by dissenting writers. One of the most eminent of them in our days (Mr. James) thus instructs his readers :—

"The doctrines you believe, the duties you perform, the ceremonies you observe, the form of church government you adopt, must all be drawn pure from the Bible, and drawn thence *by yourself.*" "The denomination in the religious world with which you connect yourself, and the minister to whom you entrust your soul's affairs, are to be chosen *by yourself.* No man has either a moral or a legal right to claim

to be your religious instructor without *your own consent.*"

Now this sort of language is neither consistent with scripture nor with fact. The writer in question could not be ignorant that this "choosing for himself" recommended to his reader, was an entirely fictitious and imaginary thing.

No one drops down from the skies, a full-formed man, into a state heretofore unknown; and amidst which he is to "choose" his place. In a great degree every one's "choice" is virtually made for him, in the sentiments and principles, and frequently the prejudices also, which are instilled into his mind, long before he is either morally or physically able to "make his choice."

The writer should have been content with the scripture rule; "*Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.*" Instead of making the inquirer's *own choice* the rule; he should have more emphatically exalted THE WORD OF GOD as the alone standard, to which all *his own* preferences and imaginings were to be subjected. To try every thing which had been already taught him in infancy, by this unerring rule; and to retain his hold on such only as could be supported by that authority,—such would have been the wisest and most faithful counsel; but this unscriptural exaltation of "private judgment" is pregnant with all kinds of evil. The real *fact* is, that, in this country at least, every man has the word of God offered to his hand, and proclaimed in his ears. By it must he be judged; and by its plain and simple declarations must he be either acquitted or condemned.

And on that dread inquest his lot will prove a fearful one, who, being deluded by the representations of

the tempter, as to the danger of trusting to his own "private judgment," has taken his faith from the words of man, rather than from the word of God; and not less perilous will be the position of those, who, being equally deceived by the opposite error, have made up a religion "for themselves," not from the simple and obvious sense of the Divine record, but from the imaginations of their own heart, plausibly concealed under this same destructive figment, of "private judgment," and "the right of every man to *expound scripture for himself.*"

Duty,—they will then learn, and learn with terror, if they learn it for the first time,—duty, and obligation, has rested on them, to read the word of God, and to obey it; and a consequent right was theirs, to read that word, unfettered, unaltered, every one for himself. But, in the presence of that word, no human being has any other right, or any other duty, than that of *submission*. Neither the collective judgment of the church, nor the private judgment of individuals, may vary, or alter, or abrogate, one word of *that*, which is the Christian's only, all-sufficient, and infallible RULE.



## XII.

THE WANTS OF THE CHURCH :  
ITS DEFICIENCIES, SHORT-COMINGS, AND NECESSITIES.

IN a series of essays concerning the church, it would savour neither of candour nor yet of discretion, were we to omit all mention of things requiring improvement. Faults or deficiencies of a serious or fundamental nature, affecting her intrinsic character, and furnishing grounds for withdrawal or alienation from her communion, we have not discovered, nor has any late writer of note or credit pointed out such blemishes. The dissenters of our day have almost entirely surrendered the ground taken by their forefathers. They take their stand, not upon garments, or organs, or even upon liturgies. Their one chief and almost sole ground of quarrel is, with *establishments* of all kinds, as such. Of that question we have already treated ; and shall not now return to it. We merely remark, in passing, that no serious or essential objection is at present urged by dissenters, to any extent justifying disunion, against the church as it now stands.

I. Yet that there are some things which few will

defend, is indisputable; and while we briefly allude to them, it is satisfactory to be able to add also, that in some points remedial measures are already in course of application. We may mention—

1. A cumbrous and almost unavailable system of discipline. That a clergyman should become an open transgressor of the moral law; a drunkard, or impure,—and that it should be impossible to remove such an one from his office, except by a long and most expensive suit at law; so that his bishop, in the discharge of a solemn duty, is put to a large expense in ridding the church of its disgrace,—is an obvious and a fearful evil.

2. That the sole power of nominating and appointing the whole episcopacy of England, should, practically, be left in the hands of a single layman, and he holding no position or place in the church whatever,—it not being necessary that he should even be a member of it, seems a monstrous anomaly. That,—as was the case in the last century,—a man who was a professed freethinker, and an open violator of the seventh commandment, should have it left to him to select and appoint the Primate of all England, and thence downwards, through the whole episcopal bench, is surely a thing, the continuance of which no one will advocate.

3. A new survey of parochial boundaries and revenues is greatly needed. It cannot be a part of the theory of the church, that a few people in a petty village should have a richly-endowed pastor to take charge of their spiritual interests; while a town containing many thousands should scarcely yield subsistence to its minister. Yet, in the lapse of years, discrepancies such as these have grown up in a great

number of places. Let us mention a few instances out of a multitude of cases.

In the town of Ipswich, which has a population of between 20,000 and 30,000 souls, there are *twelve* churches, served by *fifteen* clergymen. And these fifteen clergymen receive among them, as the whole subsistence provided by the church for themselves and their families, the sum of £1609! <sup>1</sup>

In the same diocese, Norwich, we observe a parish called Southacre, which has only 96 souls, and another, Warham, which has only 70; and the incumbents of these two parishes have, respectively, incomes of £572 and £500 per annum.

In the diocese of Ely, we perceive the great parish of Barnwell, a suburb of Cambridge, with 10,000 inhabitants, and an ecclesiastical income of £48 per annum. And in the same diocese we find the village of Newton, with 429 inhabitants, and an income of £1269; and the sinecure rectory of Elm, with *no duties* whatever annexed to it, and £1641 per annum.

In the diocese of Chester, we see towns and parishes like Colne and Chorlton, each with more than 25,000 inhabitants, and incomes of £186 the one, and £117 the other: and at the same time, Winwick, with 889 inhabitants, and an income of £3616 per annum!

We are not suggesting any violent interference with private property; but out of all the benefices in England, only 5096, or fewer than one-half, are in the hands of private individuals. The majority, then, belonging to the crown, or various public bodies, might easily be brought under a general scheme of annexation or re-distribution. As, for instance, the

<sup>1</sup> There is one parish not included in this calculation, from its having made no return.

archbishop of York possesses the patronage of these two livings :—

	Population.	Income.
Bolton Percy.....	993.....	£1540
Guisborough.....	2500.....	72

Can any valid reason be assigned, why the first of these livings should not spare £500 a year of its revenue, in order to render the second able to maintain a pastor for 2500 people? Of course, in all such changes, the rights of present occupants must be preserved inviolate.

We doubt not that some plans of this character are already forming. Indeed, after applying the principle of re-distribution to the highest order in the church, and descending from the prelates to the cathedral bodies, it would be both inconsistent, and a criminal instance of neglect, if the more extensive wants of the poor and over-peopled *parishes* were overlooked or disregarded.

And it is one among various reasons, why efficient measures should be quickly taken in this matter,—that the present state of the church, in which some few “sinecure rectories,” and small *parishes* richly endowed, are still found, forms a serious obstruction to that, which is the greatest external and visible want of the establishment and of the country,—to wit, CHURCH EXTENSION.

This last subject is now undergoing discussion in every quarter of the land ; and it will consequently be impossible for us to utter a word upon it, which has not already been repeated a hundred times. The facts upon which the claim is rested, and the unanswerable nature of the claim itself, must now be perfectly familiar to the public. That the state professes

to maintain a church establishment; that the very idea of an *establishment*, whether civil, military, or religious, involves the idea of commensurateness; and that the population of England has more than doubled itself, without any other national effort to meet this new want of instruction by a new supply, than the grants of £1,500,000, in 1818—25;—all these facts are now, we believe, thoroughly impressed on the minds of churchmen generally, and, except controverted,—which they cannot be,—they establish the clear obligation, and the urgent necessity, of immediate measures to render the church what it ought to be, and what, in theory, it necessarily professes to be.

II. But we must not dwell longer upon *externals*. The far higher subject, of the internal wants of the church, demands a more lengthened and careful consideration.

And here, not denying the existence of many smaller deficiencies, which might, perhaps, be profitably made the subject of remark; we must confess that our attention has latterly been so much drawn to one principal point, that we are scarcely able to look at minor subjects. The point to which we allude is, *the want of a higher, deeper, and more scriptural theology*, in the great majority of the pulpits of the established church.

There has been, it is sufficiently obvious, a prodigious change in the current theology of our clergy, since the beginning of the present century. Looking back scarcely beyond that period, we observe Mr. Simeon an object of almost universal contempt and abhorrence with the heads of the university of Cambridge, and Mr. Newton unable to reckon above

seven clergymen of similar sentiments to his own, in the whole metropolis. But after a lapse of forty years we find the former the object of universal honor, not in Cambridge only, but throughout England; and a new edition of his works announced, “dedicated, by *permission*, to the Archbishop of Canterbury:” while, instead of seven, it would probably be an easy task to find, at present, many more than *seventy* clergymen, who preach, as far as they are able, the same doctrines which Mr. Newton preached, in various pulpits in the metropolis.

And one natural result of this wide diffusion of Evangelical views is, that they are no longer looked upon as the strange, extravagant, and outrageous notions which they were formerly considered. Multitudes, consequently, who, half a century back, would have ranged themselves, without inquiry, in active opposition to the sect which was “every where spoken against,” now, finding themselves surrounded on all sides, by amiable and well-conducted “Evangelicals,” begin to tolerate, to examine, and perhaps even to approve.

The result of these changes is just what might naturally be looked for. Contumely and persecution generally constitute a better regimen for the parties immediately subjected to them, than popularity and general acceptance. It has been for the good of the community that the spiritual church has extended itself on every side; but the greater contact and admixture have acted injuriously upon the church itself. “The stream is now far *wider*, but it is much less *deep*.” There is much superficial profession; much superficial knowledge, and even much superficial belief. An elementary acquaintance with the lead-

ing doctrines of Christianity is widely diffused ; but many of those who have this outline knowledge, have not digested, even in the mind, what they know. And this superficiality, as it overspreads the whole professing church, so it is not absent from the ministers of that church. Indeed, a moment's reflection must satisfy us, that a deficiency of this kind, existing generally amongst the people, must arise in a great measure, from a similar deficiency on the part of their instructors. And, as we would not willingly impute to these, an intentional holding back of their message, we must conclude that any existing shortcoming in the popular theology of the day, must be traced, primarily, to a positive want on the part of those who are the people's instructors in theology.

But, in approaching closer to this subject, we feel a natural reluctance to appear to dogmatize on matters almost beyond our province. We shall endeavour, therefore, to throw our thoughts into the form of queries and suggestions ; premising, what, indeed, we trust would have been generally taken for granted, that what we say has not the least individual bearing upon any one ministration, or any particular district ; but arises out of as large a view as we have been able to take, within the course of several of the later years.

We ask, then, with a degree of doubt whether the question can be affirmatively answered,—Is there discernible, in the pulpits of the church generally, or even among those considered as the evangelical clergy particularly, what the apostle describes as a “RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH?”

1. Is the word of truth “rightly divided,” as to the *persons addressed*?

Experience abundantly proves the necessity and expediency of a close and scrutinizing application. The most effectual preaching has always been the most searching and dividing in its character. Such was that of Peter; (Acts ii. 36; iii. 13, 14.) such was that of Latimer and of Bradford; such was that of Whitfield and of Brainerd; and even in a distant country, and among Romish superstitions, we see the like blessed effects resulting from a close and discriminating method of applying the divine word, in the case of Martin Boos.<sup>1</sup>

But is such a discriminating application of the word of God,—such a “speaking *the truth* in love,” commonly found among us? Or do we not rather hear, in too many cases, a taking for granted that which the preacher knows to be not the case—that the great bulk of his hearers are real Christians—and a brief allusion, merely, to the unconverted, in a sentence or two at the close, often beginning,—“*If* there should be any one here, who has not yet attended to the things which belong to his everlasting peace,” &c.—the preacher *knowing*, all the while, that instead of there being any doubt as to such a fact, it is a matter of absolute *certainty*, that the *great majority* of those before him are unconverted persons?

But this shortcoming, this shrinking from a distasteful duty, which generally arises, we believe, from mere human weakness, sometimes partaking of amiability, sometimes of fear, sometimes of a short-

<sup>1</sup> It was from a sermon, in which he plainly declared, that, out of a population of 5000 persons, the number of true Christians in his parish was so small, that the vestry would contain them,—it was from a sermon distinguished by this faithfulness and plainness of speech, that a great awakening under his ministry took its rise.



sighted "prudence,"—is now not only defended, but even prescribed, as the only right course. It is a part of the new Oxford system, the essence of which is to substitute appearances for realities, and to know no other great division of mankind, than that of "baptized," or "unbaptized." The baptized are the regenerate, the unbaptized are the unregenerate. The baptized are "in the kingdom of heaven;" the unbaptized are not in that kingdom. And in conformity with this scheme, we find, in a pamphlet just issued with the endorsement of Dr. Pusey's approval, the following remark.

"The clergyman who adopts the views that we are here maintaining, and which our church sets before him in her Baptismal Service, addresses his hearers as all standing on the same footing, all being baptized Christians, and so regenerate, and grafted into Christ's church. He addresses them therefore as all entitled to the same privileges, all bound to the same duties, all involved in the same awful responsibility. The Evangelical Preacher, on the contrary, divides his hearers into two classes, as he well may according to his views—the converted and the unconverted; or, which is the same thing in his estimation, the regenerate and the unregenerate. The latter are addressed in the language used by the apostles of or to the Heathen; the former, as Christians, are exhorted to live up to their privileges, and to show forth their thankfulness for the mercies bestowed upon them by a consistent walk and conversation. But how each hearer is to know in which class to rank himself, I have never yet heard at all clearly explained." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Letter to Dr. Pusey, by T. P. Platt, Esq.* p. 31.

Our objection to the mode of address here preferred, is, that it is equally opposed to scripture, and to truth and fact.

It is opposed to scripture. In every part of the preaching of our Lord and his disciples, we observe the greatest care taken to divide and discriminate between the real and the false professor.

In our Lord's very first sermon, he takes especial care to discriminate,—not between the professed members of his church and those who are “without,”—but speaking only to the *circumcised*,—addressing only those who were already within the visible church,—he draws the line between true and false professors.

“*I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.*” Matt. v. 20.

“*Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it.*” Matt. vii. 13, 14.

“*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*” (ver. 21—23.)

And to the same effect does he speak, in Matt. xv. 8, 9; xxiii. 25—28. And what is the obvious intent of the parable of the pharisee and the publican, (Luke xviii. 10—14,) but to inculcate discrimi-

nation between the formalist and the true penitent ; both of whom, however, are represented as “ going up to the temple to pray.”

A similar tone, also, is perceptible in the writings of all the apostles. As, for instance, in 1 *Cor.* x. 1—6. 2 *Cor.* xii. 20, 21 ; xiii. 5. *Gal.* iii. 1. *Phil.* iii. 18, 19. *Heb.* iv. 1, 2. *James* ii. 19, 20. 2 *Peter* i. 10. 1 *John* i. 6 ; ii. 19. *Jude* 3, 4.

And yet it is abundantly evident, that neither our Lord nor his apostles were in circumstances so clearly calling for a discriminating tone of preaching, as those in which we live. The first declaration of the gospel was made to a whole nation sunken in formal Judaism. The after instructions of the apostles, as we have them in their epistles, were given to select bodies of believers, gathered out of the Jews and heathen, and whose *general* earnestness and sincerity was manifested by the fact of their embracing a persecuted and universally-contemned faith. Far, very far more, then, does the present state of the visible church, abounding, as it does, with mere external profession, call for a discriminating tone of pulpit ministration. And the opposite course, as now recommended, is not more contrary to scripture than it is to the dictates of experience, and the necessary deductions from notorious fact.

Mr. Platt's orthodox preacher should, he thinks, “ address his hearers as *all standing on the same footing*, all being baptized Christians, and so regenerate and grafted into Christ's church.” The evangelical preacher, whom he condemns, takes an opposite course, and “ divides his hearers into two classes,—*the converted and the unconverted.*” And in so doing, according to Mr. Platt's view, he greatly errs.

But which of these two could most simply and most faithfully expound the last two verses of the 2nd chapter of Romans, without compromising his own system?—“*For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God?*”

Or which can adjust his plan most suitably, to the actual state of things around him? We are not condemning a frequent appeal to the baptismal pledge; or a perpetual remembrance of “what a solemn vow, promise, and profession was there made.” This is as suitable under one system as under the other. Mr. Platt’s main objection is, to the division of the hearers into two classes,—“the converted and the unconverted.” In other words, his repugnance is, to a plain and faithful declaration of the actual fact; to a simple exhibition of their real standing and condition.

For, if the Lord himself were to descend into any one of our worshipping assemblies,—and the day will surely come, when he will so appear,—into how many classes would the hearers be immediately resolved? They would not remain “all on the same footing” then. Into two classes—“the converted and the unconverted”—would they instantly divide themselves. “*He shall put the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on his left.*” Nor will the latter be the unbaptized, or the outwardly reprobate merely. “*Many shall say in that day, Lord, have we not cast out devils in thy name, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And he shall say unto them, I*

*never knew you ; depart from me, ye workers of iniquity."*

"But how each hearer is to know in which class to rank himself," says Mr. Platt, "I have never yet heard at all clearly explained."

If there be any substantial difficulty on this point, how could the apostle, in instructing his own converts, all being baptized persons, say to them "*Examine yourselves, WHETHER ye be in the faith ; prove your own selves?*" 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

But, to recur to the most obvious facts;—let us ask, How many, in an ordinary congregation of one thousand persons, are usually found to attend the Lord's table? In most cases, not more than an hundred? in more favorable, perhaps an hundred and fifty, or even two hundred.

Now, is there not here an open and indubitable distinction? Granting that a few, a very few cases may be found,—and with these the minister can generally make himself acquainted,—of such as have a desire to come, but are deterred by doubts and fears,—still, the great majority remain at a distance, simply because they feel no care or interest about the matter. And are these to be addressed in the same language as the humble and penitent Christian? Do all the consolations of our Lord's last conversation with his disciples, just before his passion,—all the rich anticipations which abound in the apostolic epistles, do all these belong *equally* to the earnest follower after true holiness, and to the utterly careless and unbelieving? Can such a scheme as this bear even a moment's consideration? Surely not!

But this is not all. The division between those who make some outward profession of an interest in

Christ's death, and those who will not even do this, is an obvious one, and at once removes into "the outer court," a vast majority of the apparent worshippers. But of the remaining fifth or tenth of the whole, how many more must be sifted off, when the pastor brings his personal acquaintance into the scrutiny!

*These*, he will say, come from mere custom, and will be found the next night in the theatre, or at the gaming-table; *those*, because it is a part of their religion, and they expect the act to be put down to their credit in heaven's reckoning. Censoriousness being kept down, and charity stretched to its utmost limits, how small a portion will remain at last, to be reckoned as sincere, humble, earnest followers after holiness!

Now to mass together the whole body of external worshippers, is just what the insincere would most desire. If the preacher will but do this, he may do almost any thing else that he likes. Their universal voice is, and always has been, from the days of Noah to the present moment,—"*Prophesy not unto us right things; speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits.*" (Isaiah xxx. 10.) And in almost every case will it be found, that dry abstract propositions; or mere correct statements of theology; even when carried into the heights and depths of the loftiest and profoundest doctrines, may pass, at least, in these days, without awakening much enmity or opposition; so long as no "rightly dividing the word of truth," is attempted;—so long as the congregation, generally, is addressed as a body of true Christians; and warnings and exhortations are confined to some supposed reprobate who may happen to be present. <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Most assuredly," (remarks Mr. Scott) "this *undistinguishing*

When we see, then, so wide a diffusion of those very doctrines, which, a few years since, in the mouths of Simeon, and Scott, and Newton, and Romaine, were an abomination to the great body of the clergy; and when we see, also, that while the persecution has ceased, the vivifying effects of those doctrines have apparently greatly declined, we must seek for a cause, which has tended equally to allay the bitterness of persecution, and to reduce the efficiency of the ministration. And may not both these changes, we would ask, be alike attributed to the less discriminating tone of modern preaching; to a prevalent deficiency in that sort of "rightly dividing the word of truth," which "gives to every one his portion in due season"?

But we must proceed to another part of our subject, intimately, and, in fact, indissolubly connected with that we have just been considering,—and ask,

2. Is there *a right dividing of the word of truth*, as to the DOCTRINES taught, and their personal and seasonable application?

The "faithful and wise steward" is described as giving to every man his portion "*in due season.*" This is sufficient to warn us, that even truth may be misapplied, by being administered *out of season*; or at a moment, when another portion, another exhibition of truth, would have been more justly applicable. The same lesson is taught to us in another

way of preaching is "casting that which is holy unto the dogs;" and, I am deeply convinced, is one of the worst mistakes that a preacher can fall into; tending most directly to stupify the consciences, and harden the hearts of the ungodly; and to "strengthen their hands, that they should not return from their evil way;" and, in proportion, discouraging the heart of the humble, broken, contrite believer."—See also *Rev. C. Bridges on the Christian Ministry*, p. 276—280.

place, under the figures of milk and strong meat;—the first, as fit for babes, the second, for “them that are of full age.”

A more detailed illustration may be drawn from the practice of the physician. The whole human race is diseased; full of a spiritual sickness which is mortal. Let us consider, then, how he who aims to cure our bodily diseases, proceeds in the application of his various remedies.

Take the case of an ordinary fever. In the first place, the physician's aim is to expel the disease. He uses depletives and sudorific medicines. If he succeeds, the fever leaves the patient, weakness and exhaustion succeed the febrile action; and now the physician's course is entirely changed. Restoratives and tonic medicines are required; and by their aid the patient gradually regains his usual health.

But were the *same* medicines used in any other order, the result would be fatal to the patient. Tonics and cordials administered while the fever was raging, would be merely so much poison. And equally clear is it, that if the depletion were carried beyond the proper point, and were persevered in after the fever had been subdued, this, too, would work the death of the sufferer. Up to a certain period it was indispensable; beyond that, it would work destruction, not a cure.

Just so, too, of a wound, attended with inflammatory symptoms. To reduce the inflammation, it is necessary, not to heal the wound, but to keep it open, and promote a discharge. After a while, if this course succeeds, a change is required; the discharge may now be stopped, and the wound closed up and healed. To heal it up, while the inflammation con-



tinued, would be fatal. To keep it open, and continue the discharge, after the inflammation had ceased, would destroy the patient in another way.

The application of this subject to spiritual things, is, perhaps, sufficiently obvious. All men, in their natural state, labour under a mortal disease, and so much the more desperate is their condition, in that they are wholly unconscious of it. The first step towards a cure is to learn their real condition; to discern "every man the plague of his own heart;" to perceive the nature and extent of the malady; in order that the remedy may be received and applied. This "opening of the blind eyes, and unstopping the deaf ears," is the office, under the operation of the Holy Spirit, of the law of God. "*By the law is the knowledge of sin.*" "*I was alive,*" in idea, "*without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.*" He was in a state of fancied health and security, until the sight of the holy law of God, in all its extent and spirituality, shewed him his real state, as "*dead in trespasses and sins.*"

This divine medicine having done its work, under the powerful influence of the blessed Spirit, the soul is now prepared for, and greatly needs, the appointed restorative, the quickener, the enliverer from the dead, the Gospel. When the man has been filled with horror and self-loathing, in a view of the holiness of God and his own vileness, and has been forced to cry out, "*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*" he is then in a fit temper of mind to receive and value the glad tidings, that "*Christ hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light by the gospel.*"

And then, having been made to know something of a true repentance, and of a living faith in the one atonement, he is taught the third lesson, which is, "*That ye put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*" "*Ye were sometime in darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light.*" "*If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*"<sup>1</sup>

Now these three great branches of the preaching of the doctrine of Christ, are as distinct, and as separate, one from the other, as the different medicines, which the physician of the body employs in the various stages of a disorder. And their misapplication, or their use in a wrong order, is as ruinous, and as contrary to the divine will, as the reversal of the right application of the remedies for bodily disorders.

The physician, who should administer tonics to a patient in a high fever, or depletives to one already sinking under exhaustion, would be adjudged by the well-informed bystander to be chargeable with the patient's death. But is it less ruinous or deplorable, to preach either the strong consolations of the gospel, or the apostolic exhortations to good works, to men "*dead in trespasses and sins,*" who have neither the least token of spiritual life, nor the least desire for it? We say, *the apostolic injunctions to good works*, meaning thereby *those* injunctions, which the inspired writers address to Christians, *as such*. "*These things I will, that thou affirm constantly, that*

<sup>1</sup> *Ephes. iv. 22; v. 8. 2 Cor. v. 17:*

*they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works.*" (Titus iii. 8.) "*If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above.*" (Col. iii. 1.) "*I beseech you, that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,*" (Ephes. iv. 1.) and in a multitude of other places, in which the apostles urge the motives of the gospel upon those who can appreciate them. To others, good works must be preached as their duty, their obligation, but with a special view—not to produce good fruit from a corrupt tree,—but to make them feel their need of a vital union to the "true vine;" from which union alone any real fruit can spring. (John xv. 4.)

It has been sometimes alleged of a few preachers, supposed to hold high Calvinistic doctrines, that "they preached only to the elect." We believe that there have been some who have openly declared such to be their plan and system. But the thought has frequently occurred,—Is there not a great deal more of this "preaching only to the elect" than is generally imagined?

Those who eschew Calvinism *in toto*, are yet of necessity aware that there are such persons as "the elect" mentioned in Scripture. If asked to describe them, they would probably point out those "*who keep mercy and judgment, and wait on God continually.*" (Hos. xii. 6.) And they would say that so long as such persons persevere in such a course, they are to be considered "the elect," and no longer.

Now it will be generally admitted that on those who have been "*saved, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost,*" it is a part of the Christian minister's duty to urge the performance of good works. "*Herein is my Father glorified, that ye*

*bear much fruit ; so shall ye be my disciples.*" (John xv. 8.)

But equally clear is it, that until awakened by divine grace, and called out of his original state of spiritual death, all exhortations to Christian obedience are lost upon the sinner. "*The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him ; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*" (1 Cor. ii. 14.) Exhortations to "*walk as children of the light,*" can only be consistently addressed to those who have *become* "*children of the light.*"

The holy law of God, as ever obligatory, may and should at all times be pressed upon the conscience ; but it should be so pressed upon the unrenewed, for the purpose of *conviction* ; not in the vain hope that the unconverted sinner either will or can yield a true and hearty obedience to it. The righteousness of the law ; its excellence ; its benevolence ; its perfect fitness, should be brought home to the sinner's conscience, and contrasted with the obliquity, the deceitfulness, the impurity, the wickedness of his own heart, in order that he may fully perceive the entire truth of the Saviour's declaration, "*Ye must be born again.*"

Is it not clear, then, that if the general subject of any one's preaching, is sanctification, or Christian obedience, he is open to the charge of "*preaching only to the elect.*" For it is to the elect only that the subject belongs. Moral obligation, indeed, attaches to all, but obligation cannot confer power.

Let us, then, ask, What is the usual strain of preaching, among the more earnest, sincere, and devout of the clergy of the present day ?

Is the law of God constantly and explicitly set forth to the people, for the express purpose of convincing them of sin? Is its height and depth, its extent and spirituality, its majesty and beauty, frequently and largely dwelt upon, with the express view of bringing the people to Job's confession—“ *I have heard of thee with the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee ; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes* ” ?

Or is the gospel, in its length and breadth, its freedom and fulness, its wondrous suitableness to the desperate case of lost and ruined sinners, frequently and fully brought before them? Is “ the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world,” constantly held up to view ; not vaguely and indefinitely, as the Saviour of all men, but as Life from the dead to all “ who *look* unto him,” the Saviour of all who *believe* ?

Or may we not rather fear, that, avoiding these great and *ever*-necessary topics, the ordinary subjects of the pulpit ministrations, even among many of the most earnest and faithful of the clergy, are selected from what Hannah More calls “ Christian Morals,” and “ Practical Piety ;” and concern rather the various features and characteristics of the believer's walk, than the rescue of the surrounding thousands from “ the broad road that leadeth to destruction ?”

Now we readily admit that these topics are legitimate, fit for pulpit use, and capable of being handled in such a manner as to open the whole message of a Christian minister. But the practice of going beyond, or away from, the subject in hand, is happily falling into disuse ; and we therefore cannot but believe, that, generally speaking, when a clergyman takes a text

which concerns chiefly the believer's walk and conversation, he will devote the greater part of his sermon to the case and circumstances of believers. But, meanwhile, what is doing for the bulk of the congregation? Nine out of every ten, probably, require awakening, before they can even understand, with the heart, the exhortations of the preacher. But what is doing to arrest their attention;—to force them to reflect;—to place “righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come” before their eyes, and thus to cause them to tremble, and to cry out, “What must we do to be saved”? Was there more than a passing observation,—a brief sentence of inquiry? We fear not. But does this style of preaching agree with the example of Him, who “*left the ninety and nine sheep in the wilderness, and went after that which was lost*”?

If there be an error in this system of preaching,—a conclusion which we rather inquiringly suggest, than dogmatically assert,—it is not difficult to surmise whence it has arisen. Those whose duty it is to teach others, refer both naturally and correctly, to that book which is given to teach themselves. And they find the apostolic exhortations, as recorded in the epistles, chiefly running in two strains, Christian privilege, and Christian practice; both, however, flowing from Christian doctrine. Accordingly, reading the epistles, and forming their pulpit addresses upon them, those who adopt the Calvinistic scheme preach the higher doctrines of the gospel;—and those who lean to the Arminian theory principally insist on Christian duties. Neither class dwells much upon the law, for conviction of sin;—for in most of the apostolic epistles this is not a prominent feature.

But is not a very important distinction overlooked

here,—between the persons addressed by the apostles; and those addressed by the Christian ministers of the present day? Were not the primitive times, times of persecution; when those who professed the Christian faith, did it at the risk of their lives? And are not the present days, among us, days in which such a profession is rather fashionable and respectable than otherwise? And is it not one inevitable consequence of this change, to bring into the pale of the visible church, myriads, who, in the primitive times, would have kept out of it? Is it not, therefore, a fact, as far as we can judge, that the Christian churches, in the apostolic days, were churches chiefly or at least extensively consisting of real Christians; while the nominally Christian churches of our days, consist chiefly of those who are *not* real Christians? Surely, then, so vast a change in the character of the persons addressed, should teach us the necessity of some difference in the mode of addressing them. For instruction, surely, as to the topics to be brought before *such* assemblies as now come before a preacher of the gospel, we ought rather to consult the *sermons* of our Lord and his apostles, than the epistles sent to their attached and sincere disciples.

It has often occurred to us, that if a preacher could but, in spirit, prepare his sermons *in the pulpit*, instead of *for it*; if it were possible for him to bring all of his congregation in imagination before him,—to weigh the individual character and disposition of each, and *thus* to form a tolerably accurate idea of the prevalent bias and disposition of the aggregate body, so as to frame his addresses with fitness and just application to their actual condition,—we have often thought that if sermons, instead of being made from books,—

the congregation out of sight,—were made from the heart, to a congregation actually present,—we should find a great alteration in their ordinary tenor and bearing. Or, to make another supposition,—let us imagine a congregation, divided into sections, for cottage or domiciliary lectures from their pastor, and let these classes be of the average composition, of *one* of whom the pastor entertains hopes, and nine others, who are “walking after the fashion of this world,” and “fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.” Would any minister of ordinary judgment, address such a meeting in the language commonly used by the apostles to their sincere disciples? Would he, if an Arminian, insist upon practical duties, and exhort them to “*be stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as their labour was not in vain in the Lord?*” or, if a Calvinist, would he insist on Christian privilege, and say, “*Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God?*” Would he not rather feel such texts as John i. 10; iii. 5, 18, 19, 36; x. 27; xii. 48. Rom. i. 20, 21, 32; ii. 4, 5, 15, 24; iii. 19; vi. 21, 22, 23; and the very many others of similar tenor with which the scriptures abound, to be more suitable to the condition of his hearers. But if so, how is the case changed by the multiplication of his audience, the general character remaining the same,—there being but a “few” who are treading the narrow way, but “many” who are unquestionably passing down the broad road which leadeth to destruction?

In pressing this point we are far from urging anything *new*: on the contrary, we are but counselling a return to the oldest and soundest precedents. Our inquiry is, Why the preaching of the present day



seems to prove less effectual than that of other times? and the most obvious reply seems to be, Because it has suffered a change of character, which must of necessity lead to a change of results.

The grand feature of the preaching of the New Testament is, that it is a preaching of *Repentance and Faith*;—“*Repentance towards God; and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.*” Now repentance includes in itself a declaration of the law, and of the transgression of that law, and of the consequences of such transgression. This, as the first step in the preaching of the gospel, is constantly described in the New Testament, as a distinguishing characteristic of the apostolic ministrations.

The preaching of our Lord himself, was, “*Repent ye, and believe the gospel,*” (Mark i. 15.); and his disciples, following his footsteps, “*went forth, and preached that men should repent.*” (Mark vi. 12.) St. Peter’s first sermon, which issued in the conversion of three thousand souls, ended with the exhortation, “*Repent, and be baptized;*” and his next, which brought in a further harvest of two thousand, ran in the same strain, “*Repent ye, therefore, and be converted.*” (Acts iii. 19.) St. Paul, also, describes his own preaching as tending to the same point, “*That they should repent, and turn to God,*” &c. Acts xxvi. 20. “*That repentance and remission of sins should be preached among all nations,*” is St. Luke’s description of the Saviour’s last command; and “*repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ,*” is St. Paul’s epitome of his own ministry. (Acts xx. 21.)

Such was the preaching which spread the gospel throughout the world. And when human inventions, “*fables and endless genealogies,*” had buried it for a

time beneath heaps of rubbish, it was the same preaching which, at the Reformation, brought Christianity again into the light of day.

“I handle not,” says Bullinger, “the least and lowest points of the Christian religion ; I handle the Law, the Gospel, Sin, Grace, and Repentance.”<sup>1</sup>

In like manner, when, in England, at the end of the seventeenth and commencement of the eighteenth century, a deep spiritual slumber had crept over the church, it was dispelled, in a degree, by the efforts of such men as Whitfield, Venn, Romaine, and others, who turned from the mere inculcation of moral duties, to the grand fundamental doctrines which the word of God alone reveals. And one who, in our own times, followed in their footsteps, writes, “*Sin and Salvation* are the two grand subjects of our preaching ; and they ought to be brought forward unceasingly, both doctrinally, practically, and above all, experimentally.”<sup>2</sup>

The last-mentioned preacher was an eminently *successful* one. Multitudes of redeemed souls will form his crown on the day of his Lord’s appearing. Whitfield, Venn, Romaine, and their coadjutors were eminently *successful* preachers. They roused England from a state of death-like lethargy. The Reformers were eminently *successful* ;—they resuscitated the Christianity of Europe. The apostles were eminently *successful* ;—they established Christianity throughout the known world. All these, in different ages, were honoured in being God’s instruments for the salvation of multitudes of the human race ; and *they all took the same course*, in their ministrations. They

<sup>1</sup> *Todd’s Life of Cranmer*, vol. ii. p. 223.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of the Rev. J. Richmond*, p. 124.

preached *the Law* ; for the conviction of sinners, and to lead them to repentance. To those who received this message into their hearts, and were brought to cry out, “ *What shall we do to be saved?* ” they preached the *Gospel*, as God’s appointed way of deliverance. And, in the third place, to those who embraced this salvation, and clung to Christ as their only hope, they preached a holy life and conversation, as calculated “ *to shew forth the praises of Him, who had called them out of darkness into marvellous light.* ”

Such was the “ *right dividing of the word of truth,* ” which the Apostles and the Reformers constantly observed. They did not mingle up the various medicines provided by the Great Physician, nor yet reverse the order of their appropriate application.

But have we not, in modern times, a fearful disregard of this important point? Do we not frequently meet with a mitigated law, and a conditional gospel : a system of preaching which contains a mixture of precept and privilege, in such sort that each neutralizes the other : a scheme which confounds law and gospel, and while it apparently comprehends something of both, is yet very little like either. Do we not sometimes observe the highest privileges of believers inculcated and urged upon those who are *not* believers?—a course of conduct, which necessarily leads to antinomianism. And do we not still more frequently hear the walk and conduct of a renewed man pressed upon those who are not “ *alive from the dead,* ” without one warning that it is needful, that the tree should be good, before the fruit *can* be good? a course which as inevitably leads to self-righteousness. In a word,—the vast majority of the attendants at our churches, being merely nominal Chris-

tians, “*fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind,*” are they not nevertheless continually addressed as if they were “*children of light?*” and thus not only left without the calls and warnings which they need, but even buoyed up with false hopes and confidences, which it ought to be their pastors’ chief object to root up and to destroy?

And—as a part of this mistaken system—are not symptoms frequently dealt with, as if *they* were the real diseases; instead of being merely the signs of a deep-seated disorder? If men, for instance, manifest an utter disregard of the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, are they not warmly and strenuously urged and invited to come? If they are seen to neglect prayer, or public worship, are not their obligations, in these respects, strongly pressed upon them? Now, as *parts* of an address to their consciences, such exhortations might be fully justified. But if this be the whole treatment of the case, surely the chief matter is left out of view,—namely, that these negligences are symptomatic of an unrenewed heart,—and should be urged upon the conscience as such, with a view to conviction of sin. For, without this, what real good would be effected, even if the number of communicants, or of attendants at church could be doubled,—the motive being merely a fear of reproof, and the result merely the lulling to sleep of an uneasy conscience? <sup>1</sup>

But all this turns upon the propriety or impropriety

<sup>1</sup> “Some preachers,” says the Rev. L. Richmond, “are defective in one most essential part of a discourse. They insist with much earnestness on the necessity of holiness, of abstaining from sin, of loving God, &c. &c., but they never tell their people *how all this is to be done*. They leave out the characteristic features of the gospel. They build, without first laying the foundation.”—(*Life*, p. 382.)

of addressing men as either converted or unconverted. If all are to be dealt with, "as on the same footing,"—all baptized, all regenerated in baptism, all possessors of the same privileges, and entitled to the same hopes,—then the preceding remarks are wholly unfounded and unjust. But if the apostolic writings are to be taken as our guide, then we must believe in this simple division of the visible church into two classes,—those "who walk after the flesh," and those "who walk after the Spirit." The one class "mind the things of the flesh," the other "the things of the Spirit." The one class are "carnally-minded," the other "spiritually-minded." The one class "have not the Spirit of God, and are none of his," the other "through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, and live." (Rom. viii.) These two classes we find constantly adverted to throughout the epistles; and if our eyes are not closed to the most obvious facts,—these two classes are found in every church. Even among the most carefully-cultured congregations, men are found, who "mind earthly things;" who "walk after the course of this world;" whose hearts are in their gains, or their pleasures, or their ambition, and who do not even attempt to conceal the fact, that their whole religion is included in a two hours' attendance at church per week. If there is to be any simplicity or sincerity in the church of God, must not these external worshippers be faithfully and candidly dealt with? And if, not a few, but a large majority of the hearers are, under some guise or other, found in this class, must not a large proportion of the pulpit addresses be directed towards them?

The Law of God, then, not in a mitigated form, or as a code of morals merely, but in all its extent and

purity, in all its beauty and majesty, as comprehending nothing but what is infinitely merciful and perfectly right and just,—the eternal and unchangeable Law, should be prominently and earnestly set forth, with a view of bringing the careless and unconverted, who form generally the great majority of the congregation, to a sense of their real state and condition. Upon which there immediately follows,—2. the Gospel, without a full declaration of which no sermon should ever conclude ; and,—3. to those who have embraced the great salvation, the way of holiness, or a cheerful and willing following of the footsteps of Christ, not for the attainment of salvation ; but as those who are already saved,<sup>1</sup>—already redeemed, who are “ *bought with a price,*” and who would therefore strive to “ *glorify God in their body and their spirit, which are His ;*” as those who are “ *a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people,*” and who therefore desire to “ *shew forth the praises of him, who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light.*”

III. One more point, however, and far the most important point, remains to be adverted to. “ *Man may project, but it is God only who can effect.*” It is right and expedient, on our parts, constantly to “ *consider our ways ;*” to remove all hindrances to usefulness ; to devise means for increased efficiency ; and to reprove and repel those, who would oppose or obstruct the extension of the Redeemer’s kingdom. But we must endeavour always to bear in mind the all-important distinction, between the external and the spiritual church. After all that we

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. i. 18. Titus iii. 5.

can do, to facilitate the progress of the former, every thing of eternal moment must still depend upon the growth of the latter. Were it possible wholly and at once to carry into execution all our desires, as to the national church, so as to provide, in the shortest conceivable space of time, "a fold for every sheep, and a shepherd for every fold," we should still have left the grand desideratum unachieved; simply because the regeneration and conversion of the soul is not a work in which man has any but the most subordinate agency. Paul may indeed plant, and Apollos water, but the rain, the dew, the frost, the sunshine, in spiritual as well as in natural things, are not in human power. All the skill, and logic, and eloquence, and earnestness that ever were known upon earth, if all concentrated into a single sermon, would utterly fail of giving spiritual life to even one individual soul. While, on the other hand, when the fiat has gone forth, from Him who is "*the giver of life,*" a single text of scripture, a word casually spoken, nay, even a ray of sunshine,<sup>1</sup> is sufficient to call a man "*from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God.*"

DIVINE INFLUENCE, then, is the great essential blessing, towards which our thoughts should constantly be directed. It is unpurchaseable and unattainable by human contrivances; and yet this circumstance, even when coupled with the futility of all external means without it, does not at all release us from all proper and expedient efforts. To build churches and to provide ministers is our duty, and

<sup>1</sup> The fact, we believe, is on record, of an idle fellow, who, basking on a bank on a fine sabbath eve, received a thought into his mind by the instrumentality of a sun-beam, which ended in his entire conversion to God.

these things are within our reach. We may feel an uncertainty as to the future succession of men to fill the pulpits so erected ; but here is a proper sphere for the exercise of faith. The “mere stone and lime”<sup>1</sup> arrangement is just that part of the whole business which best suits the powers and capabilities of man. To build a church,—to build hundreds of churches, is quite within his power;—to form one “able minister of the New Testament” is not within his power. It belongs to him, then, to imitate the inhabitants of Egypt; who, in hope and expectation of the accustomed swelling of their river, were in the habit of opening all the sluices and canals that they could devise, to spread its fertilizing streams far and wide; but who never looked, for the blessing of the river itself, to any but a divine and overruling power.

The effusion, then, of a greater and a constantly increasing measure of the influence of the Holy Spirit, must be the point to which our hopes and prayers must chiefly be directed. Without this, the enlargement and improvement of our external machinery will effect nothing more than some trifling external amelioration of morals. With it, even our present faults and deficiencies, manifest as they are, would not prevent our church from becoming “a praise to the whole earth.”

But such an effusion of divine influence, must be asked for, and expected, chiefly through the appointed channels—“*the golden pipes, which empty the golden oil out of themselves,*—namely, the witnesses which prophecy or preach the testimony of Christ, (Zech. iv. 12. Rev. xi. 3, 4, 7.) and which are also

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Wardlaw's Lectures*, p. 300.



frequently spoken of under another figure,—as “the light of the world,” and “the golden candlestick.” It would be contrary to all the recorded experience of past ages, to expect a blessing to descend upon the people, irrespective of, or without coming through, the appointed ministers of the everlasting gospel.

Our hopes and expectations, then, of an increase of the church’s true prosperity, must chiefly be connected with the prayer of faith, for greater grace and energy, to be bestowed on the pastors of the flock. “*Come from the winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.* (Ezek. xxxvii. 9.) “*Awake, O north wind, and come, O south, blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out.*” (Cant. iv. 16.)

That there is abundant need of perpetual supplications on this score, will be denied by no one who is really interested in the church’s prosperity. A divine effusion is required, to impart to multitudes among the clergy, 1. greater depth of feeling; and 2. greater unction in their ministrations.

A very estimable and generally-respected clergyman once remarked in our hearing, that “he thought that a certain degree of *dulness* was naturally to be looked for in such a composition as a *sermon*.” Another, of a name universally venerated in the church, after having shewn more than ordinary animation, in pleading for a charity connected solely with the temporal well-being of the poor, accounted for it by the remark, that “the *unusual interest* of the subject naturally led him into unusual warmth.”

Do not such incidents as these, which might easily be multiplied, shew that there often exists a great want of deeper views of the real state and condition

of our fellow-creatures, and the immeasurable value of the gospel?

Mr. Legh Richmond, after closing his ministry, in the prospect of death, by two sermons of more than usual solemnity, exclaimed to a brother clergyman, "Brother, we are only half awake! we are none of us more than half awake!"<sup>1</sup>

But the best and only accurate test, is the language of scripture. Do such words as the following describe the feelings of even the liveliest Christians among us? "*Horror hath taken hold upon me, because of the wicked that forsake thy law.*" "*Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.*" "*I have great heaviness and continual sorrow of heart, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.*" "*By the space of three years, I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.*" "*For many walk, of whom I told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ.*" Are these feelings no longer called for in the church? Or rather do not the scenes that surround us on every side—the wreck of fortunes, the destruction of health, the broken hearts, the ruined families, the maniac wives, the groans and sorrows, and death and despair which meet us at every turn,—and all arising from one single universally overspreading malady, Sin,—do not these daily and hourly admonish us, that a right state of feeling would lead to language nearly resembling that of the psalmist or the apostle?

The hurry of over-engagement doubtless often renders calm and quiet meditation hardly attainable; or a serious review of the state of men in general, in the

<sup>1</sup> *Rev. L. Richmond's Life*, p. 396.

present life, and of their awful destiny in another, would often bring the mind into some degree of sympathy with that of the Saviour, when "*he beheld the city, and wept over it.*"

And this would be the right frame of mind for the administration of the severest remedies. We have already expressed an apprehension, that, *for conviction*, the law of God is not sufficiently brought forward. But the tone of an accuser or a judge would not be the best for such a task. Henry Martyn early discovered the secret, *how to reprove*; and records, in his journal, his resolution, "not to reprove others, when he could conscientiously be silent, except he experienced at the time a peculiar contrition of spirit."<sup>1</sup>

Nor is the right tone for administering reproof, the only lesson we may draw from this remark. Well considered, it tells us much more than this. It tells us, that to speak *to* the affections, we must speak *with* the affections. To gain the heart, our own heart must go forth. Emotion,—without which nothing is done,—will not be excited in those to whom we speak, if we speak without ourselves being moved. Our reasonings may convince the mind; our forebodings alarm the imagination: but the heart and soul will only be touched by words, in which it is evident, that our own heart and soul bears part.<sup>2</sup>

We purpose not to write a treatise on the pulpit or its duties; and shall merely, therefore, sum up these remarks in a few suggested inquiries. The

<sup>1</sup> *Rev. H. Martyn's Life*, p. 49.

<sup>2</sup> At the same time, in all generalizing observations of this kind, it must always be borne in mind, that, while the Holy Spirit ordinarily works by *means*, those means may, in some cases, by the exercise of divine sovereignty, be dispensed with.

fruitlessness of ministerial labour is often lamented in the present day; will those who indulge in such complaints, seriously ask themselves a few plain questions?—

“Are the great leading features of the divine plan of redemption constantly brought forward in our addresses, in their full scriptural proportion?”

“Is the law frequently and explicitly preached, as a condemning and convicting record? Is its extent and spirituality, the justice and entirely reasonable character of its requirements, constantly set forth; in order thereby to shew that the whole world is guilty before God? Is conviction of sin, by this the appointed means, made one great and predominating object of preaching?”

“Is the gospel declared, with equal constancy and fulness;—not as *alike* belonging and appertaining to *all*, not as a remedy actually possessed by those who reckon themselves “*whole, and not needing a physician* ;”—but as the divine provision for those who are indeed “*wearry and heavy-laden*,” and who may therefore be appropriately invited to Christ, that they may “*find rest for their souls*?”

“Lastly, is the moral law, as a transcript of the mind and will of God, frequently explained; not merely as set before the whole congregation for their rule and guide of life; but as a manifestation of the divine mind, in its wisdom, beneficence and holiness; and as necessarily lovely to the renewed soul, although without any attraction to mankind in general?”

“In all these great branches of scriptural knowledge, is there a “*right dividing of the word of truth*?”

## XIII.

THE DANGERS WHICH AT PRESENT THREATEN THE  
CHURCH.

IN proceeding, as we must now do, to speak of the various perils into which the church of England is at present brought, we are naturally led to consider, in the first place, those which beset her *externally*. These chiefly arise from the *liberal*, or it may be more properly called, the *infidel* spirit of the age; which, not really and sincerely admitting the first principle,—that we have a divine revelation,—naturally holds it to be an intolerable presumption in any man, or in any body of men, to assume that “the truth” is with them, and that those who refuse obedience to it, must be, in the very nature of things, in great danger of eternal unhappiness.

This fundamental error,—or rather this capital offence of negligence, in not satisfying themselves of the fact, that *there is* a divine revelation, to which universal obedience is due,—this blameable error pervades every step taken with reference to the church, by those who range themselves among the

“*liberal*” school. And it endangers the church on every occasion which calls for legislation ; inasmuch as such legislation is always attempted to be conducted on wrong principles. The fact, that the church is essentially *right*, is never once admitted ;—the assumption, that mankind can and ought to know what *the truth* is, is always treated as bigotry and intolerance ; and the opposing principle, that every man has as much right to assert his own creed to be the true one as any other man,—is constantly made the basis of action.

It is unnecessary to go into particulars, in a matter which every man’s memory will assist him in illustrating. Yet it may be worth while to notice, if it be only to place on record, the appalling fact, that a plan of national education was gravely propounded to the parliament of 1839, by the government of Great Britain, which, in its expansive “*liberality*,” was tolerant enough to admit even Socialism itself, with all its blasphemies and obscenities, to teach, under the sanction and at the expense of the state, irreligion and immorality in our (so planned) national schools !

In this direction, unquestionably, our chief *external* danger is found. But it is not terrifying, to one who calmly surveys the progress of the public mind ; even looking to human powers alone ; because, while he recognizes the peril, he sees also the counteracting influence, in that “*pressure from without*,” which keeps, as was seen in 1839, the legislature from plunging into the contemplated evil. The fact is,—and it greatly stays the mind, under the various alarms which perpetually present themselves,—that the current of popular feeling, especially in the middle and

upper classes, rather runs upwards than downwards; rather tends to high-church principles than to "liberalism;" and on this account it is, that the next subject we have to notice, shrinks into such very insignificant and trifling dimensions.

The efforts of Dissenters,—properly so called,—against the church, have indeed fallen into comparative insignificance. In 1833,—immediately after the passing of the Reform Bill,—it was a general expectation, especially among the Dissenting leaders, that the church establishment must of course be at once abated, like the rotten boroughs, as a common nuisance. A few months, however, served to moderate this expectation, and in 1835 and 1836, it assumed the lower tone, that the power of taxing Dissenters, by a church-rate, must be abandoned. This, however, was brought to issue in 1837,—when that moderated hope was extinguished; for even a reformed House of Commons offered no encouragement to the proposed alteration. Since that period the question has remained in abeyance,—no government venturing again to make such a proposition; and any effort attempted by the Dissenting advocates being instantly put down. The real cause of this vast change, in prospect and expectation, being, as we have just said, that the current of popular feeling, so far from setting towards dissent and religious liberalism, is running strongly in a very opposite direction.

And this carries us to the remaining division of the subject. For, as the wants of the church, in externals, were found to be of immeasurably less importance than those which concerned her spirit and power and ministerial unction; so, the *external* perils of

the church, though not inconsiderable, are yet far below, in present interest,—its *internal* dangers.

And these are new, and peculiar to the present day. They exhibit, in a remarkable manner, the ever-changing, flexible, and adaptive character of the temptations of the great enemy of the church. A century ago the poet wrote, of secular affairs and ordinary seductions,

“ For Satan’s now grown wiser than before,  
And tempts by making rich, not making poor.”

And with equal truth we may say of his later machinations, that, having tried to the uttermost his old seductions of worldliness and sensuality, he has latterly taken up the more plausible course of pharisaism and formal religion. The like succession of temptations appears in the history of God’s ancient people. First, mere worldliness and sensuality, (Exod. xiv. 12. Numb. xi. 5); then, when drawn out of Egypt, placed in the promised land, and the altar of God set up in the midst of them,—a going after other gods;—and, lastly, and as the greatest refinement of temptation,—a system which was neither sensual nor idolatrous, in the ordinary sense of the words—but formally *religious*:—an *apparent* obedience to the divine rule, veiling a *real* departure from it. “ *Full well have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your traditions.*” “ *Ye pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law.*” “ *Ye make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but within they are full of extortion and excess.*”

We have already observed, in the preceding chapter, that the great want of the church is an increased



measure of Divine influence. Of the outward form and profession of religion there has been, within the last forty years, a manifest and very considerable increase. The careless and the dissipated among the clergy no longer form,—as it must be feared they once did,—the great majority. The purer lives and greater influence of those who preached and loved the Christianity of the Bible, has raised up a new and a very large class, which hardly existed in the eighteenth century,—namely, of serious and painstaking ministers of the church, who follow, in many respects, the example of the evangelical clergy, without preaching the whole of their system, or wishing to be reckoned of their number. This new section of the clerical order, must, at the present moment, amount to several thousands. Those who belong to it eschew the race-course, the chase, and the ball-room; but they take care to eschew also what they call “Calvinism;” under which term they too often include the doctrines of Jewell and of Hooker, as well as those peculiar to the Genevan Reformer. Still they are really “religious” men, and appear to great advantage when compared with the clergy of a century back, as we find them depicted in various authentic records. And, with an improvement in the teachers, there necessarily appears a similar improvement in those who are taught. The directors of the printing establishments of the two Universities will probably find, if they refer to their records, that for one Common Prayer Book printed by those establishments in 1800, there were *ten*, if not *twenty*, printed and sold in 1839.

But, as we have already observed, the stream is *broad*, but not *deep*. What is chiefly needed, is, the

awakening, convincing, converting power of the Holy Spirit, to give a soul to all this external form; and to make the apparent amelioration ripen into a real "life from the dead."

And this is the moment seized by the tempter for the employment of a seduction peculiarly adapted to the state of men's minds. He no longer resorts to ridicule of all serious men and serious things; on the contrary, he proposes more than ordinary seriousness, and unusual attention to religion. But he takes especial care, that his suggestions, plausible as they may appear, shall, in reality, *lead the wrong way*. The church needed more life and power of religion. He counsels, instead, more form and ceremony. The church, having advanced, with many of her ministers, scarcely beyond the rudiments of the faith, wanted deeper instruction in the mysteries of the gospel; the free and full justification, adoption, and sanctification of the believer, and his preservation in Christ; but the counsel offered, is, to shut up all these questions, as only fit for a certain few "initiated;" and to return to "the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands," and other elementary points of the Christian system. In a word, the church had acquired a large mass of merely external and nominal adherents; baptized unbelievers; and her real want was, to know how to change these into Christians, regenerated in heart and life, and truly converted to God. In place of which, it is strenuously argued, that these myriads of practical heathens should be taught that they are already regenerated; and should be incited to fast, to frequent the eucharist, to use the daily service, and to expect "grace from the communion of the successors of the apostles."

Such is the chief, the greatly preponderating peril, which besets the church of England at the present day. It has in it all the essential features of Popery; but, apart from this, and were it never to proceed beyond the point to which it has now reached, it is fraught with the fearful evil of a withering, parching, blighting operation, drying up and banishing all spiritual life and influence from the church.

1. It is, in fact, a revival of the substance and spirit of Popery. The attempt, indeed, is often made, to convince us that it is unjust to charge a writer or a system with a tendency to Popery, so long as such writer or such system keeps up an opposition to Rome upon some few points. And in this strain it is often argued, that as the Oxford Tracts still maintain objections to Romanism in some half-dozen particulars; such as—the worship of images,—the denial of the cup,—the necessity of the priest's intention to the validity of the sacraments,—purgatory,—and the anathemas of the council of Trent,—they must be taken to be very orthodox expositors of the doctrines of the Reformation. But, between the cautious and guarded tone in which the tract-writers object to these minor points in Popery; and the bold and uncompromising rejection of the whole anti-christian usurpation, which marked the conduct of the Reformers, the distance is immense. The matters on which the Tract-writers differ from Rome, are not the grand fundamental questions, with which Cranmer and Luther concerned themselves. They are points which an opponent might concede *seriatim* and *bona fide*, and yet remain a thorough Romanist still.

The great doctrines on which the Reformation was founded, were such as these:—1. Justification by

faith; in opposition to salvation by works: 2. One Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ; in opposition to the countless mediators of the Romish church: 3. An Atonement, once made, and for ever efficient and complete; in opposition to the new atonements professed to be continually made in the Sacrifice of the Mass: 4. A Rule of Faith, perfect, infallible, and open to no addition; in opposition to the unfixed and ever-changing Rule of written and unwritten Tradition.

Now on all these, and on every kindred subject connected with the Romish controversy, the school which has recently arisen in Oxford, exhibits the most decided leaning to the Romish side of the argument. The most active and energetic among them, Mr. Newman, has produced an elaborate treatise subversive of the great doctrine of Justification by Faith. In the 75th number of their Tracts, they gently and almost imperceptibly, but not the less really, re-introduce the Invocation of Saints. In the 81st number they argue for the belief that the Lord's Supper is a propitiatory sacrifice. And in divers of their publications, especially those of Mr. Keble, the insufficiency of the Bible, as the sole and abundant rule of faith, is urged, and the value and *necessity* of tradition is insisted on.

In all the great leading features, then, of this new school, we discern a tendency to Romish doctrines, and an abandonment of those asserted by the Reformers. And in all those minor matters, which perhaps shew the bias of the mind even more distinctly than more vital questions,—the same leaning is always discernible.

The Virgin Mary,—never once alluded to, in any

one of the apostolic epistles, as an object of worship or even peculiar veneration,—is exalted to a super-human estimation.

“What must have been her gifts, who was chosen to be the only near relative of the Son of God?” “What, think you, was the sanctity and grace of that human nature, of which God formed his sinless Son?” “How is it possible we should bear to gaze on the creature’s holiness in its fulness?”<sup>1</sup>

“Grant, O Lord, we beseech thee, that we thy servants may ever prosper in perpetual health of body and mind, and by the *glorious intercession of the Blessed Mary, Ever Virgin*, may be delivered from present sadness, and enjoy eternal bliss.”<sup>2</sup>

Rome itself, and its bishop, are regarded with a degree of reverence and favour wholly unknown in the apostolic ages.

“To honour the Roman church and the Roman bishops, for example, without countenancing the errors of Popery, is a perplexing problem.”<sup>3</sup>

“But is it then a duty to forget that Rome was our mother, through whom we were born to Christ?”<sup>4</sup>

“O Mother church of Rome, why has thy heart  
Beat so untruly to thy northern child?”<sup>5</sup>

Monachism and clerical celibacy are spoken of as requisite and desirable.

“You must have dissent or monachism in a Christian country : so make your choice.”<sup>6</sup>

“Great towns will never be evangelized merely by the parochial

<sup>1</sup> *Rev. J. H. Newman's Sermons*, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Tracts for the Times*, No. 75, p. 53. As there has been a great deal of most disingenuous fencing with reference to this tract, it may be as well to observe, in passing, that the prayer quoted above is in no way disclaimed or spoken of with disapprobation by the compiler of that selection of prayers; many of which are even still more idolatrous.

<sup>3</sup> *British Critic*, Jan. 1838, p. 233.

<sup>4</sup> *Tracts*, No. 77, p. 33.

<sup>5</sup> *Lyra Apost.* p. 229.

<sup>6</sup> *Brit. Mag.* v. ix. p. 366.

system; they are beyond the sphere of the parish priest, burdened as he is with the endearments and anxieties of a family.”<sup>1</sup>

“It has lately come into my head, that the present state of things in England, makes an opening for reviving the monastic system.”<sup>2</sup>

**The Reformation itself, and the Reformers, are constantly spoken of with undisguised dislike.**

“As to the Reformers, I think worse and worse of them.”—  
“Really I hate the Reformation and the Reformers more and more.”—“The Reformation was a limb badly set—*it must be broken again in order to be righted.*”<sup>3</sup>

“The perverse ecclesiastical spirit, to which the Reformation on the continent gave birth.”<sup>4</sup>

“Then many a *schism* overleaped the banks;  
Genevese, Lutheran, Scotch diversities.”<sup>5</sup>

**And Mr. Froude tells us,<sup>6</sup> that, on his visit to Rome,**

“We got introduced to Monsignor —, the head of the — college, to find out whether they would take us in on any terms to which we could twist our consciences, and we found to our dismay that not one step could be obtained without swallowing the Council of Trent as a whole. We made our approaches to the subject as delicately as we could. Our first notion was, that the terms of communion were, within certain limits, under the control of the Pope, or that in case he could not dispense solely, yet at any rate the acts of one Council might be rescinded by another; indeed, that in Charles the First’s time it had been intended to negotiate a reconciliation on the terms on which things stood before the Council of Trent. But we found to our horror that the doctrine of the infallibility of the church made the acts of each successive council obligatory for ever; that what had been once decided could never be meddled with again; in fact, that they were committed finally and irrevocably, and could not advance one step to meet us, even though the church of England should

<sup>1</sup> *British Mag*, vol. ix. p. 368.

<sup>2</sup> *Froude’s Remains*, vol. i. p. 322.

<sup>3</sup> *Froude*, vol. i. p. 379, 389, 433. <sup>4</sup> *British Magazine*, vol. ix. p. 359.

<sup>5</sup> *Brit. Mag.* vol. ix. p. 31.

<sup>6</sup> *Froude’s Remains*, vol. i. p. 306.

again become what it was in Laud's time, or indeed what it may have been up to the atrocious council; for M—— admitted that many things, *e. g.* the doctrine of mass, which were fixed then, had been indeterminate before.

“So much for the Council of Trent, for which Christendom has to thank Luther and the Reformers. —— declares that ever since I heard this I have become a staunch Protestant, which is a most base calumny on his part, though I own it has altogether changed my notions of the Roman Catholics, and made me wish for the total overthrow of their system. I think that the only *τόπος* now is “the ancient church of England,” and as an explanation of what one means, “Charles the First and the Nonjurors.”

Now, assuredly, it would have been easy for his editors to have disclaimed these sentiments, apprizing us that they were merely the individual opinions of an ardent mind, now withdrawn from all earthly controversy. But Messrs. Keble and Newman, having had the opportunity of thus exculpating themselves, deliberately refuse to do so. They have recently published a second series of *Remains*, to which they affix a preface, distinctly defending all his views. And on the very point in question,—the Reformation,—instead of attempting the least retraction or modification of the contumelious language adopted in the former volumes, they observe, that

“It appeared to him (Mr. Froude) and to the editors, that the persons chiefly instrumental in that great change, were not, as a party, *to be trusted* on ecclesiastical and theological questions.”<sup>1</sup>

Nor is this a solitary expression of their disapprobation. They describe Mr. F. in another page, as

“Retiring on the *letter* of the Articles for refuge against the *spirit* of their first compilers;—their letter, as interpreted and acted on by later generations, more alive to the claims of Antiquity.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Froude's Remains*, vol. iii. pref. p. xix.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. xxi.

And, again, they allude to

“The *substantial* differences in the way of thinking and moral sentiment, which separate the Reformers from the Fathers.”  
 “Generally speaking, the tone of the fourth century is so unlike that of the sixteenth, on each and all of these topics,—that it is impossible for the same mind to sympathize with both. You must choose between the two lines. *They are not only diverging, but CONTRARY.*”<sup>1</sup>

The choice, as far as these writers are concerned, has been already made. They have long since announced their adherence to “Antiquity.” They now unequivocally admit and declare, that this is tantamount to *giving up the Reformation*.

Scarcely, then, can it be considered candid in Dr. Pusey,—while he maintains and avows his connection with these writers,—to address to his diocesan a voluminous pamphlet, aiming to prove, that he and his coadjutors are the only true and loyal children of the Reformation!

Bishop Burnet, in the preface to his third book of the History of the Reformation, thus accurately designates the points, on which Popery inevitably revolves. He says,—

“The opinion of the sacrament’s being an expiatory sacrifice; and of the necessity of secret confession and absolution; and of the church’s authority, acting in an independence of the civil power, were the foundations of Popery, and the seminal principles out of which that mass of corruptions was formed.”

Now every one who is at all acquainted with the writings of the new Oxford school, will be well aware that these are the very points on which the affections of

<sup>1</sup> *Froude’s Remains*, vol. iii. pref. pp. xxviii. xxix.



the writers are chiefly fixed. That the Lord's Supper is a "sacrifice" is the doctrine asserted in the bulky tract, No. 81, as we have already seen in a former chapter.<sup>1</sup> Touching confession and absolution, the notions put forth in Mr. Froude's Remains and in the *Lyra Apostolica*, are as high as the Vatican itself could desire.

"Behold your armoury ! Sword, and lightning shaft,  
 Cull'd from the stores of God's all-judging ire,  
 And in your wielding left ! The words that waft  
 Power to your voice absolving, point with fire  
 Your awful curse. O grief !—should Heaven's dread Sire  
 Have stayed, for you, the mercy-dews of old  
 Vouchsafed, when pastors' arms in deep desire  
 Were spread on high to bless the kneeling fold !  
 IF CENSURE SLEEP, WILL ABSOLUTION HOLD ?  
 Will the great King confirm their acts of grace,  
 Who careless leave to cankering rust and mould  
 The flaming sword, that should the unworthy chase  
 From His pure Eden ? O beware, lest vain  
 Their sentence to *remit*, who never dare *retain*." <sup>2</sup>

And, of the church's authority and independence of the civil power, the following is one specimen of their sentiments :—

"The present church system is an incubus upon the country. It spreads its arms in all directions, claiming the whole surface of the earth for its own, and refusing a place to any subsidiary system to spring upon. Would that the waters would throw up some Acheloides, where some new bishop might erect a see beyond the blighting influence of our upas tree ! Yet I suppose that before he could step in, an Act of Parliament would put its paw upon the *κρησφύγετον*, and include it within the limits of some adjacent diocese. I admire M.'s hit about our being united to the state as Israel was to Egypt." <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See page 311.

<sup>2</sup> *Lyra Apostolica*, p. 218.

<sup>3</sup> *Froude's Remains*, vol. i. p. 405.

While, in another place, we find a whole volume devoted to the praise of Thomas à Becket, called "St. Thomas of Canterbury;" in another publication, an eulogium on Dunstan; and, in a third, the warmest admiration of Hildebrand, who is spoken of as "that celebrated man, who reigns in the church without the vestige of a rival."<sup>1</sup>

But as a recent and well-rounded specimen of these avowedly "high-church doctrines," it may be as well to give the following passage from the last publication of this school, the new volumes of Mr. Froude's *Remains*, recently given to the world under the deliberate sanction of Messrs. Newman and Keble.

"The Reformed Church of England has given birth to two martyrs, an Archbishop and a King, and both these blessed saints died for Episcopacy. But was it for a form, or a point of discipline, that they resisted thus unto death? Surely not" "When they contended for Episcopacy as one of the essentials of religion; they no more regarded it as an external and a form, than they regarded Christ's death upon the cross as an external and a form."

"Their belief on this subject seems to be contained in the following propositions:

"1. That before Jesus Christ left the world, he breathed the Holy Spirit into his apostles; giving them the power of transmitting this precious gift to others by prayer and the imposition of hands; that the apostles did so transmit it to others; and they again to others; and that in this way it has been preserved in the world to the present day.

"2. That the gift thus transmitted empowers its possessors, (1.) to admit into or exclude from the mysterious Communion called in Scripture "the kingdom of heaven," any one whom they judge deserving of it; and this with the assurance that all whom they admit or exclude on earth, and externally, are admitted or excluded in heaven, and spiritually, in the sight of God and of holy angels; (2.) that it empowers them to bless, and intercede for, those who

<sup>1</sup> *Brit. Mag.* vol. ix. p. 359.

are within this kingdom, in a sense in which no other men can bless or intercede : (3.) to make the Eucharistic bread and wine the Body and Blood of Christ, in the sense in which our Lord made them so : (4.) to enable delegates to perform this *great miracle*, by ordaining them with imposition of hands.

“ In these propositions is contained the substance of what the great champions of Episcopacy have contended for : and these, if admitted to become in the remotest degree credible, evidently give a new complexion to the question. To be admitted within the mysterious precincts of the kingdom of heaven, to be miraculously blessed and miraculously fed with the Bread that came down from heaven, these are surely something more than forms and externals ; and the Episcopacy that has (if indeed it has) preserved them to us, is something more than a matter of bare discipline, observed in conformity to apostolical practice.

“ According to this view of the subject, to dispense with Episcopal Ordination is to be regarded not as a breach of order merely, or a deviation from Apostolical precedent, but as a surrender of the Christian priesthood, a rejection of all the powers which Christ instituted Episcopacy to perpetuate ; and the attempt to substitute any other form of ordination for it, or to seek communion with Christ through any non-episcopal association, is to be regarded, not as a schism merely, but *as an impossibility*.” (v. iii. p. 43.)

Here we have Popery, under a modern guise, it is true, but still Popery, full-grown, ample and mature. Christianity, with its Saviour, its Bible, its Regenerating, Converting, Sanctifying grace, is wholly set aside. To be convinced of sin,—to study God’s word with prayer,—to come to Christ for pardon, for strength, and for holiness, and thus to obtain peace on earth, and eternal life in heaven,—the whole of this,—the Christianity of the epistles of St. Paul and St. John, is clean gone ; and in its place we have an Ecclesiastical Corporation, invested with certain vast and supernatural powers, all of which are to be assumed and taken on trust ; and by means of which

powers men are to be saved at their behest, or lost, if falling under their frown. And what is this,—under whatever new phrases it may be concealed, but absolute, downright, essential **POPERY**?

We need not, however, rely solely on our own impressions, in this matter. Our fears are most fully corroborated by the hopes and expectations of the Romanists themselves. An authorized publication of their church, issued at Rome in the course of the last year, thus speaks of the new Oxford school:—

“The attention of all good Catholics, and specially of the holy congregation of the Propaganda of the Faith, cannot be sufficiently excited to the state of the English church, in consequence of the new doctrines propagated with such force and so much success by Messrs. N., P., and K. With arguments drawn from the works of the Holy Fathers, of which they have already undertaken a new edition in English, they labour for the restoration of the ancient Catholic liturgy, of the breviary (which many of them recite each day regularly) of fasts, of the monastic life, and of many other religious practices. They also teach the insufficiency of the Bible as a rule of faith, the necessity of traditions, and of ecclesiastic authority, the real presence, prayer for the dead, the use of images, the power of absolution in the priesthood, the sacrifice of the Eucharist, devotion to the most holy Madonna, and many other Catholic doctrines; so that but very little separates them from the true faith, and this little decreases every day.”<sup>1</sup>

Such testimony, one would think, must be sufficient to decide the question, whether there be, or be not, an approximation to the church of Rome in this quarter.

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in *Bickersteth's Guide to the Prophecies*. p. 420.

2. Apart, however, from this, and were we wholly to overlook the identity of this new system with the doctrine of the middle ages,—there would remain to be considered, the fearful effects of these views on the general theology and teaching of the church.

That the system now adopted by the writers of the *Tracts for the Times*, is not the system inculcated by our Reformers, is admitted by themselves. We have their own express declaration, that “the two lines are not only diverging, but *contrary*.”

This, however, leads us to a fearful conclusion;—for truth is strictly *one*, and if the truth were preached by our Reformers, then something else than the truth is offered to us now. But what says St. Paul:—“*Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach ANY OTHER GOSPEL unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed!*” (Gal. i. 8.) “Diverging” and “contrary” lines in theology cannot be both right, or both safe. This is self-evident. There is but one gospel;—“one Lord, *one faith*, one baptism.”

It is not, however, by any means, the desire of the new Oxford school, to be considered as “preaching the gospel.” We should be sorry to misrepresent their feelings or principles; but we can truly say that we have never heard the phrase, “the preaching of the gospel,” used in the presence of one of their number, without perceiving a curl of the lip or a knitting of the brow, which betokened their impatience of the very expression itself. Mr. Froude, with his usual frankness, gives distinct expression to this feeling. He says, of one friend, just appointed to a curacy, “May he escape becoming a ‘Gospel minister!’”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Froude's Remains*, vol. i. p. 250.

Now, were the expression thus repudiated merely one of the many invented by human theologisers, and meaning, sometimes nothing—sometimes what is not true, we should have wondered little, and cared less, at any degree of contempt poured upon it. But when a term of this kind is boldly proscribed, wholly excluded from their published writings, and scouted by all their followers, it seems necessary just to remind them, that it is the great and standard scripture phrase: “*Go ye into all the world, and preach THE GOSPEL to every creature.*” (Mark xvi. 15.) “*The Lord had called us to preach the gospel.*” (Acts xvi. 10.) “*I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.*” (Rom. xv. 19.) “*Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.*” (1 Cor. i. 17.) And so in more than twenty other places in the epistles. Not one word do we hear of “preaching the sacraments,” or of preaching the church: it is ever “*the gospel*” that is to be the preacher’s grand topic.

Little wonder, however, is it, that no relish seems to exist for this sort of preaching; for the gospel itself, the “good news,” “the glad tidings,” which the apostles delighted to carry into all the world, withers up, in the hands of these writers, into something as little savouring of *gladness* or *joy* as can well be imagined. Take the following, as a single specimen, from the pen of Dr. Pusey himself.

“We are by Baptism brought into a state of salvation, or justification (for the words are thus far equivalent), a state into which we were brought of God’s free mercy alone, without works, but in which having been placed, we are to “work out our own salvation with fear and trembling,” through the indwelling Spirit of “God, working in us to will and to do of his good pleasure;” *a state admitting of degrees, according to the degree of sanctification*; (although

the first *act*, whereby we were brought into it, did not) a state admitting of relapses and recoveries, but which is weakened by every relapse; injured by lesser, destroyed for the time by grievous sin; and after such sin recovered with difficulty, in proportion to the greatness of the sin, and the degree of its wilfulness, and of the grace withstood.”<sup>1</sup>

“But who *truly* repent;” what are helps towards *true* repentance; when a man, who has been guilty of “*deadly sin wilfully committed after Baptism*,” may be satisfied that he is truly repentant for it; whether and to what degree he should, all his life after, continue his repentance for it; whether he be altogether pardoned, or whether only so long as he continue in a state of penitence; wherein his penitence should consist; whether continued repentance would efface the traces of his sin in himself; whether he might ever in this life look upon himself as restored to the state in which he had been, had he not committed it; whether it affect the degree of his future bliss, or its effects be effaced by his repentance, but their extinction depend upon the continued greatness of his repentance; whether cessation of his active repentance may not bring back degrees of the sin upon him; whether it shall appear again in the day of judgment; these, and the like, are questions upon which the Article does not speak.”<sup>2</sup>

“Romanism as well as Ultra-Protestantism would consult readily for man’s feverish anxiety to be altogether at ease; our Church sets him in the way in which God’s peace may descend upon him, but forestalls not His sentence. She has no second Baptism to give, and so she cannot pronounce him altogether free from his past sins. There are but two periods of *absolute* cleansing, Baptism and the day of judgment. She therefore teaches him continually to repent, that so his sins *may be* blotted out, though she has no commission to tell him absolutely that they *are*.”<sup>3</sup>

“The effect of our preaching, as it does not depend upon ourselves, so neither may it be our test of its soundness; and that, simply, because we can at the best know but a very small portion of its real effects or defects. Our concern is, whether it be according to God’s word. And it behoves us much to ascertain, by

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Pusey’s Letter*, p. 52.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 83.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 93.

patient, teachable study of that word with prayer, whether it be right to make the way of repentance so easy to those who, after baptism, have turned away from God ; whether we have any right at once to appropriate to them the gracious words with which our Saviour invited those who had never known him, and so had never forsaken him, and with which, through the church, he still invites his true disciples to the participation of his most blessed body and blood :—“ *come unto me, ye that labour and are heavy laden ;* ” and whether, having no fresh “ baptism for the remission of sins ” to offer, *no means of “renewing them to repentance,”* we have any right to apply to them the words which the apostles used in inviting men for the first time into the ark of Christ ; whether we are not thereby making broad the narrow way of life, and preaching “ peace, peace,” when, this way at least, “ there is no peace.” ”<sup>1</sup>

Now the first reflection that strikes the mind, after a few minutes’ consideration of this fearful statement, is,—the inseparability of Divine Truth, and the manifest impossibility of understanding the gospel, until the law is first understood. Can it be supposed for an instant that the writer of the above extract had attained to even a moderate insight into the extent and spirituality of the holy law of God ? He speaks of “ *those* who, after baptism, have turned away from God.” In another place he says, “ Our modern system confounds the distinction of grievous sin before and after baptism, and applies to repentance, after falling from baptismal grace, all the promises which are pledged as God’s free gift in baptism.”<sup>2</sup> “ Again, the pardon in baptism is free, *full*, instantaneous, universal ;—the pardon on repentance, for *those* who have forfeited their baptismal pardon, is slow, *partial*, gradual.” Now, in all these expressions, it is abundantly clear, that sin, grievous

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Pusey on Baptism*, p. 207, 208.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* Pref. p. 13.



sin, after baptism, is a thing which in his mind only attaches to *some*; while *others* “retain their baptismal purity,” and do not “forfeit their baptismal pardon.”

Is it possible that there can be a more decided proof of a total want of all right appreciation, alike of the nature of sin, or the spiritual requirements of God's law? What can Dr. Pusey's estimate be, of his own standing and character in the sight of God, or of the true estimation of the holiest among his friends? How entirely must it differ from the judgment of Hooker, who thus writes:—

“Let the holiest and best things, which we do, be considered. We are never better affected unto God, than when we pray: yet, when we pray, how are our affections many times distracted! How little reverence do we shew unto the grand majesty of God, to whom we speak! How little remorse of our own miseries! How little taste of the sweet influence of his tender mercies do we feel! Are we not as unwilling many times to begin, and as glad to make an end, as if, in saying *Call upon me*, he had set us a very burdensome task? It may seem somewhat extreme which I will speak: therefore, let every one judge of it, even as his own heart shall tell him, and no otherwise. I will but only make a demand. If God should yield unto us, not as unto Abraham, if fifty, forty, thirty, twenty, yea, or if ten, good persons could be found in a city, for *their* sakes this city should not be destroyed; but and if he should make us an offer *thus* large: search all the generations of men, sithence the fall of our father Adam; find one man, that hath done one action, which hath passed from him pure, without any stain or blemish at all;

aud, for that one man's only action, neither man nor angel shall feel the torments which are prepared for both: do you think, that this ransom, to deliver men and angels, could be found to be among the sons of men?"<sup>1</sup>

And equally from Bishop Beveridge's confession, "Alas! I can neither set my hand nor heart about any thing, but I still show myself to be the sinful offspring of sinful parents, by being the sinful parent of a sinful offspring. Nay, I do not only betray the in-bred venom of my heart, by poisoning my common actions, but even my most religious performances also, with sin. I cannot pray, but I sin; nay, I cannot hear, or preach a sermon, but I sin; I cannot give an alms, or receive the sacrament, but I sin; nay, I cannot so much as confess my sins, but my very confessions are still aggravations of them; my repentance needs to be repented of, my tears want washing, and the very washing of my tears need still to be washed over again with the blood of my Redeemer. Thus, not only the worst of my sins, but even the best of my duties, speak me a child of Adam: insomuch that whensoever I reflect upon my past actions, methinks I cannot but look upon my whole life, from the time of my conception to this very moment, to be but as one continued act of sin."<sup>2</sup>

But will Dr. Pusey, either for himself, or for the best and purest of his friends, decline a comparison with such men as Hooker and Beveridge, and allege, that *their* attainments in holiness are far exceeded by men of the present day? If not, then what remains for all Christians alike, but a common lot in the par-

<sup>1</sup> Hooker, *Dis. on Justification*.

<sup>2</sup> Bp. Beveridge's *Private Thoughts*, Art. iv.

ticipation of that deplorable condition, which Dr. P. describes, as that of those who have “fallen from baptismal grace,” “forfeited their baptismal pardon,” and for whom, in his opinion, there are “no means of renewing to repentance,” or of “restoring” the “regeneration” which had been “lost?”

But, this being the state of all Christians alike, what is the *gospel*,—the *good news*, which Dr. Pusey offers them? The following expressions will indicate *his* views of its character.

“There is no hint that regeneration can be obtained in any way but by baptism; or, if lost, could be restored.”

“A new birth unto righteousness, at any other period than that of our first introduction into God’s covenant (by baptism) is as little consonant with the general representation of holy scripture, as a commencement of physical life after our natural birth is with the order of his providence.”

“It behoves us to ascertain, by patient, teachable study of God’s word with prayer, whether it be right to make the way of repentance so easy to those who, after baptism, have turned away from God; whether we have any right to appropriate to them the gracious words: “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden;” and whether, having no fresh baptism for the remission of sins to offer, no means of ‘renewing them to repentance,’ we have any right to apply to them the words which the apostles used,” &c.

“The *possibility* or efficacy of such repentance I have not denied—God forbid; but that such repentance is likely, or that men who have fallen can be as assured of the *adequacy* of their repentance,” “daily experience forbids us to hope.”<sup>1</sup>

Such is the sort of “gospel” which Dr. Pusey would proclaim to all believers; for we have already seen, from the examples of Hooker and Beveridge, that the class of “those who have lost their baptismal purity,” must comprehend the whole body of the bap-

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Pusey on Baptism*, pp. 14, 202, &c.

tized. And this entire mass is placed, by Dr. P.'s theory, in the predicament of doubt and fear so strongly delineated in the extracts just given.

But is this the "glad tidings" preached by the apostles? Far from it. Their descriptions of the right frame of mind for believers, are entirely at variance with Dr. Pusey's views. The state into which they describe the Christian to be introduced, is constantly described as one of "blessedness." "*Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered: blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.*" (Rom. iv. 7, 8.) "*They which be of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham.*" (Gal. iii. 9.) "*The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.*" (Ephes. i. 3.) And the feelings naturally consequent are thus delineated;— "*Believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.*" 1 Peter i. 8.) "*Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer.*" "*The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing; that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.*" (Rom. xii. 12; xv. 13.) "*That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us.*" (Heb. vi. 18.) "*The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.*" (Rom. viii. 16.) "*I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" (Rom. viii. 38, 39.)

Is there, in this language, anything at all resem-

bling the declarations of Dr. Pusey,—that “to those who have fallen, God holds out only a light in a dark place, sufficient for them to see their path, but not bright and shining;”—that “the pardon on repentance, for those who have forfeited their baptismal pardon, is *slow, partial, gradual*”;—that the penitent must “be content to wear ‘doubt’s galling-chain.’”<sup>1</sup> Rather, instead of the least resemblance, in tone, or spirit, or essential character, may we not rather say, with the editors of Mr. Froude, “The two lines are not only *diverging* but *contrary*?”

But how will Dr. Pusey dare to oppose his theory to the inspired declarations of the great apostle of the Gentiles? His answer,—the only answer he can possibly make, is sufficiently obvious. He will say, that the apostle speaks of one class of persons,—those who have “kept their baptismal purity;”—*he* of another,—those who have “forfeited the pardon” therein obtained. And this brings us to the very gist of the question, namely, that neither in scripture nor in fact, can *such* a division of professing Christians be found.

Two great classes, indeed, there are in the church,—the regenerate and the unregenerate; but Dr. Pusey’s two classes,—those who having been once pardoned and regenerated, have “kept their first estate;” and those who, having lost and forfeited that privilege, are almost beyond the reach of pardon,—these two classes, we repeat, exist neither in the word of God nor in the world around us.

They exist not in scripture: Of this we might adduce many proofs from the apostolic writings; but it

<sup>1</sup> *Dr. Pusey on Baptism*, Pref. p. 14.

will be sufficient to advert to a single instance, in the apostolic experience. "*What I would,*" says St. Paul, "*that do I not; but what I hate that do I.*" "*I delight in the law of God, after the inner man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*"<sup>1</sup> (*Rom. vii. 15, 22—24.*)

Here, then, we have a man, who had not only been baptized and regenerated, but much more,—who had been "*caught up into the third heaven,—into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter,*" (2 Cor. xii. 2, 4,)—we hear such an one lamenting that "*sin, which dwelled in him, warred against the law of his mind, and brought him into captivity to the law of sin which was in his members.*"

That he is speaking of his regenerate state, is indisputable, for he declares that sin is what he "*hates,*" and the law of God, that in which he "*delights,*" neither of which could be truly asserted of any unregenerate man. And yet we here find him, baptized, regenerate, inspired, unreservedly declaring, that "*the good that I would, I DO NOT; but the evil which I would not, THAT I DO.*"

Could we, then, divide the baptized into the two classes suggested by Dr. Pusey:—those who have sinned after baptism, and those *who have not* (!) where could we place the apostle of the Gentiles, but among the former? But if so, then, according to Dr. P., "*doubt's galling chain*" must be his portion. The

<sup>1</sup> Rather, "this body of death," in allusion to the punishment sometimes then inflicted, of fastening a living man to a decaying corpse.

apostle, however, casts this from him with the fervid exclamation, ‘ *Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? Shall God, that justifieth? Who is he that condemneth? Shall Christ, who died, yea, rather, who is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, and who maketh intercession for us? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us.*’ (Rom. viii. 33–37.) Scripture, then, gives no countenance whatever to the supposition of Dr. Pusey, that there is a class of believers who have committed no grievous sin since their baptism; and that to all others nothing better than “*doubt’s galling chain*” remains.

Nor will the answer of notorious fact and universal experience differ from this first reply. If we ask the great mass of Christians whether there be a class of men who have never lost their baptismal purity,—never sinned since their outward admission in the bonds of the covenant?—the answer will universally be, Not among us; we know of none such;—if such persons exist, they must be sought among the excellent of the earth, among those who have “*given themselves to prayer,*” to meditation, to following after holiness.

We turn to two such individuals, therefore, to speak for the whole. All who have really attained to the first rank of a Christian walk and conversation, would reply in the same terms; and multitudes of their confessions might easily be gathered together; but surely the declarations of such men as Beveridge and Hooker may suffice. And nothing can be more

distinct and clear than their answers. The first tells us, that “not only the worst of his sins, but even the best of his duties, speaks him a child of Adam: inso-much that he cannot but look upon his whole life as one continued act of sin.”

And the second teaches us, that “the best things we do have somewhat in them to be pardoned.”<sup>1</sup> “The little fruit we have in holiness is, God knoweth, corrupt and unsound. Our continual suit to him is, and must be, to bear with our infirmities, and pardon our offences.”

The conclusion, then, of the whole matter is somewhat as follows:—1. All Christians of exemplary sanctity declare,—and the more holy, with the greater decision do they declare it,—that “*sin dwelleth in them,*”<sup>2</sup> and that “*if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*”<sup>3</sup>

2. All Christians, then, even of exemplary sanctity, must be considered as falling under Dr. Pusey’s fearful description, of “having forfeited their baptismal pardon,”—of having no second pardon to expect, but that which is “slow, *partial*, gradual,” and uncertain; and of being condemned, for the rest of their course, to “fears, anxieties,” “perplexity,” “doubt’s galling chain,” &c.

3. But, as this is wholly negated by apostles, on one hand, and the most eminent saints on the other, it follows, that a fundamental error exists somewhere in Dr. Pusey’s whole system; and that he has entirely mistaken, both the strictness and spirituality

<sup>1</sup> We do not overlook the apparent difference between these two confessions. But it is only apparent. The discrepancy is nearly the same which, on a cursory reading only, would appear to exist between Rom. vii. 25; and viii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. vii. 17.

<sup>3</sup> 1 John i. 8.



of the law, which convicts even an apostle of daily and hourly sin; and the freeness and fulness of the gospel, which, recognizing this "exceeding sinfulness" of the sinner, magnifies the grace of God so much the more, in his entire, immediate, and everlasting deliverance.

We have seen both shining forth most resplendently in the words of St. Paul; we will now add one more instance in the words of Hooker; who warns us, first, as to the vanity of human reliances:—

"Howsoever men when they sit at ease, do vainly tickle their hearts with the vain conceit of I know not what proportionable correspondence between their merits and their rewards, which in the trance of their high speculations they dream that God hath measured, weighed, and laid up, as it were in bundles for them; notwithstanding we see by daily experience, in a number even of them, that when the hour of death approacheth, when they secretly hear themselves summoned forthwith to appear, and stand at the bar of that Judge, whose brightness causeth the eyes of the angels themselves to dazzle; as these idle imaginations do then begin to hide their faces, to name *merits* then, is to lay their souls upon the rack; the memory of their own deeds is loathsome unto them; they forsake all things wherein they have put any trust or confidence; no staff to lean upon, no ease, no rest, no comfort then, but only in Jesus Christ."<sup>1</sup>

But then,—far from imagining with Dr. Pusey that those to whom "the memory of their own deeds is loathsome," must be content to wear "doubt's galling

<sup>1</sup> *Discourse on Justification.*

chain ;"—he breaks out into this glowing description of the blessedness of him, who "*is found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ,—the righteousness which is of God by faith.*" (Phil. iii. 9.)

"Blessed for ever and ever be that mother's child whose faith hath made him the child of God. The earth may shake—the pillars of the world may tremble under us—the countenance of the heaven may be appaled—the sun may lose his light, the moon her beauty, the stars their glory : but concerning the man that trusteth in God, if the fire have proclaimed itself unable as much as to singe a hair of his head ; if lions, beasts ravenous by nature, and keen with hunger, being set to devour, have as it were religiously adored the very flesh of the faithful man ; what is there in the world that shall change his heart, overthrow his faith, alter his affection towards God, or the affection of God to him ? If I be of this note, who shall make a separation between me and my God ? Shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword ? No—I am persuaded, that neither tribulation, nor anguish, nor persecution, nor famine, nor nakedness, nor peril, nor sword, nor death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall ever prevail so far over me. I know in whom I have believed—I am not ignorant whose precious blood hath been shed for me—I have a shepherd full of kindness, full of care, and full of power—unto him I commit myself : his own finger hath engraven this sentence in the tables of my heart, *Satan hath desired to winnow thee as wheat, but I have prayed that thy*

*faith fail not*: therefore the assurance of my hope I will labour to keep as a jewel unto the end; and by labour, through the gracious mediation of his prayer, I shall keep it.”<sup>1</sup>

The grand difference, then, between Dr. Pusey and his adherents, on the one hand, and St. Paul, Hooker, and their followers, on the other, is this;—that the latter class have views of the extent and spirituality of God’s law, and of the glory and efficacy of the gospel, of which the former appear to be wholly destitute. Commencing with baptism, it is Dr. Pusey’s belief, that, then, in *all* persons,—(or at least in all baptized in infancy)—a divine change is effected, a new nature is imparted, regeneration takes place: and that this divine change or regeneration is the *only one* which can be looked for on this side the grave. He has “no fresh baptism,” he says, “to offer,” “no means of renewing to repentance” those who, after baptism, had fallen into sin. That such sinners *may* repent, Dr. Pusey says he does not deny, “but that such repentance is likely, or that men can be assured of the *adequacy* of it,” he cannot permit himself to hope. An “irksome, distasteful course,” full of “fears and anxieties,” lays before them; and of the probable end, the church, he says, is *silent!* Such is Dr. Pusey’s notion of the Law, and of the Gospel. The apostle, on the other hand, as we have already seen, declares himself, even in the midst of his apostleship, to be bound to a body of corruption; to be “serving the law of sin;” to be continually doing the thing he would not; and yet to be rejoicing and thanking God for his salvation through grace, by faith in the

<sup>1</sup> *Disc. on Perpet. of Faith of the Elect.*

Lord Jesus. And the church, in her homily *on Repentance*, thus teaches,—“ Although we do, after we be once come to God, and grafted into his Son Jesus Christ, fall into *great* sins (for there is no righteous man upon the earth that sinneth not), and *if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us ;*” yet if we rise again by repentance, and with a full purpose of amendment of life, do flee to the mercy of God, taking sure hold thereupon, through faith in his Son Jesus Christ, there is an *assured and infallible hope* of pardon and remission of the same, and that we shall be received again into the favour of our heavenly Father.” This, indeed, is pre-eminently “ *the Gospel ;*”—without this it would be no “ glad tidings ” to sinful man ; and he who attempts to withdraw this, its distinguishing feature, from the message, does, thereby, impose upon us “ another gospel,” and incur in some sort, the peril of falling under the apostle’s awful condemnation, of those who sought to “ pervert the gospel of Christ.”<sup>1</sup>

Yet is this delusion growing and extending itself among us ! Shall we exclaim, with St. Paul, “ *I marvel, that ye are so soon removed*” from the grace of Christ ?<sup>2</sup> Or shall we not rather remember, not the Galatians only, but all the ancient churches ; which, being “ *corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ,*”—stumbled on, from one contrivance of man to another, until “ the mystery of iniquity ” was perfected, in the matured form of Antichrist himself ? Why should we forget,—or rather, how *can* we forget, that although there is the greatest adaptation possible, in the remedy provided by God, for man’s

<sup>1</sup> Gal. i. 7—9.

<sup>2</sup> Gal. i. 6.

moral sickness,—yet that to man himself, remaining in his natural state, and not brought “to his right mind,” the things of God are “*foolishness*,” “*neither CAN he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*”<sup>1</sup> The adaptation is not seen; the medicine is not valued; and this chiefly because the sickness of the soul is not felt. Man, “*poor, and wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked*,” says of himself, “*I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing* ;”<sup>2</sup> and so long as he is in this mind, the gospel, which is not for “*the righteous*,” but for “*sinners*,” can find no entrance into his mind.

The writers of the preface to the latter volumes of *Mr. Froude's Remains*, seem to exult in this great advantage which their system possesses, and jocosely remark that it is “something in the air;—something going on in all places at once, and in spite of all precautions.” There is many a true word spoken in jest; and this, we believe, is one of them. The present theological epidemic is “something in the air;” and we know who it is that claims, among his many titles, that of “the prince of the power of the air;” nor is there much difficulty in tracking his course in this visitation.

But, more than this, we have to bear in mind the peculiar liability, or rather, the *predisposition* of the natural heart of man, to fall into this sort of temptation. Considering these things, and remembering the awful power of the tempter, and the facility which the tempted have always shewn, to give way to such seductions, why should we be surprised, or cast down, at the rapid progress which these errors have

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. iii. 17.

made, and are still making, throughout the church ; or that under this banner, the old “ high church ” confederacy, recently dissolved,—against evangelical Christianity, is now re-forming ? This must be looked for ; and we must reckon upon seeing the doctrines of the Reformation once again cast out as hateful and intolerable. For this we must be prepared ; and to this prospect our minds must be accustomed. The only thing which remains to be done, is to strive to rescue such as are really enlightened by the Holy Spirit, from falling into this delusion. And nothing will effectually do this, but the constant exhibition of sound doctrine ;—the theology of the Bible, and of the Reformation.

It is the want of this, chiefly, that leads to the perversion of a few truly spiritual men. The *whole* armour of God is requisite to defeat the wiles of the devil, and the least deficiency is instantly detected and taken advantage of, by our subtle adversary.

As an instance of this, we may observe, that one writer thus most poignantly describes his own reasons for hoping and desiring that the new Oxford system might be true. He says, “ We looked to Dr. Pusey and his coadjutors for *deliverance* from the Calvinistic theology by which we were *pressed* out of measure, so that we despaired even of life. When we were feeling the intense, the *intolerable misery* of being obliged to treat these poor people as outcasts from God’s mercy, of whom one or two *might* find their way to the waters of healing, if an angel first went down and troubled them ; when we were tormented with the *horrid contradiction* of having to say in one breath “ believe ; ” in the next “ you cannot believe ; ”—now, “ you ought to look upon God as a

gracious and loving Lord,"—then, "we have no proofs that you are some of the elect children whom he loves;"—"these kind doctors told us of a theology which taught that our people were still under the covenant," &c. &c.<sup>1</sup>

Now what have we here, but a mind earnestly employed on these great questions, and which yet has not thoroughly "submitted itself to the righteousness of God?" We are told of "the horrid contradiction of having to say, in one breath, "Believe," and in the next, "You cannot believe." But whose words are these, so rashly stigmatized? None but His, who "spake as never man spake," and who exclaimed, on one occasion, "Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" on another, "Ye WILL NOT come unto me, that ye might have life;" and on a third, "No man CAN come unto me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him."<sup>2</sup>

Here we have, entire, what is called "the horrid contradiction;" and any man who feels a just reverence for the word of the living God, will lay his hand on his mouth, and his mouth in the dust, in the deepest penitence for having used such a term respecting it!

A mind thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the gospel, and with the theology of the scriptures, will not rush into these mistakes. There is no contradiction in God's word; the contradiction is wholly of the complainant's own fabrication. The message which he has to deliver is both *divine truth*, and plain, unquestionable *fact*.

It is a *fact*, that every individual of the human

<sup>1</sup> *Letters on the Kingdom of Heaven*, vol. i. p. 98.

<sup>2</sup> *Matt.* xi. 28. *John* v. 40; vi. 44.

race is as much labouring under a mortal disease, as were the wounded Israelites, in *Numbers* xxi. 6. It is a fact, that “as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (*John* iii. 14.) A remedy of the most unfailing character is provided, and one look of faith applies this remedy in all its power. But it is also a fact, that the very disease itself causes the sufferer to hate the remedy; whence it follows that “man cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to *faith*, and calling upon God.” (*Art.* x.) All this is as visible in the world around us, as it is in the word of God. And if it be asked, What avails, then, the preaching of the word? the answer is given by the apostle in few words;—“*It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.*” *1 Cor.* i. 21.

The error lays in the want of that of which we have recently spoken;—the “*rightly dividing* the word of truth.” The sovereignty of God in the salvation of certain only of the children of men, is an eternal verity against which the gates of hell shall never prevail. That some are saved, and some not saved; and the salvation of the former is to be ascribed, entirely and absolutely, to “God who sheweth mercy;” is, one would think, a fact which no serious and reflecting person could deny, and a scripture truth which no believer in revelation could venture to question. But, “for curious and carnal persons, lacking the Spirit of Christ, to have continually before their eyes the sentence of God’s predestination, is a most dangerous downfall; whereby the devil doth thrust them either into desperation, or into



wretchlessness of most unclean living, no less perilous than desperation.”<sup>1</sup>

To unconverted sinners, then, the law first, and then the gospel, is to be proclaimed. The law, to bring them to “*abhor themselves, and repent in dust and ashes;*”—the gospel, as the glad tidings to those “*who labour and are heavy laden,*” whereby they may find “*rest unto their souls.*”

Yet the whole truth, “the whole counsel of God” is to be declared. To those who *have* believed, who *have fled for refuge to the hope set before them*, but who yet tremble in the view of the temptations of Satan, and are ready to exclaim, “*I shall one day perish by the hand of this Saul,*”—to such it is of the greatest importance to be convinced that “*it is God who worketh in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure;*” and that “*He who hath begun a good work in them, will perform it until the day of Christ.*”<sup>2</sup> To such, says our church, “the godly consideration of predestination, and our election in Christ, is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort;” “as well because it doth greatly establish and confirm their faith of eternal salvation through Christ, as because it doth fervently kindle their love towards God.”

The “contradiction,” then, which seems so “horrid” to the writer just quoted, is merely a similar contradiction to that of the physician, who gives to the same patient both lowering and tonic medicines, but not *both together*.

The doctrine of predestination, says the Article, worketh life and holiness to the converted sinner;

<sup>1</sup> *Art. xvii.*

<sup>2</sup> *Phil. ii. 13; i. 6.*

despair and recklessness to the “curious and carnal.” Take into the fever hospital only a tonic medicine, and give it to all alike; you will kill those who are in the first stage of the disorder, and cure those who are in the third. Yet the medicine is good, and valuable, and rightly applied in the latter cases; and all this not the less for its fatal effects in the others.

An indistinct and partial view of the scriptural plan of salvation is the real origin of most of these errors. Truth is simple and infallible; error, multifarious and full of contrariety. That man is utterly lost, ruined and undone; and wholly unable “to turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith and calling upon God;”—that those whom “God hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation,”—“are called according to his purpose by his Spirit working in due season; that they through grace obey the calling; are justified freely; are made sons of God by adoption; and walk religiously in good works;”—that this is the simple and uniform history of all true Christians, is both certain and abundantly intelligible. But if this, the only way of salvation, as described alike by St. Paul in *Rom.* viii. 30, and by our own church in her Articles,—be only partially or hesitatingly received, or not received at all,—then man is thrown back upon his own devices, to plan and scheme for himself a method of escaping from the wrath to come. And immediately is it seen, that “*God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.*” Many fastings, many prayers, many penances, many mediators,—all to make up a sufficient something to substitute for that alone remedy:—“*God hath made Him to be sin for us,*

*who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."*

We are told, and told with perfect truth, that "the tone of the *fourth* century," "on the subjects of fasting, celibacy, religious vows, voluntary retirement and contemplation, the memory of the saints, rites and ceremonies recommended by antiquity," "is altogether unlike that of the *sixteenth*."<sup>1</sup> Doubtless it is so, and equally unlike that of the *first*. What concord is there between the stress laid upon these things in the Nicene era; and the light estimation in which they were obviously held by St. Paul? Does "the tone of the fourth century" at all harmonize with such language as this:—"One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks." (Rom. xiv. 5, 6.) "But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse." (1 Cor. viii. 8.) "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holiday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ." (Col. ii. 16, 17.) "Wherefore, if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which

<sup>1</sup> *Froude's Remains*, vol. iii. pref. p. xxix.

*things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.*" (Col. ii. 20—23.)

Not that it is right, or safe, or scriptural, to speak lightly of prayer or fasting, or the observances of the rites of the church, if these things are put in their proper place, and not used as substitutes for faith and repentance. They are "things that accompany salvation," and this consideration is enough to give them weight and importance;—but they are not *salvation itself*; and when brought forward as a substitute for it, they as effectually "pervert the gospel of Christ," as antinomianism or any other heresy.

"*What must I do to be saved?*" is the grand question with every man who has been awakened to see and feel his real condition by nature. "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,*" is the scriptural reply. "*I am the way, and the truth, and the life,*" is our Lord's own answer to the same question. Nothing can come before, or in the room of this. And again is the question put, and answered;—"What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" "*This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom he hath sent.*"<sup>1</sup>

Till this is done, nothing is done; nothing can be done, to any good effect. "*Without faith (in Christ) it is impossible to please God.*" "*Without me,*" says Christ, "*ye can do nothing.*" But, "*being justified by faith, we have peace with God,*" and from this peace flows all filial obedience. To use the words of one who was well versed in the writings of the English Reformers: "The order is this, first, God loves us; secondly, therefore we obtain faith to trust him;

<sup>1</sup> Acts xvi. 30. John xiv. 6. John vi. 28, 29.

thirdly, we are thus saved; fourthly, we thus love him who first loved us; fifthly, this love produces good thoughts, words, and works, as the fruits, not the root of our salvation.”<sup>1</sup>

But how entirely different is the scheme now offered us by the Oxford Tract-writers!

“Man desires to have, under any circumstances, certainty of salvation through Christ. To those who have fallen, God holds out only ‘a light in a dark place,’ sufficient for them to see their path, but not bright or cheering, as they would have it: and so, in different ways, man would forestal the sentence of his judge; the Romanist by the *sacrament* of penance, a *modern class of divines* by the *appropriation of the merits and righteousness of our blessed Redeemer*; the Methodists by sensible experience; *our own*, with the ancient church, *preserves a reverent silence*, not cutting off hope, and yet not nurturing an untimely confidence, or a presumptuous security. A further question will, probably, occur to many; what is that grievous sin after baptism, which involves the falling from grace? what the distinction between lesser and greater—VENIAL and MORTAL sins? or if MORTAL sins be “sins against the decalogue,” as *St. Augustine* says, are they only the highest degrees of those sins, or are the lower also? This question, as it is a very distressing one, I would gladly answer if I could, or dared. But, as with regard to the sin against the Holy Ghost, so here also *scripture is silent*. “What the measure is,” to *apply to St. Augustine’s words*, “and what are the sins, which prevent men’s attaining to the kingdom of God—it is most difficult to discover, and more dangerous to define.” I certainly, much as I have laboured, have not yet been able to decide any thing. Perhaps it is therefore concealed, lest men’s anxiety to hold onward to the avoiding of all sin should wax cold.—But now, since the degree of VENIAL iniquity, if persevered in, is unknown, the eagerness to make progress by more instant continuance in prayer is quickened, and the carefulness to make holy friends of the mammon of unrighteousness is not despised.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Rev. L. Richmond’s Life*, p. 285.

<sup>2</sup> *Dr. Pusey on Baptism, Preface*, p. 14, 15.

Thus is the hope, and power, and energy of the gospel annihilated. All is to be uncertainty, "silence," "concealment." Practically, it will be worse;—it will be sometimes the vehement self-infliction of the ascetic, or the lavished sacrifices of him who exclaims, "*Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil?*"—at others, the heart-sinking, the lassitude, the despair of him who, more enlightened, cries out, "*If I wash myself with snow-water, and make my hands never so clean; yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me.*" (Job ix. 30.)

And for what a "glorious hope" is this the dread exchange! How do the epistles of St. Paul overflow with the exultation of one who could say "*We are always confident;—WHEREFORE we labour that we may be accepted of Him.*" (2 Cor. v. 6, 9.) Never are his exhortations to energetic obedience based upon "uncertainty," "silence," or "anxious doubt." On the contrary, they are unceasingly bound up, in his theology, with Christian assurance. "*Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. THEREFORE, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, FORASMUCH as ye KNOW that your labour is not in vain in the Lord,*" (1 Cor. xv. 58.)

Life, *divine life*, experienced, felt, enjoyed, is the main spring of active obedience, in the apostle's view. Darkness, gloom, doubt, an impervious uncertainty, seem, in Dr. Pusey's view, to be the surer means of producing holiness. "*A reverent silence,*" he tells us, "*is preserved by our own church,*" as to how "*those who have fallen*" may have peace and assurance of hope. Is this a true report? Take a single portion of her services as an example.

In her second exhortation to the Lord's Supper, she supposes some one to say "I am a grievous sinner!" and she immediately adds, "Wherefore, then, do ye not repent and amend?" and proceeds to urge such an one, *so repenting*, to come to the Table the very next Sunday. And, being so come, what are the words she puts into his mouth?

"Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank thee, for that thou dost vouchsafe to feed us, who have duly received these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious body and blood of thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favour and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs through hope of thy everlasting kingdom, by the merits of the most precious death and passion of thy dear Son."

Is this "a reverent *silence*" as to the condition of the repentant sinner? Or is Dr. Pusey a faithful expositor of the church's sentiments, when he so describes her?

## XIV.

## CONCLUSION.

MUCH, doubtless, might be added, especially on subjects connected with those last considered. But our limits warn us of the necessity of closing our investigation by a rapid retrospect of the whole argument.

“*Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.*” (Ecclesiastes xii. 13.) Are these words of any value or importance to us? Do we rightly suppose that the portion of God’s word from whence they are taken, has any bearing on present times, or any authority over our own consciences? Does St. Paul,—when he says, “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,*”—does he really intend to bind his readers, to the end of time, to the whole Bible, as a rule of life and standard of duty, with the single exception of the Levitical dispensation, “*which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on men, until the times of reformation?*” (Heb. ix. 10.) If so, then is the main question



now at issue between churchmen and dissenters irrevocably settled. One controversialist may conveniently forget, and another may as conveniently mis-state, the argument, but to those who read the Bible for themselves, the plain and obvious purport of the whole scripture will be too clear and distinct to be doubted or misunderstood.

And that purport has the great advantage of being supported by the common sense and conscience of mankind. Every one feels, that if a system of faith and morals, unspeakably beneficial to the recipient, is in his own possession, it *must be* his duty to impart that system, by every legitimate means in his power, to those within his reach, and under his influence. *Which* may be considered to be the legitimate means, is another question,—but, as far as positive duty permits, his conscience and his feelings of compassion will necessarily impel him to go.

To a certain extent, though with some hesitation, dissenters themselves must accompany us in this course. The most decided “voluntary,” if he were also a decided Christian, could not venture to open a colliery, or to build a factory, and thus to draw together a large population, living on his wages, and coming within the range of his influence, without making some provision for the preaching of the gospel and the conducting public worship among them. The man who could leave some hundreds of fellow-creatures without the least provision of this kind, might be a good dissenter, indeed, but he must be a very doubtful Christian. We may, however, carry the argument one step further; for the large landed proprietor differs little in his obligations from the manufacturer or the owner of mines or collieries.

Take the case of the owner of one of those many small islands which abound in the British seas. Such a speck in the ocean may have but some 400 or 500 inhabitants. But he who calls the whole territory his own, and who could remove at pleasure the entire population, dares not, if he be really a Christian, disregard the spiritual interest of these five hundred immortal beings. What dissenter, even, could be guilty of such an absurdity as to send missionaries to the islands of the southern ocean, at a distance of 10,000 miles, and to leave his own dependants, at his very door, to perish in heathenism?

The proprietor, then, very naturally and unobjectionably, sends them a clergyman and a schoolmaster, and builds for them a church and a school. So far even most "voluntaries" will permit him to go.

But he may entertain doubts and fears as to his successors. He may feel uncertain as to the continuance of this provision, by him who appears likely to follow him in the possession of the property. What, then, shall he do, to secure the permanence of the provision he has made?

He adopts the following course: He says to the islanders, "You have been in the habit of paying me 18s. an acre for your land. I wish now to apportion that rent in a different way. To maintain the minister whom I have placed among you, you shall pay 3s. an acre as tithe. You shall also keep the church in repair, by a rate to be made whenever needed. And in consideration of these payments, the rent paid to me as landlord shall be, in future, only 14s. per acre. And this shall be a permanent settlement, binding on your heirs, and on mine, in all future time."

Injustice, it is abundantly clear, there would be none in this arrangement. The only question is, whether, as a Christian, the proprietor would be justified in taking such a course. If not, we should like to be informed, at which point of his proceeding the impropriety begins. Can it be said that he had no right to place a preacher of his own peculiar doctrines in that place; but should have left the people to "choose their own religion"? If so, why not leave the Sandwich islanders at equal liberty? Why force upon them a number of preachers of Christianity, for whom they never felt the least desire, or manifested the least anxiety?

But if it is admitted that a man, believing in the gospel himself, and believing, too, that there is no other way of salvation,—may establish a missionary either in the Sandwich islands, or in the Scilly isles,—then, where is the moral difference between his supporting him out of the rents he receives, and his allotting to him a similar income out of those rents, by directing the tenants to pay him a certain proportion? Where, in short, does the irregularity or the unscriptural character of the transaction begin? We are anxious to know.

But if it cannot be pointed out; then, what is just and right in a small island, cannot become suddenly unjust by being removed into a larger one. If legitimate in Sark, it could not be unjust in Wight or Guernsey.

Nay, nor in England itself! Could England be held by one proprietor, he might rightfully follow the above course. Being held by thousands instead of by one, the will of the majority is of necessity substituted for the will of one or a few. If there is to

be any law or order,—if every man is not to “do that which is right in his own eyes,”—then it follows that in all matters not contrary to the law of God, the few must be overruled by the many; and the decisions of the greater part must become law.

And what kind of justice or fair dealing would there be, in a man, who, having taken land *so* settled and apportioned, should afterwards discover that “his conscience” would not permit him to pay such a charge; and should propose, not to pay the full value of the land to the chief owner; but to get rid of the charge for his own personal advantage! Would any candid spectator have any difficulty in deciding, that in such a case “the rights of conscience” were hypocritically pleaded?

But what, if among the occupiers, there have arisen some who find fault with the religion established and preached; and hold that some other should be substituted, or that there should be none at all? Such persons, being a minority only, are most likely to be overruled:—Is, then, such overruling any violence to their consciences; and is their compelled submission an act of religious persecution?

Only when the coercion extends so far as to reach their own personal acts;—those acts in which will and choice are concerned. The payment of a tax or rate is not one of these acts. Most men pay the tax-collector without a question as to the application of the moneys so demanded. And they do rightly.

The legislative and the executive government undertake these questions. The subject's duty is merely to pay what is demanded. He may, indeed, under a free government, have a right to enquire into the

application, and to censure or approve the public authorities for their conduct in the administration of the funds : but this right gives him no title to refuse payment of a tax demanded by a lawful authority, merely because he disapproves of its intended application. Such a liberty would utterly destroy all government. One man might say, "I conscientiously disapprove of a war with China ; and I cannot pay taxes which are levied to support it." Another might aver that he held a standing army to be contrary to the spirit of the gospel ; and could not, therefore, with a safe conscience, contribute to its support. In this way all the operations of government might be suspended, and general confusion ensue.

Our Lord, without hesitation, ordered the tribute demanded of him to be paid, even while remarking that he himself had a just ground of exemption. And St. Paul distinctly enjoins the payment of tribute to Cæsar, even although part of its application was to maintain idol-worship.<sup>1</sup> In the same spirit we contend, without the least hesitation, that while a sincere Protestant, residing in a Popish country, could neither frequent the idolatrous rites of that religion, nor pay them the least regard, even by a single external gesture ; but must rather suffer punishment than so defile his conscience ; the same person might lawfully, or rather *must* readily, pay any rates or taxes demanded of him by the lawful government, whether for the support of the church, the police, or any other institution ; the character of the institution being altogether out of view in that question. "*Tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to*

<sup>1</sup> *Matt.* xvii. 24, 27. *Rom.* xiii. 7.

*whom custom,*” is the Christian’s rule ; and no one can for a moment suppose, that in the days of our Lord and of St. Paul, the application of the tribute paid to Cæsar was such as either would have approved. But every government, whether free or arbitrary, absolute or limited, must have the power of levying imposts and taxes, and their warrant is the Christian’s full discharge, *in foro conscientiæ*, for the payment.

But a Christian legislator is as much bound as a mere landed proprietor, to attend to the spiritual necessities of those for whom he legislates ; and in so doing, so long as he compels no man to join in worship which he disapproves, he violates no right of conscience. The obligation is pressed upon him by his own innate perception of duty ; and when he turns to the word of God, he finds every single example there recorded, from which he may safely aim to learn wisdom,—uniting in one current of uniform practice. Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon, Jehoshaphat, Nehemiah, Ezra,—all, in short, to whose history he turns for direction, agree in teaching him by their conduct, recorded “for our instruction in righteousness,”—that the religious welfare of the people committed to his charge, ought to be the first and chiefest object in a ruler’s view.

He learns, then, without difficulty, that it is incumbent on him to establish the worship of God. He next reads further, with a view to inquire, after what kind of system such an establishment should be framed.

He finds, from the very beginning of history, an established and recognized priesthood. He observes, in all ages, an order of men set apart,—not, obviously, by their own will or fancy merely, but accord-

ing to some settled plan, originating, unquestionably, in a divine command.

The ministers of both dispensations derive their appointment directly from God himself. Aaron was consecrated and anointed by God's especial command to his inspired servant Moses.<sup>1</sup> The apostles were sent forth by Christ himself, who "*breathed on them, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.*"<sup>2</sup> And, acting by direct inspiration, they themselves appointed successors to their ordinary, though not to their extraordinary, functions and powers; as we see in the cases of Timothy, Titus, and various others.

He also observes, on a little further examination, that the oversight, or *episcopacy*, which the apostles naturally exercised over the churches they had planted, and the pastors they had settled among those churches,—was continued, as far as it could be continued by uninspired men, in the hands of certain of the more eminent of their followers; as is sufficiently visible in scripture, both in St. Paul's epistles to the bishops of Ephesus and Crete, and St. John's messages to the angels of the seven churches.

He has thus arrived at a satisfactory conclusion on three great points: 1. A provision to be made by the civil power, itself being Christian, for the instruction of the people in Christianity; 2. An order of men, prepared and sent forth to the work of the ministry, by those "who have authority given unto them to call and send ministers into the Lord's vineyard; 3. An episcopacy, or oversight over the ministers of the church, to be exercised by certain of the more experienced of their number, set apart by the church

<sup>1</sup> *Exodus* xxviii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *John* xx. 22.

for this peculiar duty. These leading points being established, he becomes, naturally, a supporter of an established, and episcopal church; that is, if placed in this part of the world,—of the church of England.

But here a new question springs up:—

The dissenting objector is dismissed; both because his favourite scheme of voluntaryism runs counter alike to conscience and the word of God; and because he arbitrarily and unjustifiably casts off the primitive form of church government. Another claimant, however, arises, in a church, or at least a community calling itself a church,—which assumes to be the identical body founded by Christ, and denounces all other forms of Christianity as spurious and illegitimate. The demand is boldly advanced, and the student, if unprepared for it, will be easily staggered, at first, by the firm and confident tone of these pretensions.

“True,” the Romish objector will say, “you have indeed what you call a church, and what you imagine to be bishops; but in these matters we are not to be blinded by mere external appearances. Your so-called church is at variance with the Catholic church of nearly all Christendom. We must inquire how this happens; and we shall then find, that the caprice of an arbitrary monarch, about three centuries since, severed your establishment from the unity of the faith; altered and re-altered creeds; made and unmade bishops, and left, in short, nothing but a wreck of the ancient church of England; upon the foundations of which was reared, a merely human and political institution, agreeing with nothing else calling itself Christian, on the whole face of the earth.”

Such is the objection constantly made by the ad-



herents of the church of Rome. How is it to be met?

Certainly not by attempting to justify every act of Henry VIII, the Duke of Somerset, or Elizabeth. In the good providence of God, the acts of arbitrary rulers were made subservient to the blessed end of reforming the English church; but it would be idle to contend that this reform was effected by the great body of the bishops and clergy of the realm, as it ought, upon any consistent church principles, to have been.

Equally futile will be the attempt to prove Romanism fatally erroneous by the voice of "tradition," and in this way to justify the reform which then took place. If it were allowable, indeed, to select, at pleasure, our own portion of "tradition;" and to arraign popery before the bar of the fathers of the first three, or the first five centuries, something might possibly be done; though even then we might find deviations from "antiquity" in our own, as well as in the Romish church. But who is to limit "tradition" to this or that period;—or how is the Romanist to be made to submit to be judged by the witness of the fifth century, excluding the sixth and seventh; or by the first seven, excluding all after? The end of all discussions must be just that at which Mr. Froude ultimately arrived. "It appears to me plain that in all matters that seem to us indifferent, or even doubtful, we should conform our practices to those of the church which has preserved its traditional practices unbroken."<sup>1</sup>

"I can see no claim which the Prayer-book has on

<sup>1</sup> *Remains*, vol. i. p. 336.

a layman's deference, as the teaching of the church, which the Breviary and Missal have not in a far greater degree." <sup>1</sup>

No, the Reformation cannot be justified;—and if not justified, then the church of England cannot be maintained,—on any other than the one, infallible authority, the word of God. "Holy scripture," saith the church, "containeth all things necessary to salvation,"—and holy scripture containeth not one atom or outline of Popery. Nay, further, Popery is a system *essentially opposed* to scripture: it proposes another religion; other objects of worship; another way of salvation. It rivals, and, where it can, it displaces and supplants Christianity; it contradicts, and wherever it is able, it closes and puts away, the holy scriptures.

On this ground, and on no other, the Reformation may be defended. Admit the fact,—which all history establishes,—that "laity and clergy, learned and unlearned, all ages, sects, and degrees of men, women and children of whole Christendom,—were drowned in abominable idolatry, for the space of eight hundred years and more;" <sup>2</sup> and you have a sufficient justification of the convulsions of the sixteenth century,—convulsions which shook the realm to its foundations, and often threatened to overwhelm it in universal confusion: but without this fact you have none.

Rome, it has recently been argued, is now, and always has been, a true church of Christ. So thought not Ridley, "than whom," says Mr. Palmer himself, "none merits a more conspicuous place." He thus

<sup>1</sup> *Froude's Remains*, vol. i. p. 403.

<sup>2</sup> *Homily on the Peril of Idolatry*, part iii.

writes,—“Is it not read, that the old and ancient writers understood Peter’s first epistle to be written at Rome, which is called by him, in the same epistle, in plain terms, “BABYLON?” By the “abominations” thereof, I understand all the whole trade of the Romish religion, carried on under the name and title of Christ, but which is *contrary to the only rule of all true religion*, that is, to God’s word.”

“When I consider all these things, and compare the same again and again, all those ways wherein standeth the substance of the Romish religion, whereof I spake before, it may be evident and easy to perceive that these *two ways*, these *two religions*,—the one of Christ, the other of the Romish see, in these latter days, are as far distant, the one from the other, as light and darkness; good and evil; righteousness and unrighteousness; Christ and Belial.”<sup>1</sup>

“The (Romish) see is the seat of Satan, and the bishop of the same, who maintains the abominations thereof, is ANTICHRIST himself indeed. It is this see which St. John, in his Revelation, calleth “Babylon,” or the harlot of Babylon, and spiritually Sodom and Egypt, “the mother of fornications and abominations in the earth.””<sup>2</sup>

And this view, which was universally held by the divines of the period of the Reformation, and generally by those of later days, as it is founded on, is necessarily agreeable to, the predictions contained in the later apostolic writings; while the contrary hypothesis is absolutely irreconcilable with those predictions. All the prophetic writings, whether of the Old or New Testaments, concur in warning us of an

<sup>1</sup> *Lamentation for the Change of Religion.*

<sup>2</sup> *Last Farewell.*

extensive falling away, in the latter days ;—a falling away, which, if Rome has not apostatized, has entirely failed of its fulfilment.

Daniel, among the ten kingdoms (horns) into which the Roman empire is divided, sees one horn, “ *diverse from the other,*” which “ *speaketh great words against the Most High, and wears out the saints of the Most High, during a time, and times, and half a time.*” (ch. vii. 24, 25.) And the judgment and condemnation of this mysterious power, is identified with the coming of “ *the Son of Man*” in his glory.

St. Paul, in the strictest harmony with the prophet, warns the Thessalonians, that “ *the day of Christ*” will not come until “ *a falling away*” has first been seen, “ *and that man of sin has been revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.*” And “ *this wicked,*” says the apostle, “ *the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming.*” (2 Thess. ii. 3, 4, 8.)

St. John, following in the same line, declares, that “ *the holy city shall be trodden under foot forty and two months:*” and that God’s witnesses, the “ *two olive-trees*” and “ *two candlesticks,*” shall prophesy in sackcloth for this period of 1260 days. In another vision, he sees the church, symbolized by “ *a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars,*”—driven “ *into the wilderness,*” there to abide for the same space of 1260 years. And in her place he finds another woman, who is “ *arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls;*

*having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: and upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.*" (Rev. xvii. 4—6.) And this vision is connected with that of Daniel, by this link, that the woman sits on the beast, "*having seven heads and ten horns,*" which Daniel, nearly 700 years before, had had presented to his view. It is also added, "*The woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth:*" a description which necessarily and finally fixed, in the apostle's mind, the identity of the harlot with Rome.

It is hardly possible, then, for a reasonable being, entering on the inquiry with any degree of candour, to resist the conviction, 1. That the fourth universal empire, Rome, is designated in Daniel's vision: 2. That it is in its divided state, of the ten kingdoms which have subsisted since the breaking up of the western empire, that it is to be regarded: 3. That as ridden upon, or ruled over, by a woman, a church or ecclesiastical power,<sup>1</sup> it is Papal Rome, the power which "*makes war with the saints,*" (Dan. vii. 21.) which is chiefly to be considered.

But, lastly, it is observed that the end of all these prophetic views is the same, "*I beheld until the beast was slain, and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame.*" (Dan. vii. 11.) "*And that wicked the Lord shall consume with the brightness of his coming.*" (2 Thes. ii. 8.) "*She shall be utterly burnt with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.*" (Rev. xviii. 8.)

<sup>1</sup> A few remarks on Mr. Palmer's objections to this interpretation will be given in Appendix C.

Now this end, the inquirer will unhesitatingly say, cannot be the fate reserved for a true church. If Rome be destined to this destruction, then, instead of recommending, as Mr. Palmer does, that, "If residing in France or Spain, the law of unity requires that we should be willing to communicate with the Romish church there established<sup>1</sup>," the only fitting language is that of the apostle, "*Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.*" (Rev. xviii. 4.) Rome,—the Romish church, the only Rome which has had any existence for the last twelve centuries,—Rome is unquestionably the power designated in Rev. xvii. 18. Rome, then, is, "*the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus,*" (ver. 6): and this again identifies her with the little horn of Daniel vii. which "*made war with the saints, and prevailed against them.*" And history offers her thousand corroborations of this description, in the myriads of slaughtered victims which dyed the fields of Languedoc, of Belgium, of the Vaudois, of Bohemia, and which perished in the dungeons of the Spanish inquisition. Even were prophecy silent, the record of blood-guiltiness, of the deepest dye, would remain to sink this "mother of harlots" into perdition. But history, in these cases, is the mere corroboration of inspired prophecy.

In the visions of the future, the apostle saw the harlot-church revelling in the blood of the saints. In the records of the past we find the most abundant proofs of the divine inspiration which depicted this view, and guided the apostle's pen. And both agree to anticipate

<sup>1</sup> *Treatise on the Church*, vol. i. p. 318.

the day, when it shall be exultingly said, "*Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her:*" "*for in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.*" (Rev. xviii. 20, 24.)

With Rome, then, we can have no parley; no compromise. Opposed to the Dissenter, on the one hand, because, in our view, he deserts his first and most imperative social duty; and denies, equally, to God, the honour which is His due,—to man, the instruction which is his "life,"—we are still more opposed to the Papist, on the other, because in his false and apostate church we view "*the Mother of Harlots and abominations of the earth.*" The "voluntary" "leaves undone that which he ought to have done,"—the idolater "does that which he ought not to have done." May we be kept in the safe but narrow road, lying midway between the two.

The great danger, however, as we have already argued, in the latter chapters of the preceding work, is at present found in *too high*, rather than in *too low* doctrines. on most of these questions. So sets the stream of popular feeling at the present moment; and so sets, also, the current of mind, and learning, and character. To maintain and propagate "high-church principles" is a distinction eagerly sought for and proudly borne;—as if there was no danger in ULTRA notions in this direction, whatever there might be in ULTRA-PROTESTANTISM!

Common sense, however, discerns, without difficulty, the dangers which attend extremes on either side; and amidst the varying fashions of human opinion, the mind that distrusts itself and looks upward for direction, will anxiously long for some in-

fallible rule and guide. No such rule, excepting the Word of God, can be found. The teaching of the Spirit, *independent of and superior to*, the written word,—as held by the Quaker,—gives way, and betrays those who hold it, some into Socinianism, and others into Popery. The teaching of the Church, as preferred by the Romanist, resolves itself, when closely examined, into nothing better than the teaching of an individual priest. And the “voice of Antiquity,” now vainly set up by some among ourselves, is nothing more than a maze of contrarieties and difficulties, leading, as the only natural result, into the wearied enquirer’s last resource,—the infallibility of the Church, which is Popery itself. From each and every one of these delusions may it be our constant prayer to be delivered; and to be enabled to cling fast to the Psalmist’s stay,—“*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.*”



## APPENDIX.

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NOTE A. PAGE 100.

EXTRACT FROM DR. DWIGHT'S TRAVELS.

“ If it be admitted, as by the sentence of both reason and revelation it ought to be, that a legislature has a right to establish the worship of God ; it will also be admitted, that the legislature of Connecticut has adopted a wise and liberal system for this important purpose. They have done most of that which is necessary, and nothing which is not necessary, to this end. So far as is consistent with the design, they have also placed every thing in the hands of those who are chiefly concerned ; and left them to the guidance of their own choice. At the same time they have made them responsible to the proper tribunal, the supreme authority of the state.

“ There are two classes of men, who contend against the interference of the legislature for the support of public worship : those who consider it as inexpedient, and those who regard it as unlawful.

“ On this subject it would be easy to fill a volume. It cannot be supposed that I can here discuss it at length ; nor that, if this were in my power, you would with patience read the discussion. But it has been

so often a theme of contention and complaint, on this as well as on the other side of the Atlantic, and particularly in the states south of New England, as to render it proper to examine the subject with some degree of minuteness even here. To the former of these classes, then, I address the following observations :—

“ The legislature of every state is the proper superintendant of all its prudential concerns. It has not only a right, but is obliged by an authority, which it can neither oppose nor question, to pursue every lawful and expedient measure for the promotion of the public welfare. To this great purpose religion in every country is not only useful, but indispensable. But religion cannot exist, and has never existed, for any length of time, without public worship. As every man ought, therefore, willingly to contribute to the support of whatever increases his own prosperity; he is by immovable consequence obliged to support the religion, which, by increasing the common prosperity, increases of course his own.

“ Should an advocate for the doctrine which I oppose, demand proof that religion is indispensable to the welfare of a free country, this is my answer :—Morality, as every sober man who knows any thing of the subject, discerns with a glance, is merely a branch of religion; and where there is no religion, there is no morality. Moral obligation has its sole ground in the character and government of God. But where God is not worshipped, his character will soon be disregarded; and the obligations founded on it, unfelt and forgotten. No duty, therefore, to individuals, or to the public, will be realized or performed. Justice, kindness, and truth, the great hinges on

which free society hangs, will be unpractised, because there will be no motives to the practice, of sufficient force to resist the passions of man. Oaths of office, and of testimony, alike, without the sanctions of religion, are merely solemn farces. Without the sense of accountableness to God,—without the realizing belief of a future retribution, they are employed only to insult the Creator, deprave the juror, and cheat his fellow-men. This sense nothing but religion can inspire or preserve. With the loss of religion, therefore, the ultimate foundation of confidence is blown up, and the security of life, liberty, and property buried in the ruins.

“In aid of these observations I allege, that no free government has ever existed for any time without the support of religion. Athens, Sparta, and Rome stood and fell with their religion, false and gross as it was; because it contained some of those great truths and solemn sanctions, without which man can possess no conscience, exercise no virtue, and find no safety. To their religion, Britain, Switzerland, and the United Netherlands have owed most of their happiness and their permanency; and might say to this celestial denizen, in every period of their prosperity, as the devout and humble Christian to his God, ‘Having obtained help of thee, we have continued to this time.’

“In the history of the globe there is recorded but one attempt seriously made, to establish a free government without religion. From this attempt has sprung new proof, that such a government, stripped of this aid, cannot exist. The government, thus projected, was itself never established, but was a mere abortion; exhibiting doubtful signs of life at its birth,

and possessing this dubious existence only as an ephemeron. During its diurnal life it was the greatest scourge, particularly to those for whom it was formed, and generally to the rest of mankind, which the world has ever seen. Instead of being a free, just, and beneficent system of administration, it was more despotic than a Persian caliphate; more wasteful of life, and all its blessings, than an inundation of Goths and Vandals. Those who lived under it, and either originated or executed its measures, were the authors of more crimes than any collection of men, since the termination of that gigantic wickedness, from which nothing but an universal deluge could cleanse this polluted world.

“These evils, my antagonist is further to be informed, were the result of the only experiment ever made, of erecting a government without religion. They are the only specimen of the genuine efficacy of infidelity and atheism on the mind and on the happiness of man, during the only opportunity which they have enjoyed, of possessing an unlimited control over human affairs. Until the remembrance of this experiment shall have been lost, it can never be made again.

“Finally, he is to be informed, that it is wiser, more humane, and more effectual, to prevent crimes than to punish them. He is to be told, what he cannot deny, that religion is the only great preventative of crimes: and contributes more, in a far more desirable manner, to the peace and good order of society, than the judge and the sheriff, the gaol and the gibbet united. He is to be reminded, that mankind, with all the influence of religion added to that of the civil government, are still imperfectly governed; are

less orderly, peaceful, and friendly to each other, than humanity must wish; and that, therefore, he who would willingly lessen this influence is a fool; he who would destroy it, a madman.

“I am well aware, that, in spite of this and any other reasoning,—in spite of demonstration itself, there are men, who may, and in all probability will, say, that however good and useful the public worship of God may be, they do not wish to avail themselves of its benefits, and owe therefore no contributions to its support. To these men I reply, that he who has no children, or who does not wish to send his children to school, and he who does not use the roads and bridges of his country, because he is either necessitated or inclined to stay at home, may, on exactly the same ground, claim an exemption from supporting schools, roads, and bridges. To such an objector it is a sufficient answer, that these things enter into all the happiness which he enjoys, and that without them he and his countrymen would be hermits and savages. Without religion, man becomes in a short time a beast of prey, and wastes the happiness of his fellow-men with as little remorse as the wolf or the tiger, and to a degree which leaves their ravages out of remembrance. Even if this were not the melancholy fact, the list of individual enjoyments is as much more valuable in a community where religion prevails, than where it does not, as the safety, peace, and pleasure of civilized society are more desirable than the exposure, discord, and misery produced by the furious and malignant passions of uncultivated man.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Christ has ordained that they who preach the

gospel shall live of the gospel." To cut off all debate, so far as debate can be cut off, St. Paul has sanctioned this ordinance, by an appeal to the law of Moses, the express injunction of Christ, and the authority of his own inspiration.

"But why, it will be asked, may not this living be furnished by a voluntary contribution? There are, undoubtedly, cases in which it may. In large towns, congregations may be ordinarily gathered, sufficiently numerous and sufficiently liberal, to build one or more churches, and to support one or more ministers. In smaller towns this would ordinarily be impossible; and I suppose the objector himself will admit, that it is at least as necessary for the inhabitants of smaller towns to have ministers as for those of cities; especially as they constitute the mass of people in all countries. In such towns the whole burthen of supporting ministers by contribution would fall upon a few individuals. But these could not sustain this burthen, and ministers, of course, could not live. In such towns, therefore, there will, upon this plan, be no ministers; I mean none such as the gospel requires: "Workmen who need not to be ashamed: who rightly divide the word of truth; who give attendance to reading, to exhortation, and to doctrine; who meditate upon these things, and give themselves wholly to them; so that their profiting may appear unto all."

"If we look to facts, we shall find the same doctrine supported with illustrious evidence. In the year 1793, I was a member of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church. There were then, if I do not misremember, four hundred and twelve congregations, belonging to this church, within the

United States south of New England ; and two hundred and nine congregations in the state of Connecticut alone. To supply these Presbyterian congregations, there were two hundred and four ministers. In Connecticut there were, in the year 1790, 237,946 inhabitants, and in the states south of New England, 2,920,478. In the year 1798, there were belonging to the Presbyterian church, two hundred and forty-two ministers : of whom thirty-three were without any charge ; or, in the language of New England, were not *settled ministers*. Two hundred and nine ministers, therefore, supplied, so far as they were supplied at all, the whole number of Presbyterian congregations south of New England. The number of congregations at that time cannot be ascertained, as the returns were in this respect imperfect. These ministers supplied two hundred and ninety congregations : eighty-one being what are called pluralities : and there were one hundred and forty-two vacancies returned. Five presbyteries made no returns of the vacancies within their bounds. If we suppose the vacancies in these presbyteries to be eighteen, the number will be one hundred and sixty. This number will make the whole four hundred and thirty. With this numerous train of vacancies, there were thirty ministers still, who were unsettled. It follows irresistibly, either that the congregations were so small as to be unable to support ministers, or so indifferent to religion as to be unwilling.

“ The number of vacancies in Connecticut at that time, I am unable precisely to ascertain. Twenty may perhaps be assumed as the probable number. There were, then, at that time within the state, one hundred and eighty-nine ministers.

“ In the year 1800, there were in Connecticut, 251,002 inhabitants; and in the states south of New England, 4,033,775. The whole account, according to this estimate, will stand thus:—

“ There were in 1798,

	Congre- gations.	Minis- ters.	Vacant- cies.	Plura- lities.	Ministers not settled.	Inhabit- ants.
In Connecticut ...	209	189	20	0	5	251,002
In the States south of New-England	430	242	160	81	33	4,033,775

“ In Connecticut, then, a sixteenth of the number of inhabitants formed two hundred and nine congregations, and supported one hundred and eighty-nine ministers. Of these congregations, twenty were vacant, and five of the ministers were unsettled. In the states south of New-England, sixteen times the number of inhabitants formed four hundred and thirty congregations, of which eighty-one were pluralities, and one hundred and sixty were vacant, or without ministers. The ministers supported and settled were two hundred and nine. If the states contained congregations, and were supplied with ministers in the same proportion as Connecticut, the whole number of congregations would be three thousand three hundred and forty-four; and the whole number of ministers settled and supported would be three thousand and twenty-four.<sup>1</sup> In this estimate we

<sup>1</sup> Or, to give the result in another form: In those states in which Christianity was established by law, the Presbyterian ministers, supported and settled, were in the proportion of *one to every thirteen hundred and sixty-four inhabitants*; while, in those states in which the “*voluntary system*” prevailed, the settled and supported ministers of the same class were only in the proportion of *one to every nineteen thousand three hundred*.

And yet the advocates of “voluntary churches” are perpetually referring us to America for proof, “*conclusive proof*,” of the excellence



have a fair specimen of the natural consequence of establishing, or neglecting to establish, the public worship of God by the law of the land. In Connecticut every inhabitant, who is not precluded by disease or inclination, may hear the gospel, and celebrate the public worship of God every sabbath. In the states specified it is not improbable, that a number of people several times as great as the census of Connecticut, have scarcely heard a sermon or a prayer in their lives.

“The only objection which I can foresee, against this estimate is, that although the number of Presbyterian congregations in Connecticut is much greater in proportion, than that in the states specified, yet this difference is, to a great extent, lessened by the superior proportion of congregations formed by other classes of Christians in those states. The number of Episcopal congregations in Connecticut, including twenty-six pluralities, is sixty-one; the number of Baptist congregations sixty-seven; making in the aggregate one hundred and twenty-eight. It is doubted whether a correct estimate of the congregations formed by these and other classes of Christians, in the two fields of inquiry, would be materially different from that which has been already given. This estimate, however, cannot be made; there being no data from which it may be derived. I have chosen the Presbyterian congregations as the subject of inquiry, because the numbers were attainable from returns in my possession.

“An examination of the religious state of Massa-

and efficiency of their scheme. To *America!* one glance at which ought to close their mouths for ever. But they “know neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.”

chusetts would have given a result not essentially different.

“In a happy conformity to this estimate, and the scheme here supported, has been the prevalence of religion in these two states. It is doubted, whether there is a collection of ministers in the world, whose labours have been more prosperous, or under whose preaching a greater proportion of those who heard them have become the subjects of real piety. I know of no country in which revivals of religion have been so frequent, or, in proportion to the number of inhabitants, so extensive, as in these two states. God, therefore, may be considered as having thus far manifested his own approbation of the system. If, at the same time, we advert to the peace, the good order, the regular distribution of justice, the universal existence of schools, and the universal enjoyment of the education which they communicate, and the extension of superior education, it will be difficult for a sober man not to perceive, that the smiles of heaven have regularly accompanied this system from its commencement to the present time. I need not, however, have gone any further for the illustration of this subject, than to a comparison of the states of Rhode-Island and Connecticut. The former of these, independently of Providence, Newport, and two or three other small towns, is in all these important particulars, *a mere contrast to the latter*. Yet these states were planted by colonies from the same nation, lie in the same climate, and are separated merely by a meridional line. *A sober man, who knows them both, can hardly hesitate, whatever may have been his original opinion concerning this subject, to believe, that a legislature is bound to establish the public worship of God.*”

## NOTE B. PAGE 113.

## THE REVENUES OF THE CHURCH.

We cannot but esteem it a most happy circumstance, that the official returns lately ordered by government have been completed, and have put an end, so far as it is possible to put an end, to a system of exaggeration the most gross and scandalous that ever was made use of even for the basest purposes. It was scarcely possible, during the last six or seven years, to take up any dissenting publication, without meeting with some statement aiming to excite the popular cupidity, without the least regard to truth or common honesty. Nothing was more current than assumptions of "enormous wealth" possessed by the church, as confidently put forward as if the fact had been fully and completely ascertained and established. The most moderate of these statements generally described the revenues of the church at six or seven millions per annum, while others raised the estimate to eight, or even to nine millions.

Totally at variance, however, with all these fictions, is the official report lately made by the Commissioners appointed for the purpose of ascertaining the facts of the case. That report gives the result of actual investigation, as to the revenues of the church of England and Wales, for three years, to wit, 1829,

1830, and 1831. The outlines of the statement are as follows:—

Net Annual Revenues of the Episcopal and Archiepiscopal Sees.	-	-	-	-	160,114 <i>l.</i>
Net Annual Revenues of the Cathedral and Collegiate Churches	-	-	-	-	207,975
Net Annual Separate Revenues of Dignitaries, in such Churches	-	-	-	-	63,995
Net Annual Income of the 10,701 Benefices in England and Wales	-	-	-	-	<u>-3,058,248</u>
					3,490,332 <i>l.</i>

It ought not to be overlooked, however, that the last item, the 3,058,248*l.* which forms the net income of the 10,701 benefices, is not composed of the tithes merely, but of *all* the receipts and emoluments, voluntary or legal, which form the whole income of the parochial clergy. How important it is to make this distinction may be seen from one or two facts, a variety of which might, if necessary, be adduced. One rectory in London, the tithes of which are nominally 350*l.* but never actually produce more than 300*l.* is returned as possessing an income of 590*l.*

The very next parish pays only 250*l.* tithes, but its income is reported to be 462*l.*

The difference arises from Easter-offerings, surplice-fees, and various small endowments, left by pious persons in former times.

Let a moderate allowance be made for these things, and it will be doubtful if the amount of tithes actually collected can much exceed *two millions* per annum. Such are the revenues of that establishment, which is sometimes described as “gorged and overburdened with wealth!” Such are the revenues, by the seizure of which, according to the *Ecclesiastical Knowledge Society*, the state would be enabled to remit *twenty-one millions* of annual taxation!

But the assailants of the church are most fond of

dealing in generals; and they like best to speak of her revenues in the gross. These, by the simple operation of *only doubling*, or *trebling*, they contrive to state at some seven or eight millions a-year. They then invent a statement, *wholly fictitious*, which professes to shew the revenues of all the other churches in Europe; and which is so contrived,—having not the least foundation in fact,—as to exhibit a total of rather less for all Europe than for England and Ireland alone! The desperate dishonesty of the whole invention is seen in this one fact, that the English church is made to appear to be better endowed than all the churches of Europe, Spain being one of the mass;—whereas the slightest glance at the statistics of the two countries would have shewn, that the church of Spain possesses not less than *a fifth*, and in all probability *a third*, of the whole land and agricultural products of that kingdom,—while the church of our own country owns certainly not a *fiftieth*, and probably not a *seventieth* part of the land and agricultural products of England! But it is this sort of freedom in dealing with facts, which constitutes a predominant feature in the modern “*liberal*.”

Were, however, the statement as precisely true, as it is grossly and wickedly false,—that the endowments of our established churches were equal in annual amount to those of all the rest of Europe united, still it would be the height of absurdity and injustice to urge such a contrast, without at the same time admitting the correlative circumstance,—that in all other things, as well as in religion and religious institutions,—the expenditure of England is out of all proportion to that of any of the continental kingdoms. Where, but in England, do we find courts of law

costing *half a million* per annum; or nearly *three millions* expended on the salaries of the public servants in various departments?

In fact, this way of viewing the question is just as rational, as the argument which seeks to abolish the monarchy of England; because, forsooth, it is discovered, that our transatlantic relatives have procured a sort of chief clerk to sign their letters and perform other routine business, at about half the salary which the city of London gives to its Lord Mayor!

Wholly irrational is it to take any such view of the question, without at the same time remembering that in wealth, in national revenue, in commerce, in naval power, in colonial possessions, and in a variety of other points of view, England stands at the same point of elevation above all the other nations of the earth, as, according to these representations, she does in ecclesiastical endowments! This general view is all-important, as suggesting the question, how this widely-extended power and influence and wealth came to be concentrated in this little isle. To deny the overruling hand of God in thus raising England to the summit of earthly grandeur and dominion, is nothing less than atheism. And in the mind of one who refers all things to His sovereign will, and who, at the same time, remembers that he has himself said, "Those who honour me I will honour,"—the question arises, most naturally and irresistibly, whether England's having long maintained the purest church in Christendom, may not have had some connection with England's steady and continued rise, which has never ceased its progress since that church was first placed on its present foundation?

However, fixing our eyes again on the ascertained fact, that the church establishment of England and Wales enjoys revenues amounting to nearly three millions and a half per annum;—let us seriously ask, whether this amount is too large,—whether it is disproportionate to the object to be attained, or to the other branches of the country's ordinary expenditure.

Three millions a year may very naturally seem a large sum, if it be compared with dissimilar objects. If a man thinks of any private fortune or private expenditure, or casts his eyes on some minor and penurious state, such as Denmark or Switzerland, or on some kingdom where infidelity virtually reigns, as in France, he may soon bring himself to think with astonishment and indignation, of a church establishment possessed of three millions a-year! But nothing can be more absurd than this mode of comparison. Nothing in England, and especially none of her institutions, can, with any propriety, be compared with the same things in other countries, in point of expense. The settled state of things, and the value of money, totally differs. If we would learn whether any disproportion exists, between the objects contemplated by the church, and the revenues set apart for those objects, we must compare the facts of the case with those which concern others of our national affairs and concerns.

The church establishment possesses and employs (it is erroneous to say it *costs*) an annual revenue of *three millions and a half*. And this, let it be remembered, for no decaying establishment, but for an institution which never before was so energetic, so efficient, or so useful, as at the present moment. Now let us ask, what is expended among us, on other and

equally national objects. Our army is at present on a peace establishment. It is, therefore, little more than a skeleton, except so far as may be required for our colonies. And yet for this outline of an army we pay more than *seven millions* per annum; while upon our navy we expend nearly *six millions*, and on the ordnance *a million and a half*. A total of more than fourteen millions per annum is thus devoted to the defence of the country, and that at a moment when we have scarcely a single declared enemy in the four quarters of the globe!

In conducting the civil service of the state, a similarly liberal expenditure will be found to be incurred. A return was ordered, and laid before Parliament in 1828, of the pay or salaries of all persons employed in public offices and departments; which return shewed a total of no less than 2,788,987*l.* paid in salaries to persons employed in the service of the government.

These circumstances will shew the scale on which public business and public remuneration in this country is carried on, and will aid us in forming a just idea of the propriety of an endowment of 3,058,248*l.* set apart for the religious instruction of 10,701 parishes.

Then, as to the burden of this “expensive establishment,” and the relief which might be afforded by confiscating its revenues to the service of the state;—let us say a few words:

In the year 1830, the duty on beer was repealed. Will the reader pause for a moment, and try to estimate, if he can, the amount of actual relief to the country, and of comfort and happiness to the people, which accrued from that repeal? It escapes our search; we have tried, but we cannot detect it. We are aware, indeed, of the multiplication of beer-shops,



and of the vast increase of crime which rapidly followed,—but the benefit, the advantage we are unable to find out. And yet the amount then conceded by the national exchequer, was equal to the whole amount of all the tithes of England and Wales. Had the Chancellor of the Exchequer so pleased, he might have continued the beer-tax, and abolished the tithes. And at this moment, by re-imposing the beer-duty, and raising the price of porter to that which it bore in 1829, the finance minister of this day might at a word, annihilate the tithes, and endow the holders, like the West Indian proprietors, with a government stock in lieu of their amount.

When considering this point, of the revenues of the church, contemplated as a *burden* on the country ; (though, in truth, that can be no burden to the people, which is wholly paid, as we shall presently see, by the landholders)—it is useful to observe one or two facts relating to some other burdens which the people voluntarily impose upon themselves. The amount of taxation paid by them for useless, and partly injurious, luxuries, will shew what a comparative trifle is this three millions and a half per annum ; and with what ease the people might relieve themselves from more than twice that amount, by merely abstaining from enjoyments of the most foolish, and even mischievous, character.

In the year 1827, the duties received upon *spirituous liquors* amounted to the sum of 7,043,244*l.* 11*s.* 2*d.* Allowing for the prime cost of the commodity, and the profits of both the wholesale and retail dealers, it may be computed that the people voluntarily taxed themselves in the purchase of this one article, to the extent of from *ten to twelve millions* within the year.

And we may, upon a moderate calculation assert, that at least nine millions of this was paid to their own injury!—spent on what tended to destroy both soul and body. In the same year a nearly equal sum (6,984,996*l.*) was paid for duties on malt liquors: denoting another *ten or twelve millions* wasted, like the former, upon drink. Half of this, at the least, worked not good, but evil,—not refreshment, but drunkenness. On the whole, however, let it be borne in mind, when the “ vast wealth ” of our ecclesiastical establishment is spoken of;—that in the mere article of fermented and spirituous liquors, there is expended, (and as far as the above items are concerned, we suppose chiefly among the working classes) about *six or eight* times as much as the whole revenues of the national church!

Take another instance,—and that of a mere luxury. The duties paid on tobacco, that utterly useless trash, have often, in late years, exceeded three millions in the year! So that it would seem that we thrust up our nostrils in the form of snuff, or consume in smoke from the ridiculous “ cigar,” more than is required to furnish a resident clergyman in 10,700 parishes?

But it would be endless to follow out this line of illustration. A multitude of instances would present themselves to every mind. The strollers and holiday-makers of London spend more in the mere item of steam-boat excursions, in one summer, than would pay all the clergy of the metropolis for three years.

Surely, however, enough has been said on this first head. Surely, if any thing like a general view of the country's means, and its expenditure, is taken, it will be impossible for any one to maintain, that the revenues of the church, as a whole, are excessive.

But we may next consider,—what is the real duty of the state, in the matter of *regulation* and *distribution*. And here our first duty is to exhibit, from the commissioners' report, the principal items touching this distribution.

According to this report, the twenty-seven episcopal and archiepiscopal sees have, collectively, a net revenue of 160,114*l.* yielding an average income of 5,930*l.* to each. And the inequalities in these revenues,—some bishops having 19,000*l.* a-year, and others only 900*l.*—have been already rectified by an Act of Parliament passed within the last two years.

As no statement is given of the number of persons attached to the cathedral chapters, we can strike no average in their case. But as the total net revenues of these bodies, amounting to 271,970*l.* are shared among several hundred individuals, it is clear that the number of large incomes among them cannot be great. But here too, measures are already in progress for reducing the number of cathedral offices, and thus obtaining endowments for some of the new churches which are rising in every quarter.

The parochial benefices are arranged in the following order. There are

294	with incomes under	50 <i>l.</i> per annum.
1621	..... of 50 <i>l.</i> and under	100
1591	..... 100	150
1355	..... 150	200
1964	..... 200	300
1317	..... 300	400
830	..... 400	500
504	..... 500	600
337	..... 600	700
217	..... 700	800
129	..... 800	900
91	..... 900	1000
137	..... 1000	1500
31	..... 1500	2000
18	..... 2000 and upwards.	

Such are the leading facts of the case. Let us now compare these incomes, the larger ones especially, with the salaries and allowances of other professions and branches of the public service.

For instance; we have twenty-seven bishops, dividing between them 160,114*l.* per annum, or 5,930*l.* for each *sec.* Now let us see what another learned profession, important and venerable indeed, but not more so than that of divinity;—let us see what the heads of the legal bench are allowed.

We have, in all, for England and Wales alone, in equity, law, bankruptcy, &c. twenty-four or twenty-five judges. Their salaries vary from 14,000*l.* to 3000*l.* per annum,—a *puisne* judge of the principal courts receiving 5000*l.* a-year, which is probably about the average. And, if we pass onwards, and look towards the deans and chapters, we see them balanced by masters in chancery, registrars, clerks, and commissioners, with salaries from 1000*l.* to 4000*l.* each, swelling the total cost of our judicial establishments to 484,000*l.* per annum.

So much for one branch of the public service, and that a branch too, which has undergone, of late years, frequent and continued reforms, and most of the salaries of which have been fixed by recent acts of parliament. But let us take one general view of this part of the subject, and then pass on. Sir H. Parnell informs us, in his work on financial reform, that “the account recently presented to Parliament of officers with salaries of £1000 a year and upwards, gives a total of nearly 1000 persons, who enjoy among them £2,066,574 per annum. Of these there are two hundred and sixteen persons whose salaries average £4429 each.”

Such is the expenditure which the state finds necessary, in the legal and civil departments. But in the church, instead of a thousand persons enjoying incomes of £1000 and upwards, we cannot reckon more than 260 at the utmost; and instead of 216 persons, with average salaries of £4429, there are not forty ecclesiastics in our whole establishment who enjoy incomes of that amount.

But perhaps some one may say, Then you acknowledge to have in your establishment as many as 260 benefices or dignities, of the annual value of £1000 and upwards? Yes, we do. Is that reckoned prodigious? Is this the "plethora of wealth" that we sometimes hear talked of? Let those who speak thus foolishly, pause and look round them for a moment. In one single parish of Westminster, and not in one only, they may meet with an equal number (260) of tradesmen, possessing similar incomes, i. e. of £1000 and upwards. And even if the aggregate were taken, of the annual incomes of the two classes, we should venture to surmise that the shopkeepers of such *single parish*, would outweigh all the wealth of all the ecclesiastical dignitaries in England. So absurdly do men talk, as if it were shocking that a dean should have £2000 a year, but very natural that a dentist should make his annual 7 or £8000. You may often hear a Londoner inveighing against Bishops and their revenues, and quarrelling with their equipages and footmen; and the same man will be proud to seat a tailor or a tallow-chandler in a gilded coach, and will readily vote him £10,000 a year, "to support the dignity of the office." In fact, the Lord Mayor of the *City* of London, when all his trappings are included, actually costs more than the Lord

Bishop of the *Diocese*. The duties of the latter are more toilsome and extensive than most people can easily conceive; and in intrinsic value and importance, he who lightly estimates them, only shews his judgment to be both weak and shallow. The duties of the former, provided for by a still greater expenditure, consist in sitting in a police-office for about three hours per diem, which is done in Westminster by a police magistrate for £500 a year, and in presiding at Courts of Aldermen and of Common Council now and then, and at his own state dinner-table as often as he pleases.

Not to extend this subject unnecessarily, we will just remark, that when it was lately thought advisable to institute a small court for the purpose of reviewing the decisions of the commissioners of bankruptcy, the salary allotted to the barrister appointed to preside in that court was £3000 a year. The duties of the office could scarcely occupy a fourth part of his time, nor was he liable to either of the three species of expenditure to which we have just adverted. Yet £3000 a year was thought to be a fit stipend for his services. Now there are not less than ten of our bishops, who, while called upon for the expences of a residence in town, as lords of parliament; frequent journeys to and from the metropolis, and over all parts of extensive dioceses; public hospitality; and charities, generally amounting to many hundreds per annum,—have up to the present moment had yet smaller incomes,—in several instances far smaller incomes,—than this lately-appointed judge of the Court of Review in Bankruptcy. And, in fact, out of the twenty-seven prelates of England and Wales, there are only nine, including the archbishops, whose incomes equal that of a puisne judge of the Court of

Common Pleas! The income of the see of Llandaff is about nine hundred a year; and it was lately stated, at a public meeting in that city, that the bishop actually contributes to the charities of the diocese *more than the whole revenue* he derives from it! The income of the see of Gloucester is little more than £2000 a year, and yet out of this does the bishop set apart a considerable portion every year, (besides his other charities) for the augmentation of the smaller livings in his diocese!

Let us recur, however, for a moment or two, to the distribution of the incomes of the various benefices. We shall not pretend that all is exactly as our fancy might wish it to be. Clearly there is much to be desired in the point of the augmentation of the smaller livings. And something, doubtless, might be spared from some of the higher class. Still, on the whole, matters are far more satisfactory than is generally supposed: and the language which is often heard, describing "the working clergy" as half-starved, and the whole wealth of the church as held by a few hundred persons, grossly misrepresents the case.

Few persons who indulge in this kind of talk, will hesitate to admit, at once, that they would wish to see the parish priests, on an average, endowed with incomes of about £300 a year,—allowing some to be a little higher, and some a little lower.

Now, will not such reformers be a little surprised when they are informed, that out of the whole number of 10,701 benefices, as many as 8972, or considerably more than four-fifths, do actually range between the points of from £50 a year to £500—the average being little more than £200. If any thing here can be found fault with, it is that this average is rather too low.

But there are 1464 livings of £500 a year and upwards. And surely it will be admitted, that in our larger towns and cities, an income of 6 or £800 is often required by the clergyman, especially if he has a family to bring up, and the extent of his parish requires the aid of a curate. There are 1278, out of the above 1464 benefices, which have incomes varying between £500 and £1000 a year.

There remain 186 only, of £1000 a year and upwards. Not pleading for the permanence of all these, on their present footing, we must still observe, that, as long as many parishes are allowed to remain, undivided, with 30,000 or even 100,000 inhabitants, there will be a kind of propriety in yielding to the pastor of such a vast body, a liberal income. To allot to the incumbent of Marylebone or Pancras, for instance, some 5 or £600 a year, would appear absurd. The claims made upon him, for curates, charities, and other matters connected with the parish, will probably swallow up at least this amount annually.

On the whole, then, how little ground does there appear to be for those wholesale censures on the "bloated wealth" of the beneficed, and the starvation of the working clergy, which have been so common of late. Room, indeed, there may be, as we have already shewn, for some little borrowing from the more wealthy, in order to get rid of these scandals, the "livings," as they are miscalled, which are still "*under £50 per annum.*" But, after all, to find that as many as 7057 out of the 10,701 benefices, are above £100 and under £500 is a general result of a much more satisfactory character than we had calculated on reaching.



## NOTE C. PAGE 451.

As Mr. Palmer has given several pages of a separate supplement to his *Treatise on the Church*, to the consideration of certain objections to that work, taken in the last edition of these *Essays*, it will be but right and proper, on our part, to examine his reply. Our remarks will fall under the following heads:—

1. He justifies his inclusion of the Papacy in, and his exclusion of the Scottish and Lutheran establishments from, the pale of the Catholic church, by arguments which appear to us to be wholly *Latitudinarian*.

He speaks of “that lamentable intolerance with which all differences of opinion on religious subjects are treated by some well-meaning persons. The slightest deviation from what they see to be *true*, is stigmatized as an apostacy from Christianity itself.” “That system of optimism which refuses to admit that superstition or error can ever exist in the church of Christ, and therefore, views any society in which they may be found as *apostate*. It is on this mistaken principle that some persons are led to reject the visible church of Christ during the middle ages, as an anti-Christian society, and to seek for the fulfilment of God’s promises to his church in the existence of some feeble remnant.”<sup>1</sup>

On reading such language as this, we naturally turn back, to see if it be the *Morning Chronicle* or the *Edinburgh Review*, that we may have taken up

<sup>1</sup> *Supplement*, page iv.

by mistake. The similarity in tone and style amounts to entire identity.

Who has ever denied, that "differences of opinion," "deviation from what appears to be true," and even a degree of "superstition and error may exist in the church of Christ?" Why misrepresent us in this odious manner; as maintaining an intolerable and bigotted tyranny over the faith of others?

The question is not, whether "*slight deviations* from what we believe to be true," may or may not exist; but whether *idolatry* of the grossest description, "*doctrines of devils*," of the most fearful character, and persecution exceeding all the atrocities of Nero, can exist in a community without that community having become *apostate* and *anti-Christian*? "What," says Bishop Newton, "is apostacy, if idolatry be not?" Even at this very instant, ameliorated as it is (in England, at least,) by the influence of Protestantism, the religion of the Romish church is not the worship of God, but the worship of Mary and the saints. And this *total* change, which dethrones the Saviour and exalts a helpless woman in his place; which shuts up His word from the people, and gives them books of fables and lying wonders in its room; and which professes to save men, not by faith in His atonement, but by masses and penances and purchased prayers,—this system of falsehood, which, if anything can, falls under the apostle's anathema of "another gospel,"—is quietly pleaded for by Mr. Palmer as "a difference of opinion," "a deviation from what we see to be true," a degree of "superstition and error," indeed, but only such a degree as might be expected "in the church of Christ." Is it possible for Latitudinarianism, practically, to go beyond this?

But the same principle next shews itself in a totally opposite direction. Of the church of Scotland, Mr. Palmer thus speaks,—“I am happy to think, that good and able men exist amongst Presbyterians; and though *we cannot regard them as a portion of the Catholic church*, yet Christian charity will prevent us from regarding them generally as guilty of the sin of schism, and will lead us to hope for their acceptance by the free, though uncovenanted, mercy of God.”<sup>1</sup>

This sort of “charity” is *not* “Christian charity.” Our Lord’s own words are, “*He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.*” John x. 1.

The very essence of Latitudinarianism is the notion denounced by the church in her xviiiith Article, which declares, that “They also are to be had accursed that presume to say, That every man shall be saved by the Law or Sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that Law, and the light of nature. For Holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the name of Jesus Christ, whereby men must be saved.”

And that notion we have here, in its full extent, maintained by Mr. Palmer, who tells us that the Presbyterians are not in the church of Christ; and yet may hope to be saved, by what he calls “the uncovenanted mercies of God.” Those mercies must of course be *mercies out of Christ*. And thus are the Saviour’s words virtually denied, “*I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture:*” (John x. 9.) and the apostle’s declaration becomes of none effect, “*He*

<sup>1</sup> *Supplement*, page x.

*that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life.*" (1 John v. 12.) Of this unscriptural dogma, of "the uncovenanted mercies of God," we may use the strong expression of St. Paul, and say, "*If righteousness come by the law,—or by "sincerity," or by any other way or mode beside the gospel,—"then Christ is dead in vain."*" (Gal. ii. 21.)

2. Mr. Palmer next essays to get rid of the argument from prophecy. This he attempts to do by what has been properly called "the *frittering* system," which consists in dividing an argument into as many parts as possible, and then attacking each in detail.

The instruction we draw from the prophetic parts of God's word, with reference to the state of the church since the apostolic days, is so important, that we should hesitate to rest such grave conclusions on our interpretation of the figurative language of a single prophecy. It is the exact agreement of the visions of Daniel, St. Paul, and St. John, which establishes our conclusion. Mr. Palmer, therefore, avoids the combined view; takes up each passage apart; insists on the discrepancies and dissonances of human interpreters, and draws at last the conclusion, that the revelations of which the Holy Spirit declared, that, "*Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep the things which are written therein, for THE TIME IS AT HAND,*" are to all appearance wholly unintelligible, and "most probably *yet unfulfilled*"! although 1700 years have elapsed since that declaration was made.

The word of God, by his servants, warns us, that before the manifestation of Christ's glory, "*there shall be a falling away;*" (2 Thess. ii. 3.) and the appearance

of an opposing power, usurping the chief authority in the church. In another scripture, that this power, or horn, shall “*make war with the saints, and prevail against them.*” (Dan. vii. 21.) In a third, that the church shall be driven into the wilderness, and her place taken by a harlot, or idolatrous church, with whom the kings of the earth commit fornication, and who makes herself drunk with the blood of the saints. And all this depression and persecution of the true church, and dominance of an idolatrous church, is again and again described as enduring for 1260 years. We read these predictions; and in history we find the facts corresponding *to the minutest particle of the description.*

Mr. Palmer objects, 1. That it is not certain that the 1260 days, or forty and two months, are to be interpreted to mean 1260 years. And he gives us the names of sundry wise commentators, such as Langius, Leydekker, Roos, Heider, Storr, and the like, who have chosen to read them literally. In answer to which it is enough to refer to Daniel ix. 24—26, in which “*seventy weeks*” is used to signify, as the event has shewn, 490 years; and to Dan. xii. 7—13, in which three years and a half, and 1290 days, are used to describe *a very long period*; and we can afford to dismiss all these learned interpreters, and to rest content with the interpretation furnished by scripture itself.

He further objects, 2. that it is incorrect to say that an harlot or adulterous woman is the symbol of an apostate church,—although there is no symbol more constantly employed through the whole Bible,—inasmuch as whoredom is imputed to Babylon, and to Tyre, and to Nineveh.

Whoredom, in the symbolic language of scripture, stands for idolatry ; and is therefore properly charged upon Babylon and Tyre. As to Nineveh, described as a “ harlot,”—we must bear in mind that a prophet had been expressly sent unto her, and she had turned to God, and afterwards relapsed into idolatry. But the apocalyptic harlot stands clearly opposed and contrasted to the “ *woman clothed with the sun, and having the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars.*” The one is “ the Bride, the Lamb’s wife,”—the other is “ *the great whore which deceiveth all nations with her sorceries.*” That this language denotes a mere city, like Rome, or any temporal power, is incredible ; for the temporal powers, the ten horns of the divided Roman empire, are described as “ *committing fornication with her.*”

Lastly, however, Mr. Palmer argues, that if the threatenings of the Apocalypse *do* refer to the Papal Rome, “ it seems a most unreasonable and strained interpretation to extend the condemnation to *all the churches subject to Rome*, or to apply the exhortation of the angel to “ come out ” of the devoted city, to urge the necessity of forsaking the communion of those churches.”

In reply to which we shall merely repeat the angelic warning, “ *If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God.*” (Rev. xiv. 9, 10.)

3. Mr. Palmer’s favourite and final argument, however, is that of Latitudinarism extended quite up to infidelity. It runs thus : “ Such a view of Christianity (as he had just given) appears to me, at once, *more charitable*, and more conducive to the glory of

God, than the doctrine of those who would *consign to damnation*, or exclude from the pale of Christianity, almost the whole visible church during the middle ages, and the great majority of professing Christians in the east and west, at the present day.”<sup>1</sup> The same argument is repeated, again and again, some five or six times in the course of the remaining sixteen pages.

But who, that ever fell into conversation with an infidel, can fail to recognize the main reliance, the chief and constant resort, of all impugners of revelation? When was a sceptic or disbeliever pressed in argument, that he did not instantly fly for refuge to this, his stronghold, “No, I can never believe, that a merciful God has, as you represent him to have done, —reserved salvation for a chosen and favoured few, in one corner of the globe; and left the great majority of mankind, in all ages, to perish without hope of salvation, and without even the knowledge of a Saviour.’

Mr. Palmer has not told us how he meets this argument, when proposed to him by an infidel. He will be perplexed to make any rational reply which shall not at the same time refute his own favourite objection in the *supplement* we are now reviewing

The true answer, both to the infidel and Mr. P. consists in a joint appeal to scripture and to facts. For a worm of earth to speculate upon what God *ought* to do, and upon what is “most conducive to his glory,” in defiance of his own word, and the plain facts of the case, is little better than presumption. Christ told us that his people should be “a

<sup>1</sup> *Supplement*, p. 6, 7.

little flock." He declared that "*Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat, because strait is the path and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*" (Matt. vii. 13.) And, except we choose to close our eyes to the state of mankind, *thus*, and *thus* only, do we perceive the fact to be.

Mr. Palmer talks of "consigning to damnation" "almost the whole visible church of the middle ages." But who ventures to "consign to damnation,"—even in the remotest idea,—one single, humble, prayerful child of God? The question is, Were there *many such*, in "the visible church of the middle ages?" Every man, at death "*goes to his own place.*" (Acts i. 25.) *All* who had been "born of God," whether in the darkest or the brightest ages, would, on closing their eyes to this world, find themselves with their Lord in Paradise. For the rest, it is not any human system or human interpretation, that can consign them even to heaven or hell; but the word of infallible truth declares, that "*he that believeth not shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.*" (John iii. 36.)



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