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# FOUR DOCUMENTS.

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BISHOP CUMMINS' LETTER

OF "ABANDONMENT OF THE COMMUNION OF THE CHURCH."

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BISHOP ALFRED LEE'S "OPEN LETTER,"  
IN REPLY.

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BISHOP CUMMINS' SERMON  
IN DEFENCE OF THE PRAYER BOOK.

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BISHOP JOHNS' LETTER  
IN REPLY TO THE LETTER OF THE REV. MR. LATANÉ.

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M'CALLA & STAVELY, PUBLISHERS, 237-9 DOCK ST., PHILA.

I. R. WELDIN & CO.  
101 WOOD STREET, PITTSBURGH.

*New York, 38 E. 22d Street,*

MARCH 9, 1874.

MESSRS. M'CALLA & STAVELY,

*Dear Sirs:*—I am much pleased with your plan of publishing a Tract, containing the matters you mention, *i. e.*:—

1. Dr. Cummins' Letter to Bishop Smith, on leaving the Church.

2. Bishop Alfred Lee's Letter to Dr. Cummins.

3. Dr. Cummins' Sermon on the Prayer Book.

4. Bishop Johns' Letter to Rev. Mr. Latané.

Nothing could be better. I shall be glad to promote the circulation of the Tract in my Diocese, and will take at least 2000 copies.\*

It is grateful to all hearts to see two of our honored Bishops standing forth, in advanced life, in defence of the Church we have all loved and labored for.

A very few expressions in the letters of Bishop Johns and Lee I might have wished to qualify. But those matters may be safely left to the judgment of the Church. In the main, both letters are cogent and in the true spirit. I commend them to the careful consideration of the members of my Diocese.

In future years it will be matter of wonder that the Church could have been agitated by such things (the eccentricities of 8 or 10 congregations out of 2,800!) as have now been used to excuse clamor and schism.

Very truly, yours,

HORATIO POTTER,

*Bishop of New York.*

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\* The Bishop afterwards increased his order to 4000.

# BISHOP CUMMINS' LETTER

OF

## “Abandonment of the Communion of the Church.”

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NEW YORK, November 10, 1873.

TO THE RIGHT REVEREND BENJAMIN BOSWORTH SMITH,  
D.D., BISHOP OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
IN THE DIOCESE OF KENTUCKY.

*Rt. Rev. and Dear Bishop* :—Under a solemn sense of duty, and in the fear of God, I have to tell you that I am about to retire from the work in which I have been engaged for the last seven years in the Diocese of Kentucky, and thus to sever the relations which have existed so happily and harmoniously between us during that time.

It is due to you, and to my many dear friends in the Diocese of Kentucky and elsewhere, that I should state clearly the causes which have led me to this determination.

I. First, then, you well know how heavy has been the trial of having to exercise my office in certain Churches in the Diocese of Kentucky where the services are conducted so as to symbolize and to teach the people doctrines, subversive of the “truth as it is in Jesus,” and as

it was maintained and defended by the Reformers of the Sixteenth Century.

On each occasion that I have been called upon to officiate in those Churches, I have been most painfully impressed by the conviction that I was sanctioning and endorsing, by my presence and official acts, the dangerous errors symbolized by the services customary in Ritualistic Churches.

I can no longer, by my participation in such services, be "a partaker of other men's sins," and must clear my own soul of all complicity in such errors.

2. I have lost all hope that this system of error now prevailing so extensively in the Church of England, and in the Protestant Episcopal Church in this country, can be or will be eradicated by any action of the authorities of the Church, legislative or executive. The only true remedy, in my judgment, is the judicious, yet thorough Revision of the Prayer Book, eliminating from it all that gives countenance, directly or indirectly, to the whole system of Sacerdotalism and Ritualism: a Revision after the model of that recommended by the Commission appointed in England under Royal Authority, in 1689, and whose work was endorsed by the great names of Burnet, Patrick, Tillotson, and Stillingfleet, and others, of the Church of England—a blessed work, which failed, alas! to receive the approval of Convocation, but was taken up afterwards by the Fathers of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, and embodied in the Prayer Book of 1785, which they set forth and recommended for use in this country.

I propose to return to that Prayer Book, sanctioned by William White, and to tread in the steps of that saintly man, as he acted from 1785 to 1789.

3. One other reason for my present action remains to be given. On the last day of the late conference of the Evangelical Alliance, I participated in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, by invitation, in the Rev. Dr. John Hall's Church, in the City of New York, and united with Dr. Hall, Dr. William Arnot, of Edinburgh, and Prof. Dorner, of Berlin, in that precious Feast. It was a practical manifestation of the real unity of "the blessed company of all faithful people" whom God "hath knit together in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of His Son Jesus Christ."

The results of that participation have been such as to prove to my mind, that such a step cannot be taken by one occupying the position I now hold, without sadly disturbing the peace and harmony of "this Church," and without impairing my influence for good over a large portion of the same Church, very many of whom are within our own Diocese.

As I cannot surrender the right and privilege thus to meet my fellow-Christians of other Churches around the tables of our dear Lord, I must take my place where I can do so without alienating those of my own household of faith.

I, therefore, leave the communion in which I have labored in the sacred ministry for over twenty-eight years, and transfer my work and office to another sphere of labor. I have an earnest hope and confidence that a basis for the union of all Evangelical Christendom can be found in a communion which shall retain or restore a Primitive Episcopacy and a pure Scriptural Liturgy, with a fidelity to the doctrine of Justification by Faith only, *Articulus stantis vel cadentis Ecclesiae*, a position towards which the Old Catholics in Europe are rapidly

tending, and which has already taken a definite form in "The Church of Jesus," in Mexico.

To this blessed work I devote the remaining years of life, content if I can only see the dawn of that blessed day of the Lord.

I am, dear Bishop, faithfully yours in Christ,

GEORGE DAVID CUMMINS.

My address for the present will be No. 2 Bible House, New York.

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## BISHOP ALFRED LEE'S "OPEN LETTER,"

IN REPLY.

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The following letter, as the date shows, was the impulse of my mind after reading the communication from Bishop Cummins to Bishop Smith. After writing it, there seemed so little prospect of influencing him, that I refrained from sending it. The judgment of friends to whom it was recently shown, induces me to make it public.

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WILMINGTON, DEL., Nov. 14th, 1873.

THE RT. REV. GEORGE D. CUMMINS, D.D.:

*My dear Friend and Brother:*—I shall not attempt to express the surprise and sorrow occasioned by your letter of November 10th, 1873, addressed to the venerable Bishop of Kentucky, and published to the world without waiting for his answer. To me, as well as to your former associates generally, so far as my knowl-



edge extends, the step you have taken in renouncing your connection with the Church in which you have exercised so high an office appears most ill-advised and unhappy. As one who admitted you into the ministry of the Protestant Episcopal Church twenty-eight years ago, and who has been associated with you in fraternal co-operation, I cannot withhold some notice of your communication. I will not dwell upon the pain and disappointment occasioned by this repudiation of a trust which you once counted so sacred. Neither is it my province to pronounce upon the motives by which you have been actuated. But I may be pardoned for setting before you plainly the aspect of this case, which presents itself to one who formerly stood to you in an almost paternal relation.

At the outset I must be permitted to declare my astonishment that a decision so momentous should have been formed and made public without a word of previous consultation with those best entitled to your confidence. If my conferring upon you Holy Orders when you entered our Church, and the friendship which has since existed between us, gave me no claim to be consulted, surely that venerable and godly man whose Episcopal duties you shared, and who relied so much on your assistance at his advanced period of life, ought not to have been left in ignorance until your purpose was irrevocable. Yet not a word was breathed to either of us, or to other brethren with whom you had been in previous sympathy. We met just before in the city of Philadelphia at the Anniversaries of what are known as the Evangelical Societies. At those meetings you took a prominent part—a part scarcely to be reconciled with wavering loyalty to the Church, within whose bosom

they were formed. Either your purpose was then undecided, and you surely might have given your friends an opportunity of remonstrance; or you ought, in candor, to have made known your intentions, and declined being put forward as an expositor of their principles. In any event, if your purpose grew out of mature deliberation and earnest prayer, it would have borne examination, and you need not have shrunk from imparting it to the ear of friendship. If such consultation had confirmed your own previous conclusions, then you would have avoided the appearance of unbecoming precipitancy in a matter which may be fraught with the gravest consequences, and which concerns many besides yourself. If, on the other hand, you might have been convinced that the step meditated would be rash and pernicious, the impulse of morbid feeling and temporary irritation, then you would not have inflicted upon the Church which has trusted and honored you, a wound so grievous.

I will now briefly glance at the reasons assigned in your letter :

1. You speak of "the trial of having to exercise your office in certain Churches in the Diocese of Kentucky, where the services are so conducted as to symbolize and teach doctrines subversive of the truth as it is in Jesus." You "have been painfully impressed by the conviction that you were sanctioning, by your presence and official acts, the dangerous errors symbolized by the services customary in Ritualistic Churches." But, my dear brother, were your lips sealed when present in your official capacity? Were you not clothed with authority to preach the Word, to reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine? Could you not bear your testimony against dangerous innovations as plainly and

decidedly in the pulpit and from the chancel, as upon the platform in our large eastern cities? Nay, if in one place more than in another you could be out-spoken, would it not be in your own Diocese, and among those committed to your oversight? There, emphatically, you could put forth your energies, strive "to banish and drive away from the Church all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's Word, and call upon and encourage others to do the same." This, I freely admit, is no pleasant duty, but when the question is of abandoning a post to which we once thought the Lord had called us, then is it the time to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. So long as no restraint was placed upon your presentation of the truth in sermons, charges, addresses and pastoral letters, you could deliver your own soul; neither could you "be made partaker of other men's sins."

That there should be within our Church false teaching and practices, symbolizing errors, is indeed a grief and a burden to many of her faithful ministers and members. I am not one to make light of them.

But is it a new thing? Was the Apostolic Church unvexed by similar evils? Had St. Paul nothing to contend with from "false brethren," and from the intrusion of "another Gospel?" Were such things wholly unknown when you accepted the office to which you were elected by the Convention of the Diocese of Kentucky? You then uttered before God and men, the following declaration and promise:

"In the name of God, Amen. I, George David Cummins, chosen Assistant Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Kentucky, do promise conformity to the doctrine, discipline and worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. So help me God, through Jesus Christ."

Has there been the smallest authorized change since you gave that pledge? Has there been an iota added to or taken from the standards of the Church? Are not her Articles and Liturgy the same, *verbatim et literatim*? If you could then with a good conscience utter that vow, are you now justified in repudiating so solemn an engagement?

2. You "have lost all hope that this system of error can be or will be eradicated by any action of the authorities of the Church, legislative or executive." As it was never sanctioned by authorities, legislative or executive, those who resist and denounce it stand on the vantage ground in this respect. But with regard to the evil itself, why should you be hopeless? In combatting such errors, had you not with you the Word of God, the doctrinal standards of your Church, the protest of the reformers, the blood of martyrs, the sympathy and prayers of thousands of earnest Christians? Is such a cause to be despaired of? Does not truth rise up invincible from depression and defeat, and vindicate her heavenly birth? I believe better things of that grand old Church whose light has never been quenched since kindled at martyr pyres, and which for centuries has borne the brunt of outward hostility and internal treachery.

But admitting the dangers to be great, and the prospect gloomy, is that a reason why the pilot should desert the helm? The shepherd abandon the flock? If the shepherd sees the wolf coming is not that the time to stand at his post, even if he must give his life for the sheep? If you cannot wholly keep out the enemy, so formidable or so insidious, you may hope by all means to save some of the flock entrusted to your care. You are well aware that to a large body of the clergy and

laity of the Protestant Episcopal Church, I might say a large majority, Romish and Ritualistic invocations are as distasteful as to yourself. Is it the post of a good soldier of Jesus Christ to desert in the hour of peril brethren who are striving to fight the good fight of faith?

The only true remedy in your judgment is "the revision of the Prayer Book, eliminating from it all that gives countenance, directly or indirectly, to the whole system of Sacerdotalism or Ritualism." If this be the remedy, you were at liberty to advocate it to your heart's content. Our Church, in Article VI., recognizes Holy Scripture as the one standard of faith and practice. That it would be highly desirable, for the sake of peace and to prevent misunderstanding, to change a very few expressions in our services I have steadily maintained; not that I think they really teach error, but that they may be misinterpreted and abused. But the course of some of the prominent advocates of Revision has been so captious, unreasonable, and unfair, as greatly to diminish the prospect of success. But is it true that the errors of which you complain are wholly attributable to abuse of the language of the Prayer Book? My impression is, that they generally arise from perversions of the language of Holy Writ. Exaggerated sacramental views are founded upon taking literally what the Scripture intends to be understood spiritually—upon "the letter that killeth." The false doctrine once adopted strives to lay hold of anything that may be twisted to its purpose, and the Liturgy cannot escape. But the weak arguments and disingenuous course of the Romanizing party plainly show that they have no solid ground to stand upon.

You desire a Revision after the model recommended

in England by the Commission of 1689. But are you not aware that most of these recommendations are embodied in our present Book, and that although they failed in England, they found acceptance here. Says Bishop Short (History of the Church of England), "The American Prayer Book, altered in 1790, is formed in a great measure on this."

But still more explicitly you write, "I propose to return to the Prayer Book sanctioned by William White, and to tread in the steps of that saintly man as he acted from 1785 to 1789." I would not be understood as disparaging in any way so excellent and wise a man as Bishop White, when I affirm that, so far as the interests of Protestant and Evangelical truth are concerned, to leave our present volume for the Book of 1785, would be retrogression and not advance. Bishop White himself indicates no special fondness for this Book, and manifests no regret that it was not finally adopted. Indeed, his tone as to some points is far from eulogistic.

In that Book the decided Protest of our Articles against the Errors of Rome is greatly softened and toned down. The clear ringing sound of the Reformers grows comparatively faint and feeble. We miss their condemnation of the adding of five Sacraments to the two instituted by Christ himself, of the sacrifices of masses, of the denial of the cup to the laity, of enforced clerical celibacy; the five articles declaring our faith in the Holy Trinity are compressed into one, defective in highly important statements, and the Nicene Creed is omitted. If certain changes in the Baptismal service, and the substitution of the word minister for priest in various rubrics are great recommendations in your view, they were dearly purchased by the defective doctrinal character of

the articles. With regard to the two points referred to, the objectionable interpretation sometimes placed on the language of the Baptismal service was explicitly denied by the House of Bishops at the Convention of 1871, and the word Priest is well understood to be a contracted form of Presbyter. If the word itself be an offence, it is not avoided in the Proposed Book which (Article XIX.) adopts the Ordinal.

You gave, as an additional reason for your course, the proof afforded by the results of your taking part in the celebration of the Lord's Supper at a Presbyterian Church, that "such a step could not be taken without disturbing the harmony of the Church and impairing your influence there and within your own Diocese." And on this ground you do what is vastly more disturbing to such harmony. If fully persuaded in your own mind, why should you be greatly affected by unfavorable comments? For them you could not have been wholly unprepared. However unpleasant expressions of disapprobation may be, if conscious that we are right, we need not be vastly troubled by them. That anything more than such comments would have resulted, I see no reason to apprehend. A meeting of the Bishops took place within a very few days after in the city of New York, from which you absented yourself; but nothing whatever was said upon this subject. However much the views of some of your brethren differed from your own, you would have experienced from the House, as a body, only forbearance and consideration.

The catholic and comprehensive character of our Church admits wide diversity of sentiment within the limits of the faith once delivered to the saints.

The position of your letter, which occasioned me the

deepest pain and solicitude, was that in which you seem to intimate a purpose of starting a new sect. Can it be possible! Is disunion to be the issue of your aspirations for closer unity! Will you add another to the unhappy divisions of Protestant Christendom, and when the Church of Christ is already so broken up, increase the number of fragmentary bodies? If so, you may live to mourn so rash and unwarrantable a step, the mischiefs of which may extend further than either of us can foresee. That such an attempt can be permanently successful I do not believe. Experiments in that direction have not been encouraging. If the effort prove a disastrous failure, there will be little, I conceive, to console the projectors under the disappointment. In the sentiment that "a basis for the union of Evangelical Christendom can be found in a communion retaining a Primitive Episcopacy, and a pure Scriptural Liturgy with fidelity to the doctrine of justification by faith only," I cordially agree. Such a communion it has not been left for the 19th century to create. Such a communion I believe to be that which you have now abandoned.

Your friend of many years,

ALFRED LEE.



# BISHOP CUMMINS' SERMON

## IN DEFENCE OF THE PRAYER BOOK.

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In 1861, Dr. Cummins delivered a sermon in Philadelphia, in behalf of the Bishop White Prayer Book Society, and in 1867, after he had been consecrated to the Episcopate, as Assistant Bishop of Kentucky, he preached before the Convention of that Diocese that same sermon, rewritten, with additional matter. The views and arguments of the Bishop so impressed that venerable body, that the sermon was published with the Bishop's consent, as follows :

### THE PRAYER BOOK A BASIS OF UNITY.

JEREMIAH vi. 16.—“Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.”

“The immediate present,” says the latest historian of England, “however awful its import, will ever seem common and familiar to those who live and breathe in the midst of it. In the days of the September massacre at Paris, the theatres were open as usual; men ate and drank and laughed and cried, and went about their common work, unconscious that those days which were passing by them, so much like other days, would remain the *dies nefasti*, accursed in the memory of mankind forever. Nothing is terrible, nothing is sublime in human things so long as they are before our eyes. It is only when

time has done its work that such periods stand out in their true significance."

It may be doubted if this remark is true of the age in which we live. The impression is deep and profound, in every thoughtful mind, that the age in which our lot is cast is no common or ordinary age, but one ever to be remembered for its great events, its strange characteristics. And among these, it may be doubted if there is any peculiarity more marked, and indeed more momentous, than the spirit of change, nay of rash and reckless innovation, which, under the noble name of progress, deludes the minds of millions. In science, in philosophy, in religion, it is a time marked by the casting off of all the authority of the past, by an attempt to unsettle the foundations on which successive generations have built and dwelt in serenity and peace.

In the sphere of religious truth this tendency finds its widest, its most alarming development; and there is nothing sadder on this earth than the spectacle of a gifted mind like Robertson, of Brighton, letting go at one time all the precious faith of his childhood, and sinking into the darkest abyss of doubt, where the only ray of light left him, was the single truth, "it must at least be right to do right." How precious at such a time the inheritance of a faith whose cardinal doctrine is that it admits of no change, but is, like its great Author, "the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever;" which, rejoicing in all progress in science, in philosophy, in freedom, earnestly denies that in divine truth there can be any progress, and contends steadfastly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, whose utterance ever is, the old paths are the only true paths, the only safe paths, and whose voice ever sounding amid the din and strife of the present is,

“Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.”

But not less marked than this, is another peculiarity marking the religious character of our age. It is the longing for unity. It is the profound feeling that the present state of Christendom is not what its Divine Father designed it to be. His prayer that His people may all be one, has never yet been realized, and that the spectacle of a divided and warring Christendom—Christ’s seamless robe torn and rent—is a grief to the heart of the Divine Master, and a mighty hindrance to the final triumph of His kingdom.

Under the influence of this conviction men are yearning for unity, some blindly feeling after it, and willing for its attainment to sacrifice even vital truth. Rejoicing in this tendency of men’s minds, and desiring to add my mite to its safe direction, I propose to-day for my theme the fitness of the *Book of Common Prayer* to be the bond of unity, the manual of worship for all the confessions which divide Protestant Christendom, the golden chain to restore the ancient unity of the kingdom of the Redeemer.

1. And first, the special fitness of the Prayer Book to fulfill this office arises from the fact that it embodies, as no other uninspired volume does, the ancient and primitive catholic faith of Christ’s Church; not catholic in any corrupt, or perverted, or exclusive sense, but catholic in the sense of the once universal, unadulterated faith of Scripture—the faith of the Church, when its heart was yet warm with its first, fresh love, ere philosophy, falsely so-called, had defiled the pure well-spring of sacred truth. And this old and undefiled faith, the Prayer Book em-

bodies, not merely in confessions and creeds and articles of dogmatic theology, but, what is far better, in devotional offices, in the utterances of prayer and praise, in supplication and adoration; so that the incense of its devotion is fragrant with the most precious truth in God's holy word. This goodly robe of the bride of Christ is wrought out of the purest gold of divine truth—its warp and its woof are alike Holy Scripture.

Let us look more closely into this statement. What great cardinal truth of the ancient primitive faith is not interwoven into the very texture of the Liturgy?

I. Is it the doctrine of the Trinity, the Triunity of Father, Son and Holy Ghost? The wondrous thing about the Liturgy here is, that it brings this sublime verity close to our hearts in all its blessed practical significance, as nothing else can bring it.

Says one, who is not of this fold, but who bears his admiring testimony from without, "Who that has been able, in some frame of holy longing after God, to clear away the petty shackles of logic, committing the soul up freely to the inspiring impulse of this divine mystery as it is celebrated in some grand doxology of Christian worship—as the *Gloria Patri*—a hymn of the ages framed to be continuously chanted by the long procession of times, until times are lapsed into eternity—and has been lifted into conscious fellowship with the great celestial minds in their highest ranges of blessedness and their shining tiers of glory—who has not known it as being at once the deepest, highest, widest, most enkindling and most practical of all practical truths?"

This is the work of the Prayer Book—to turn a theological mystery into a precious heart-truth of deepest experience. For as soon as the soul of the worshipper has

prostrated itself in deepest humility and penitence before God, and received the declaration of His abundant pardon to those who "truly repent and unfeignedly believe," it rises into strains of loftiest adoration in a chant which has borne to heaven the praises of saints for 1500 years, or in the thrilling accents of the angel's song, or in the hymn of St. Ambrose, cries with the Seraphim, "Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth, the Father of an infinite Majesty, Thine adorable and true and only Son; also, the Holy Ghost, the Comforter!"

Then the worshipper turns to the ancient symbols, and makes his confession of faith in a creed so primitive and pure as to be rightly called the creed of Apostles, or in another, scarcely less ancient and venerable, and chants "God *of* God, Light *of* Light, very God *of* very God!" And again there is heard the deep, earnest, plaintive pleading of the Litany, and to each adorable person of the Godhead does the prayer ascend until it reaches its climax in "O, Holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, Three Persons and one God, have mercy upon us!"

How can this foundation truth ever be lost out of the heart of a Church whose unchanging order of prayer thus enshrines it in the deepest, holiest feelings of the soul? And, if one who ministers at her altars should prove recreant to this great truth, how keen is the rebuke which he must feel, as forever he is constrained to unite in such utterances.

2. Is the atonement, the vicarious sacrifice of Christ upon the cross for us men and our salvation, a vital part of the Christian system? Not less full is the Prayer Book of this than of the Trinity; not in the formal and abstruse terms of the theological science, serving only

to confuse and perplex the mind of the simple believer in Jesus, but in strong cryings and pleadings for mercy "through the satisfaction of Jesus Christ our Lord."

Of the 200 prayers and collects of this book, all, with scarce an exception, are offered in one name, are based upon one plea, "through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, our adorable Redeemer." Redemption through the blood of the Lamb is the key-note which floats through all this mingled chorus of praise and prayer. "Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world," is the Church's ever-repeated cry in the *Gloria in Excelsis*; "When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of Death, Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers," is its echo in the *Te Deum*. "By Thine agony and bloody sweat, by Thy cross and passion, by Thy precious death and burial," is the sinner's only claim to salvation.

But if we would know all the fullness with which the Prayer Book sets forth the propitiatory sacrifice for sin by the blood of Christ, we must turn to the most sacred and precious of all its offices, "the order for the administration of the Supper of the Lord." Language seems powerless to convey its sense of the infinite preciousness of the Redeemer's sacrifice. At each notice of the celebration of this sacred feast, the minister is to remind the recipient that it is "in remembrance of His meritorious cross and passion, whereby alone we obtain remission of our sins." In the exhortation preceding the office of consecration, he is to bid them give thanks to God "for the redemption of the world by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ, both God and man, who did humble himself even to the death of the cross for us miserable sinners." As he kneels before the Holy Table, he prays

“ that our sinful bodies may be made clean by His body, and our souls washed through His most precious blood.” And, more significant than all, he is bidden to declare that upon the Cross Jesus Christ “ made a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.”

Blessed testimony to a blessed truth ! How sublimely does this volume witness to this “ old path,” this “ good way” of salvation, in a day when men would take from the Gospel its very life-blood, by seeking to eliminate the truth of Christ’s vicarious sacrifice. Let us thank God that its ceaseless utterance is, “ Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”

3. Again, is the plenary inspiration of Holy Scripture a vital truth, essential to the very being of the Faith ? It is recognized and acknowledged throughout the whole framework of the Liturgy. The Prayer Book honors the Word of God as it is honored in no other volume on earth. “ Hear what comfortable words our Saviour Christ saith ;” “ hear what the Holy Ghost saith,” is its repeated utterance, as it echoes the teachings of Holy Scripture. Here is no doubting, hesitating acknowledgment of the plenary inspiration of the Bible. And now more than ever we prize this testimony, when recreant sons of our Mother Church in England have risen up to assail this pillar of the truth. Never can such false teaching widely prevail among men using this book, which bids them pray, “ Blessed Lord, who hath caused all Holy Scripture to be written for our learning.” Or again, “ O God, who hast instructed Thy Church by the heavenly doctrine of the Evangelists, give us grace that, being not like children carried away by every blast of

vain doctrine, we may be established in the truths of Thy Holy Gospel."

Time forbids us to go further into this investigation, deeply interesting as it might prove. We might take successively other vital and central truths, dear to the hearts of God's people in all time, and show how each is incorporated into the very life of devotion. Thus the truth of man's ruined nature, the office and work of the Holy Spirit in the renewal and sanctification of the heart, justification by faith, "only for the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ"—"a most wholesome doctrine and very full of comfort"—these are everywhere inwrought into the texture of this book.

This, then, is our first argument. If to pray aright we need to pray "with the spirit and the understanding also," and if all the primal and essential doctrines of salvation are brought to the heart as blessed realities, and made the very flame of devotion by him who worships God in the order of this book, is it not eminently worthy of the high office we claim for it, to lead the devotions of all who would "worship in spirit and in truth?"

II. We advance to another position. The Prayer Book is fitted to unite all reformed communions, because it enshrines most faithfully the true spirit of the Reformation.

The *Book of Common Prayer* is the fairest and most beautiful child of the great Reformation. It is a blessed monument of God's goodness to His Church, in bringing her great deliverance after long ages of bondage and darkness. It is the precious casket in which are laid up the spoils of the mightiest conflict waged with the



powers of darkness since the fathers of Christendom fell asleep, for "the truth as it is in Jesus."

How wondrously can we trace the hand of God in the agencies and instruments employed in the accomplishment of this work! First came the "Reformers before the Reformation." Wicliffe and his brotherhood, sowing in tears the seed for a harvest to be reaped in joy by others. Then followed, in God's good time, Cranmer and his co-laborers, Jewel, and Latimer, and Ridley, and others whose names will never die, first in 1554 only permitted to translate the prayers and the litany into the English tongue; next, under Edward VI., setting forth the first *Book of Common Prayer*, drawn up in the words of the royal decree, "according to the most sincere and pure Christian religion taught by Scripture, and according to the usages of the Primitive Church."

Then came the memorable Whitsunday of 1549, when for the first time the reformed liturgy led the worship of a whole realm, rejoicing in "the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free." Soon, indeed, under another reign, there returned for a season a night of superstition, to be followed only by a more glorious day, whose meridian brightness other generations are yet to behold.

But what a history is condensed into the few sentences just uttered! What prayers and sacrifices, what patient waiting and suffering, what stripes and imprisonments, what burnings at the stake were needed to win for the Church of the future the glorious heritage of this book! And the great principle which guided the English reformers was that enjoined in the text; they sought to find "the old paths," "the good way" of the Church in its days of primitive purity.

Isaac Walton tells us, that when Sir Henry Wotton

was present at a Church festival in the city of Rome, and listening to strains of exquisite music, a priest, thinking the time a favorable one to win him over to the Romish faith, sent to him a note with this question: "Where was your religion before Luther?" to which question Sir Henry presently underwrote: "My religion was to be found then, where yours is not to be found now, in the Word of God." The work of reformation at which the martyrs and confessors of the English Church labored, and which hundreds among them sealed with their blood, was not the work of constructing a new system, but of restoring the old to its lost purity. They were like men who went forth to cleanse and restore some grand old cathedral, whose windows were darkened by the accumulated dust of ages, whose courts were defiled with uncleanness, and whose altars were polluted with strange fire; and their work was to clear away the heap of rubbish, to kindle a new and holy fire on its altar, to fill its courts with the incense of a pure devotion, and to let in the unobscured glad sunlight of truth, filling and flooding its whole vast area.

Such was the work which bequeathed to us the *Book of Common Prayer*, combining the "old paths" of the Apostolic Church, and the "good way" of the great Reformation. May we not safely challenge any portion of reformed Christendom to produce in any confession, or symbol, or formulary of devotion that which represents so faithfully the spirit of that great movement? Hear the grand and stately protest of the Articles of Religion, as for three hundred years they have borne their solemn witness against transubstantiation, purgatory, pardons, the worshiping and adoration of images and relics, the invocation of saints, the denial of the cup to

the laity, the use of prayers in a strange tongue, the five added and spurious sacraments, the requiring anything to be believed as necessary to salvation, "which is not read in holy Scripture nor may be proved thereby;" and then remember that the authors of this protest gladly laid down their lives in its defense, and sealed it with their blood.

We are not unmindful of the retort that may be made, that not a few, trained under the influences of this book, and familiar with all the hallowed memories which consecrate it, have found their way back to the altars of a corrupt and idolatrous Church, even while the language of the liturgy yet lingered on their lips. But we lay hold of the very objection to strengthen our position. The perverted religiousness of the human heart, which hungers for a sensuous worship and another Gospel, can find no satisfaction in the simple Scriptural worship of this book. A pure and Apostolic Church affords no abiding-place for such a spirit. "They went out from us because they were not of us." They go forth to bear witness that, whilst this liturgy remains intact, it will prove a mighty breakwater to save the Church of Christ from ever again being devastated by the floods of superstition and idolatry.

III. Again, we claim this high position for the Prayer Book because it is committed to no human system of theology, but is broad enough and comprehensive enough to embrace men who differ widely in their interpretations and definitions of Scriptural truth.

It is indeed a peculiar glory of the Prayer Book that it is marked by the "elastic tenderness of a nurse who takes into account the varying temperaments and dispositions of children;" not by the rigid precision of an

imperious taskmaster, who would prostrate into a procrustean bed all the varieties of human feeling and human conscience. It bears upon its very fore-front Augustine's motto, "In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity." They who framed the liturgy recognized the truth that their work was not for a day, but for all time; not for a nation or a denomination, but for a great Catholic Church, which, in God's good time, might be co extensive with the earth.

Hence, they were careful that its doctrinal teachings should be set forth only as the Bible sets them forth, and as they were embodied in ancient creeds and liturgies, purified from all the errors which were the growth of a later and darker age. They called no man master on earth; they followed not Augustine, nor Luther, nor Calvin, but Christ and His Apostles. Hence the theology of the Prayer Book is not the confession of Augsburg, nor that of the Synod of Dort, nor yet of the Westminster Assembly. It is not Lutheranism, nor Calvinism, nor Arminianism; but better than all, it embraces all that is precious and of vital truth in each of these systems, yet committing itself to none; and a disciple of each of these schools may find in it that which gives "rest to his soul."

Does the follower of Calvin find the doctrine of election a "doctrine full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to the soul of a godly person?" So teaches the seventeenth article of religion of the Prayer Book. Does the Arminian hold nothing to be more vital and essential than the doctrine of the free, unlimited, unrestricted offer of salvation to all mankind? He finds it running like a silver thread through all the texture of these beauteous garments of the Bride of Christ. Does the

Wesleyan regard it as the blessed privilege of a child of God to know God as a reconciled father, who, in Christ, has put away his sins, and given him joy and peace in believing? Where else is such a truth so fully recognized as in those seraphic strains of devotion which lift the soul into holy communion with God, and cause it to realize its acceptance in the beloved? Does the Lutheran place a high value upon the worthy partaking of the Sacrament of Christ's body and blood? Surely, the lofty, glowing language of the communion office is fitted to meet the deepest longings of the soul, as it feeds on Christ in the heart by faith with thanksgiving.

Are not these facts evidence that the system of the Prayer Book is the system of the *Bible*? This is the boast, this is the honor of our Church. Let her willingly submit to the ignorant reproach that men of every creed can find in her something to favor their views, whilst she shares this reproach with the Word of God. It is this fact which fits her for universality; in this fact is found her chief power.

IV. Once more: In claiming for the Prayer Book that it is fitted to be a basis of unity to all Christians, we claim for it what the experience of centuries has confirmed—that it is eminently adapted to unfold and nourish the spiritual life of the believer.

Where is the longing of the soul which it does not satisfy? Where the craving it does not appease? Where the deepest experience of the love of God which finds not here an appropriate utterance? Where the contrition which cannot unburden itself in its penitential pleadings? What soul-sorrow finds not fitting expression? What soul-rapture may not find wings for its heavenward flight

in these anthems worthy to be chanted by cherubim and seraphim?

Here we advance our argument to a high position indeed. We claim that the voice of three hundred years bears testimony to the truth that the Prayer Book is eminently fitted to develop and nourish the very loftiest type of spiritual piety. We are willing to test it by its fruits in the lives of the faithful. And just as the course of a stream may be traced at a distance by the luxuriant skirt of trees lining its banks and fed by its waters, so through all the lapse of three centuries may we trace the windings of this river that makes glad the city of our God by the trees of righteousness, the saints of lofty stature, whose roots found rich nourishment in its living fountains.

The monks of the Middle Ages spent almost a lifetime in illuminating, by curious skill of the pencil, the Missal and the Breviary; but what an illuminated edition of the Prayer Book would it be, could we gather around it the lives of the elect and saintly spirits who have been nourished at its rich banquet of spiritual food! It will well repay us to walk with reverent step and admiring hearts along the far-stretching galleries of the Church's history, and pause before the portraits of men and women whose names are dear to all God's people, and who may be justly claimed as living epistles, witnessing to the power and preciousness of this book. "*Come and see,*" is our reply to him who would depreciate the Liturgy, and tell us that its tendency is to deaden spirituality and to make formal, lifeless Christians. "*Come and see*" the saints of lofty stature, the men and women of lofty holiness, the weighty wrestlers with God, the meek and lowly followers of the Lamb, whose names and works are

now the heritage of all christendom, and whose lives are most truly the fruits of Prayer Book nurture.

To what sphere of faithful service for Christ can we turn without meeting a cloud of witnesses to His truth? Is it among those who "resisted unto blood" for the precious truth of the Gospel? What venerable and saintly forms are those which pass before us, girded for the sacrifice, and chanting, "This is the day the Lord hath made; this is the way, narrow though it be, yet full of the peace of God, and leading to eternal bliss?" Need I tell you? They are Ridley and Latimer, Cranmer and Bradford, Rogers and Philpot and Taylor, on their way to the stake, to swell "the noble army of martyrs!"

Is it among great doctors and masters and learned theologians, whose writings form the stately buttresses defending and upholding the temple of truth? Where shall we find names more august than that of the Church of England's great apologist, Jewel, whose piety was as profound as his learning, and of whose departure it has been beautifully said by his biographer Walton, that "it was a question whether his last ejaculations or his soul did first enter paradise?"—or the incomparable Hooker, whose meekness and heavenly-mindedness we are apt to forget amidst the bright shining of his wondrous intellect—or the myriad-minded Jeremy Taylor, or Stillingfleet or Chillingworth, or Barrow, colossal champions of the Reformed faith.

Is it among true-hearted and faithful and holy pastors? What beauteous pictures are those that live in our memories of the life of the saintly Leighton, of whom Burnet said, after an intimacy of more than twenty-two years, "I never once saw him in any other temper but that in which I wished to be in the last moment of my life—of

the simple-minded and gentle country parson of Remerton, whose dying request was, 'Read me the prayers of my mother, the Church of England: there are no prayers like them:'—of the home and the flock of Leigh Richmond, in the beautiful Isle of Wight, where the grave of the Dairyman's Daughter, a Prayer-Book Christian, is a spot sacred to the heart of millions, who have wept over her touching story; of the lives and labors of Tiliotson and Ken, of Usher and Hall, of Simeon and Cecil, of Newton and Ven.

Shall we seek among the sweet singers of the Church for traces of its influence? Where but at these fountains did Cowper, and Charles Wesley, and Wordsworth, and Keble drink inspiration?

Passing to the noble sphere of a world-embracing philanthropy, whose names are enshrined so sacredly in the hearts of all good men as those two Prayer-book Christians, one whose last request was, "Lay me quietly in my grave, place a sun-dial over my breast, and let me be forgotten;" and yet whose statue in St. Paul's Cathedral bears the name of John Howard, and the other, who sleeps in Westminster Abbey by the side of Pitt and Burke, and Canning and Sheridan, his compeers, yet greater than them all—William Wilberforce. Or, rising to the highest field of holy labors, whose names shine out against the darkness of heathenism so bright as those of Martyn, of Heber, of Selwyn, and a host like-minded, who found in this book strength and holy inspiration?

By its fruits is the tree known; and by its fruits let the Prayer Book be tested. Is it presumption, then, to claim for it a fitness to be the Prayer Book of all Protestant Christendom, to bind together in one great Christian family those now divided and discordant?

Will it be said that it is in vain to hope for, to pray for,



to labor for such a result? Nay, not so; there is a yearning for unity, deep-seated and wide-spread, which can only come from above, and which stirs the noblest among us to heroic action? What a sublime thought that this is the work God has committed to us, whose birthright is this heritage—to restore the long-lost unity of Protestant Christendom upon the basis of the Prayer Book! To grasp this thought in all its fulness would of itself elevate the Church to a status never yet attained in this generation. It would heal every division, and hush every voice of strife among ourselves into silence. It would animate us to the noblest endeavors after a character becoming a position of honor and responsibility such as this. It would incite to noble deeds of piety, noble works of love, to prove to all men what mighty power for good God has entrusted to His Church! It would restrain all harsh judgment and condemnation of those whom we seek to bring into our heritage. And its voice of love would ever be to all who profess and call themselves Christians, “stand in the ways and see and ask for the old paths where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest to your souls.” “Come and sit down with us at this feast of fat things. Come and share our inheritance. Come back under the shelter of the old roof-tree of our Father’s house. Come with us and we will do you good, for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel.”

Oh! blessed vision of the Church of the future, as it rises before me to-day, a city at unity in itself; its strength no longer wasted in intestine warfare, but combined against a common foe, going forth from conquering unto conquest, fair as the sun, beauteous as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners.

## REPLY OF BISHOP JOHNS TO REV. J. A. LATANÉ'S LETTER OF WITHDRAWAL.

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MALVERN, Feb. 2d, 1874.

*Reverend and Dear Brother* :—You might well suppose that the announcement contained in your letter would cause me both “surprise and pain,” in which your many friends have largely shared, on hearing of your withdrawal from the Church of their deliberate choice and devoted affection.

For many years your own love for that Church, and your diligent labors in her Ministry, have compared favorably with those of your attached brethren of the Clergy, and secured for you the kind regards of the intelligent and pious Laity throughout the Diocese. Of this you have received many and unmistakable proofs, which respect for your delicacy restrains me from mentioning. In all this favorable manifestation, no one rejoiced more cordially than myself. I thankfully regarded you as one on whom, in my age and infirmities, I could rely to aid in steadying my feeble steps and supplying my lack of service. This I am sure you perceived, and so can in some degree understand the shock and sorrow which your announcement has caused.

You need not, my dear brother, apprehend any ungenerous construction of *your* motives in taking this serious step. For our brethren in Virginia, I can engage that one and all will render *you* full credit for conscientiousness however decidedly they may disallow the

reasons you assign for leaving the Episcopal Church, and regard it as a causeless separation.

Your just testimony as to the unchanged Protestant and Scriptural teaching of the Articles and Offices of the Church is no more than was to have been expected from one of your intelligence and candor, though it is testimony which many persons must find difficult to reconcile with your "withdrawal."

Your testimony may be presented as follows: You, of course, regard the doctrines held by what you call the "Low-Church Party" to be sound and Scriptural. Now, on page thirteen you represent "the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church, which were designed to be the standard of doctrine for the Church," as sustaining the Low-Church Party in its teaching, and as proving "conclusively that it (the Low-Church Party) holds to-day the doctrines held by the framers of the Prayer Book."

The passage in its connection affords favorable testimony to the orthodoxy of the XXXIX Articles, and indirectly to the orthodoxy of the Prayer Book.

Again, page 4: "It is true that her standards of doctrine remain unchanged, and the XIX. and XXIII. Articles in the Prayer Book still testify to her original Protestant stand on this question" (the question of the Ministry, which carries with it the whole question about Priest, Sacrifice, and Altar).

Once more, page 4: "I am satisfied that this doctrine (that Baptism invariably effects regeneration) was *not held* by the framers of the Prayer Book, *nor intended to be expressed* in the Service, and therefore *is not really* the doctrine of the Church."

I do not cite these passages as dissenting from them, for I think them accurately true; but as expressing your

deliberate opinion as to the strict conformity of the teaching of the Church, in the Articles and Offices, with the Word of God as interpreted by the Reformers.

For separation from a Church justly entitled to such testimony, what reasons can be assigned? Those alleged in your letter I cannot recite in full, nor is it necessary, being, as you say, "just those which have been for some years a burden and grief to many in the Church," and it might be added, which have been often and clamorously urged by adversaries without. They may be thus summarily stated :

There are in some of the Formularies provided in the Book of Common Prayer a few, very few, words or phrases which, though if rightly interpreted according to the intent of the framers, express true doctrine, yet are *liable* to be misunderstood, and, in *fact*, have been and are so misunderstood and perverted, as to subserve the cause of serious doctrinal errors. This statement is unhappily true, and furnishes a good and sufficient reason for such *alterations* as may be necessary to obviate the evil. But it is no valid reason for repudiating the Book or *withdrawing from the Church*. If *this* were admitted, consistency would require us to reject the Pauline Epistles, and withdraw from Christianity. St. Peter (2, iii. 16) writes, that in all those Epistles "are some things hard to be understood," and which "certain persons wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction." You would not expect me to allow the validity of a reason capable of an application so wide and so destructive, and which would make a clean sweep of all we both hold to be most precious.

The true lesson taught by the facts which are admitted is the importance of such alterations in the terms

and phrases alluded to, or in the Rubrics relative to their use, as may most effectually guard against misunderstanding and perversion. Any such interference with the text of Sacred Scripture is out of the question; but for an uninspired document no such exemption can be claimed. Now this Church, after the example of the Church of England, has, in her Preface to the Book of Common Prayer, laid it down as a rule that: "The particular forms of Divine Worship, and the Rites and Ceremonies appointed to be used therein, being things in their own nature indifferent and *alterable* and so *acknowledged*, it is but *reasonable* that upon weighty and important considerations, according to the various emergencies of times and occasions, *such changes and alterations should be made therein* as to those who are in authority should, from time to time, seem either necessary or expedient."

Wise and ample provision is thus made to remedy just such evils as those of which you complain.

But you despair of relief in this way, pronounce it an "absolute impossibility;" represent the effort made in this direction by the nine Bishops, in a letter to their brethren, as a "signal failure," ending in a "mortifying discomfiture." Having been present in the House of Bishops during the entire proceeding to which you so slightly refer, and having watched it with intense interest for those whom it was intended to relieve, and having carefully committed it to writing *at the time*, I feel at liberty to correct the erroneous impression you have received.

Before an opportunity offered for presenting the Letter of the nine Bishops, the whole subject was introduced in a promising form, and with a very appropriate state-

ment by one of the majority. The discussion, which continued for several days, was conducted not only with exemplary courtesy, but in a fraternal spirit, which will not soon be forgotten by those who witnessed it with admiration and gratitude. Instead of widening the distance between those who differed, that distance diminished with every day's deliberations. The measure at first proposed was from time to time variously modified with most amazing concord, and at last adopted and signed, as published, by the whole House, with only one exception. The names of forty-eight Bishops are affixed to the Declaration. This result you will scarcely characterize as a "mortifying discomfiture." You, my dear brother, may think and say that "the Declaration" is not in "any sense" "a gain" to those for whose relief the nine Bishops were concerned. I can assure you that though what those Bishops sought was but partially attained, yet it was so much beyond what they hoped from a first move, and was yielded so handsomely, that they "thanked God and took courage." I will add, that when the Declaration as adopted was previously submitted to Bishop McIlvaine, with the inquiry, "How does this strike you?" he very emphatically replied, with a smile of unmistakable satisfaction, "The best thing yet!" But the circular addressed by the nine Bishops to those whom they sought to relieve, and which was prepared and sent to press after the Declaration was adopted, and to which I beg leave to refer you, may enforce my brief report, and perhaps modify your views of the transaction and its results.

It placed you, and others who agree with you, doctrinally, in an easier and more advantageous position, leaving you unchanged in your conviction that the great

spiritual change, the new birth unto righteousness, is not inseparably connected with the administration of Baptism, and that the contrary view "was not held by the framers of the Prayer Book, nor intended to be expressed in the Service, and is not, therefore, the doctrine of the Church;" and, moreover, sustaining you in this your conviction, by this Declaration of forty-eight Bishops in Council, who state that, "being asked, in order to the quieting of the consciences of sundry members of the said Church (Protestant Episcopal Church in United States), to declare our conviction as to the meaning of the word 'Regenerate,' in the Offices for the Ministration of Baptism of Infants, do declare that, in our opinion, the word 'Regenerate' is not there so used as to determine that a moral change in the subject of Baptism is wrought in that Sacrament."

That efforts would be made by some to explain away the meaning and force of this testimony was to be expected; but there it stands, to be understood and used agreeably to the express design of the signers and the proper import of its terms; and, as the nine Bishops and very many others thought, worth considerably more than "nothing," both in itself, for the excellent spirit in which it was done, and the hope thus given that, as it should become apparent that other measures were needed "for the preservation of the unity of the Church, and cutting off occasion from them that seek occasion of cavil or quarrel against her Liturgy," such measures would be adopted.

Another consideration which you urge with much feeling is the "attitude which the Protestant Episcopal Church has assumed towards the great bulk of Protestant Christians." Of course, you do not mean "the Church,"

for you say in the same immediate connection that her standards of doctrine remain unchanged, and the XIX. and XXIII. Articles in the Prayer Book still testify to her original Protestant stand on this question. I therefore understand you to mean what you indicate by "the prevailing opinion," the "current of public sentiment." Such "sentiment" and "opinion" you regard as imperious and unchurching in reference to all ministers not Episcopally ordained.

"Public opinion," when counter to our own, may be annoying, but it is of no authority. "Prevailing sentiment" is too variable and fallacious to be entitled to the consideration and influence which you seem to allow it, even when you denounce it as pernicious. Under such circumstances, it would be more like yourself to stand immovably witnessing for the truth, trusting to its power for triumph, and not to seek relief by getting away from opposition. Your known spirit authorized me to anticipate a calm but unflinching maintenance of a right position in a right cause. I confess I am disappointed.

When, in any matter involving conscience, be it in reference to faith or practice, public sentiment is erroneous, and becomes so prevalent and aggressive as to pass into law, *then*, indeed, the grievance is intolerable. This is precisely what you *fear* on the subject of the Ministry. You think the drift is decidedly towards the high latitudes, and the current so strong that the result is inevitable; that the bearing of legislation is increasingly in that direction, and has already progressed so far, that if we accept the current interpretation of certain Canons, no minister of the Episcopal Church can now, by *any one official act*, recognize any other Protestant Church, or the ministers of any other Church, as lawful ministers.



I am not aware of any such advance in legislation as you describe. The only action on this subject of recent date, was the adoption of Canon II, Tit. 1, "Of persons not ministers of this Church officiating in any Congregation thereof." It simply prohibits the officiating in any one of *our Congregations* of any person, without sufficient evidence of his being duly *licensed or ordained to minister in this Church*. The language of this Canon is by no means as strong as that in the preface to "the Form and manner of Making, Ordaining, and Consecrating," established in General Convention, Sept. A. D. 1792. In both, the purport and scope are the same; to protect the congregations of this Church against the ministrations of persons who are not responsible to this Church for what they may teach and do. It does not declare that no persons are *Ministers* except those ordained to minister in this Church, but simply that such only are allowed to officiate for our people. It is a prudential municipal regulation, that our congregations may not be exposed to disturbance by the insidious teaching of some one who might delight in the opportunity for creating confusion, especially as he was not liable to be dealt with for the evil he had caused.

It is worthy of notice that this regulation is virtually in practice, to a greater or less extent, by other Churches where it has not been ordained by law, a condition which I apprehend involves more delicacy, and gives occasion to more offense, than where the whole is the subject of positive enactment.

The regulation is not a line wider than the Church's responsibility. It covers only the services provided for our *own* people and in our *own* places of worship. If any one of our members or Ministers thinks proper to visit an as-

sembly of Christians of another Church, and to join in their devotions, listen to their teachings, partake in their Communion, there is no law prohibiting his course. It is for him to judge of its expediency; and if he exercises his liberty without ostentation, and without invidiously reflecting on brethren who do not desire to follow his example, he violates no rule of his Church, and is not justly liable to censure. If he is injured by his indulgence, he has himself only to blame, and for any benefit he receives all who love him will be thankful.

Every one knows that Ministers and members of other Churches may, and do, when they desire it, so partake with us. Such intercommunion is neither unlawful nor new. The declaration of Archbishop Usher was but the spirit of the leading Reformers: "Howsoever, I must needs think that the Churches which have no Bishop are thereby become very much defective in their government; and that the Churches in France, who, living under a Popish power, cannot do what they would, are more excusable in this defect than the Low Countries, that live under a Free State, yet, for testifying my communion with these Churches (which I do love and honor 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, if I were in Charitone." The action of Dean Alford at Berlin, and of Dean Smith in New York, each having the sanction of his Metropolitan, shows that the liberty is not withdrawn or antiquated in the Church of England.

In the Church in the United States such intercommunion is neither interfered with, nor likely so to be. I

regard this as one form of the practical recognition which you seem to think is discountenanced by "the Episcopal Church." Not the Episcopal Church, my good brother; her skirts are clean. There are, indeed, certain Episcopalians, how many I know not, I wish there were none, whose temperament inclines them to exclusiveness, and whose harsh censure of those who differ from them equals the outcry of the craftsmen at Ephesus. But these are not the Episcopal Church. They speak without her sanction, and have no power to enforce what they dictate. Such vehement and "imperious" vociferation may be annoying, nothing more. You seem worn out by this din, and propose to find relief by retiring from the enclosure now common to both. I would agree with you, if they had essentially altered the enclosure, changed its ministration so as to forbid what we consider obligatory, or enforce what we deem sinful. If they had power for all this, and so use it, then we could but suffer, to death if need be, or for conscience sake go out to live and labor elsewhere. But no such transformation has taken place. The venerable Church in itself is, from the corner-stone to the cross-surmounted spire, the same from which, at an incalculable cost, our fathers wrenched the corrupt accretions by which it had become disfigured and defiled. The Services in which we engage are the same simple Scriptural Services by which their hearts ascended to God in prayer and praise. The servants who minister are free to preach the glorious Gospel; no let or hindrance other than their own infirmities. The children are all free to take the Bread, and drink *the* water of life. And shall we leave this blessed home and relinquish this precious heritage? For what? Whither and with whom? No! no! it is all ours and unchanged!

Let those who covet change, and are intent on innovations, who "are not of us, go out from us;" but let those who love the Church as it is, and because it is what it is, who find refreshment and strength in its Scriptural Services and Sacraments, who prize its Apostolic ministry and open Bible, abide in the enjoyment of these inestimable privileges, guard them with jealous care, and transmit them unimpaired to those who are to come, and so meet as we may, our responsibility to the Great Head of the Church, who has entrusted to us such incomparable treasures.

This, my dear brother, is my clear conclusion, after a careful consideration of the reasons you assign for your "withdrawal," not one of which, as far as I am capable of judging, furnishes any justification of your act.

You know how fully our Theological views harmonize. I also agree with you in reference to grievances of which you complain, though I think you over-estimate their extent and power. That I regard you as mistaken as to the duty which these grievances impose on the Clergy and Laity of the Church, and as to the proper mode of obtaining relief, the previous pages sufficiently disclose. You will believe me, when I assure you of the great reluctance with which I make to you this communication in *this mode*, but your letter in print and published left me no choice.

In what I have thus written there is, I hope, not a word discordant with the fraternal relations which have obtained since our intercourse began, or to impair them in the future.

The Scriptural example, which you adduce to support your policy of withdrawal I readily accept, and fervently hope it will have your entire conformity. Paul and Bar-

nabas had "sharp contention," and they "departed asunder one from the other;" sought separate spheres of service, *that was all*; neither of them *withdrew from the Church*. If, however, you think you must make the experiment, I trust you will only depart for a season, that we "may receive you forever a brother beloved." And if my already prolonged life is extended so far, you will find me ready at the entrance, or rather hastening as fast as my tottering steps will permit, to meet you, to accompany and welcome you to your early home.

Then may I say, as did the aged Simeon, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation."

Meanwhile, yours, truly,

J. JOHNS.

Rev. J. A. LATANÉ.

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