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KINGSTON ONTARIO CANADA

A
LETTER
TO THE
RIGHT HON. N. VANSITTART, M. P.
BEING
AN ANSWER
TO HIS
SECOND LETTER
ON
The British and Foreign Bible Society ;
AND, AT THE SAME TIME,
AN ANSWER
TO
WHATEVER IS ARGUMENTATIVE IN OTHER PAMPHLETS,
WHICH HAVE BEEN
LATELY WRITTEN TO THE SAME PURPOSE.

BY HERBERT MARSH, D. D. F. R. S.

Margaret Professor of Divinity in Cambridge.

1812.

AC 911. 1812. M²⁷

A LETTER, &c.

DEAR SIR,

MY “Inquiry into the consequences of neglecting to give the Prayer-Book with the Bible,” having excited a host of adversaries, who have assailed me in every possible way, and with every possible weapon, it is necessary that I should attempt a vindication of that Inquiry, lest silence should be construed into an inability to answer. But that which chiefly induces me to remain for the present on the field of controversy, is the honor of combating so distinguished a champion as yourself. The second Letter, with which you have lately honored me, contains every thing in the shape of *argument*, which has been advanced by the united efforts of my other adversaries, whether in the form of Speeches, Letters, Prefaces, or Reviews; and contains it unmixed with extraneous matter, which serves only to divert the reader from the subject of discussion, and to confound where it cannot

confute. Indeed one of my adversaries, whose situation it would especially befit, to practise the benevolence which we are ordained to preach, has not only departed from the subject of inquiry, and thus left it precisely where he found it, but has substituted for argument a mass of personal invective, which it would be no less degrading to notice, than it was disgraceful to advance. And I am sure you will agree with me in the opinion, that when an author breathes nothing but the spirit, which the Gospel was intended to *subduc*, he will hardly contribute to the diffusion of the precepts, which the Gospel was intended to *convey*. However extensively we may disperse the *letter* of it, yet if our own example is at variance with its *spirit*, we defeat by our actions what we recommend by our words. The gentleness of its divine Author, and the mild conduct of the Apostles, form a striking contrast with the impetuosity thus displayed by advocates for the Bible Society: and impartial observers will suspect, that men who violate the laws of decorum, are pleading, not for piety, but for power.

To so much the more advantage does your own pamphlet appear, when contrasted with publications like these. It is true, that the “amiable spirit,” which I commended in your first Letter, is *less* perceptible in your second. But you every-where preserve the character and the language of a gentleman; you have never departed from your subject to compensate, by personality, the deficiency of argument; you have stated with precision the propositions, which you intend to combat, and to that statement you have adhered. For *this* reason, no less than for the reasons before assigned, I select your pamphlet, as that which, above all others, is intitled to regard; so much so indeed, that an answer to *your* pamphlet is an answer to *all the rest*. I mean, as far as *argument* is concerned: for

I would not offer so great an affront to the respectable writer, whom I am now addressing, as to introduce into this Letter a reply to objections of any *other* description. Indeed, the public at large can feel no interest in personal abuse from an angry author: and with respect to myself, I trust, that my character is too well established, to make it necessary for my *own* sake, to notice the effusions of spleen or malice. But such effusions cannot fail to lower the authors themselves in the opinion of impartial judges: and, if malice is accompanied with an affectation of *pleasantry*, it cannot fail to excite *disgust* in every man, whose taste is not corrupt, or whose judgment is not perverted. But to proceed, without further preface, to your own Letter, which is of a very different description.

The propositions, which you undertake to combat, you have stated in the following words, in the second page of your Letter.¹

“First, that the Bible Society produces a disregard of the Liturgy.

“Secondly, that its foreign operations have been mis-stated and exaggerated. And,

“Thirdly, that its real objects are of a political, and not a religious nature.”

These three propositions being quite distinct, it is of no consequence in what order they are examined. And as the two last require at present very little examination in comparison with the first, and are really unconnected with the decision of the main question, which was agitated in my Inquiry, it will be more convenient to dispose of these two propositions, before we enter on the first, which will then become the principal subject of examination.

¹ See Page 160. No. I.

The *second* proposition, which relates entirely to the *foreign* department, can have no influence on the decision of a question, which was wholly confined to operations *at home*. For this reason, though I ventured to deny that the Society's exertions in foreign countries were entitled to that high applause, which was bestowed by its advocates, I did not *argue* from that denial, on the subject then before me, but conceded for the sake of argument, and argued from that concession.¹ Whether the proposition therefore is maintainable or not, the inference which I deduced from the neglect of the Prayer Book, in the *home* distribution, will remain unaltered. But having once advanced the proposition, though incidentally, and not in proof of any thing *then* depending, I thought it my duty, as soon as I was able, to produce the evidence, on which it was founded. And, that this evidence is now produced, affords me the more satisfaction, as I find from your second Letter,² that the delay, though really unavoidable, was become a subject of complaint. Being now in possession of that evidence, you must be fully convinced, that the proposition I advanced, is perfectly true. You are not ignorant of the splendid descriptions, which the advocates of your Society have repeatedly made of its numerous *translations* into foreign languages; translations indeed so numerous, as to excite the recollection of the miraculous Pentecost, when the Apostles were gifted with the power of preaching to every man in his own language. Compare these splendid descriptions, compare even your own statement in your last Letter,³ with the facts, which I have

¹ See the paragraph, p. 142. No. I. beginning with the words, "But since it is of no importance to the Inquiry *now* before us," &c.

² Page 167. No. I.

³ Page 168. No. I.

proved by indisputable evidence, and then answer, whether the operations of your Society abroad have not been greatly exaggerated. They have indeed been exaggerated in such a manner, as to exceed the belief of any man, who had not before him the evidence which I have produced. For I have proved, that your Society, according to the last printed documents, on which alone those splendid descriptions could have been founded, *had not translated even the four Gospels into any one language, into which they had not been before translated.* I have proved even, that they had not done it of so much as *two* Gospels. I have proved also, from the same authority, that your Society had not *printed* so much as one entire Gospel, in any one language, into which the Scriptures, or portions of the Scriptures, had not been translated, either before the existence of the Society, or independently of its assistance. And even with respect to new editions of existing translations, I have shown that the want of them was by no means such as the advocates of your Society have pretended.¹

The third proposition, which you undertake to *combat*, namely, that your Society's "real objects are of a political and not of a religious nature ;" it is not my business to *defend*: for it is a proposition which I have *never advanced*, though you introduce it as one of my allegations.² Your ascribing to me the position, that the real objects of the Society are *not* of a religious nature, is the more extraordinary, as the very reason, which I have assigned, why the mem-

¹ See the work lately published, under the title, "A History of the Translations, which have been made of the Scriptures, from the earliest to the present Age, throughout Europe, Asia, Africa, and America."

² Page 160. No. I.

bers of your Society overlook domestic danger, is, that “they are animated by *religious zeal*.” I will quote the whole passage :¹ “There is nothing, which so prevents men from seeing the *danger* of an object, as, when in the pursuit of that object they are animated by *religious zeal*. With the prospect of extending the *universal Church*, men find it difficult to contract their views within the limits of a *single church*. With the prospect of promulgating the *Gospel* to *distant regions*, where its light had never shone, they view, through a glass inverted, the danger *at home*. And to the danger thus diminished, they are ready to close their eyes, if the *removal* of that danger obscures the glory of the prospect.” With a knowledge of this passage, how could you declare to the public, that I represented the objects of your Society as being *not* of a religious nature ? You should consider that there are thousands attached to the Bible Society, who will read your letter without reading my reply, who will take therefore my opinions from *your statement* of them, and openly censure me for sentiments, which I have never entertained. Hence the various charges which have been laid at my door by men, who got their intelligence at second hand. I am not surprised at *many* perversions, which have been made of my opinions : I am not surprised, that they who judge of me from the various misrepresentations, to which I have been exposed, should convert, for instance, the danger which I really apprehend from the *omission of the Prayer Book*, into a supposed apprehension of danger from the *distribution of the Bible*. But I really *am* surprised, that so respectable a writer as Mr. Vansittart, should lend his aid in the diffusion of unfounded allegations ; that neither justice nor mercy to an opponent, assailed on all sides, should have suggested the propriety of

¹ Inquiry, p. 133. No. I.

extreme circumspection, before he ventured to charge that opponent with asserting what must equally affect *all* the members of the Society, and equally excite the *indignation* of them all.

Having admitted in general terms, that the Society was animated by *religious zeal*, I did not conceal the opinion, that other objects were occasionally *associated* with that religious zeal. It provides, I said, “for temporal, *as well* as spiritual wants.”¹ But I did not *exclude*, as your position implies, the provision for spiritual wants. I did not ascribe to *any* man, and much less to the *whole body*, the mercenary motive of seeking *merely* the promotion of private interest. If this were my opinion, I should hardly have explained the inattention to domestic danger, as arising from a zeal for *religion*. I therefore positively *deny* the position which you ascribe to me: I deny the having *said*, or the having *meant*, that the real objects of your Society were *not* of a religious nature. The question, whether motives of private interest do not sometimes operate *as well* as motives of religion, in inducing men to join your Society, is quite distinct from that *general* position, which excludes religious motives *altogether*; which excludes them not from *one* only, but from *every* member of the Society. I asserted nothing more, than a *partial association of temporal objects*, which you have thought proper to convert into a *total exclusion of religious objects*. And though you represent that assertion as a *principal* subject of the Inquiry, it was introduced only incidentally in the following manner. *The principal* subject, namely, the danger of neglecting the Prayer Book, was finished with the eighth section. The ninth and last section related to a change in the *constitution* of your Society, which would remove every

¹ Page 151, No. I.

objection which I had made to it : but apprehending, that the temporal, as well as spiritual advantages, derived from the operations at home, would present an obstacle in the way of such a change, I stated what, in my opinion, those advantages were. You deny indeed, that the Society really *has* the advantages, which I ascribe to it, and accompany that denial with such strong indications of personal displeasure, that I cannot pass it over in silence.

I stated three ways, in which your Society provides for temporal wants, namely, “ it gives *power* to the Dissenter, *popularity* to the Churchman, and *interest* to the Politician.” That the Dissenters should derive *power* from a Society, which brings them to act with Churchmen on such a principle, assur-
renders what *distinguishes* the Church, is a matter too obvious to require illustration. No man surely can doubt, that there is such a thing as a *dissenting interest*, and that the more this interest is courted, the more powerful it will be. That Churchmen, who promote the Bible Society, thereby obtain *popularity*, while they who venture to oppose it are loaded with every species of abuse, can surely, after the late events, require no demonstration. And that the politician promotes his *interest* by joining the Bible Society, must be likewise obvious to every man, who has the least knowledge of the world. But you are offended with this observation, as if I meant to apply it to yourself. Now the interest, of which I was speaking, is such as you cannot *want*. But if you were member for a *county*, in which a large proportion of the voters were *Dissenters*, your zeal for the Bible Society would certainly have insured you for the next general election, against any candidate who had *opposed* the Society. But though you would *derive* this temporal advantage, I should not therefore deny, that you were actuated by *religious* motives. Nor have I denied it of *any* man. I can easily see, when temporal advantages are

obtained: but I can never see, whether they are exclusively or conjointly the *motives* to action: and therefore, though I asserted the *existence* of those advantages, I never argued from them to motives, which must be left to every man's own conscience. Why therefore should you be so displeased? You even accompany the denial of those advantages, with the observation, “which, however, I am sorry to say is not the case.” If you are *sorry* it is not the case, you must rejoice on finding that it *is*. Yet you are so angry as to say, that I have here had recourse, to “not only one of the most *vulgar*, but one of the most *dangerous* arts of controversy.” Now the character of vulgarity is *coarseness*, which surely does not apply to my remark. It was rather keen, than blunt; and that it has touched a tender point, is clear from the irritation, which it has produced. The *danger* of my remark consists, I find, in its capability of being “*retorted with effect*.” You say that “*temporal*, as well as *spiritual* wants, may be provided for by the profession of a distinguished zeal for the interest of the Church.” But surely you must know, that in the present instance, it cannot be “*retorted with effect*.” For if I had been then actuated by the desire of recommending myself to high ecclesiastical honors, I should have taken the side, which was chosen by my opponents. But I have obtained what depends on no man, the satisfaction of having acted from the suggestions of *duty*; whether I am mistaken or not, I have acted from my own conviction, which alone is the rule of an honest man; and I would not exchange this satisfaction for the reflections arising from a contrary conduct, though it were rewarded with rank, popularity, and power.

Let us now proceed to that, which constitutes the main subject of my Inquiry, *the Consequences of neglecting to give the Prayer Book with the Bible*. As we are still at

variance on this important subject, and there is no prospect of our coming to an agreement, while the preliminaries themselves remain unsettled, I must first examine, whether you have formed a correct opinion on the *kind* of importance which I attach to the Prayer Book. For if your *premises* are inaccurate, the same inaccuracy will attend your *conclusions*. I will quote therefore the following passage from the sixth page of your second letter (p. 162. No. I.) which contains a statement of the sentiments, which you *ascribe* to me, respecting the Bible and Prayer Book. "Such a claim of equality with the Bible, the venerable and holy men, who compiled our Liturgy, would have disclaimed with horror. There is no point, on which they more firmly insist, than upon the complete and absolute sufficiency of the Scriptures, in matters of faith: this indeed is the very basis of the reformation; while the authority of the Church in points of doctrine is no less avowedly the foundation of Popery. The danger of the perversion of Scripture, on which you so much insist, is the very argument used by the Papists in defence of the denial of the Bible to the Laity. And indeed to such a length do you carry your argument, that I know not what answer you could give to a Catholic doctor, who should justify the practice of his Church by your authority."

Now by process similar to that which you have here adopted, I would undertake to confute any proposition in Euclid. I have only to substitute the word *equal* for *unequal*, and the business is done. For instance, if I set out with the position, that the interior angle of a triangle is *equal to*, instead of *less than*, the opposite exterior angle, I shall deduce the inference, that the three angles of a triangle are *more* than two right angles. In like manner, you set off with the no less groundless position, that I put

in for the Prayer Book “a claim of *equality* with the Bible:” and in like manner you come to a conclusion similar to that, which relates to the triangle. It is no wonder, that you *appear* to have answered my objections, if you place them in a false light: for there is no argument whatever, which may not, by suitable *alterations*, be rendered capable of confutation. That I claim for the Prayer Book an *equality* with the Bible, is an assertion, made not only *without* authority, but in *direct contradiction* to repeated declarations in that very book, which you profess to answer. If “*without the Bible the Liturgy has no support,*” as I declared at p. 115; if the validity of its doctrines depends on their being “*correctly derived from the Bible,*” and the Bible is “*the only foundation of religious truth,*” as I declared at p. 126, have I not reason to complain, that you should represent me as claiming for the Prayer Book an *equality* with the Bible? I have called indeed the Prayer Book a proper *companion* for the Bible,¹ and have accordingly urged their joint distribution. But does this imply an *equality* between them? As well might a subject suppose himself equal to his sovereign, because he was admitted into *company* with his sovereign. Nor can I discover in the two pages, to which you refer, namely, p. 110 and 124, the smallest foundation for what you have been pleased to say of me in the passage above quoted. The latter of those two places contains the sentiments of *Bishop Beveridge* on the importance of the Liturgy, to which you must object, if you object at all. And in the former place, though I argued against Chillingworth’s “notion of *generalised Protestantism*, which admits of no reference to any *particular Creed,*” I argued not, as you contend, in the spirit of *Popery*, but on the very principles,

¹ Page 100. No. I.

which were maintained by our *Reformers*. For if our Reformers had been of opinion, that there was no necessity for Liturgy and Articles, they would not have composed our Liturgy and Articles. Whether they acted *rightly* in so doing, is a question, on which I hope we are not at issue. And if we are not, you cannot consistently appeal to our Reformers for the purpose of overturning my arguments. I plead for the book, which our Reformers composed, and urge its *distribution* on the *same principles* on which they recommended its *acceptance*. I urge the distribution of it, not as being *equal* with the Bible, but as being in *conformity* with the Bible. Our Reformers did the same : and consequently, if there is Popery in *my reasoning*, there was Popery in *theirs*. The inference to be deduced from your reasoning, I leave to be made by yourself.

But you suppose, that my objection to Chillingworth may be rendered nugatory by an appeal to the Homilies, from which you quote two long passages to prove (what I never doubted) the sufficiency of Scripture to salvation, and then triumphantly ask, “ Could the men, by whom such passages as these were written, have foreseen, that in the Church, which they founded, it would be considered as an offence to distribute the Bible unaccompanied by any human work ? Could they, humble as they were pious, have been supposed to claim, on behalf of their own writings, an equality with those Scriptures, by which they were guided, and for which some of them laid down their lives. Yet this claim of equality is all, which the members of the Bible Society, who belong to the Church of England, deny.” Here I beg leave to ask in my turn, whether the objection, which I made to Chillingworth, implied an objection to any thing contained in the *Homilies*. I had asserted in the Address to the Senate, that Churchmen

should distribute *both* Bible and Prayer Book. In your first letter, which was published as an answer to that Address, you quoted Chillingworth for the position, that the Bible *only* is the religion of the Protestant. But did I deny this position in that "Inquiry," which your second letter is intended to confute? Certainly not. On the contrary, I said explicitly, "Equally *true* is the general proposition, that the *Bible only* is the religion of the *Protestant.*"¹ You quote therefore from the Homilies to prove what was previously *admitted.*¹ It was the *application* of that position, not the position *itself*, which I contested. I argued against the conclusion *deduced* from that position; I denied, that, because the Bible *only* was the *religion* of the Protestant, it was a necessary consequence, that the Bible *only* should be *distributed* by the Protestant. And if this conclusion was not *intended* to be deduced, for what purpose did you *appeal* to Chillingworth? If my argument for the *joint* distribution of Bible and Prayer Book is to be confuted by his position, that the Bible *only* is the *religion* of the Protestant, that position must be extended to the act of *distribution*, or it is no contradiction of what I asserted. Either therefore you quoted Chillingworth without any meaning, which I cannot suppose, or you must have quoted him for the purpose of defending the practice of your Society, the distribution of the *Bible alone*. And that this was really your object is manifest from the question which you have again asked in the passage last quoted, whether our Reformers could "have foreseen that in the Church, which they founded, it would be considered as an offence "to distribute the *Bible unaccompanied with any human work?*" Now to say nothing of the word *offence*, which

¹ Page 106. No. I.

serves only to place my argument in an odious light,¹ the question itself, which is asked *in opposition* to my argument, is sufficient evidence, that you meant to *vindicate* the distribution of the Bible alone. You endeavour indeed to justify your opposition by repeating what I have already confuted, that when I contend for the joint distribution of Bible and Prayer Book, I place them on a footing of equality, and you add, that “this claim of *equality*, is all, which the members of the Bible Society, who belong to the Church of England, deny.” Now if this is *all* that you deny, what reason was there for your two letters to me? What occasion was there for all the declamation against me, which has been made at your auxiliary meetings? Both in the Address and in the Inquiry, the equality which you deny, was not only never asserted, but openly and explicitly *disavowed*.

Under such circumstances, I think that common justice requires an acknowledgment on the part of my adversaries, that they have been guilty of a wanton attack. The plea of *equality*, which is urged in vindication of it, is so obviously devoid of foundation, that no man could have resorted to it, except in a case of desperation. But I perceive, that the advocates for the Bible Society, when they are driven from a post, which they regarded as impregnable, take refuge in a position which they had represented as untenable. They conjure up the spirit of our Reformers to bear testimony to the *offence* of urging the distribution of the Bible in company with a *human work*, and then

¹ I asserted that Churchmen did not do their *duty*, if they neglected to give the Prayer Book with the Bible. The *offence* which was taken, was taken by the *advocates* of your Society, in consequence of my *urging* the just distribution.

appeal to experience, to prove that they do not *impede* the distribution of this human work. Now if it is Popery to *object* to the distribution of the Bible alone, a genuine Protestant must regard it as an *excellence* in your Society, that it *promotes* the distribution of the Bible alone. He must value it for this very reason, that it has *no tendency* to associate “divine perfection with human frailty.” With what consistency therefore can any man, who had condemned me for *urging* the distribution of the Prayer Book in company with the Bible, now vindicate the Society on the ground, that its tendency is the reverse of that which I ascribed to it?

But I will not quarrel with my adversaries on the score of consistency, if they at length admit, that I was right in contending for the joint distribution of Bible and Prayer Book. And this they *must* admit, if they now assert, in defence of the Society, that it has *not* a tendency to produce a neglect of the Liturgy. On the other hand, you will say, if I was right in the principle, I was wrong in the *application* of it. You contend, and my other adversaries at present do the same, that experience is *against* me; that the *practical* effects are at variance with my *speculative* conclusions. If such is really the case, I must admit, that my principal objection to your Society will be removed. I objected to it on the very ground of its *having* a tendency to bring the Liturgy into neglect; and for this very reason I instituted an inquiry into the *consequences* of such neglect. When I applied the principle to your Society, I not only thought that the *arguments* which I used would warrant the application, but that those arguments were corroborated by matter of *fact*. Nor do I perceive, that you have attempted to invalidate either my reasoning on this subject, or the examples, to which I appealed in confirmation of it. It is true that you have likewise appealed to a *fact*, which you consi-

der as alone sufficient to disprove the tendency, which I ascribe to your Society ; and that I may do justice to your statement, I will give it in your own words. But I must previously observe, that in combating my position respecting the tendency of your Society, you have exhibited another instance of that unfairness, of which I have had occasion to complain more than once already. Whoever undertakes to *confute* a proposition should strictly adhere to the *terms* of the proposition ; for if he substitutes *other* terms, which have a different import, it *ceases* to be the proposition which he professes to confute. In the *seventh section* of the Inquiry, which was devoted to this subject, I particularly used the word *neglect*. Isaid, p. 137. No. I. "Shall we recommend it therefore to Churchmen to become members of a Society, which not only has a tendency to bring the Liturgy into *neglect*, but which already, as we know by experience, produces *that effect*?" Again in the same page I said, "And what are those general effects but to bring into *neglect* the bulwark of the established church?" In what manner this *neglect* operated I had previously explained in p. 135. No. I. "as diminishing the *frequency of its distribution*." And the very title of the pamphlet was an Inquiry into the consequences of *neglecting* to give the Prayer Book with the Bible. But for the word *neglect* you have substituted the word "*disregard* :" and hence the leading proposition, which you propose to confute, and which is the first of the three above stated, runs thus, "That the Bible Society produces a *disregard* of the Liturgy." Now a man may *neglect* the distribution of the Liturgy, without having an absolute *disregard* for it : he may *neglect* that distribution for want of knowing the *consequences* of that neglect. To such persons, and to such persons *only*, could I be supposed to address myself, when I *explained* those consequences : for men who have

an absolute *disregard* for the Liturgy, would be induced by a consideration of those consequences to *persevere* in the neglect, of which I complained. Requesting, therefore, that your words may be properly corrected, I will now state your *fact*, as you have given it in p. 161. No. I. "Of the disregard to the Liturgy, which you suppose to have been produced by the Bible Society, if real, the Reports of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge must bear conclusive evidence. We shall in that case find, that during the growth of the Bible Society, the demand for Prayer Books for distribution has been gradually lessening. But what is the fact? The number of Prayer Books delivered by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge to its members, on an average of the three years immediately previous to the institution of the Bible Society, (viz. 1802-3-4) was 13,426; the average of the last three years was 19,815, being an *increase* of nearly one half." As this *fact* has not only been copied by another of my adversaries, who produces it with the triumph of a victor already trampling on his foe, but has really made some impression on the minds of men, who have discernment as well as zeal, it is intitled to particular attention. The question to be examined is, not whether the fact *itself* be true, but whether it *disproves* the *tendency*, which I ascribe to your Society. I will take for granted that your average is correct; that the distribution of the Prayer Book at Bartlett's Buildings has *increased*, and increased in that proportion which you have stated. But the increase of distribution by *one* Society is perfectly compatible with the tendency to its diminution by *another* Society. I will illustrate this by an example with which you are well acquainted. The Exports from this country to the *Continent of Europe*, during the three years which *followed* the Berlin and Milan Decrees, amounted to more than *sixty-five millions*,

whereas during the three preceding years, these Exports amounted to less than *fifty-four* millions. But I think no Statesman would conclude from this circumstance, that the Berlin and Milan Decrees have no *tendency* to diminish the exports of this country even to the *Continent of Europe*. You would hardly argue in this case as you do of the Bible Society, and say, “If the Berlin and Milan Decrees have a tendency to diminish the trade with the Continent, the Reports of the Inspector General, laid annually before the House of Commons, must bear decisive evidence. We shall in that case find, that during the continuance of these decrees, the Exports to the Continent have been gradually lessening. But what is the *fact*? The average of the three years which followed those decrees, has *exceeded* by nearly one fourth the average of the three preceding years.” You yourself must admit that such reasoning would be fallacious. If you express yourself in *general* terms, without a reference to any particular object, you will still more clearly perceive the fallacy of your reasoning. Substitute A. and B. for the two Societies, and the argument will stand thus. A. increases its motion in *one* direction: therefore B. has no tendency to move in an *opposite* direction. Here you see at once that the premises and the inference have *no connexion*. What then becomes of your argument, and where is the use of your *fact*, the mighty *fact*, which is supposed to have laid my whole edifice in ruins. I did not assert, that the tendency of your Society to occasion a neglect of the Liturgy, would produce the same effect at *Bartlett's Buildings*. On the contrary, the very circumstance, that the Liturgy was neglected by the former, would suggest the necessity of increased attention to it by the latter. Well then (you will say) if the desired effect is only produced, it follows that no harm is done. If the motion of A. does but in-

crease sufficiently to *counteract* the tendency of B. the apprehended evil is prevented. True; but the argument then implies the *existence* of the tendency. And should not every Churchman prefer a Society, which has *no* such tendency? Is it not better to be *free* from defect, than to *have* one, however capable of remedy? And how advantageously does the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge appear from your very argument, which represents this Society, not only as *free* from the defect, of which I complain, but as correcting that defect in the *other* Society?

But however true it may be, that the distribution of Prayer Books at Bartlett's Buildings has increased in the proportion of nearly three to two, this is not the *only* proportion which we must take into the estimate, in order to judge of the tendency of your Society. If, as I contend, it is the duty of Churchmen to distribute *both* Bible and Prayer Book, the defect, of which I complain, can be remedied only by *such* an increase in the distribution of the Prayer Book, as shall be proportioned to the increase in the distribution of the *Bible*; of the *Bible*, namely, as distributed among *Churchmen*. And an increase, according to *this* proportion, the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge has at present not the *means* of effecting.¹ We distributed last year more than twenty thousand Prayer Books; but then we distributed more than twenty thousand Bibles and Testaments. Your Society, according to the last Summary Account, distributed above a hundred

¹ The common annual subscription to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge is *one guinea*: the common donation at admission is *two guineas*. But when Churchmen contribute to the *Bible Society*, their generosity extends to benefactions of ten, twenty, thirty, forty, and fifty guineas.

thousand Bibles and Testaments in the same year. And if only two thirds of them were English and Welsh, and only one half of that number were given to Churchmen, at least thirty thousand Churchmen were provided last year with a Bible or Testament, not one of which was provided by either Society with a Prayer Book. For our Society has been *hitherto* unable to do more for the distribution of the Liturgy, than keep pace with its *own* increased distribution of the Bible and Testament. That the Prayer Book therefore *is* neglected, and in a manner which it ought not to be, by *Churchmen*, appears from actual *experience*.

But I can state a *fact*, which bears still more strongly on the present subject. There is no place where the effects of your Society are more likely to have been felt, than the printing office at Cambridge, which has been particularly *employed* by your Society. The records, therefore, of our printing office afford the best criterion of judging of its effects. In the *eight* years which have elapsed since the formation of your Society to the beginning of the present year, the number of Bibles and Testaments printed at our office have amounted to 531,800 : the number of Bibles and Testaments printed in the *eight preceding* years, namely, from 1796 to 1803 inclusive, amounted to 201,000. The increase therefore in *Bibles and Testaments* has been in the proportion of more than five to two. But has the number of *Prayer Books* increased in the same proportion, or has it increased at all? Quite the contrary. The number of Prayer Books printed at our office in the eight years which have *followed* the formation of your Society has amounted only to 140,900 ; whereas the number of Prayer Books printed at our office during the eight years which immediately *preceded* the formation of your Society, amounted to 161,750. Here is not only a proportional, but an *absolute* decrease in the number of Prayer Books : a decrease of

more than *twenty thousand* since the formation of your Society, compared with the *same period* preceding it. Nor must I omit to mention, that in 1802 and 1803, *no* Prayer Books were printed at our office, the 161,750 having been printed in the *six* years from 1796 to the end of 1801. So much fairer was the opening for the printing of Prayer Books in the eight *following* years : and surely *eight* years afford a very fair trial. There is also another circumstance which must not be forgotten. Though the number has decreased in the *last* eight years, it had been previously on the *increase*. In the four years ending with 1795, the number of Prayer Books printed at our office was 101,500 ; in the four years ending with 1799, the number was 116,750 ; and in the four years ending with 1801, the number was 133,000, which is nearly as many as have been printed in *double* that time since the formation of your Society. Whether we judge therefore of its tendency by argument or by fact, the inference is in my favor.¹

¹ Mr. Simeon, who has addressed me in a tone of defiance not usual among gentlemen, except in repelling a gross *personal* attack, says, page 2, that my “argument is altogether founded on an assumption of a fact *as true*, which, if inquired into, will prove *false*:” this fact, as he himself states (p. 5) from a passage of my Inquiry is, “the practice of neglecting to give the Prayer Book with the Bible;” on which he says, no one but myself “has had the *hardihood* to affirm the existence of such a fact, and much less to assume it without a shadow of truth.” At p. 40, after a long dissertation about Calvinism, he returns to the charge, and quoting a passage from my Inquiry, where his Society is described as one “which not only has a *tendency* to bring the Liturgy into neglect, but already, as we know by experience, *produces the effect*,” he immediately adds, “The reader is requested to take a special notice of these words: for *on your proof of this assertion I am content to rest the whole question.*”—Now when a Society, by its very constitution, *excludes* the distribution of the Liturgy, we should suppose, that to a common understanding no proof would be wanted that such a Society had at least a *tendency* “to bring the Liturgy into neglect.” And

But before I conclude the examination of *facts*, which have been represented as fatal to my whole Inquiry, I must notice one of a different description, though produced by another opponent, lest any thing, which bears the *name* of fact, should be considered as valid for want of notice. It is not the result of *calculation*, nor of the actual *distribution* of the Prayer Book, but is designed as the foundation of an argument to disprove the tendency in question. At New York, it seems, there is a Bible Society, and a *Bible and Prayer Book Society*: both of these Societies have applied for assistance to your Society in London, and both of them have *received* assistance; whence it has been inferred, that

that such a Society, in its corporate capacity, *does* neglect to give the Prayer Book with the Bible, must either be *true*, or the Society is not what it *pretends* to be, a Society for the distribution of the Bible *alone*. Where then was the *hardihood*, as Mr. Simeon is pleased to call it, of affirming, that such neglect *existed*? Where was the absurdity of inquiring into the *consequences* of that neglect? But if Mr. Simeon really wanted *facts* to prove the tendency in question, the Inquiry itself contained facts of this description: for every instance, in which the distribution of the Bible alone, or without the Prayer Book, is *vindicated*, is an instance of a *fact*, which *corroborates* that tendency. What are the numberless examples of objection to the position, that Churchmen should distribute *both* Bible and Prayer Book, but so many proofs of a tendency toward a neglect of the Prayer Book? Mr. Simeon's appeal to the increased distribution of the Prayer Book at Bartlett's Buildings, I have already shown to be perfectly irrelevant to the tendency of *his own* Society. But my appeal to the Printing office at Cambridge, which has been devoted to the service of the Bible Society, exhibits a *fact*, which is perfectly *in point*. It is not the distribution at Bartlett's Buildings, but the number printed at Cambridge, which affords the *true criterion* for judging of the effects of his Society. And as Mr. Simeon (p. 41) "dares" me to the production of a proof, and is "content to rest the whole question" upon it, I hope he will be satisfied with the FACT, the incontrovertible FACT, that since the Institution of his Society, the number of Prayer Books printed at Cambridge is more than TWENTY THOUSAND less, than the number which was printed there during the same period, *previous* to the formation of his Society.

the British and Foreign Bible Society, even in its corporate capacity, does not discourage the Prayer Book. But when all the circumstances are known, this *capital* fact will appear in a very different light. To the New York *Bible* Society the sum of 100l. has been voted ; the same sum has been voted to each of the following Societies : the Connecticut, the Massachusetts, the New Jersey, the Charleston, the Maine, and the Georgia *Bible* Societies, and to the Philadelphia *Bible* Society, 200l.¹ Here I shall not inquire into the wisdom of sending money out of this country to supply the citizens of the United States, who are no less able to *subscribe* for the purchase of Bibles, than the auxiliary Societies at home ; but shall remark only the *distinction* which was made between the *Bible* Societies and the *Bible and Prayer Book* Society. This Society petitioned like the rest for *money*, and declared that “any grant of money would be faithfully appropriated to the purchase and distribution of Bibles only.”² But did your Society *consent* to vote money, as was desired, and was done to the *Bible* Societies in the United States ? Did your Society *trust* to the declaration, that no part of the grant should be employed on Prayer Books ? No ! You voted indeed the *worth* of 100l. but you voted it in Bibles and Testaments.³ I do not say, that the caution here observed, and the exception here made, were inconsistent with the principle, on which your Society is founded. But the example should not be quoted as an instance of *regard* for the Prayer Book.

¹ See the account of the sums voted, in the fifth, sixth, and seventh Reports. What additional sums were voted last year, I cannot say ; I judge only from documents already printed.

² See the letter of Bishop Moore, the President of this Society, printed in the seventh Report. App. p. 41.

³ Seventh Report, App. p. 134.

Having considered the *facts* which have been alleged to disprove the tendency in question, I will now consider the *arguments* which you produce for the same purpose.¹ "Instead of leading to a disregard of the Liturgy, I have no doubt, that among Churchmen the Bible Society tends to recommend and endear it. It is, I think, impossible to engage seriously in the concerns of the Society, without imbibing some portion of the spirit by which it is actuated, and without acquiring a deeper sense of the inestimable value of the Scriptures, and of their practical and personal importance to ourselves. We cannot be earnest in recommending the Bible to others, without applying it to our own hearts; and we cannot do so without becoming better Churchmen, because better Christians and better men." I perfectly agree with you in the opinion, that a man cannot "engage seriously in the concerns of the Society without imbibing *some portion of the spirit*, by which it is actuated :" but that the spirit of a Society, which constitutionally *excludes* the Liturgy, should have a tendency *in its favor*, appears to me a perfect paradox. If you become "better Churchmen, *because* better Christians and better men," what will the *Dissenters* say, who are members of your Society, and who feel its benign influence *without* becoming Churchmen? Is not *their* Christianity improved by the Bible Society as well as *your own*? And if it *is*, might we not expect, according to your reasoning both here and elsewhere,² some indications of a favorable disposition toward the Liturgy, among the dissenting members of your society? Might we not expect, as the great body of Dissenters belong to it, some favorable change in the course of eight

¹ Page 174, No. I. where you solemnly say "I deny your minor."

² You say, page 164, No. I. they must learn to respect what they know to be held in veneration by men whom they esteem.

years? Might we not expect that the number of Dissenters would have diminished since the formation of the Bible Society? But is this the *fact*? Is it not notorious, that since that period the number of Dissenters has very materially *increased*? Is it not therefore absurd, to talk of the Bible Society as having a tendency *in favor* of the Liturgy? Is it not absurd to suppose that a Society, founded on the *exclusion* of the Liturgy, should have a tendency to *promote* it?

Another argument, which you produce, is merely an *argumentum ad invidiam*. I do not question the sincerity of your professions, when you express your regard for the Liturgy of the established church: but if, as advocate of a Society, which in its corporate capacity *excludes* the distribution of the Prayer Book, you have recourse to reasoning, which I think injurious to the church, I may be permitted, with every feeling of *personal* respect, to state my objections. I have contended in *general terms*, that your Society does not make such provision for the distribution of the Prayer Book, as Churchmen *ought* to make: but I have introduced no personal remarks on this subject, and consequently there is no need of personal defence. But you really endeavour to place me in an odious light, by confounding general objections with personal imputations: and because there are respectable Prelates, who are members of a Society which I disapprove, you are disposed to insinuate, that I am thus guilty of individual affront. With equal and indeed greater justice might I contend, that as the great majority of our Prelates have *not* joined your Society, every argument which you use in favor of it, is an imputation upon *them*. You say at p. 173, No. I. "The friends of the British and Foreign Bible Society, who trust in the discretion of the Prelates who *support* it, and conclude that an institution sanctioned by their authority *cannot* be injurious

to the church, &c.” What answer therefore could you consistently make, if I should say in similar language, “The *adversaries* of the British and Foreign Bible Society, who trust in the discretion of the prelates, who *refuse* to support it, and conclude that an institution, *not* sanctioned by their authority, *may* be injurious to the church, &c.” But such personal considerations have no concern with the general question. And as you may fairly vindicate your Society without offence to those, who have *refused* their assent, I may fairly state my objections, without offence to those, who have *given* their assent. Indeed, when the welfare of the established church is concerned, I should very ill discharge my duty as Professor of Divinity, if respect for any individual, however good or great, could deter me from declaring the danger which I really apprehend. On this occasion, however, you have availed yourself of a privilege, which the advocates of the Bible Society particularly claim, that of altering the terms, which are used by their opponents. On this occasion the substitution of “*disregard*” for “*neglect*,” of which I have already complained, is of singular advantage. No Prelate can be justly offended with the supposition, that he does not *perceive* the consequences of neglecting to give the Prayer Book with the Bible: it is the supposition only of an *oversight*, from which the wisest of men are not exempt. And I have reason to believe that one of those respectable Prelates, whom you name at p. 174, No. I. who, like yourself, is a Vice-President of your Society, was *not* offended with the supposition, since he applied to Bartlett’s Buildings, very soon after the publication of my Inquiry, for not less than *two thousand* Prayer Books, to be distributed in company with the Bible. But change only the terms, and say that I ascribe to the Prelates, who are members of your Society, an actual *disregard* for the Liturgy, and you furnish them at once, if they judge from your statements, with cause of

offence.¹ This may answer the purpose of exciting indignation against the *person* of your adversary : but it would be more candid, as well as more to the purpose, if you confuted his *arguments*.

That a Society, which constitutionally *excludes* the distribution of the Liturgy, has no tendency to occasion a *neglect* of that distribution, is a proposition, which really involves a contradiction. Indeed your second letter, though it professes to *disprove* that tendency, serves only to *confirm* it. You still *vindicate* the practice of distributing the Bible alone, though every instance of such *vindication* is a *fact*, which proves the truth of my assertion. You appeal to the Naval and Military Bible Society, which likewise distributes only Bibles, to justify the same restricted distribution on the part of your own Society : and as far as an *argumentum ad verecundiam* extends, I cannot deny, that from this appeal you derive particular advantage. The Archbishop of Canterbury is President of that Society, and the Bishop of London is one of the Vice-Presidents. Neither of these distinguished Prelates has honored your Society with his name and patronage : but by introducing them as presiding over *another* Society, which confines its distribution to the Bible, you claim them as promoters at least of the *principle*, on which your Society is founded. Now the Naval and Military Bible Society commenced in 1780, at a time and under circumstances, when the consequences of neglecting to give also the Prayer Book were not so apparent as they are at present. And I have no doubt, that, if an institution were to be *now* formed for supplying the army and navy with Bibles, it would be made an indispensable condition by *both* of those dis-

¹ In the page to which I have referred, you say "The same gratuitous supposition of *disregard* to the Liturgy, &c.

tinguished Prelates, that the Prayer Book should be distributed as well as the Bible. Indeed no reason can be assigned, why our soldiers and sailors, who belong to the established church, should be left unprovided with the Prayer Book. The opinion of Government on this subject has been lately shown in a very conspicuous manner : for in the month of March last, the Admiralty impressed, as it is termed, *fifteen hundred pounds*, which will be continued annually, to the Chaplain General, for the purpose of procuring *books*, including Prayer Books with Bibles, from the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.¹ And you yourself have afforded a very cogent argument for the distribution of the Prayer Book among our *soldiers*, by reminding me, that in the time of Cromwell, "it was a *fanatical* army which overturned *both the altar and the throne.*"²

Another mode of defending the principle, on which your Society is founded, consists in the contemplation of that *happy state*, which it is calculated to produce when we shall "be so refined from all party prejudices and interested views, so softened by the spirit of charity and mutual conciliation, and so controlled by agreement in the leading principles, and zeal for the general interests of Christianity, that no sect or persuasion should be tempted to make religion subservient to secular views, or to employ political power to the prejudice of others."³ You are

¹ The *gratuitous* distribution to the Navy has cost this Society during the last seven years 3361*l.*

² Page 173. No. I.

³ P. 175, No. I. In a similar strain, says Mr. Lancaster, "Above all things, education ought not to be subservient to the propagation of the peculiar tenets of any *sect*. Beyond the number of *that sect* it be-

manifestly pleading for a repeal of the Test Act, to which I declared in the Inquiry, that the progress of your Society would ultimately lead. You again therefore *confirm* my positions by your attempts to confute them. You even add, a few lines after the passage just quoted, that you "believe the Bible Society to have a strong tendency to produce such a state of things," as you had been just describing. And you conclude by saying, "In *this* way it *may* become a means of removing the Test Act." You deny indeed, that it can become so in any *other* way: but if your Society produces the *effect*, it is hardly worth our while to dispute about the *means*.

Indeed your last Letter confirms, almost in every particular, the truth of what I asserted in the Inquiry. I there said,¹ in reference to the co-operation of Churchmen with Dissenters, in the Bible Society, "While it provides against contingent evil, it creates a *present* one; in the hope of preventing *political* mischief, it undermines the established

comes undue influence, like the strong taking advantage of the *weak*." Indeed the Bible Society and the Lancastrian System are founded on the *same principle*, as I fully explained in the fourth section of the Inquiry. And even four months *before* that Inquiry was published, the Committee for promoting the Lancastrian System published a letter addressed to the Members of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in which they say they "feel confident that they are addressing persons, who can fully appreciate the value of efforts, which are solely directed to *the advancement of those views for which the Bible Society was instituted*." And in p. 2, they add, "According to *the practice of the Bible Society*, in distributing the sacred text without note or comment, *so* has ever been the practice of Mr. Lancaster." This letter is dated September, 1811, and is signed by Mr. Joseph Fox, and other principal members of the Lancastrian Committee. The resemblance therefore cannot have been *suggested* by my Inquiry, which was published in the following month of January.

¹ Page 146. No. I.

religion; without receiving the smallest compensation, it surrenders the interest of the church, by bringing Churchmen and Dissenters to act upon a common principle, which excludes what is *essential to the Church*.” Let any man compare this sentence with what you have replied in your last Letter, and determine whether my apprehensions are ungrounded. You represent the Bible Society, as an institution “in which the Churchman and Dissenter meet to *lay aside* their prejudices;”¹ you describe it as “a plan founded on the *surrender* of ancient prejudices.”² Here let me ask, whose “ancient prejudices” are thus surrendered in your Society. It cannot be the prejudices of the *Dissenters*; for they surrender *nothing*. Those “ancient prejudices,” therefore, as you call them, must be the ancient prejudices of *Churchmen*; they must be the ancient prejudices in favor of the *Liturgy*; and *these* prejudices really *are* surrendered; but it is a surrender of the Established Church. Can you wonder, therefore, that a Professor of Divinity should *object* to your Society.³

¹ Page 172. No. I.

² Page 181. No. I.

³ I will here quote a passage from the British Review, (No. IV. p. 447.) because you consider it (p. 182.) as “one of our ablest periodical works.” Speaking of the Methodists, the writer says: “They may be assured that their professed attachment to the principles, to the faith, and liturgy of our Church, would in itself be sufficient to unite all other Dissenters, however inconsistent in other respects, in a common cause, for their destruction. And have they read the instructive page of history? If they have, they may surely derive a lesson from the past conduct of the sectaries, with whom they are now connected, when possessed of power and authority. The individuals are changed, but the spirit of the sects is the same. Into the particulars of that conduct we will not now enter. Let them, however, be diligently inquired into, and seriously reflected upon, by those,

But my objections, it seems, are to be overruled by menaces. You say,¹ “The voice of the public is now *with* the Church: it may, by a pertinacious resistance to reasonable expectations, be turned *against* her.” And a few lines afterwards, you add: “The cause of the Church may likewise suffer, in no inconsiderable degree, from ill-judging advocates. If her alleged defenders insist on arguments

to whom we are thus offering a friendly admonition. Let them beware of their new associates, of whom they are at this time, in a great degree, the dupes and instruments, and of whom they may possibly become the victims.” From this passage you will see, that even the British Review, when the *Bible Society* is not immediately under consideration, entertains the same general sentiments as were advanced in the Inquiry. Indeed the writer expresses himself in terms, which I should not have ventured to use. For he adds: “We have a scrupulous and tender regard for the *dissenting conscience*, and the highest respect for the character and conduct of many enlightened Dissenters. But we have no respect or regard whatever for what may be called the *dissenting interest*, that is, for those who make a cloak of religion, to cover their private purposes, and to obtain for themselves the power and influence of a party. And we have the utmost contempt for those persons, *not Dissenters*, who flatter and encourage what they must believe (if they are honest men) to be dangerous error, and who condescend to purchase by dupery and hypocrisy the rewards of popularity.” At p. 445, the same writer says, again speaking of the Methodists: “in pursuance of this system they have become connected with the body of real Protestant Dissenters, the far greater part of whom are actuated by a spirit of decided hostility to the Established Church; and in whose minds, if there exist any sentiment, as strong as hostility to the Church, it is contempt for those with whom they are thus associated.” These passages are the more remarkable, as being contained in a Review, conducted indeed by Churchmen, but by Churchmen who are zealous friends of the *Bible Society*.

¹ P. 178, No. I.

so repugnant to the common sense and feelings of mankind, that they can only be supported by treating the clearest and simplest subjects, as the most intricate and perplexed, the ridicule, which must attach itself to such arguments, however ingeniously maintained, cannot fail, in a certain degree, to be reflected on the Church." Now, whether I am an *ill-judging advocate*, whether I am only an *alleged defender*, whether my arguments are *repugnant to common sense*, whether I reflect honor, or bring only *ridicule* on the Church, are questions, which I shall leave to the decision of the public, though not without expressing my obligations for your proposal of them. But the "*pertinacious resistance to reasonable expectations*," which you say will turn the voice of the public against the Church itself, is a matter of serious concern to us *all*. If these "*reasonable expectations*," meant only the expectations, that benefited clergymen should reside on their livings, (to which you had incidentally alluded in the preceding page) I should readily admit, that *such* an expectation was a *reasonable* one; and I should admit it, not merely because I myself have nothing but a sinecure rectory attached to my Professorship; but as the threat is introduced in a Letter, designed to combat *objections to your Society*, as it is followed by strong personal allusions to the *author* of those objections, and followed even by a reference to the pamphlet, which you profess to answer,¹ it not only *may*, but *must* be applied to those very objections. It is my "*pertinacious resistance*" to the claims of your Society, which gives offence. But however "*reasonable*" those claims may appear to its advocates, and however dangerous it may be to *dispute* them, yet, as neither argument nor fact has hitherto established their vali-

¹ You refer expressly to my Inquiry.

dity, resistance should not be *abated* by additional cause for alarm.

After all, though you contended in your former Letter for the distribution of the Bible *alone*; though even to the end of your second Letter, you plead for those who "carry home to the habitations of the poor and ignorant that Bible *alone*, which is daily read in the Church, as *alone* containing the words of everlasting life,"¹ yet as the Prayer Book is *also* read in the Church, and constitutes a much greater part of Divine Service, the friends of the Bible Society seem lately to have discovered that I was *right* in contending for the distribution, on the part of Churchmen, of *both* Bible and Prayer Book. For shortly before the General Meeting of your Society, on the 6th of this month, at Free Mason's Tavern, proposals were circulated for another meeting at the same place, on that day fortnight, with the view of establishing a kind of supplementary Society, for the distribution of the *Prayer Book*. The Prospectus, which I have now before me, is intitled, "Reasons for establishing, at the present time, a *Prayer Book and Homily Society*, for the sole purpose of distributing gratis, and circulating at reduced prices, the *Prayer Book and Homilies* of the United Church of England and Ireland, among the people of the British Empire, and particularly in his Majesty's Army and Navy, and in our Colonies and Dependencies." In the first paragraph of the Prospectus, where mention is made of objects "hitherto only partially accomplished," immediately is added, "Among these, that of more widely circulating the *Prayer Book and Homilies* of the Church of England, has appeared *peculiarly important*." How very unlike are these sentiments to the language which has been *hitherto* holden by the advocates

¹ P. 179, No. I.

of your Society? When I contended, only five months ago, for the importance of the Liturgy, and urged its distribution with the Bible, not on the ground of equality, (which you must know I never maintained) but solely on the ground of conformity; I was told in answer, that the Bible *only* was the religion of the Protestant, and that it was *Popery* to object to its *sole* distribution. But in the words of the present Prospectus, it is requested, that "the *Church* members of the Bible Society —— will not deny their patronage to an Institution, which has for its object *to diffuse more widely* the Formularies of the Church, which, in their estimation, can be deemed *inferior only to the Bible itself.*" Now, if instead of proposing, that the Church members of your Society should transfer their contributions to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, which distributes *both* Bible and Prayer Book, I had proposed the remedy which is now recommended by *your own* party, namely, a supplementary institution for the distribution of the Prayer Book, the proposal would have *then* been rejected with indignation. If it was *Popery* to urge the distribution of *both* Bible and Prayer Book, what would have been *then* said of a Society for the distribution of the Prayer Book, *without* the Bible? Even in your *last* Letter you have vindicated the practice of distributing the Bible *alone*, by appealing to the Naval and Military Bible Society: yet in the Prospectus *now* published, the distribution of the Prayer Book is represented as necessary, "*especially among the Army and Navy.*" It appears then, that after all the contradictions, and all the invectives, to which I have been exposed during the last five months, from the advocates of your Society, the very principle, for which I have been all along contending, is at length *formally and solemnly recognized.* The too great *neglect of the Liturgy*, of which I complained in the Inquiry, and of which I stated the conse-

quence, is no longer a *false assumption*, but a *fact implied in the very face of the Prospectus*. For it would be absurd to propose a remedy for a defect, which *did not exist*. The “peculiarly important object,” (as termed in the Prospectus) of a *wider circulation of the Prayer Book*, is not only thus openly admitted, but the Constitution of the Bible Society is expressly assigned as a reason, why that important object has been “*hitherto only partially accomplished*.” Lastly, that the Church would be in danger, if some means were not adopted for an *increased distribution* of the Prayer Book, is again acknowledged in this very Prospectus, by the solemn appeal “to the dignitaries and ministers of the Church generally, as well as to that vast body of the Laity, who are cordially attached to her.” When they are invoked to unite for the circulation of the Prayer Book, they are invoked (in the language of this Address) to “unite under the banners of the Church.” Not only the *existence* therefore of that neglect, which was the subject of complaint in my Inquiry, but even the *cause* which I assigned, and the *consequences* which I declared, are now unequivocally admitted.

Whether the members of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, who are *likewise* invited by the Prospectus, to join the new Institution, should not prefer, if they have another guinea to spare, an increased subscription to their *own* Society, which has been already employed *above a hundred years* in the distribution of the Prayer Book, is a question, which every member of the Society, who has the smallest *regard* for it, will answer in the affirmative. We have lately indeed been told, that it is a *relief* for our Society, when the claims upon it are diminished by applications *elsewhere*. But before an application can be made elsewhere, an *interest* must be created elsewhere: and that additional interest might

be obtained at Bartlett's Buildings, by an additional subscription there. And as there can be no reason why Churchmen should forsake a Society, which, during more than a hundred years, has been a firm support of the Established Church, every attempt to diminish that support should rouse us to fresh exertions.

Your Prospectus indeed offers two inducements to our becoming members of the new Institution ; one of which is, that it will distribute the *Homilies*, as well as the Prayer Book ; another, that it will distribute *translations* of the Prayer Book. Now the Homilies are *already* on the list of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge ; so that they, who consider a *gratuitous* distribution of them as necessary, may now be provided at Bartlett's Buildings. But though the Homilies should be studied by every *Clergyman*, as containing (in the words of the 35th Article) "a godly and wholesome doctrine, and necessary for these times," that is, the times of the Reformation, yet (as the Bishop of Lincoln observes, in his Elements of Christian Theology, vol. ii. p. 536) "the English language has changed so much since the Homilies were written, that *they would scarcely now be understood by a common congregation.*" There cannot therefore be much utility in the *gratuitous* distribution of the Homilies, if the objects of gratuitous distribution would not understand them. This is the sole reason, why the Homilies have not been *always* on our list : for when application is made for books at Bartlett's Buildings, it is understood to be, not for the use of the *members themselves*, whose subscriptions would in that case produce no public benefit, but, as stated in one of our rules, "for their own *gratuitous distribution*, or, for the Charity Schools, with which they are locally or parochially connected." Overlooking this necessary rule, some of our zealous adversaries have taken occasion to reproach

us, for not having the Homilies on our list, as if the opinion, that a book would not be understood by the poor, implied an objection to the book itself. With the view of removing so unjust a reproach, and at the same time of supplying those members of our Society, who may *differ* from the common opinion, the opportunity is now offered to those, who think proper to embrace it. But it is somewhat extraordinary, that in a Prospectus, recommending the *gratuitous* distribution of the Homilies, appeal should be made to a passage in the Elements of Christian Theology, where it is expressly declared, that the persons, who alone are the *objects* of gratuitous distribution, would not *understand* the Homilies. Nor does Bishop Horsley, to whom appeal is likewise made, recommend them, except to his *Clergy*.—On the *other* advantage, which is offered by the new institution, that of promoting *translations* of the Liturgy, the Prospectus takes notice of *five* translations already made, namely, into two East Indian languages, and into the Irish, the Manx, and the Welsh. Then *immediately* is added, “It would obviously be difficult for the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, to pay full attention to these specific objects, without withdrawing it from others of great importance and utility.” Now, whether we are really unable to attend to the objects here specified, let any one judge from the following facts. In 1763, our Society printed 2550 copies of the Common Prayer Book in the *Manx language*; and in 1808, an edition to the extent of 5000 copies, which is a very ample supply for the Isle of Man. In 1748, our Society finished an edition of the *Welsh Bible*, accompanied *with the Prayer Book*, to the amount of 15,000 copies. In 1752, a new edition of the *Welsh Bible* to the amount likewise of 15,000 copies, was accompanied with an edition of the new Testament, and of the *Common Prayer Book*, each to the amount of 5000 copies. The

edition of the Welsh Bible, printed by our Society in 1768, to the amount of 20,000 copies, was not indeed accompanied with the Prayer Book. But in the edition of 1799, consisting of 10,000 copies, and in the edition of 1809, consisting of 20,000 copies, each copy was accompanied with a *Welsh Prayer Book*. Yet the public is now to be told, that our Society is *unable* to attend to "these specific objects." And have not two translations of the English Liturgy been made into *East Indian* languages, by Missionaries in the service of our Society? To select therefore *such* instances, when we are charged with *inability* on the subject of translations of the Prayer Book, is not a little extraordinary. But the tender regard for our Society in respect to *these* objects, is founded, it seems, on the apprehension of " withdrawing it from others of great importance and utility. On these accounts it has seemed expedient, that the principle of the *division of labor*, which has been found so effectual in *secular* affairs, should be applied also to those of a *religious* nature." Here let me ask, what *are* the important objects which you are willing to leave to us in this "*division of labor*." If the Bible Society is to supersede our distribution of *Bibles*, and the Prayer Book Society our distribution of *Prayer Books*, we shall at length be reduced to a mere Society for *Religious Tracts*. And can the *real* friends of the Church be expected to submit to such a division as *this*? Shall a Society, of which every Bishop is a member, which has been employed above a century in supporting the Church, and in providing the poor, to its utmost ability, with Bibles and Prayer Books, be at once reduced to a mere Society for *Tracts*? The very thought must excite indignation, and rouse "the dignitaries and ministers of the Church, as well as that vast body of Laity, who are cordially attached to her," to unite (in the words of your Prospectus) "under the banners of the

Church," but to unite, where those banners are *really to* be found, in *the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge*. Let it be known to all the friends of the Establishment, that this Society is in *need* of support; that though our members are rapidly increasing, our expenses increase still faster; that the *income* of our Society does not keep pace with its *exertions*; and that our capital has consequently diminished in the space of *two years*, by more than *four thousand pounds*. It is to be hoped therefore, that they who can afford it, will *increase* their subscriptions, and increase them according to their *ability*.

And I would humbly propose, that an additional subscription be *immediately* opened at Bartlett's Buildings, for the purpose of increasing our energies, and the furtherance of those objects, which, in the present alarming crisis, demand our most serious attention. I would recommend also, that the sums subscribed be in future annexed to the *names* of the subscribers, as is usual with other societies, and as is already the practice with our own diocesan committees. When it is known to the Public, whether men are liberal or niggardly subscribers, they will feel an inducement to an increase of contribution, which does not operate at present. The friends of the Establishment will have thus an opportunity of *showing* their zeal, by subscribing in proportion to their *ability*. It may indeed be reckoned among the fair and honorable *rewards* of generosity, that it is known and applauded; whereas, on the other hand, it is no disgrace to contribute *little*, when we have not the means of contributing *more*.

Before I conclude, I hope you will pardon me, if I say a few words on the personal abuse, with which I have been assailed, and of which I have reason to complain. I am indeed aware that *every* man, who has the courage, in the hour of danger, to come forward in defence of Church or

State, is unavoidably exposed to personal invective : for the passions of men are never more inflamed, than when, in the pursuit of what *they* consider a work of *improvement*, they are suddenly thwarted by others, who consider it as a work of *destruction*. And we may in general estimate both the greatness of the *danger*, and the resistance apprehended from the person who *opposes* it, by the vehemence of the clamor, and the bitterness of the reproaches, which are heard against him. From this reflection, though I conclude on the one hand, that our danger is great, I may be allowed to conclude, on the other hand, that I have contributed to lessen it. And as I have acted with the full conviction of doing what my duty *required* of me, I derive from it a consolation, which neither malice nor envy can destroy : I derive from it a consolation, which no worldly honors can impart to *violated* duty. I have the further consolation to reflect, that, considering the strength of the current, which has been opposed to me, my endeavours have been as successful as I could have reasonably hoped. When I pleaded from the University Pulpit, for the Articles of our Religion, I was assailed indeed with the bitterest reproaches, by a writer, who pronounced them "*a mass of mystery and delusion.*" But then I was indemnified for this abuse, by the approbation with which my Lectures were honored, by every critic, who had a regard for the Church. When I pleaded at St. Paul's, for the national religion as the foundation of national education, the press again teemed with invective, on the part of those who would gladly exclude the Liturgy from a system of religious instruction. But the national Society, which has formally recognized, and is now acting on the principles asserted in my Sermon at St. Paul's, affords sufficient evidence, both of the goodness of the cause, and of the success with which it was main-

tained.¹ Lastly, when the advocates of the Bible Society, like the advocates of the Lancasterian system, were pleading for the distribution of the Bible *alone*, I again thought it my duty to plead for the distribution of the *Prayer Book*. Here too I have the consolation to reflect, that the united efforts of my adversaries on this subject, end at last with an Institution formed for the express purpose of *distributing the Prayer Book*. That I have rendered therefore essential service to the Established Church, by contributing to a wider diffusion, and more general application, of *that book*, without which the Established Church would cease to be what it is, my adversaries themselves (who are desirous that the Church should remain) will at length be compelled to acknowledge. It is true, that the *means*, which they now propose for a more extensive circulation of the Liturgy, are not precisely the means, which I should recommend. I still retain the opinion, that the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge is capable, with proper support, which it certainly wants, of answering *all* the purposes, which the most zealous Churchman can require. But whatever difference of opinion be entertained on this subject, I have at any rate compelled my adversaries to acknowledge, that the distribution of the *Prayer Book*

¹ To prevent mistakes, or false inferences, deduced from the word *national*, let it be observed, that the Society is so called, as being instituted for the sole purpose of supporting the *national* or established *religion*. But the term does not apply to the *funds* of the Society, and consequently does not apply to the *claims* upon those funds. They arise solely from the subscriptions of *Churchmen*, who were invited, in the terms of the Prospectus, published for that purpose, to promote "the education of the poor in the *doctrine and discipline* of the Established Church." Any attempt therefore to *divert* those funds to purposes which do *not* promote the discipline, as well as doctrine, of the Church, would be no less subversive of common justice, no less a violation of good faith, than destructive to the Society itself.

ought to be increased, and that *some* means should be devised for that purpose.

Here then I will take my leave of the present controversy, and subscribe myself,

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient,

And very humble Servant,

HERBERT MARSH.

Cambridge,

May 16, 1812.

POSTSCRIPT.

You will certainly excuse me, if I take the present opportunity of expressing my profound sorrow for the loss of that inestimable statesman, and true christian, of whom the hand of an assassin has deprived us, at a period, when we were most in need of his consummate ability, his unimpeachable integrity, and that undaunted courage, which, though it never yielded, when conscience urged him to persevere, was tempered with a benevolence which disarmed his most strenuous opposers. Sincerely attached to him for his private as well as public virtues, I had the misfortune (and I shall ever consider it as such) to differ from him in my view of that Society, which has been the subject of the preceding letter. But, as a conscientious regard to what I believe to be the truth, was the motive for publishing opinions, which were known to vary from the sentiments of a patron, at whose command were all the honors of the Church, I had afterwards the satisfaction to learn from his own hand, that he was too magnanimous to be

offended with a line of conduct which he knew was prescribed by a sense of duty. And, as the honor of having been esteemed by such a man as Mr. Perceval, is sufficient to compensate for the invectives of ten thousand adversaries, I may be allowed to quote the concluding sentence of a letter, which he wrote to me on the 6th of last February. Having acknowledged the receipt of my "Inquiry," and having lamented, that he had not then had time to read it, he concluded with the following sentence :

"I assure you, I am too fully sensible of the motives which influence you, not to be able to differ from you on that point, without suffering such difference to have the slightest effect, in diminishing the regard and respect, with which I am,

Dear Sir, Your's, most truly,

SP. PERCEVAL."

As this sentence relates entirely to myself, there is no breach of confidence in the publication of it; which would otherwise indeed be removed by the circumstance, that Mr. Perceval has since authorised me to show it, and, in conformity with his own generous feelings, has himself sent a copy of the whole letter to one of my most violent adversaries. I have reason therefore deeply to lament, as well the loss of private friendship, as of public worth. And, as testimony to departed goodness can result only from disinterested motives, I need not apologise for praises bestowed on a Minister, who is removed from the scene, where flattery may expect reward.

