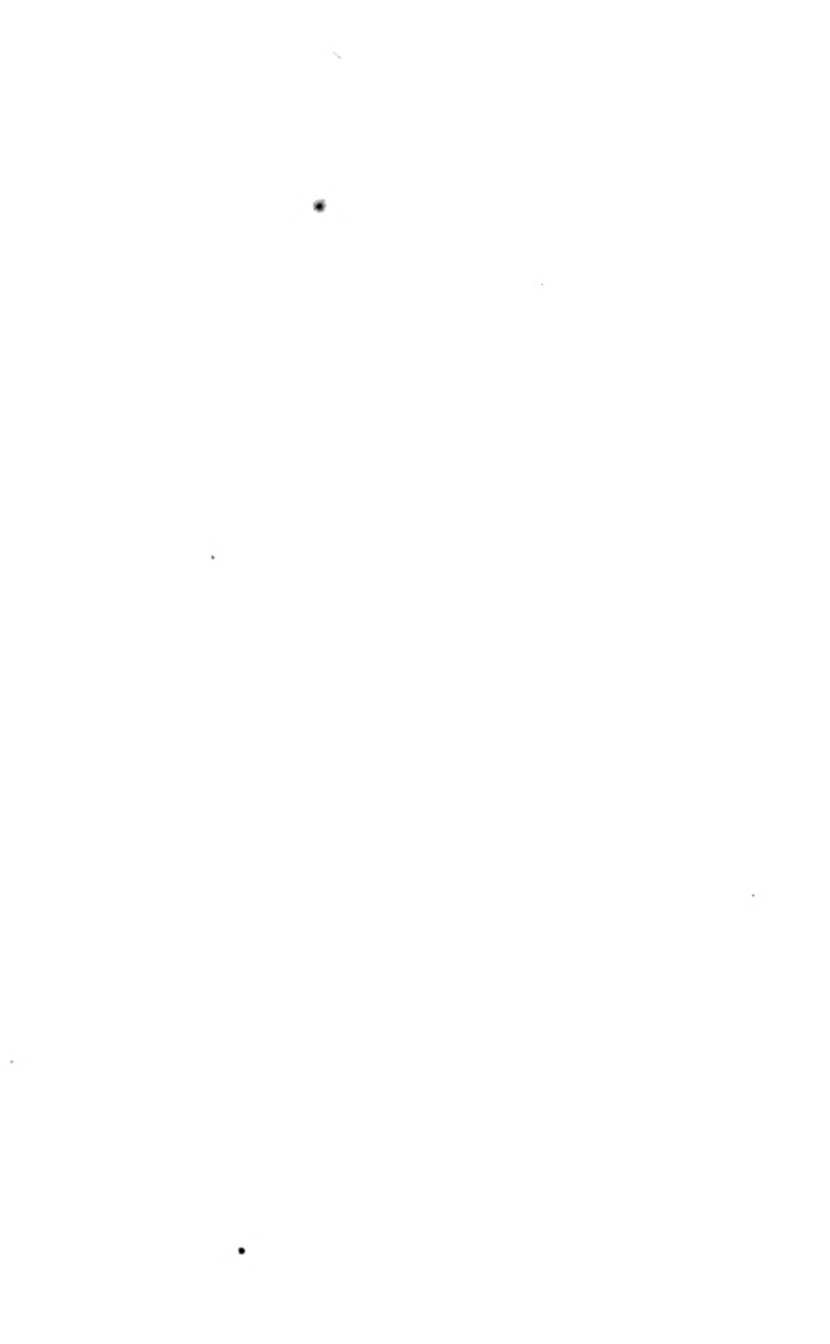






**THE ORIGIN, THE GENERAL CHARACTER,**  
**AND THE**  
***PRESENT SITUATION***  
**OF THE**  
**PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH,**  
**IN THE**  
**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.**



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**PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH,**  
**IN THE**  
**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA—**  
**A SERMON,**

**PREACHED IN ST. JAMES'S CHURCH, IN THE CITY OF PHILADEL-  
PHIA, ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 18TH, A. D. 1814.**

**On the occasion of the opening of the General Convention of the said Church,**

**AND OF THE CONSECRATION OF**  
**THE RIGHT REV. BISHOP MOORE,**  
**OF VIRGINIA.**

**BY JOHN HENRY HOBART, D. D.**

**ASSISTANT BISHOP OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
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## THE ORIGIN, &c.

### PSALM cxxii. 7.

Peace be within thy walls and plenteousness within thy palaces.

THE prayer of the devout Israelite, for that holy city where God manifested his glory and dispensed his blessing in the institutions and ordinances of the law established by his servant Moses, should be the more ardent prayer of the Christian for that New Jerusalem, that city of the living God, where he manifests his glory and dispenses his grace in his Son Jesus Christ.

“ Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls and plenteousness within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions’ sake I will now say, Peace be within thee. Because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good.”

The sentiment, contained in this prayer, should more deeply interest us, my brethren, on occasions when the promotion of the peace and the prosperity of our Zion is the object of the counsels of her highest ecclesiastical assembly.

The absence through indisposition of the Right Revd. person, who was to have addressed you, imposed upon me the duty of preparing, at a very short notice, to supply his place. This circumstance, I trust, will entitle me to your indulgence, should the sentiments delivered fall short of the importance of the occasion, and of your expectations.

The prayer, contained in the text, for the peace and prosperity of Zion, considered in reference to our own Church, naturally leads us to consider the *means* by which her peace and prosperity may be promoted; or, in other words, the *particular* duties incumbent on her clergy and people. The *general* duties of the ministry have been frequently, on these occasions, displayed by one \* whose voice is never heard but with feelings of the highest veneration and affection.

It has occurred to me, therefore, that I cannot at this time more profitably engage you than by calling your attention to the *origin*, the *general character*, and the *present circumstances* of our Church, with a view thence to deduce the peculiar duties incumbent on her clergy and people.

The *peculiar duties incumbent on the Clergy and Laity of our Church*, from a consideration of

Her *Origin*,

Her *general Character*, and

Her *present Situation*, shall be the subject of this discourse.

Your preacher is aware that he enters upon the most important, the most interesting, and the most delicate topics. Yet, if the utmost purity of intention, regu-

\* Rt. Rev. Bishop White, of Pennsylvania.

lated by a supreme desire to promote the welfare of a Church, which maintains, as he believes, the faith, the order, and the worship, of the Gospel, in their primitive integrity and power,—if such purity of intention can authorise him to hope for the divine direction and blessing, and for your candid indulgence, he confidently trusts he shall receive them both.

He almost regrets that he has entered on this field, because he perceives that it is so extensive, that he must demand an unreasonable portion of your time, and calculate largely on your patience.

I. The *Origin* of our Church, and the duties thence incumbent on the Clergy and Laity, constitute the first topic of discussion.

This part of the subject naturally divides itself into the *general*, and the *particular*, origin of our Church.

1. Her *general origin* she traces back, through the uninterrupted series of creeds, of the ministry, and of ordinances, to the only source of spiritual authority, Jesus Christ, the Lord of Heaven and earth, and the Head over all things to his Church. If there are any truths that speak with irresistible force from almost every page of the New Testament, they are—that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ established a spiritual society, with officers and ordinances, and that to this society he committed the precious deposit of the faith—that this society, he redeems by his blood, sanctifies by his spirit, and while he governs it by his Almighty power, presents constantly for its faithful members before the mercy seat of Heaven his prevailing intercession

—that of this society, stiled, on account of its intimate relation to its divine founder, and union with him, the *body* of Christ, he is the head and the ruler, the source of all its powers and authority—and that to this society, by a true and living faith and through the instrumentality of its ministry and ordinances, must be added all who, according to God's covenanted mercies, would be saved. Hear these truths enforced on the authority of Christ and his Apostles in the declarations—“ Upon this rock I will build *my Church*.” “ Christ is the head of the Church, the Saviour of the body.” “ Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it.” “ The Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood.” “ The Church which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” “ The Church of the Living God, the pillar and the ground of the truth.” “ The Lord added unto the Church daily such as should be saved.” “ By one spirit ye are all baptised into one body.” “ Ye are come unto Mount Zion, the city of the Living God.”

Of this universal Church, particular Churches located in particular districts were parts or members. Thus we read of the Church at Antioch, of the Church at Corinth, of the Church of the Thessalonians, of the Church at Galatia, of the seven Churches of Asia. And at the present day, it must be obvious, that of this universal Church, each particular or national Church is a pure and vital member, in proportion as it possesses, in their integrity, the faith, the order, and the ordinances derived from Christ and his Apostles.

Viewing then that branch of the universal Church to which we belong as a pure and vital member of the bo-

dy of Christ, we are bound to revere her as a spiritual society of divine origin—not an engine of human workmanship, to be employed as human policy and human passions may dictate; but a structure formed by the hand of a Divine Architect, which is to be an holy temple unto the Lord, in which souls are to be trained, by the grace of the spirit accompanying the word and the ordinances duly administered, unto glory and honour and eternal life—not an institution resting on the sandy basis of human power, and supported merely by the talents and the efforts of fallible men; but a spiritual building placed on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; and while continuing to rest on this rock of ages, protected against the gates of Hell by the power of the Most High—not a kingdom which, like the kingdoms of this world, may employ against the violators of its laws the secular arm, the terrors of pecuniary loss, and corporeal sufferings; but a kingdom whose punishments like its powers, are spiritual, extending only to the forfeiture of its spiritual privileges.

Hence also result the most important lessons both to rulers and ruled—inculcating on the former the momentous truths, that the power committed to them is not to be employed as the base instrument of corrupt ambition, or the cruel engine of vindictive passions, but like the divine source from whence it emanates to exert itself for the reformation and the salvation of the objects of its discipline; that those who hold this power, responsible according to the legitimate provisions of ecclesiastical authority to the tribunals of the Church on earth, are to render a more strict and awful account

to that tribunal whence they received their commission, and to which they offered their solemn vows of fidelity to the prescriptions of the Church, and of being “so merciful that they be not too remiss, and so ministering discipline, that they forget not mercy”—inculcating on the ruled the equally important truths, that the power of the Church, exercised according to legal forms and for legitimate ends, is, in the highest sense, the ordinance of God; that “whatsoever is thus bound on earth is bound in Heaven, and whatsoever is thus loosed on earth is loosed in Heaven;” and that they who in such case resist cannot expect a penalty less severe than that which is denounced by an inspired Apostle against unlawful resistance where the authority is entirely human, and the ends temporal and civil for which it is exercised.

Lastly, in reference to the divine origin of our Church, we are called on to revere, to love, to obey her as the *spouse and body of Christ*. In this view, how jealous should we be of her honour; how tenacious of her purity; how tender of her peace. The Redeemer has placed her in the most interesting and tender relations to him. She is near to him as his own body. She is dear to him as the most precious object of human affection. Blessed Lord! can any professing Christian thus regard thy Church and offend her! Can any who bear thy sacred name, sully by their unholy lives the purity of thy *spouse*! Can any, through selfish and unworthy passions, introduce disorder and division into thy Church, and wound thy sacred *body*! Save us, we beseech thee, from the tremendous guilt—save us from the horrible punishment which must ensue.

Our Church then traces her origin to that Church which was founded by Christ and his Apostles. We are now led to consider,

2. The *particular origin* of our Church—or the particular Christian communion from which she received that apostolic faith, order, and worship, which constitute her a legitimate member of the body of Christ—and that communion, we are proud to boast, is the *Church of England*.

Here your preacher deems it necessary to guard against misconception. In boasting of our origin from the Church of England, he does not contemplate her as enriched with secular wealth, adorned with secular honours, or defended by the secular arm. Of the *policy* of this union of the civil and ecclesiastical authority, so that the latter, in commutation for the wealth and patronage of the former, relinquishes a portion of her legitimate spiritual powers, and is in danger of being viewed as the mere creature of human institution, and of being made the engine of state policy, there have been sound churchmen, even of her own communion, who have entertained serious doubts.

Nor is the Church of England contemplated in connexion with the character or conduct of the government or nation where she is established, concerning which, wise and good men, and within the knowledge of him who addresses you, correct and exemplary churchmen entertain very different opinions; and your preacher would deprecate as unsound in principle and most impolitic in its results, any connexion of our Church, as a religious communion, with the principles and views of political parties.

Nor does he contemplate the Church of England in that particular organization of her government, and those local ecclesiastical appendages which involve no essential principle of Church order.

But in boasting of our origin from the Church of England, he views her merely as a *spiritual society* possessing the faith, the order, and the worship which were the characteristics and the glory of the primitive ages of the Church.

We boast then of our origin from a Church, which, in renouncing the despotic claims of the Church of Rome, tempered, with such singular felicity, zeal and ardour with prudence and moderation, as to reject the errors, the superstitions, and corruptions of that Church; while she retained the primitive faith, order, and worship which those errors, superstitions, and corruptions had debased and disfigured, but with which they were so intimately mingled as to render the separation a work of extreme difficulty and imminent hazard. We boast of our origin from a Church which, in reference to the soundness of her principles, the talents and piety of her clergy and her efforts in the cause of the reformation, still maintains the proud title which at the first she acquired of being the *glory of the reformed Churches*—A Church which Cranmer and Latimer and Ridley enriched by their blood; in whose cause Chillingworth and Hooker and Horseley exerted the strongest powers of intellect and employed the most varied and profound erudition; which Barrow and Tillotson and Porteus honoured by their eloquence; in which Andrews, and Taylor and Horne displayed the lustre of a fervent piety—a Church, which, shaking off the infirmities, the lukewarmness, and the weaknesses, of



old age, now comes forth in the vigour, and the freshness of apostolic youth, to carry the cross of the Saviour, that pledge of salvation, to the strong holds of pagan power; and to illuminate, with the light of Scriptural truth, the regions where error and superstition have held their reign.

From such a Church we boast our origin. Church of our fathers! thou hast our veneration, our affection, our prayers—"Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces." Elevated is the ground on the hill of Zion to which thou art exalted. We behold those who have been arrayed in hostility against thee, won by thy disinterested, thy noble, thy apostolic zeal, laying their weapons at thy feet; and honouring thee as the first of the Churches of Christendom; as the leader of Christendom in the glorious work of bringing into the fold of the Redeemer the dispersed of Israel with the fulness of the Gentiles, and of ushering in those blissful days when "from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same God's name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto his name, and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts."

My brethren, we honour ourselves, when we discharge the debt of gratitude, by acknowledging in the words of the preface to the book of Common Prayer, that, "to the Church of England, the Protestant Episcopal Church in these states is indebted, under God, for her first foundation and a long continuance of nursing care, and protection."

And while we discharge the debt of gratitude, it is our duty to show the sincerity of the tribute, by *adellity*

to the principles of the Church from which we are descended; so far as those principles maintain primitive faith order and worship distinct from secular influence and local arrangements.

The field before me is so extensive that I must hasten to a brief view of the second division of my discourse, which was to contemplate our Church in

II. Her *general character*, and to point out some of the duties of her clergy and people thence resulting.

The general character of our Church may be ascertained by a view of some prominent features in her *doctrine, order, and worship*.

1. Her whole system of *doctrine* is founded on the truth of the defection of man from original righteousness, so that without God's preventing grace he is disposed to evil and impotent to good: at the same time the Church no where declares the accountableness of man for any but actual transgressions committed against grace received; or the total absence of all good propensities in his nature; though she undoubtedly maintains that there can be no principle in man called into holy operation but by the preventing and sanctifying power of the Spirit of God.

On the corruption of human nature and the guilt of man, our Church founds the necessity of a Mediator—for through a Mediator it hath pleased God to conduct his dispensation of mercy—a Mediator, *man* indeed that he might obey the law, the violated authority of which was to be vindicated, and sustaining its penalties, ward them off from the guilty offenders—*man* in-

deed, that he might be touched with a feeling for our infirmities, and knowing how to pity and to succour us embolden us to come unto God through him—but also a Mediator, the *Son of God*, whom the Almighty Father would view with complacency, whose atonement he would accept as of infinite value, and whose intercession would be all prevailing. The doctrine of a *Divine* Mediator our Church sets forth most prominently in her Articles and Creeds, and explains and guards with every variety of expression—and it is his mediation, his merits, his intercession, which, animating all her prayers, her collects and services, make them the source of comfort, of peace, and of exultation to the penitent soul.

The redemption, effected by the sufferings and death of this Mediator, who, in the language of Scripture is “the Saviour of *all* men, especially of them that believe,” our Church extends to all mankind; making salvation possible through his merits to those, who, destitute of Gospel light, follow the dictates of conscience and the secret monitions of the divine spirit, as well as to those actual believers, to whom the blessings of the atonement are visibly signed and sealed by the word, the ministry and ordinances. These are the explicit declarations of our Church—“The offering of Christ once made is that perfect redemption, propitiation and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual.”\* “By his one oblation of himself once offered, he made a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.”†

\* Art. xxxi.

† Communion service.

The principle, by the operation of which we obtain a vital interest in the merits of this great Mediator, is *faith*. “Wholesome and very full of comfort,” in the judgment of our Church, is the doctrine “that we are justified by faith only.”\* For it is faith which sends us as guilty and perishing sinners, grieved with our sins and bowed down under their burden, to Christ for rest and deliverance. It is faith which places our hopes of acceptance—not on our tears; they cannot wash away the stain of our sins—not on our repentance; it needs to be repented of—not on our works of righteousness; when we have done all, we are unprofitable servants—but on the all-sufficient merits and all-perfect righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, through whom, whosoever cometh unto God shall in no wise be cast out. United by faith to Him, we have an anchor of the soul that will secure us against every assault of the adversary; we have an hope, that even in the day that shall burn as an oven, and consume every false dependence, will not make us ashamed, but will animate us with rejoicing in the Lord, with joy in the God of our salvation. “Wholesome and very full of comfort is the doctrine that we are justified by faith.” Blessed Saviour, it is faith which leads us to thee!

But the Church knows no true and lively, no justifying faith which does not produce the fruit of good works. An inspired apostle knew no justifying faith which did not “work by love and purify the heart and overcome the world.” And these works, which are the fruits of a true and lively faith, “are pleasing and acceptable unto God in Christ.” For it is a truth essentially and vitally resulting

\* Art. xi.

from his perfections, from his government, from the relations of man to him, and from the nature of the happiness of Heaven, that “without holiness, no man shall see the Lord.”

But in a creature so dependent, so weak, so corrupt, and so exposed to temptation as man, these works must be wrought by divine aid, and this holiness produced in the soul by the power of divine grace. “Wherefore,” saith our Church, “we have no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing,” going before “us that we may have a good will.”\*—But our Church disclaiming the doctrine of the irresistibility of grace which destroys man’s free agency, subverts the nature of virtue, and renders man an unfit subject of reward and punishment, declares that the grace of God works “with us when we have that good will.”† And our Church disclaiming the equally injurious and unfounded doctrine of the indefectibility of grace, declares, that “after we have received grace we may fall into sin, and by the grace of God may arise again and amend our lives.”‡

By this agency of the divine spirit is produced the renovation and sanctification of the heart, which the most superficial observer must acknowledge is a doctrine prominently displayed in all the offices and services of our Church. Inconsistent indeed would she be with herself, as well as contradictory to Scripture, if, while she maintains with emphasis that we are “born in sin,” that “there is no health in us,” that “the flesh lusteth against the spirit,” that we are “far gone

\* Article xii.

† Article x.

‡ Article xvi.

from original righteousness," she, at the same time, should fail to inculcate the necessity of the renewing of our corrupt natures by divine power, and of our restoration to a state of purity, of soundness, of evangelical righteousness.

On this subject there is a remarkable characteristic of our Church.—The avowal, with clearness and with force, of a doctrine, which indeed pervades every part of her system, that baptism is the sacramental commencement of the spiritual life. Infants, who according to the terms of the covenant, to the declarations and practice of our Saviour and his apostles, are fit subjects of baptism, are made in this sacrament members of Christ, children of God, and heirs of the kingdom of Heaven. To adults properly qualified by repentance and faith, baptism is the mean and the pledge of the same blessings. And even adults destitute of the necessary qualifications, certainly so far receive in this ordinance a proffer on the part of God, of grace, pardon, and salvation, as to leave them without excuse, and to increase their guilt and their condemnation, if they do not by repentance and faith secure the spiritual blessings sacramentally offered them. This important change of situation, whereby the subjects of baptism are called into a state of salvation, is denominated by our Church, in the language of Scripture and antiquity, *regeneration*. But if any persons would hence assert that our Church enforces no spiritual change but what takes place in baptism, they are confuted not only by the spirit and the language of all her institutions, but by the most explicit declarations of the office of baptism, which prays for those who are baptised that "the old Adam may be so buried that the new man may be raised up in

them," that "all sinful affections may die in them, and all things belonging to the spirit may live and grow in them," that "they may have power and strength to have victory and to triumph against the devil, the world, and the flesh;" and the same office enforces on the baptized person the duty of "dying unto sin and living unto righteousness, and of continually mortifying all his evil and corrupt affections, and daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living." To promote and effect this sanctification of the soul, there are provided the ordinance of confirmation, the ministrations of the word, and of the sanctuary, and of the altar; all which as well as baptism will only be unprofitable and condemning to the soul without the exercise of deep and unfeigned repentance, of lively faith, of watchfulness and prayer. The "washing of regeneration" will not avail to salvation without "the renewing of the Holy Ghost;" and, in the language of the Church in one of her Collects, they who are "regenerate and made God's children by adoption and grace, must daily be renewed by his holy spirit."

This succinct view of the prominent doctrines of our Church will serve I trust to establish her claim to the title of evangelical, in the scriptural, the primitive, the sober and the highest sense of the term—evangelical as proclaiming to all mankind not a nominal but a real Saviour; offering to all the means of an interest in his salvation. The doctrines of the Church are truly the doctrines of grace, tracing man's redemption to the love of God, who appointed for him a divine mediator, his only begotten Son; exhibiting the merits of this Saviour received by faith as the only ground of the sinner's acceptance; directing man to the power of the divine spirit—

operating not with resistless force, but in consistency with his free agency, and conveyed through the instrumentality of the sacraments, and the ordinances and ministrations of the sanctuary, received with humble penitence, faith and prayer—for deliverance from the bondage of sin, for the renovation of his affections, for strength to advance with increasing vigour in the divine life, and finally to attain in triumph the heavenly glories of his calling.

From the view of the general character of our Church in regard to doctrine, there results the duty of cherishing for her the utmost veneration, the liveliest affection, and the most steadfast devotion to her interests; of vindicating on all proper occasions her evangelical claims; and above all, of enforcing these claims and of honouring and adorning her by imbibing the spirit, and displaying the holy influence of her doctrines. My brethren of the laity! it will constitute an awful charge against those who enjoy the pure and evangelical doctrines professed by our Church, if these doctrines should not influence their hearts nor regulate their life. It will constitute no inconsiderable portion of that guilt, on which at the last day the judge will pronounce the sentence of his wrath, that by their lukewarm, their worldly, their unholy lives, they dishonoured and wounded the spouse and body of Christ!

My clerical brethren—if such be the guilt of an ungodly layman of our Church, what must be the guilt of an ungodly servant of her altar; of one who to the holy vows of his Christian profession has superadded the solemn vows of devoting to his Lord in the ministry of salvation, his soul, body and spirit, with all their pow-



ers and affections?—What must be his guilt, if this man of God display vices which would point even at the man of the world the finger of scorn? What must be his guilt, if excited by the most powerful motives that can operate on the heart, he does not cultivate and exhibit every Christian grace, and discharge every Christian duty. My brethren, let us think of these things.

It is only by the evidence of renovated affections which an humble and holy life affords, that the minister of our Church can be faithful to her doctrines, and to his duty of inculcating them. All mysteries and all knowledge, the tongue of an angel could he speak with one, while his unsanctified life discovers that his knowledge and his eloquence, exert no influence over his own heart, will fall on the hearts of others “as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.”

By his private and his public instructions must the minister of our Church show his fidelity to her doctrines. If he fail thus to inculcate them with diligence, and with prudent but ardent zeal, there is no excuse of a worldly or even of a literary nature that can shield him from the guilt of violating the most solemn obligations. What, my brethren, literary or worldly occupations urged as an apology for neglecting the sheep of Christ which he bought with his death, and for whom he shed his blood!—Urged by the man, to whose charge they were committed by the great Shepherd of the sheep; and who promised that he would “devote himself to this one thing, and draw all his cares and studies this way,” that he would be “diligent in the studies which help to the knowledge of the Scriptures, laying aside as much as he may the study of the world and of the flesh!”

My brethren! let us read our duty and recal to mind our vows in those inimitable offices by which we were bound to the service of the altar—And, in the world, in our closets, in our supplications at the throne of grace, let us remember these things!

2. It is a distinguishing excellence of the WORSHIP of our Church, to which, as another prominent feature in her *general character*, I now proceed to direct your attention, that it exhibits the whole system of evangelical doctrine with unrivalled clearness, simplicity, strength, and pathos.

That our Church in conducting her services according to a prescribed order, has conformed to the practice of the ancient Jewish Church, to the example and authority of our Lord and his Apostles, and has thus also adopted the most effectual method of securing a rational, an enlightened, a sober, impressive, and dignified devotion, constitutes without doubt one of her great excellencies.

But a still higher ground of boast is it, and on this alone your time will permit me to enlarge, that her services exhibit the whole system of evangelical doctrine with unrivalled simplicity, strength, and pathos. They unfold all the exercises of the penitent and believing soul.—They furnish her with language for uttering all her emotions in her communion with her God. Does she wish to give vent to the feelings of guilt?—"I am grieved, O my God, with the remembrance of my sins; I am bowed down with their intolerable burden." Does she seek to deprecate the wrath of her offended Maker?—"Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord, who am vile earth and a mi-

serable sinner." "Deal not with me according to my sins; reward me not according to my iniquities." Does she wish to supplicate his mercy?—"Spare me, Good Lord, spare me—have mercy upon me, have mercy upon me—for thy Son Jesus Christ's sake forgive me all that is past—After the multitude of thy mercies look upon me, through the merits and mediation of thy blessed Son." Does she seek to enjoy the consolations of pardon?—"Receive and comfort me, O God, who am grieved and wearied with the burden of my sins—Lamb of God that takest away the sins of the world, grant me thy peace." "Almighty God—make me know and feel that there is none other name under Heaven given to man, in whom and through whom I can receive health and salvation, but only the name of the Lord Jesus Christ." Does she earnestly desire the sanctifying and consoling power of the Holy Ghost? "Cleanse the thoughts of my heart, O God, by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit: May he in all things direct and rule my heart; that by Him I may have a right judgment in all things, and evermore rejoice in his holy comfort." Does she wish to love, and fear, and serve her God?—"Make me to have a perpetual fear and love of thy holy name—nourish me with all goodness, that withstanding the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, I may with a pure heart and mind follow thee, the only God." In this her state of exile, does she pant to be elevated to Heaven her eternal home?—"O God, the King of glory, may I in heart and mind ascend to the same place whither my Saviour Christ hath gone before, and there continually dwell where thou hast prepared unspeakable joys for them

that love thee." Does she in the anxious view of the regions of the grave, lift her soul to him who holds the keys of death and Hell? "When my soul is departing the body, may it be precious, O my God, in thy sight. Delivered from its earthly prison, may it live with thee in joy and felicity; and passing through the grave and gate of death to a joyful resurrection, may I have my perfect consummation and bliss both in body and soul in thy eternal and everlasting glory."

Now, my brethren, imperfect as is this display, I ask you with confidence to pronounce is it possible for piety short of that which warms the adoring seraph, is it possible for language which is not dictated by that inspiration that touched the lips of the Prophet, to breathe devotion more ardent more sublime yet more chaste and tender; to express with more force more simplicity or more pathos, the precious truths and promises of the Gospel? In this form these truths and promises are daily presented to the people, and carried to their understanding, their hearts and affections. The liturgy then preaches with an eloquence and a power that breathes in no uninspired book, that animates no uninspired tongue. The liturgy like the ark of the covenant preserves the heavenly law. By the liturgy was the flame of divine truth kept burning amidst the darkness and the desolation of our Zion. It is an invaluable depositary of all those truths which constitute the gospel, the power of God unto salvation; and from thence the servants of the sanctuary may display them in primitive lustre and apostolic power.

If these things be so brethren, Clergy and Laity, a question occurs in the view of your preacher deeply

important. Shall we directly or indirectly loosen the hold which this Liturgy ought to have on the affections of our people, and thus prepare the way for the gradual extinction of the purest source next to the Bible of divine truth, and celestial devotion?

Cold indeed must be that heart which advocates the liturgy merely because the Church has prescribed it, venerable as is her authority; which makes it merely the Shibboleth of a sect; which while it denounces the least departure from its prescriptions, neither glows with its fires, nor speaks with its tongue. The Liturgy commands our veneration, our devoted attachment, as the sacred relick of apostolic times, as the precious legacy which martyrs warmed with their spirit and wrote in their blood; as the prescription of the Church which in this case speaks with an authority that is ratified in Heaven--But, I repeat it, the Liturgy commands our veneration, our devoted attachment still more, as, next to the Bible, the purest source of divine truth and celestial devotion.

The question then, I repeat it also, is deeply important—Shall we directly or indirectly, weaken or limit the influence of this invaluable manual of truth and piety? It would be an insult to your judgment to attempt to prove, that aberrations from this Liturgy tend to this deplorable result. The question then concerning these aberrations is not solely a question concerning the obligation of rubrics and ordination vows; but a question whether we shall preserve to the Church this source of truth, this light of devotion. The evangelical excellence of our public service is not its security. Against its venerable and sober forms, the spirit of en-

enthusiasm wages irreconcilable war; and it will be ultimately successful if the Clergy, the appointed guardians of this liturgy, voluntarily surrender any of its holy devotions. Where individual judgment is substituted for public authority, and where private fancy moulds the service at pleasure, all security is lost for its preservation. Who shall direct or who shall restrain where private judgment has wrested the reins from public law? What part of the service is secure, when the almost infinitely varying judgments of men are permitted to alter it? How long will it retain its place in the *temple*, if when the members of our Church meet for social worship, they substitute for the *daily* morning and evening prayer, extempore effusions, or even premeditated devotions, necessarily inferior in excellence and authority? If *one* should omit the law of God as proclaimed in its awful prescriptions and sanctions by Jehovah himself, on Sinai's mount, what shall prevent *another* from withholding those sacred services which exhibit the cheering consolations of Zion's hill? One part of the service may be omitted for one reason, and another part for another. The part omitted by one constitutes, in the judgment of another, the brightest feature in the liturgy. Omissions, alterations, additions in the public service, most certainly and naturally produce the impression that some parts of it are defective, others imperfect, others of little moment, and others wholly unnecessary. The inevitable result is, that where the liturgy is venerated and loved, that veneration and attachment are weakened; and where lukewarmness and enthusiasm have excited an aversion to the liturgy, that aversion is fortified by the authority even of its guardians. What

more certain, than the fatal results of innovation. Friends then of evangelical truth! Honest advocates of vital piety—will you be accessory in depriving the people of the pure exhibition of this truth which the liturgy contains, and of the influence of the ardent spirit of piety which animates this liturgy? Friends of the Church—will ye extinguish her brightest glory?

To preserve then this liturgy, it is essential that both clergy and people adhere to it as prescribed by the wisdom, the piety, and the authority of the Church. But let both clergy and people remember that the possession of this invaluable blessing will only tend to their condemnation, if they do not unite in its holy devotions with unfeigned repentance; with lively faith and love; and if they do not display in their life and conversation the humble, the pure, and the heavenly tempers which, by God's blessing, it is calculated to form in the soul.

3. I pass from the worship to the exhibition of another prominent feature of our Church, her

*Apostolic Order*, under the strong impression, my brethren, that I have already trespassed on your patience, and that therefore I must be as brief as possible.

That an *external commission* as well as an internal call of the spirit, is necessary to authorise a person to minister in holy things; that this commission must be derived from the head of the Church the source of all power in it, through that order of men whom he appointed successively to convey it; that three orders of the ministry were appointed by Christ and his apostles, and the first order invested with the power of commissioning to the ministry, are truths founded on the word of God and supported by the strongest primitive tes-

timony. Whatever variety of opinion there may be concerning the terms in which these truths may be stated, and the consequences which may be deduced from them, there is certainly one ground on which all churchmen may meet—the ground taken in her articles and offices by the venerable Church from which we are descended, and maintained by our own. Now these articles and offices declare that “it is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching, or ministering the sacraments in the congregation, before he be lawfully called and sent to execute the same”—\* that “God by his divine providence and holy spirit instituted divers orders of ministers in his Church,” that “from the apostles’ times there have been these orders of ministers in the Church, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons,” that the bishop alone receives the power of “ordaining, sending, and laying hands on others,” and that, therefore, “no man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful bishop, priest, or deacon in this Church, or suffered to execute any of the said functions, except he hath had episcopal consecration or ordination.”|| This, my brethren, is no new language—these are not the effusions of sectarian bigotry—they are not the declarations of private individuals. They are the principles, the declarations, the language of the venerable Church from which we derive our immediate origin; principles which at the period of the reformation she restored to primitive shape and form and laid at the foundation of her polity; principles, in her attach-

\* Article xxiii.

|| Prayers in the Offices of Ordination, and the Preface to those Offices.



ment to which, a revolution that for a while subverted them, served more to confirm. They are principles, which no difficulties, not even the apprehension of being unable to carry them into effect, could induce our Church to relinquish; and for which her wishes, her prayers, her exertions were at last crowned with success. They are principles which she has deliberately and solemnly laid at the foundation of *her* polity, and which, if assailed or shaken, the whole edifice will be endangered. Against these fundamental principles, sanctioned by the wisdom and preserved through the changes of ages, I fear not that any innovating hand will be lifted up.

These principles which pre-eminently entitle our Church to the character of an Apostolic Church, it is the obvious duty of both clergy and people to revere, to inculcate, to defend; and to carry into full effect as it respects the admission to the ministry, the exercise of discipline, and the preservation of the unity of the church.

But let no person be guilty of the gross inconsistency and criminality of insisting on the *means*, while he is indifferent to the *end*. The salvation of souls, the promotion of vital practical godliness is the *end* for which the order of the Church is the divinely appointed *means*. And there can be no character more inconsistent, or who does greater injury to the cause which he professes to advocate, than the churchman, whether clergyman or layman, who contends with zeal for the order and the other externals of the church, while he neglects or undervalues that vital godliness and evangelical piety which they are designed to cherish and to preserve.

The order of the church then as it respects the constitution of the ministry is apostolic and primitive. In respect to her *government* properly so called, the forms by which she exercises her legislative, executive and judiciary powers, there are a few pre-eminent characteristics which you must permit me merely to point out.

And here we first recognise the important principle involved indeed in the very nature of all good government, that all orders of men affected by the laws should have a voice in framing them. Accordingly, no act in our church, not necessarily involving a point of divine institution, has the force of law, until it has received the sanction, under the forms of the constitution, of her bishops, her clergy, and laity.

We notice also the conformity of our ecclesiastical to our civil constitutions, in the *division of power* in the exercise of legislation; the bishops of the church constituting one house, in general convention, and the clerical and lay deputies another, with co-ordinate and equal powers. All the advantages of deliberation, of experience, and of security to individual rights, of which by this arrangement, our civil constitutions boast, are secured in the organization of our church.

We notice a similar conformity and further excellence, in the *unity* of her executive head; her bishops being vested by the very nature of their office with the executive authority—And thus are secured that vigour, that decision, that promptness, and at the same time that responsibility, and of course that fidelity, which it would be impossible to secure at least in an equal degree, were the executive power of our church entrusted to large and popular assemblies.

In like manner, though from the nature of his office, the bishop is the ultimate judiciary tribunal, yet he can inflict no public censure and no punishment but in the due course of law, by which a knowledge of the charges against him, the means of defence, and a trial by his peers, are enjoyed by every individual.

Apart then from the *divine institution of the ministry*, we have cause of boast respecting the ORDER of our church, that it exercises the *powers of government* agreeably to the principles of right and justice, and of those forms of civil polity, on which experience has impressed the stamp of wisdom.

The exhibition then of the *general* character of our church, impresses the duty of the most devoted attachment to her. Let not this attachment, best expressed by fidelity to all her principles, be branded as narrow bigotry, and sectarian zeal. It is an enlarged, an elevated, a noble feeling; excited by the evangelical spirit which animates all the public confessions and formulae of the church, and by the apostolical character which distinguishes her ministry and ordinances. It is an attachment therefore to a system which, exhibiting the faith once delivered to the saints and bearing the stamp of apostolic authority, must be the best calculated, if its advocates and professors are faithful to its principles, to extend in its purity the kingdom of the Redeemer, and to advance most effectually the salvation of man.—Let us then my brethren, with united hearts and voices and in the fulness of affection, offer for our Church the prayer—“Peace be within thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces.”

Under the influence of this sentiment let us proceed to view some leading circumstances in

### III. The *present situation* of our Church, and the duties thence resulting.

And here there will appear, cause both for *sorrow* and for *congratulation*.

The war of the revolution stripped our Church of a large proportion of her clergy, of many of her influential members, and of the nursing care and protection of the venerable society for propagating the Gospel in foreign parts. Her congregations, with diminished numbers and impoverished means, were left without clergy, and destitute for many years of the episcopacy, clergy were not to be obtained. The age of your preacher at this period does not enable him to speak from personal knowledge; but judging from information, he appears warranted in expressing the opinion, that our Church was placed in circumstances of so great depression and difficulty, that it became a serious question whether she would be able to preserve the characteristic of an apostolical Church, episcopal ordination. While, therefore, her present primitive organization claims for the patience, the prudence, and the persevering zeal of the agents in this most important work the highest praise (may their names ever be held in grateful remembrance) her preservation in all her characteristic features may be traced to the protecting presence of her divine head, and under him to her evangelical and apostolical character, and to her inestimable liturgy. But she still exhibits, in many places, the face of desolation. The clergy, who

have been ordained since we obtained the episcopacy, have not in many states supplied the wants even of the old congregations. Our Church in many places mourns that none come to her solemn feasts, because there are no priests to make the celebration: while in the new and extensive districts filled by the increasing population of our country, the members of our Church are wandering as sheep having no shepherd, and either joining other folds, or mourning, desolate and solitary, their exile from their *Zion*.

Amidst these causes of sorrow, it is a subject for congratulation, that our people are awakening to a sense of the duties which they owe to their Church, to the necessity of making provision for a learned, a pious, and laborious ministry, of providing for their support in the vineyard, of sending missionaries to the destitute quarters of our *Zion*, of disseminating information in the truths of religion, and the distinctive principles of our Church. It is a subject of congratulation that correct views of her distinctive principles are becoming more prevalent; that her worship, overcoming the prejudices which may have subsisted against it, is gradually exerting its evangelical influence on the hearts of her members; that the preaching of the doctrines of the cross is the aim of her clergy, and more and more demanded by her people; and that all orders among us seem disposed and desirous to cherish the spirit of Christian love and unity, to know no other aim but the glory of God, the honour of the Redeemer, and the advancement of his kingdom; and to these glorious objects to devote their talents, their influence, their hearts.

It is incumbent on us, my clerical and lay brethren of this convention, standing as we do in the high and responsible station of the general council of our Church, pre-eminently to display these divine dispositions, these harmonious and pious views. Happily organized as our Church is in her doctrines, her worship, and her discipline, and entrusted, as her supreme officers are, with many of those concerns, which, under a different organization, would be a subject of popular discussion and determination; our principal duty at these ecclesiastical meetings consists in obtaining information concerning the state of our Zion; in watching over her principles, her purity, and her peace; in adapting, but with a cautious and a temperate hand, the provisions of our laws to the changing exigencies of affairs; and, above all, it should here be our object, as in the presence and under the influence of the spirit of our divine Lord, to excite, to cherish, and to strengthen our mutual zeal in his service, in the cause of his holy religion, and in the advancement of the prosperity of his spouse and body the Church.

Since your last meeting a change has taken place in our episcopal body by the removal of two venerable brothers from their duties on earth to their rest in the Paradise of God.\* It is a subject of congratulation, however, on the present occasion, and an indication of a growing zeal for our Church that the present ecclesiastical assembly is more numerously attended than usual. The difficulties of a long journey have not prevented the attendance of the bishop and clerical depu-

\* Right Reverend Bishop Jarvis of Connecticut, and the Right Reverend Bishop Madison of Virginia.

ties from the distant diocese of South Carolina; and our hearts are cheered by the presence, long earnestly desired, of a deputation from the Church in Virginia. And it is particularly a subject of thankfulness that this diocese, where our Zion has long been languishing, and seemed almost extinct, has made provision for filling the episcopate in the reverend person\* whom having presented to us the testimonials required by the canons we shall now proceed to consecrate.

But little more than half a century has elapsed since our Church universally prevailed through the rich and flourishing dominion of Virginia. In every county there were churches and chapels, all of them decent and substantial, some of them even splendid in their decorations. In those temples were stately performed all the services of our primitive liturgy. The parishes, not much short of one hundred, were all supplied with clergy. What is the contrast? We have wept over it. Our hearts have been wrung with shame, with grief, that this contrast has been produced, not entirely (God forbid we should sink them under this tremendous guilt) but in no inconsiderable degree by many of the clergy themselves. What is the contrast? Few are the parishes in Virginia which enjoy the regular ministrations of a clergyman. In many places the liturgy is scarcely known, but as some antiquated book which was once used by their fathers. The edifices, where their fathers worshipped, now in a state of ruin, fix the astonished gaze and excite the mournful sigh of the passing traveller; and in those courts where the living

\* The Rev. Richard Channing Moore, D. D. Rector of St. Stephen's Church, New-York.

God was once invoked and the messages of mercy through his Son proclaimed, no sounds are heard but the screams of the bird of night, or the lowings of the beasts of the field. It was not possible that this state of things could long continue. Man does not feel himself safe even with his fellow man loosened from the restraints of religion—He cannot live without its consolations—He cannot enter on futurity without its hopes—The night of adversity has passed, and the morning, I would fain hope, of a long and splendid day is dawning on the Church in Virginia. I think I see the pledge of this in the attachment to our Church and in the anxious desire to serve her manifested by laymen of the highest influence and talents, and by a few zealous clergy. They have combined, and they have resolved, under God, that the Church in Virginia shall not perish. From my soul I revere and love them for the holy resolve. My God! in this remember them for good.

The first fruits of their labours, we witness this day.

To counsel, to lead, to strengthen them in their exertions; to revive, among a numerous and widely extended population, the spirit of piety; to make known, valued and loved, the evangelical and primitive institutions of our church; to make these institutions and services under God the instruments of bringing again the outcast and reclaiming the lost, of conviction and conversion to the sinner, of holiness and comfort to the saint, is the work of imminent difficulty and hazard, but I trust, by God's blessing, of success and honour, to which you, my reverend brother, will be called.

I owe it on this occasion to many who have signed in your favour the solemn testimonial required by the



canons, and I owe it to myself, participating as I shall in your consecration, to state, that any doubts which might have existed as to the duty and the expediency of the act which is now marked with perfect unanimity, were effectually precluded by your frank and explicit and unsolicited avowal of the principle which should inflexibly guide you in your discharge of your Episcopal functions. That principle is the same to which you will now in the most solemn manner pledge yourself at the altar, of conformity to the doctrine, discipline and worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. I owe it to you to declare that in relation to the episcopate of Virginia you were pressed with an urgency which would not admit of a refusal; and that your whole conduct in respect to it has been marked by a frankness, a conciliation, and a zeal for the interests of religion and the Church which have removed every difficulty that might have impeded your elevation to the Episcopal office. We shall now follow you to your arduous station with our best wishes and our prayers. It must be apparent that you make no inconsiderable sacrifice of personal ease. At a period of life when you must have begun to look forward to a degree of rest from the conflicts of active duty, you are called on to exchange, the comforts of your native city, and the attentions of a congregation warmly attached to you, for a land of strangers, and for the difficulties of a depressed and extensive diocess. Still in the labours of the field on which you enter, you will meet, we trust, with zealous coadjutors in the clergy and laity, who in a manner very honourable to yourself have chosen you for their diocesan; and who have, by this act, pledged

themselves to support you in the fulfillment of your consecration vows to extend and to maintain the doctrine, discipline and worship of our Church. Among the laity whose talents and influence will be called to your aid, I perceive some of my most early and valued friends. From the people generally among whom you will labour, you will, I am satisfied, receive every kind attention that can tend to lessen the burden of your cares. The state of society and manners among those with whom your future life is to be passed (I speak from some degree of personal knowledge) needs only the purifying and elevating influence of religion to become in a high degree interesting, and a source of personal gratification. But you must look beyond all earthly aids and consolations, to those which your Lord and Master only can confer. Should the spirit of unfeigned and humble piety, regulated and cherished by the sound doctrines, the primitive order, and the truly evangelical service and institutions of our Church be revived in the scene of your future labours, with what delight shall we all look back to the service of this day! And how fervent will be our thanks to God, who hath made you the instrument of this great good!

To his holy keeping we commend you.







