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Richard Whately  
1851

# PROTECTIVE MEASURES

IN BEHALF OF THE

ESTABLISHED CHURCH,

CONSIDERED IN

## A CHARGE,

TO THE

DIOCESES OF DUBLIN, GLANDALAGH, AND KILDARE,

DELIVERED AUGUST, 1851.

BY

RICHARD WHATELY, D.D.

*ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.*

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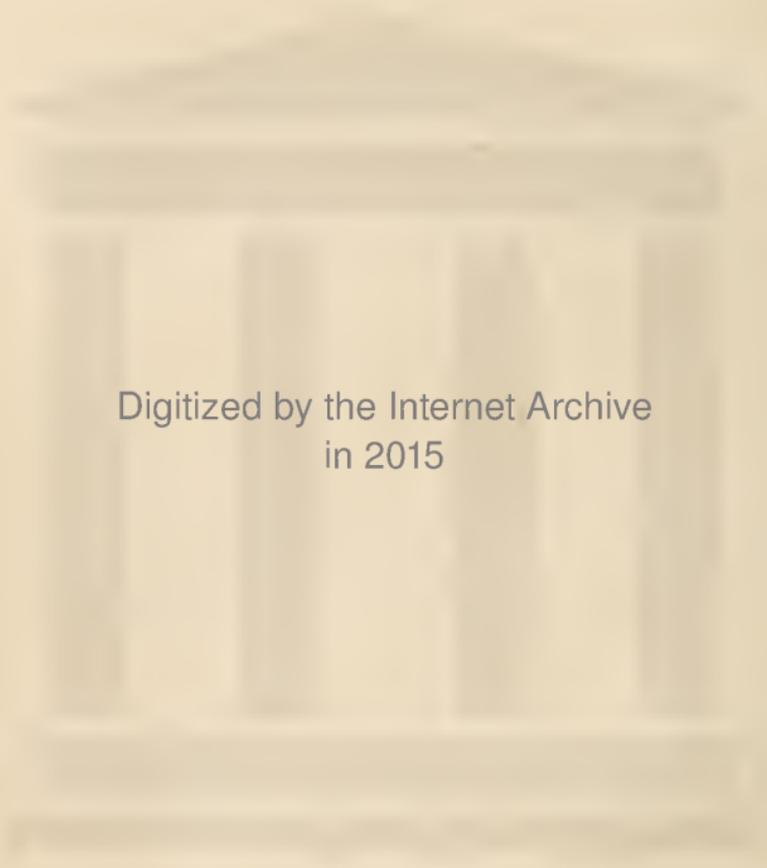
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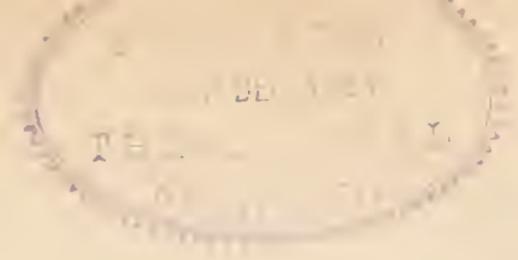
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## LEGISLATION

### IN BEHALF OF THE CHURCH.

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IN calling your attention, my Reverend Brethren, as I now propose to do, to some transactions and discussions that have taken place in Parliament and elsewhere, since we last met, I shall of course confine myself as much as possible to the religious rather than the political aspect of each subject.

It has indeed always been my own practice, as you are well aware, to take little or no part in questions of a purely political character; and to keep aloof entirely from all political parties.

But there are many questions that are partly of a political and partly of a religious character. And in adverting to any of these, it is important, in all cases, to guard against confusedly blending together the two views,—the political and the religious—that may be taken of each subject; and to avoid, on such an occasion as the present, any full discussion of the former.

*Importance of keeping distinct, political and religious questions.*

*Assumption of ecclesiastical titles by Roman-Catholic functionaries.*

This caution is peculiarly requisite in reference to the subject which has of late occupied so much of the public attention, the legislation which has taken place relative to the appointment of Roman Catholic Bishopricks.

Whatever encroachments may have been attempted on the rights or the dignity of the Sovereign, and whatever legislative measures may have been necessary for the maintenance of those rights and of that dignity, it should always be carefully borne in mind that each man's religious persuasion must be defended—and *can* only be defended—by himself. As his Faith cannot be wrested from him against his will, by the act of another, so, neither can it be maintained in its purity by legal enactments. Against religious dangers, our People must be taught, and trained, and sedulously warned, to defend themselves, instead of relying on anything that Government can do for them.<sup>1</sup> To those who are not

*Effectual protection against danger to religion.*

it be maintained in its purity by legal enactments. Against religious dangers, our People must be taught, and trained, and sedulously warned, to defend them-

selves, instead of relying on anything that Government can do for them.<sup>1</sup> To those who are not

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<sup>1</sup> Being desirous of ascertaining how far, in relation to one point, our Protestant Church had been affected, by the existence, or by the removal, of *penal laws and civil disabilities*, I have obtained returns of the numbers of new churches and other places of worship under the Establishment which had been opened during the last century, and during the first half of the present. It appears that (besides some cases of rebuilding) there were *but five* new churches erected in the diocese of Dublin during the whole of the eighteenth century, great as was the increase of population. In the present century, *forty-seven* new churches have been opened;

themselves earnest and vigilant, as no divine aid is promised, so, no human aid can be availing.

In reference to the religious portion of the question, there is no need that I should say much at present. My sentiments have long been well-known, on the subject of the claim of the Church of Rome,—or of *any* Church<sup>1</sup>—to supreme dominion over all Christians. And you are also well aware, that, strong as are my own convictions on this and on several other points, I have always been opposed to the enforcement of them on others by secular means;—to the infliction of civil penalties or disabilities on those whom I believe to be in error.<sup>2</sup>

It is important, however, to remember — what some persons seem, very strangely, to have almost forgotten,— that those claims of the Church of Rome which have been adverted to are nothing *new*, but have existed for many Ages, and are, in fact, an essential part of that system against which our

*Claims of  
the Church  
of Rome,  
not novel.*

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besides twelve licensed places of worship for the accommodation of the remoter parts of populous parishes; making a total of *fifty-nine*. And this increase has been going on in a continually-accelerated ratio. The number of the clergy increased, during the same interval, from 115 to 206.

<sup>1</sup> Note (A), Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> I took occasion, in this place, to refer my hearers to the little Tracts entitled *Cautions for the Times*, drawn up with some assistance from me, and under my supervision; as containing a fuller exposition of several points that are here briefly touched on.

ancestors revolted and protested, at the Reformation.

Of this no one can be really ignorant; and yet some seem to have so far forgotten it, that they have apparently felt *wonder* mixed with their indignation—as at some startling novelty—at the language of arrogant assumption employed by the Court of Rome; as if it were a thing possible, and consistent, to put forth, and act on, the claim to be Christ's Vicegerent on Earth, and supreme spiritual Ruler of the christian World, in terms that would, to *us*, appear modest and reasonable!<sup>1</sup>

The only novelty is, as you are aware, the substitution, in England of regular Roman-Catholic Bishops for Vicars-Apostolical, exercising all the episcopal functions, but acting as merely deputies of the Pope, and liable to summary removal at his pleasure. The style, however, in which this change was

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<sup>1</sup> Some I believe, have remarked that there is a more modest tone, and less of haughty assumption, in the language of the Apostles, who certainly claimed and possessed immediate divine inspiration, than in that of the Court of Rome.

But it should be remembered that *they* appealed to the miracles which they—*confessedly*—wrought, before friends and adversaries. And a style of vehement assertion and imperious and proud pretension is the more to be expected from any one in proportion as he has the less of decisive proof on which to rest his claims to submission.

Still, it is hardly conceivable that *any* claim to immediate absolute authority from Heaven could be put forth or implied by any one, in terms that would not seem arrogant to those who denied that claim.

announced was such as to require, in the opinion of many persons, some precautionary measure on our part, to guard some of our fellow-subjects against the mistake of supposing that the acts of the Church of Rome have any legal validity in this country.

Several intelligent persons with whom I have conversed on the subject were of opinion that this object might have been sufficiently accomplished by a royal *Proclamation*; or, by simple *Resolutions* of the Houses of Parliament, declaratory of their unalterable reverence for the royal prerogative.

A Proclamation might, it was urged, have set forth and explained to the People, that all acts done, or titles conferred, by any foreign Power (and not ratified by our Government) are in the eye of the Law, totally null and void, whatever submission or compliance any individual may in his own conscience think himself bound to: and that no one need fear any interference with his religious liberty, except such as he may of his own accord determine to submit to.

Such an explanation—it was urged—might be not really (as at first sight it might appear) superfluous and uncalled for, on such an occasion as the present; considering the strange misapprehensions that exist in some minds as to several points connected with the subject, and—among others—as to the meaning of the declaration that “no foreign Prelate or Potentate hath or ought to have any power or jurisdiction within this Realm.”

*Meaning of  
the oath of ab-  
juration.*

It may seem strange that any one should need to have it explained to him, that the thing meant is *legal* power. But some, even Protestants, have been so inconsiderate as to speak of this declaration as manifestly untrue; because, say they, the Pope notoriously does possess power in this country; that is, *influence over the minds* of those who feel themselves bound in conscience to obey him: as if the framers of the declaration could have been ignorant of that fact; and as if the very reason for its being framed had not been—as it evidently was—the knowledge that the Pope *had* adherents in the Country; which circumstance made it requisite in certain cases to disown his authority; that is, of course, his *lawful* authority. And as for any precedence, title, or office, granted by the Government of this Country to any officers appointed by a foreign Prelate, these being of course revocable at pleasure by the Government which grants them, are far from being at all at variance with the above declaration; since, if any one considers such Office, &c., to emanate from a superior Power, superseding that of our Government, he must regard it as what no Government of ours can either confer or take away.

In like manner, the words in our Thirty-seventh Article declaring that “The Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction within this Realm,” would have been superfluous, had it not been notorious not only that

he *claimed* supremacy, but also that there were persons who admitted that claim.<sup>1</sup>

Such a Proclamation then (or Resolutions to the same effect) would, it was urged, have been timely, and also sufficient for every desirable object; and would have obviated the long and irritating debates that have taken place; while the royal Prerogative—since that *does not emanate from parliamentary enactment*—would have been even more effectually vindicated.

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<sup>1</sup> “The Emperor of Russia has no power to return members to our Parliament; but it would be possible for him to employ agents to bribe electors. Joanna Southcote had no jurisdiction &c. in England—and no Roman-Catholic would have scrupled to say this—but she had followers who thought themselves bound to obey her. A private man has not power of life and death (*ἐξουσίαν*) over his neighbours, but he has the physical power (*δύναμιν*) to murder one of them. So, also, the Pretender was abjured, and very rightly: but it is well known that many of his adherents, in their hearts, acknowledged and were ready to obey him. And it would have been a folly to ask a man to swear that he knew the *inmost thoughts* of every British subject.

“But, in truth, it was precisely *because* the Pope and the Pretender were known to have adherents, and to exercise a control over them, that those oaths were framed, in which the swearer proclaimed his opinion that they had no legal right to obedience, and ought not to be invested with any. The two clauses [‘neither hath, nor ought to have’] were aimed specially at two classes of Roman-Catholics: one of whom contended that Queen Mary’s acts restoring the Pope’s supremacy were never *legally* repealed—for they considered Elizabeth as a bastard, and, besides, solemnly deposed by the Pope; the other confessed that the Pope had no power by the law of England, but that it *ought to be* restored to him.”—From a very sensible pamphlet on *Papal Aggressions*, p. 13.

For, the Crown (it was observed) being, by the Constitution, and independently of any new enactment, the "Fountain of Honour," and the royal Prerogative being evidently—no less than the rights of Parliament—a part of that Constitution, which assigns to each branch of the Legislature its own proper functions, it is important to guard against even the appearance of any interference of one branch with the rights of another.

*Objections to the passing, and to the rejection of the Ecclesiastical-Titles Bill.*

As for the course actually adopted, I saw such strong objections both to the *passing* of the Bill as it stood, and to the *rejection* of it by the House of Lords, and again, to the attempt to introduce into it, at that stage, any *alterations*, that I could not bring myself to be a party to either course; and accordingly I abstained from voting at all.

If however, as is expected by many, and wished apparently by many more, the law now enacted shall never be actually enforced, but remain a dead letter, it will, in that case, be nearly equivalent to such a Proclamation or Resolution, as I have been alluding to; though at the expense of a far greater loss of valuable time, and with more risk of generating animosity and discontent, and of diminishing men's reverence for the laws.

When, however, I speak of objections to the passing of the Bill, I do not mean that its provisions are what I could reasonably deprecate, if such a law had been enacted in reference to those of my

own Communion. If, for instance, I were an American or Scotch Episcopalian, and it were forbidden by law that any one should be styled Bishop of Philadelphia, or of Vermont, of Glasgow, or of Edinburgh, &c.; or Rector or Curate of such and such a Parish, and we were required to designate ourselves as Bishop or as Pastor "*of the Protestant Episcopalians*" of each District, I do not see that we should be justified in calling this a persecution or an insult. For, after all, it is not the *territory*, but the *People*, that are placed under our superintendence. Over those of our own Communion, our Church gives us a certain degree of authority. And as for those of any other religious persuasion, we are bound,—generally indeed to the whole Human Race,—but more especially to our own parishioners and our other neighbours, to endeavour to aid in imparting to them whatever benefits we can, and especially whatever useful instruction (be it much or little) they will consent to receive. But in all cases, it is with the *persons* inhabiting a certain district, not with the district itself considered as a portion of the Earth's surface, that we as christian Ministers are connected.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Those who speak of a Bishop or other Minister possessing, by virtue of apostolical succession, inherent and exclusive right over all Christians within his Diocese or Parish, seem to forget that, on this principle, the Protestant inhabitants of any Diocese and Parish on the Continent, over which a Roman-catholic Bishop and Rector have been duly appointed, would be left to the

But *groundless* alarms and *fancied* affronts will often produce real and great uneasiness and disturbance; such as one would gladly avoid, when there is no important object to be gained on the other side. And the danger was so manifest, of agitators in this country taking advantage of the present occasion to excite apprehensions and discontents, (though such attempts have, I believe, hitherto, at least—though aided by the injudicious language of some well-intentioned but inconsiderate protestants—been happily unsuccessful) that it was proposed, as you are aware, by several persons, to exclude Ireland from the provisions of the Act.

*Importance  
of not violating  
the Act of  
Union.*

This virtual separation of the Irish branch of the United Church from the English, in violation of a most solemn compact in the Act of Union, I have heard defended as a sacrifice of “theory” to “political expediency.”

It is by suggestions of this kind that the very word “expediency” has come to be, itself, odious to many persons; as having been associated, in their minds, with the idea of some violation of duty.

But I have always deprecated such an application of the term. Besides that, in the highest sense, nothing can be really and ultimately expedient that is at variance with the principles of rectitude. I do not believe that even mere worldly expediency

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alternative of either conforming to what they are convinced is an erroneous religion, or else being left without any Pastor at all, and without the possibility of obtaining any.

is ultimately promoted by departure from the strict rules of justice.<sup>1</sup>

In the present case, most assuredly, nothing could have been more *inexpedient* than the proposed abandonment of (what was called "Theory," *i. e.*) principle. The advocates of it probably imagined that if any Act were passed extending to England alone, Ireland would *remain in the same situation as before* the passing of it. But any one may perceive, on a very little reflection, that this could not have been the case. If there are two roads from a certain spot, and a notice be posted upon *one* of them, warning all persons that it is private, and that they will be guilty of a trespass if they pass along *this* road, you could not doubt that every one would conclude the *other* road to be a public thoroughfare. In like manner, a prohibition by law of *any* thing whatever, in one part of the empire,

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<sup>1</sup> The reader is cautioned to keep in mind the distinction—often, in this case, overlooked—between two totally distinct questions:—(1) Whether *any* such legislation as has taken place was desirable; (2) whether, in the course adopted, *whatever* it might be, England and Ireland should be kept together, or separated.

On the former of these questions, the Address to the Queen from the Irish Prelates pronounces nothing decisive. It is with the latter of the two that it is occupied.

In the Appendix (B) are subjoined this Address, together with that to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and his Grace's answer. And to these is added an extract from the *Irish Ecclesiastical Journal*, containing a statement of some facts which are too little known.

excluding another part, is sure to be understood as equivalent to a *sanction* of it in the latter.

It would have been understood, therefore, that what *had been done in reference to Galway* had been deliberately sanctioned by the legislature, and might be allowably repeated to any extent in Ireland.

It would have been understood, in short, that one portion of the royal prerogative had *required*, and received, *parliamentary* confirmation in England, and was *abandoned* in Ireland: abandoned, not on any grounds of justice or of kindness, but of fear; thus holding out an encouragement to indefinite encroachments.

And, moreover, a virtual violation of one of the Articles of the Act of Union, while that Act remains unrepealed, would have placed us in a most unfavourable position in reference to those who agitate for a repeal of the Union altogether. For, a repeal of any law, in a regular way, however unwise and mischievous, cannot be called *illegal*; and the advocates of such repeal could not well have been censured by those who should have violated its provisions indirectly, and as it were by a side-wind, while the law remained unrepealed. And it would have been in vain to allege that the whole question related to a matter of subordinate importance,—a mere point of detail;<sup>1</sup> since, however true this may

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<sup>1</sup> Such as the uniting of certain dioceses,—those of Bristol and Gloucester, for instance, in England, and several in Ireland.

be, (and I do not undertake to disprove it) it is certain the *English Public thought quite otherwise*. Supposing that it was really a matter of small consequence that for so many months agitated the Nation and the Parliament, *they* at least deemed it one of vital importance.

And what, after all, would have been the *conciliation* effected by such a compromise as was proposed? One cannot doubt that those it was designed to conciliate would have said—either openly or secretly —“if this measure is *no* hardship—no oppression or insult to any one,—and is only what is requisite for the reasonable protection of Protestants, why do you not extend this protection to two millions of them in Ireland? But if it *is* a hardship and an un-called-for procedure, why do you inflict that hardship on two millions of Roman-catholics in England, except it is that these are not yet powerful enough to overawe you? For it has not been shown that there is any difference (as far as regards the present question) between the Roman-catholics of Ireland and those of England, except in *numbers*; or that this numerical difference furnishes any argument except those addressed to fear. You seem therefore to be proclaiming, in each country, that you are influenced by no sentiments of justice, or generosity, or kindness, or humanity, towards either party; but that you will yield *any* thing to fear, and nothing to any other consideration. While, therefore, we *hate* you for what you *with-*

*hold, we no less despise you for what you concede.*"<sup>1</sup>

Such, I cannot doubt, would have been the first (though not the last) deplorable consequence of being diverted from the straight path, by the temptation of an apparent, but unreal and delusive, expediency.

While, therefore, I am unable to profess myself well satisfied with the course that has actually been adopted, I can most heartily congratulate you on the rejection (by the almost unanimous decision of the legislature) of one which would have been incomparably more dangerous, besides being what, to me and to very many others, appears no less than dishonourable.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> I should not have expressed myself so strongly (though I should have felt the same) if the proposed course had been actually adopted by Parliament. For when a law is actually passed, and there is *no reasonable hope of its repeal*, we should be very cautious in publicly uttering predictions of dangers and discontents, lest we should thus become the means of engendering or aggravating them.

<sup>2</sup> It is my belief that the proposal in question was advocated by many who had no thought of doing anything that was dishonourable, or that tended to impair the Union. And I am led to think, by the different tone that prevailed, at first and subsequently, that the greater part of them afterwards perceived, on further reflection, the real tendency and probable effects of such a measure, and thereupon abandoned the idea. They perceived probably that such a procedure would have been not unreasonably attributed to fear, even if that motive had not been—*as it was*—openly avowed and strongly dwelt on.

On the Bill which was brought in (after passing the House of Commons<sup>1</sup>) for the modification of the oath required of Members of Parliament, I need say but very little; as my opinions on that subject have long been before you, and before the public. And accordingly it would perhaps have been hardly necessary on that occasion, to speak at all in the House, but for the prevailing misapprehensions on the subject; which were unfortunately favoured by the form and title of the Bill introduced. I felt myself called on, therefore, to state my objection to that Bill, although I voted for it as being a step in the right direction, and far less objectionable than the law as it now stands.

*Supposed  
protection to  
Christianity  
by the Decla-  
ration, on the  
true faith of a  
Christian.*

But the *grounds* on which I gave that vote being quite different from that of several other persons who advocated the same conclusion, it became necessary to explain briefly what those grounds were.<sup>2</sup>

My object is, as you are doubtless well aware,

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<sup>1</sup> One of the curious circumstances connected with the present anomalous state of things on this point, is to find the *House of Lords* insisting on deciding who shall or shall not be allowed—after being duly elected—to take his seat in *the other House*; and repeatedly rejecting (though by diminishing majorities) the decision of the Commons on that question.

<sup>2</sup> For the same reason, the Bishop of Norwich, who took a similar view, spoke to the same effect.

not the relief or benefit of Jews as such, but the removal of all religious tests connected with civil office. Such tests, which are regarded by some as a safeguard and an honour to Christianity, are, in my view, detrimental and dishonourable to it. What I have always aimed at, is, not that Jews,—either many or few,—should sit in Parliament, but that electors—Christian electors—should not be impeded in their choice of the person they may fix on to represent them, where no *detriment to the public can be proved* to arise from leaving them thus at liberty.

And accordingly I have always maintained, that if any one who had advocated the removal of tests which exclude Jews, or Roman-catholics, should afterwards, as an elector, think fit to give a preference to christian candidates, or to protestant candidates, he would be guilty of no inconsistency. He would be only making a legitimate use of that right of free choice which he was willing to impart to his neighbours.

But the removal of unnecessary restrictions on liberty—strongly as I am opposed to them—is far from being the principal object I have in view. Far more anxious am I for the removal of what I regard as a discredit to Christianity, and a departure from the principles of its divine Author: of Him who declared that his “kingdom is not of this world,” and who charged men to “render to Cæsar” (the idolatrous Roman emperor) “the things that

are Cæsar's, and to God, the things that are God's."<sup>1</sup>

And his Apostles, in all their preaching, and in all their conduct, explained and confirmed his doctrine. Can any one imagine to himself those Apostles secretly enjoining, or permitting, their disciples to enact, whenever they should become sufficiently powerful,<sup>2</sup> laws to exclude the emperor from his throne, and the magistrate from his bench, and the senator from his seat, unless they would make a declaration "on the true faith of a Christian?" If I could believe them to have entertained

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<sup>1</sup> Our Lord and his Apostles, however, while inculcating the right of a civil governor to obedience from his subjects, as individuals, and in their secular concerns, had certainly no thought of committing the office of governing in spiritual matters the Jewish, or any christian *Church*, as such, to any one not a member of the same.

The case of the sovereign, therefore, (in this country) is a peculiar one; as the "Headship of the Church" is annexed to the civil office.

What is the precise character and whole extent of this Headship—and whether it would be possible and desirable so to explain and so to modify it, as to do away with the necessity of imposing a religious test on the sovereign,—these are questions which need much reflection and inquiry, and which could not be suitably discussed on this occasion.

It is worth remarking, however, that some seem to imagine it a necessary and fundamental law of the Constitution that the sovereign should be a *member of the Established Church*; forgetting that there are in Britain *two* established Churches; and also that the restriction relating to Protestantism was introduced, under very peculiar circumstances, only about a century and a half ago.

<sup>2</sup> See *Essays on the Kingdom of Christ*, Essay I. § 71.

a secret design (evidently none such was, or could be, avowed) to convert hereafter Christ's Kingdom into one of this world by fortifying it with secular penalties or disabilities inflicted on all who would not profess their faith, I could not regard them (considering all that they said and did) as other than base dissemblers.

To my mind, therefore, the whole question of the truth or falsity of the Gospel is involved in the decision of the point now before us. And this is a matter of far more importance than the freedom of elections.

If any sufficient reasons could be offered for thinking these views erroneous, I trust (as I declared in my place in the House) that I should not be withheld from changing them by any dread of the imputation of what is commonly—though most erroneously—called inconsistency.<sup>1</sup> But I am confirmed in my opinion by finding the arguments on

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<sup>1</sup> "A charge of *inconsistency*, as it is one of the most disparaging, is also one that is perhaps the most frequently urged with effect, on insufficient grounds. Strictly speaking, inconsistency (such at least as a wise and good man is exempt from) is the maintaining *at the same time* of two contradictory propositions; whether expressed in language, or implied in sentiments or conduct. As *e. g.* if an author, in an *argumentative* work, while he represents every syllogism as futile and fallacious reasoning, admits that *all* reasoning may be exhibited in the form of syllogisms; or, if the same person who censures and abhors oppression, yet practises it towards others; or if a man prescribes two medicines which neutralize each other's effects, &c.

"But a man is often censured as inconsistent, if he *changes* his plans or his opinions on any point. And certainly if he does this

which it is based,—arguments publicly and repeatedly urged, many years ago,—entirely unanswered. Not even any attempt at refutation has ever, as far as I know, appeared, up to this day. The arguments and the declamations on the opposite side are still brought forward again and again, without any notice at all of the replies that have been given to them.<sup>1</sup>

For instance, it is continually urged, that, to allow a Jew to be eligible to Parliament would imply indifference to Christianity: does it then — it was replied — argue indifference to *Protestantism*, to remove disabilities from Roman-catholics? or indifference to our own Church, to allow dissenters to be eligible? If a *christian* Country is bound, as such, jealously to exclude Jews, is not a *Protestant* Country equally bound to exclude Roman-catholics, and an *Episcopalian* Country, Presbyterians?<sup>2</sup>

This is, I admit, only a personal argument, not applicable to those (now but a small number) who are for making conformity to the Established Church

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often, and lightly, that is good ground for withholding confidence from him. But it would be more precise to characterize him as *fickle* and unsteady, than as *inconsistent*; because this use of the term tends to confound one fault with another; viz. with the holding of two incompatible opinions *at once*."—*Elements of Rhet.* p. 2, ch. iii., § 5.

<sup>1</sup> See Note (C), Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> See Speech on the Jewish Relief Bill, published in the volume of *Charges and Tracts*.

an essential condition of the enjoyment of civil rights. But the argument is valid as far as it goes; and ought to put to silence all declamations about indifference to Christianity in those who do not go the whole length of complete and consistent exclusiveness.

Yet to this and to the other arguments urged, I have never heard of any answer being offered. It would be well if those who regard their advocacy of religious tests and disabilities as a mark of their being most emphatically *christian*, and who—some of them—cast reproaches not savouring of christian meekness and charity on those who do not agree with them, as showing indifference to Christianity, and a tendency towards Judaism—it were well, I say, if these would reflect on *what grounds* it was that the chief part of the Jewish nation rejected the Messiah. Evidently, it was from their expectation of a *temporal* Messiah, who should establish a “Kingdom of this world,” supported by secular power, and secular privileges and penalties.

And they should next consider, therefore, whether those who seek by such methods to honour and to support Christ's Kingdom, are not themselves more chargeable with a tendency to corrupt the Gospel by an introduction of *Jewish* principles.

With *intentional* depravation, however, or disregard of Christianity, I would not, myself, charge any of my brethren; even though they should fail to show the same forbearance towards me. Let each study the christian Scriptures carefully and

candidly, and act on the conviction which he derives from that guide, without pronouncing harsh judgments on those who may have arrived at a different conclusion from his. And remember, my Reverend Brethren,—if ever you are tempted to depart from this rule, by finding that your opponents disregard it,—remember Him who “when He was reviled, reviled not again,” and who “left us an example that we should follow his steps.”

As for the political aspect of the question, though a full discussion of it would be unsuitable to this occasion, I cannot forbear making a remark on one point which has been very generally overlooked. Those who contend for the principle that in a christian Country no share of legislative power should be conceded to a Jew, ought manifestly—if they would be consistent—to follow out their principle, and not to be content with throwing out the Bill I have been alluding to, but to endeavour to deprive Jews of the *elective franchise*. An elector, it is true, has a much smaller share of legislative power than a member of Parliament; but this is nothing to the purpose, when the question is one of *principle* and not of amount. It was admitted on all hands that the number of Jews likely to obtain seats in Parliament would be insignificantly small; but the indecorum, and the violation of principle, would, it was urged, (and very justly) be the very same, whether they were many or few,—of great or of small influence. Now the principle in question

is even *more* completely violated (and this is the point which has been the most generally overlooked) by the law as it now stands, than by the proposed Bill. For the *elective franchise* is *actually enjoyed* by the Jew, independently of any permission from another party; while a *seat in Parliament* is *not* conferred by the Bill. That Bill only went to enable him to take his seat *if* duly elected by the constituents. It conferred no legislative power; only enabled *them* to confer it if they thought fit. It is evident, therefore, that the principle alluded to is already much more directly violated by the existing law than it would have been by that Bill.<sup>1</sup>

I have always however (as most of you must be well aware<sup>2</sup>) objected strongly to the anomaly of a christian *Church* being governed altogether as ours now is, by a Body which does not consist exclusively of members of that Church. And as on this subject also, my views have been long since<sup>3</sup> very fully laid before the Public, I had no need to say more, in the Debate that lately took place on the subject, than a

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<sup>1</sup> Another curious anomaly in the present state of the law is, that a Jew is allowed to act as a Magistrate; and that accordingly it happened very lately that a Jewish Justice of the Peace (who is also a member of Parliament, but was precluded from taking his seat) was applied to for a licence, which he granted, as he was empowered to do, for a dissenting chapel.

<sup>2</sup> See Speech on the Jewish-Relief Bill, and also on the Kildare "Petition for Church Government," in the volume of *Charges and Tracts*.

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix, Note (D).

very few words expressing my adherence to those views.

It was a very striking, and a very interesting circumstance in that Debate to observe how very large a number of influential persons had adopted, more or less, certain views respecting the present condition, and the requirements, of our Church. I will not call them, *my* views, because I know not how far, or whether at all, they had been derived from me: but they certainly were views which I had long since advocated in the House, year after year, when I stood almost alone; when I could hardly obtain a hearing for the statement of those views; when they were supported by hardly any one,—opposed by some,—and, by most, deemed, apparently, not worth opposing. Yet on this last occasion they were earnestly and eloquently discussed by several; and by all considered worthy of very serious attention.

*Opinions on  
Convocation  
or other Go-  
vernment of  
the Church.*

As for the arguments employed on both sides, I need not detain you by recounting or commenting on them, because hardly any of much importance were brought forward except what must be already familiar to those of you who take an interest in the subject. It is one which, as you will recollect, I have repeatedly and fully discussed, both in a Charge delivered a few years since,<sup>1</sup> and in several other Works.

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<sup>1</sup> See Note (D,) Appendix, and also the Speech above referred to.

It may be needful however to point your attention to the circumstance that those of the speakers who advocated, and those who opposed, the summoning of Convocation for actual business, were completely agreed in thinking that Body—as now by law constituted—utterly unfit to be a permanent government for the Church. Nor did any one advocate,—and most, I think distinctly protested against,—any government of the Church by *the Clergy, exclusively* of the Laity. But Convocation—it was urged by some—ought to be summoned for the purpose of handing over its powers to some differently-constituted Body; in the same manner as the Reform-Bill, which materially altered the constitution of Parliament, was passed, and could only have been passed, by the then-existing *unreformed* Parliament.

Whether these views be sound or not, it is no more than fair, and it is also highly important that they should at least be not misapprehended.

As for the objection which was urged, that differences of opinion, and contests, and perhaps stormy debates, would be likely to arise, in any assembly of men,—whether called Councillors, Commissioners, Delegates, or by whatever other name—met to inquire into and to decide on, important and interesting matters, and that this might be expected, equally, whether they sat as a permanent governing Body, or as a temporary Commission to be finally dissolved when it should have gone

through a certain definite task, all this was fully admitted. But it was remarked, in reply, that still greater, and more widely spread, and far more unsatisfactory contests, and more incurable discontents take place, and are sure to take place, in the *absence* of a government; when there is no recognised and legitimate channel open for suggestions, for complaints, for arguments, and statements, and proposals.

It might, indeed, have perhaps seemed antecedently probable, that peace and satisfaction, at least *within* the Church, might have been secured, though at a great sacrifice, by the withdrawal from its Communion from time to time, not only of those radically opposed to its doctrine and worship, but of many others also who might have been retained in it without any compromise of principle. Experience, however, shows that even at this cost internal peace and satisfaction are not to be purchased;—that the health and ease of the remaining portion of the body cannot be obtained even by the successive amputation of limbs.

In the Houses of Parliament, (it was urged) violent and sometimes factious contests undoubtedly occur, and instances of unwise legislation may be found. But would any one venture on these grounds to propose the discontinuance of Parliaments? Would any one say, “We are satisfied with the existing laws, and want no changes; ‘*NOLUMUS LEGES ANGLIÆ MUTARI:*’ we would fain avoid all the

wanton legislation, and all the strife of words, and party-spirit which a Parliament never fails to call forth; let us dispense with it altogether?"

This experiment we know was actually tried, on grounds which doubtless appeared plausible at the time, by the unhappy Charles the First: and we all know the result.

Then, as for the apprehended predominance, in any regularly-constituted Assembly, of the mis-judging, and violent and factious, it was maintained, in reply, that such men are incomparably more influential, and their numbers and power more apt to be over-rated, in the absence of any regular government. And an instance was adduced, which I believe might serve as a specimen of thousands of others, in which a factious clamour was raised in a certain parish against some proposed measure; such, that even several of those favourably disposed to the measure were almost overawed by what they had been led to believe was the voice of "The Parishioners." But when the expedient was resorted to, of *collecting the votes*, it was found that those who had been representing themselves as "The Parish" were, to those opposed to them, less than one to ten!

It was urged, again, that, very recently, some Australian Bishops had held a kind of Conference or Synod, at which certain Resolutions, on several points, had been passed, and which had called forth loud complaints from many lay-members of our

Church in those parts: and this was considered as indicating that any kind of Assembly convened by competent authority to deliberate on any ecclesiastical matters would be most distasteful to the laymembers of our Church, and would be productive of dissension.

But it seems most probable that that Meeting had been suspected,—not unnaturally—of a design (which however I am far from, myself, attributing to those Bishops) to claim for those Resolutions—what they certainly had no right to claim—some *binding* authority, as emanating from a *Body*—beyond what each bishop already possessed in his own diocese; and that such a (supposed) assumption of power was the chief thing that called forth expressions of indignation and of alarm.

If,—as was observed in the Debate—some ten or twenty Members of either House of Parliament should think proper to meet in an assembly constituted by their own authority, and to lead or leave men to believe that they regarded themselves as a legislative Body whose decisions were to be binding on all, then, however wise in themselves these decisions might be, no one can doubt that such a usurpation would excite resentment and opposition.

But if any one should infer from that resentment that the meeting of a Parliament *regularly summoned by the Sovereign* must be productive of dissension, and that the whole institution of Parliaments had better be abolished, most men would

perceive that the very opposite conclusion would be the more reasonable.

Before I dismiss this subject, I wish to call your attention to two very important,—perhaps the most important—*obstacles*, to the introduction of any remedy for the present anomalous condition of our Church: leaving to your own discretion to deal with those obstacles, on each occasion that may arise, according to the best of your discretion.

(1.) One is, the expectation, or suspicion, that any Assembly, Council, Convocation, or whatever else it might be called, that should be convened for the regulation of the affairs of our Church, might claim for itself *inspiration*, and consequent infallibility.

We know that Councils *have* before now, advanced such a claim;<sup>1</sup> and have rashly—not to say profanely—applied to themselves the words (of which moreover they manifestly mistook the real meaning) of the decree of that early Council held at Jerusalem, “It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us.”<sup>2</sup>

And the slightest hint,—or even the absence of a disavowal—of any such claim, would be sufficient

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<sup>1</sup> I know that on a late occasion that claim, on behalf of a Convocation, was understood to be maintained by a speaker who, I verily believe, had not really any such intention.

<sup>2</sup> In the case of *Cornelius and his Household* (to which Peter had just been directing their attention) the Holy Spirit had given

to excite such alarm and disgust as would raise up an effectual barrier against the summoning of any such Council.

(2.) The other obstacle to which I would advert is, the notion of the Universal [Catholic] Church being *one Community on Earth*, to which all Christians are bound to pay submission; its governors, and their enactments, claiming obedience from all Christ's followers.

If there *be* any such one Community on Earth, it is manifest that no branch of it,—no individual members of it, whether few or many—can have any right, *without its express permission*, to assemble for the purpose of deciding—or even deliberating on—either Articles of faith, or regulations as to Church-discipline and public Worship, or anything whatever that at all concerns any portion of the Church of Christ.

And how can we obtain, or even apply for, any such permission? since we do not acknowledge any Vicegerent on earth of Him whom we believe to be the sole Head of the Catholic Church.

Any meeting of persons who are subjects of the British Empire, in any city or county of it, called together without the sanction of the Imperial Legis-

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a plain decision that *those individuals* might be admitted into the christian Church without conforming to the Law of Moses (see Acts, x. 47). And the Council, by an obvious inference from that case, decided that the same rule would apply to *all* Gentile converts.

lature, who should pretend to enact laws binding on the inhabitants of that district, would be justly regarded as no better than rebels, however good in themselves their enactments might be. The bye-laws of any Corporation must be made with the permission of the central Government; else there would be a most mischievous and dangerous *imperium in imperio*; in fact, a complete revolt from the Authority we are bound to obey.

And if some self-constituted Assembly in this Country should profess to be "*called together in the name of the Sovereign,*" the use of this language by persons who could not *produce a royal licence* duly signed, would be considered as rather aggravating their offence.

As long, therefore, and as far as this notion shall exist in men's minds of a Universal Church as *one Community on Earth*, possessing—as every such Community must—a supreme *central Government* on Earth, to which all Christians owe submission, so long, and so far, our own Anglican Church (which expressly disclaims being itself that Church)<sup>1</sup> must have an insuperable obstacle placed in the way of any Government for itself.

And it should be remembered also that this notion strikes at the root of all *past* as well as

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<sup>1</sup> "And in these our doings we condemn no other nations, nor prescribe anything but to our own People only; for we think it convenient that every Country should use such ceremonies as they shall think best, &c."—*Preface to Prayer-book*. See also Art. 34.

future Government of our own or of any other Church. It leads inevitably to the conclusion that all decisions, regulations, ordinances, and enactments of whatever kind, by any Church that can be named, must be utterly null and void from the beginning; and that all Convocations, Synods, or Assemblies, of whatever kind, summoned for the purpose of making any such enactments, must have been chargeable with Schism, as having acted without distinct permission from the supreme central Authority.

And hence it is, partly, that the notion I have been alluding to has so often led men to join the Church of Rome; which does at least claim (though on no sufficient grounds) what our Church distinctly *disclaims*, — to *be* that supreme central Authority.

Before I conclude, I wish to call your attention to the efforts recently made in behalf of the truly venerable “Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts,” the Jubilee of which, at the close of its hundred and fiftieth year, was honoured with the presence and advocacy of an exalted Personage, distinguished not more by his high station than by his energetic and well-directed zeal in the cause of every institution and every undertaking calculated to benefit his adopted Country, and the whole human Race.

*Claims of  
the Gospel-  
propagation-  
Society.*

This Society, to which we owe the very existence of a Sister-Church in America, and the extension of our religious system to almost every part of the World in which our language is spoken, I could not more effectually advocate, even if my limits would permit, than by referring you to the little Tracts circulated by it, containing the speeches delivered before the diocesan Branch of it, in Dublin, by the present Bishop of Norwich. And these I earnestly recommend to your attention.

I also recommend, that, according to the suggestion of the Parent-Society, you should urge its claims on the attention of your People, by sermons, or otherwise, as may be judged most suitable for each locality.

## APPENDIX.

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(A), page 3.

AMONG the things excluded from the Christian system, we are fully authorized to include all subjection of the Christian World, permanently, and from generation to generation, to some one Spiritual-Ruler (whether an individual man or a Church) the delegate, representative and vicegerent of Christ; whose authority should be binding on the conscience of all, and decisive on every point of faith. Jesus Himself, who told his Disciples that it was "expedient for them that He should go away, that He might send them another Comforter, who should abide with them for ever," could not possibly have failed, had such been his design, to refer them to the man, or Body of men, who should, in perpetual succession, be the depositary of this divine consolation and supremacy. And it is wholly incredible that He Himself should be perpetually spoken of and alluded to as the Head of His Church, without any reference to any Supreme Head on Earth, as fully representing Him, and bearing universal rule in his name,—whether Peter or any other Apostle, or any successor of one of these,—this, I say, is utterly incredible, supposing the Apostles or their Master had really designed that there should be for the universal Church any institution answering to the oracle of God under the Old Dispensation, at the Tabernacle or the Temple.

The Apostle Paul, in speaking of miracles as "the signs of an Apostle," evidently implies that no one NOT possessing such miraculous gifts as his, much less without possessing any at all,—could be entitled to be regarded as even on a level with the Apostles; yet he does not, by virtue of that his high office, claim for himself, or allow to Peter or any other, supreme rule over all the Churches. And while he claims and exercises the right to decide authoritatively on points of faith and of practice on which he had received express revelations, he does not leave his converts any injunction to apply hereafter, when he shall be removed from them, to the Bishop or Rulers of any other Church, for such decisions; or to any kind of permanent living Oracle to dictate to all Christians in all Ages. Nor does he even ever hint at any subjection of one Church to another, singly, or to any number of

others collectively;—to that of Jerusalem, for instance, or of Rome; or to any kind of general Council.

It appears plainly from the sacred narrative, that though the many Churches which the Apostles founded were branches of one *Spiritual* Brotherhood, of which the Lord Jesus Christ is the Heavenly Head,—though there was “one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism,” for all of them, yet they were each a distinct, independent community *on Earth*, united by the common principles on which they were founded, and by their mutual agreement, affection, and respect; but not having any one recognised Head on Earth, or acknowledging any sovereignty of one of these Societies over others.—*Essay II. on Kingdom of Christ*, § 15.

While questions are eagerly discussed as to the degree of deference due to the “decisions of the universal Church,” some preliminary questions are often overlooked: such as,—when, and where did any one visible Community, comprising all Christians as its members, exist? Does it exist still? Is its authority the same as formerly? or when, and how, was its authority suppressed, or curtailed? And, again, who are its rulers and other officers, rightfully claiming to represent Him who is the acknowledged Head of the Universal (or Catholic) Church, Jesus Christ, and to act as his *Vicegerents* on Earth? For it is plain that no society that has a *supreme Governor*, can perform any act, *as a Society*, and in its corporate capacity, *without* that supreme Governor, either in person, or represented by some one clearly deputed by him, and invested with his authority. And a Bishop, Presbyter, or other officer, of any particular Church, although he is a *member* of the Universal Christian-Church, and also a *christian Ecclesiastical Ruler*, is not a Ruler of the Universal Church; his jurisdiction not extending beyond his particular Diocese, Province, or Church: any more than a *European King* is King of Europe. Who then are to be recognised as Rulers of (not merely *in*) the Universal Church? Where (on Earth) is its central supreme government, such as every single Community must have? Who is the accredited organ empowered to pronounce its decrees, in the name of the whole Community? And where are these decrees registered?

Yet many persons are accustomed to talk familiarly of the decisions of the Catholic Church, as if there were some accessible record of them, such as we have of the Acts of any Legislative Body; and “as if there existed some recognised functionaries, regularly authorized to govern and to represent that community,

the Church of Christ; and answering to the king—senate—or other constituted authorities, in any secular community. And yet no shadow of proof can be offered that the Church, in the above sense,—the Universal Church,—can possibly give any decision at all;—that it has any constituted Authorities as the organs by which such decision could be framed or promulgated;—or, in short, that there is, or ever was, any *one community on earth*, recognised, or having any claim to be recognised, as the Universal Church, bearing rule over and comprehending all particular Churches.”—*Essay II. on Kingdom of Christ*, § 22.

(B), No. 1, page 11.

*From the Irish Prelates to his Grace the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.*

WE, the undersigned Archbishops and Bishops of the United Church of England and Ireland, have seen in the public prints a document entitled “An humble Address of the Archbishops and Bishops of *the Church of England*,” and commencing with the following words:—“May it please your Majesty, we the Archbishops and undersigned Bishops of *the Church of England*, approach your Majesty,” &c. It is with much regret, and not without apprehension, that we have observed the title by which your Grace and the Archbishop of York, together with the suffragan bishops of the two provinces under your jurisdiction, have designated yourselves in addressing our Sovereign—a title which, we beg permission to say, is unknown to the law of the land, and which imports a virtual denial of the fifth article of Union between England and Ireland. Your Grace is aware that, by the statute 39 and 40 George III., c. 67, it is enacted, “that the Churches of England and Ireland, as now by law established, be united into one Protestant Episcopal Church, to be called *the United Church of England and Ireland*.” The title-page of our Book of Common Prayer, and the form of ordaining priests, bear their solemn testimony to the incorporation of the two Churches into one, and to the designation by which that one Church is to be known.

We have painfully felt that of late years, as well in legislating on ecclesiastical affairs, as on many public occasions, a disposition has been manifested to regard the Irish provinces of the United Church as if they did not form an integral portion of the one Church of the nation. We are conscious that the Irish branch

of the Church is peculiarly exposed to the attacks of its enemies; and we are on that account the more apprehensive of any step being taken which has a tendency, even in appearance, to dissociate our provinces and bishoprics from that great community with which it is our happiness, and, we hope, our safety, to be identified. We, therefore, not unnaturally, fear the effect which may be produced by a movement on the part of our English brethren against a common adversary, in which they have not only acted without any concert or communication with us, but have styled themselves by a name which would seem to intimate that they are prelates of a separate Church from ours, and wish to appear so before her Majesty.

We beg to assure your Grace that in submitting this statement to your consideration, we are not actuated by any wounded feeling of disappointment or dissatisfaction. But we deem that we owe it to the Church in which we bear office, to guard, as far as in our power, against a separation being made between the component parts of the National Church, which were most solemnly and authoritatively united together into one. We confidently hope that the form of designation employed in your address was adopted inadvertently, and not from a design to disclaim a connexion with the provinces of Armagh and Dublin. And we trust we may reckon on having the aid, the sympathy, and the prayers of the Archbishops and Bishops of the provinces of Canterbury and York, in whatever difficulties and dangers may yet await our portion of the Church.

We would respectfully request your Grace to communicate this expression of our sentiments to the several prelates who signed the address to her Majesty.

JOHN G. ARMAGH.

RD. DUBLIN.

THOMAS S. MEATH.

J. KILMORE, ELPHIN, and ARDAGH.

R. DERRY and RAPHOE.

LUDLOW KILLALOE and CLONFERT.

THOMAS TUAM, &c.

J. T. OSSORY and FERNS.

ROBERT CASHEL, &c.

JAMES CORK and CLOYNE.

ROBERT DOWN and CONNOR.

WM. LIMERICK, ARDFERT, and AGHADOE.

*Answer.*

Addington, Croydon, December 31, 1850.

MY LORD ARCHBISHOP,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of a letter signed by your Grace, by the Archbishop of Dublin, and all the Irish Bishops, referring to the recent address of the English bench to her Majesty, in which they were styled “the Archbishops and Bishops of the Church of England.”

I am anxious to assure your Grace, and my other right reverend brethren in Ireland, that this designation did not originate in any desire to represent ourselves as a separate body, but was employed solely because, in the present instance, “the movement of the common adversary” was immediately directed against ourselves.

It did not appear to any of the Bishops, whom I had the opportunity of consulting, that we could properly invite the Irish Bishops to complain of an aggression which only affected the Church in England. At the same time, I am ready, for my own part, to acknowledge that the document would have been more correctly worded, if it had been written in the name of the English Archbishops and Bishops of the United Church of England and Ireland. It would have been better to have indicted an inharmonious sentence, than to have given ground for the apprehensions expressed in your Grace’s letter.

I will take an early opportunity of communicating the letter to my episcopal brethren, who, at present, are dispersed in their various dioceses. But I can venture to say, in their behalf, that we all consider the Irish branch of the United Church to be so closely identified with our own, that if one member suffers, the other cannot fail to suffer with it; and that in all cases where co-operation is desirable or practicable, we shall be ready to act with your Grace, and the other Irish Prelates, as an united body.

I remain, my Lord Archbishop,

Your Grace’s faithful servant,

J. B. CANTUAR.

His Grace the Archbishop of Armagh.

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*From the Archbishops and Bishops of Ireland to the Queen.*

WE, the Archbishops and Bishops of the Irish provinces and bishoprics of the United Church of England and Ireland,

approach your Majesty at this time with the humble tender of our duty, and the expression of our heartfelt participation in those sentiments of devoted loyalty to the Crown, and of unshaken attachment to the principles of the Reformation, which the recent proceedings of the Bishop of Rome have drawn forth so generally from your Majesty's subjects in England.

The same laws of the realm which have made one United *Kingdom* of Great Britain and Ireland, have no less established one United *Church* of England and Ireland: and the Irish branch of that United Church, as it has always been faithful in the maintenance of the union of the kingdom, so has it ever been, and now is, no less earnest than the English branch, in denying the pretensions of any "foreign prince, person, prelate, state, or potentate," to any rightful "jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence, or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm."

The recent exercise of such a pretended right by the Bishop of Rome, in constituting a territorial hierarchy in England, subject to his supreme jurisdiction, is, happily, in that form, as yet a novelty in Great Britain; but, unhappily, it is not the first exercise of such pretensions within the bounds of the United Kingdom. For in Ireland, where the prerogative of the Crown is by law one and the same as in England, the Bishops of Rome have long ago pursued a course not dissimilar to that now attempted in England.

At the period of the Reformation, nearly all the Irish bishops renounced the papal authority; and of these the Prelates of the Established Church are indisputably the regular successors. It was not until after the lapse of several years that a new and rival episcopate was gradually introduced by the Popes, which has become politically formidable to the stability of the United Church in this country, besides obstructing its efforts to make known the Word of God, and promote peace, unity, and concord among your Majesty's subjects.

We have thought it necessary to advert to these well-known facts relating to Ireland, because they seem to have been almost, if not altogether, lost sight of in the indignation which has been excited by the recent attempt of the Pope to exert the like power in England. Uneasy apprehensions have been awakened within us by observing that in the addresses, and resolutions, and

speeches, which that bold procedure has called forth in England, all the concern manifested has been for the distinct and special defence of what has been called—by a title unknown to the law —“The Church of England.”

We are convinced, indeed, that the silence which has been maintained in reference to the case of the Irish branch of the Church, is in most instances to be regarded as merely the result of the peculiar solicitude which men naturally feel for the part immediately assailed, and which for the time banishes from their mind all interest in, or recollection of, every other part; and we are persuaded that it would be wrong to understand it as conveying any wish to divide the United Church, or any opinion that, being united as it is, the interests of its component parts may be so dissevered, that while both are exposed to the same hostile power, each may be content to defend itself; and still less, that the stronger may provide for its own safety by sacrificing its weaker associate.

We trust that a great majority of those who have allowed themselves for a time to forget our case, in their anxiety about their own, must be aware that any permanent disregard of it would be a grievous error in point of prudence as well as of principle. But knowing that different views with reference to the ecclesiastical establishment in the two countries are entertained by not a few in England, and that some such ill-considered compromise as we have glanced at, is actually contemplated by them, we cannot but feel alarm at whatever may tend to give effect to so short-sighted and fatal a scheme.

We are deeply impressed with the conviction, that if the excitement now existing in England were to lead to the adoption of any measure calculated to impair the integrity of the United Church, or the completeness of the union between the two portions of it, such a proceeding would involve more real injury to the whole Church and to the country than any acts of the Bishop of Rome, or any encroachment from without could possibly effect.

The Irish branch might, and probably would, be the first sufferer from such false policy; but the English branch would ultimately be no less surely its victim. And how deadly a wound its fall would inflict upon all that constitutes the happiness and greatness of that favoured country, we trust it may not be doomed to know by unhappy experience.

We confide, under God's good providence, in your Majesty's wisdom, guided and supported by both houses of Parliament, to avert all such evils, by maintaining the union which happily exists between the countries, and between the branches of the Church in both.

How the aggressive proceedings of the Bishop of Rome ought to be guarded against and counteracted, we do not presume to suggest. But we are anxious distinctly to state, that we have no desire that they should be met by any restraint affecting the just rights of conscience of any of your Majesty's subjects.

It is our humble prayer, that whatever may be the defensive measures determined on for securing the National Church against injury, the two portions of it may not be regarded or treated as having separate interests, but that one and the same legislative protection may be extended to both branches of the Church in common.

[Signed by all the Prelates.]

(B), No. 2.

*Testimonies to show that there is no unbroken line of Roman-Catholic Prelates in Ireland since the Reformation.*

IN the discussions which have lately taken place, both in and out of Parliament, upon the subject of the Papal aggression, many unfounded statements have been put forth respecting the lineal succession of the prelates of the Established Church, and of the Roman-Catholic body in Ireland; and it has been attempted to build an argument upon those statements for permitting the Roman-Catholic bishops to assume territorial titles here as a matter of right, upon the supposition of an unbroken succession of bishops of their church.

Therefore it may not be out of place to say a word or two upon that question:—First, in order to show that the prelates of our Church are not intruders (as asserted), but are the legitimate successors of the Irish bishops anterior to the Reformation; and, secondly, to prove, *from writers of their own communion*, that the present Roman-Catholic bishops merely represent persons who were illegally intruded by the Pope into sees already filled. Indeed, many years had elapsed before such an attempt was made in several of the dioceses; in others, the Pope placed, not bishops

but *vicars apostolic*; so that the supposed fact of a full and uninterrupted succession of *bishops in ordinary* falls to the ground, and carries with it that conclusion which it was intended to raise and substantiate.

First. At the time when the Irish Act of Uniformity was passed (January, 1559-60), there were twenty-nine archbishops and bishops in Ireland. [The Primate Dowdall had died three months before Queen Elizabeth's accession.]

It is notorious, that *only two* out of that number were deprived for refusing to take the oath of the Queen's supremacy, as set forth in that act; namely, Walsh, bishop of Meath, and Leverous, bishop of Kildare. *All the others retained their bishoprics*; therefore we may presume that they did not scruple to satisfy the Queen in the matter of the oath. Thus, for instance, Hugh Curwin retained the archbishopric of Dublin, and consecrated Archbishop Loftus, Lancaster, and others; and even Hugh Lacy, bishop of Limerick, whom Queen Mary had appointed in place of William Casey, whom she had deprived in 1557, was allowed to retain his see for eleven years; although Casey, whom he had supplanted, was living, and in fact was afterwards replaced in his old see, when Lacy resigned it, in 1571.

More might be added; but perhaps these two examples may be sufficient upon this head.

Secondly. Let us hear what *Roman-Catholic authors* have admitted respecting the broken condition of their hierarchy after the Reformation, and the methods adopted from time to time by the Popes for replacing it from foreign sources.

I. D'Alton, in his *Memoirs of the Archbishops of Dublin*, (8vo, 1838,) writes thus:—

“A.D. 1599.—After Hugh Curwin had abandoned the Roman-Catholic faith, the assertion of Queen Elizabeth's supremacy, and the imprisonments, &c., *prevented the appointment of a prelate for upwards of forty years*. At length, Philip II. of Spain sent over a troop of Spaniards to assist James Fitzmaurice in his rebellion, and with them he sent Matthew de Oviedo, a Spanish friar; but the enterprise failed, and the friar returned home. But in 1600 he was again invited over, and was appointed Archbishop of Dublin by the Pope.” D'Alton justly styles him ‘an emissary and agent of Philip II.’ In 1601 he was driven out of the country, and died in obscurity in Spain.

“In 1611, after a *lapse of ten years*, Eugene Matthews was ap

pointed by the Pope. He fled from Ireland about 1617, and died in the Netherlands in 1623.

“In 1623, Thomas Fleming was sent over by the Pope. He died about 1653.

“1660. At the close of the year 1660 *there were but three prelates* of the Roman-Catholic faith in Ireland, those of Armagh, Meath, and Kilmore; while this see (Dublin) was under the jurisdiction and control of James Dempsey, *Vicar Apostolic* and Capitulary of Kildare.”

Mr. D’Alton is a very laborious and inquiring writer, and his statements of these matters need not be disputed. But he does not stand alone; he is abundantly supported by other historians of the same creed, who lived much nearer to the events in question, and who would not be likely either to omit or understate any circumstance seemingly favourable to the credit or power of their Church.

II. Thus, Philip O’Sullivan, in his *Historiæ Catholicæ Compendium*, (4to, Ulyssipone, 1621,) admits, that in 1579, Patrick O’Hely was consecrated Bishop of Mayo, by Pope Gregory XIII., and sent over to Ireland, *to oppose the English heresy*. He states that in his time (about 1620), very few Irish bishops were appointed, because they could not live in honour and dignity without ecclesiastical revenues; wherefore the four archbishops, appointed by the Pope, nominated *vicars-general*, by papal authority, to their suffragan sees. Eugene Mac Mahon, Archbishop of Dublin, and David O’Kearney, Archbishop of Cashel, remained in Ireland; but Peter Lombard, of Armagh, and Florence O’Melconry, of Tuam, delegated their provinces to vicars.—(p. 229.)

III. Peter Lombard, in his work, *De Regno Hiberniæ*, (4to, 1624,) gives this, among other urgent reasons, why the Pope, and the King of Spain, and other Roman-Catholic princes, ought to assist Ireland in her rebellious attempts; viz., that *most*, indeed *all*, the metropolises and dioceses were deprived of the consolation of their pastors.—(p. 464.)

He speaks of the dioceses of Ireland, as *passim vacantes*.—(p. 490.)

He owns that, in 1600, Dermot, Bishop of Cork, was the *only* Roman-Catholic bishop of the province of Muster, *then alive*.—(p. 431.)

IV. Father Peter Walsh, a Franciscan friar, (called by C. O’Conor “the most learned man of that learned order,”) in his

extremely valuable work, *The History of the Loyal Irish Remonstrance*, (fol. 1673,) gives a vast deal of curious and important information about the broken state of the hierarchy, from about 1640 to 1672; and furnishes evidence that several of the dioceses were under the government of *vicars apostolic*. At p. 4 he states that the titular Archbishop of Armagh, the Bishop of Meath, and the old bed-ridden Bishop of Kilmore, (Owen M'Swiney, of whom see some account in *Burnett's Life of Bishop Bedell*,) were the *only three bishops in Ireland*. James Dempsey was *Vicar Apostolic* of Dublin, and Capitulary of Kildare. Limerick was under custodiam. The other bishops were in foreign parts.

Page 573, &c. The sees of Clonfert, Elphin, Killaloe, and Kilmacduagh, (all of the province of Tuam,) were *vacant*, and under vicars-general. Only three bishops were then alive in Ireland, viz., of Kilmore, Ardagh, and Tuam.

All the dioceses of Dublin province, except Ferns, were vacant in November, 1665.

All the sees of Cashel province were *vacant, their bishops being dead*; except Kilfenora, the bishop of which was in France. And the only bishops then surviving, and residing in foreign parts, were Edmond O'Reilly, Archbishop of Armagh; Nicholas French, Bishop of Ferns; and Andrew Lynch, Bishop of Kilfenora; three at home, and three abroad.

In 1666, Dublin, Cashel, and Killaloe, were under *vicars apostolic*.

Between 1669 and 1672, thirteen or fourteen new bishops, including four archbishops, were created *at Rome, by the Pope*.

V. Francis Porter, in his *Compendium Annalium Ecclesiast. Regni Hiberniæ*, (4to, Romæ, 1690,) mentions, that the Nuncio at Paris was very anxious that the succession should be kept up; and therefore he procured the appointment of P. Talbot to Dublin; Oliver Plunket to Armagh; John Bourgath to Cashel; and James Lynch to Tuam; with others.

He informs us (p. 343), that the whole province of Ulster, except one or two dioceses, was *without bishops for nine-and-twenty years*; and states that, in his own time, several sees were vacant, and that there were *certain people* who used all their efforts to keep them so.

VI. Anthony Bruodin, another friar, in his book, called "*Propugnaculum Catholiciæ Veritatis*," (4to, Pragæ, 1669,) a most

abusive and mendacious work, speaks of Matthew Roehé as having been, in 1644, for thirty-five years *Vicar Apostolic of Leightlin*.

VII. Thomas De Burgo, in his *Hibernia Dominicana*, (4to, Kilkenny, 1763-73,) tells us—

Page 869, that “Bishop Thonory, of Ossory, died in 1565, and the bishopric was not filled up till 1582, when the Pope appointed Thomas Strong. He resided in Spain, and died there in 1601. His place was not filled up till 1618, when David Roth was appointed.”

Page 817.—“Eugene Matthews was made Archbishop of Dublin, on May 2nd, 1611. Before him was Matthew de Oviedo, who had been appointed on May 5th, 1600. Before him the see of Dublin was without a pastor for thirty-three years.”

Thus we see that Bourke admits Hugh Curwin (who resigned in 1567) to have been its lawful bishop, although he had conformed to the Reformed faith.

“In 1646, Ross, and also Tuam, were under *Vicars Apostolic*.

“1667, Nicholas French presented a petition to the Pope, which contained the names of the Roman-Catholic bishops who had died since 1649. The list comprises—

*Nine* bishops, who had died in Ireland.

*Three*, who had been executed.

*Ten*, who had died in exile in foreign parts; and

*Four*, who were then alive.”

VIII. In the *Catholic Directory*, annually published in Dublin, we have, in the volume for the year 1837, lists of the successive bishops of each diocese of Ireland. How far the compilers were able to make out a full and unbroken succession, the following specimens may show:—

“WATERFORD AND LISMORE.

Nicholas Cummin resigned in 1551.

Patrick Comerford was Bishop in 1646, &c.

CLONFERT.

Roland de Burgo was elected in 1534.

Thaddeus O’Ferral was Bishop in 1602, &c.

ACHONRY.

Cormac was Bishop in 1523.

Eugene (at the Council of Trent) died 1623.

Dr. Durean was *Vicar Apostolic*.

Dominic O’Daly was consecrated in 1726, &c.

## KILFENORA.

John O'Hinalan, 1552.

Andrew Lynch was Bishop in 1649, &c.

## KILMACDUAGH.

Christopher Bodkin translated to Tuam, 1536.

Hugh Burke 1609, &c.

## CORK AND CLOYNE.

John Hovedon, appointed 1542.

Edmond Tanner, Bishop in 1580.

William Therry, Bishop in 1620.

## ARDFERT.

James Fitzmaurice, Bishop in 1556.

Richard Connell, in 1648.

## DUBLIN.

No Archbishop from 1559 till 5th May, 1600.

Matthew de Oviedo, 1600, &c., &c."

There is little doubt that those wide gaps would gladly have been filled up, if satisfactory materials for doing so were at hand. And when to all the foregoing evidence we add the recent admission of Archbishop MacHale, in his sermon preached before the Synod of Thurles, that there was a "disastrous time when *only two bishops could be found in the land;*" it is hoped, from a spirit of fairness, that the loose assertions ignorantly hazarded respecting the hierarchy of the Church of Ireland may henceforth be discontinued; and that we may hear no more of an uninterrupted line and perpetual succession of *Roman-Catholic* bishops from the time of St. Patrick to this day, when the contrary is undeniably and notoriously the truth.

HENRY COTTON.

(C), page 19.

I HAVE thought it advisable to reprint in this place an extract from a work published some time ago:—

The Bill I have been alluding to is apparently regarded by many as a Bill to admit Jews into Parliament; because, incidentally, such is likely to be, in one or two instances, the result; and the question, accordingly, which presents itself to the mind of many persons is, whether a Jew is or is not the fittest person, —or a fit person,—to have a seat in the Legislature. But in

reality the question is, not this, but a very different one; namely, whether the ELECTORS shall be left to their own unrestricted choice, or whether it is right and necessary to tie them up by legislative enactments. Now if each man were to hold himself bound in conscience to endeavour to compel all others to act, in every case, in the way in which *he* would himself think it right to act, and to restrain them by law from the exercise of any of their rights in a way which to *him* might seem objectionable, the result would evidently be a most intolerable tyranny exercised by the majority over the minority. There would be an end of all liberty, if men were to be deprived of all rights and all power which they may possibly make an ill use of, or such a use as their rulers might think not to be the best. That *paternal* government, as it is called, which in ruder ages well-meaning men have often attempted to introduce,—a government which prescribes to the subjects, as a parent to his children, their diet, their dress, their expenditure, their studies, and their whole mode of life,—such a government is evidently quite incompatible with rational liberty, and unsuited to the character of man considered as a rational agent. In a free country, though restrictions must indeed be imposed when the public welfare requires it, they should be strictly reserved for such cases. The *general* rule must be, that each man should be left to act according to his own discretion; and the exceptions to this rule should rest on the ground of some manifest and important public advantage sufficient to counterbalance the evil of a restriction.

Accordingly those who in any case oppose the limitation of their neighbour's rights, are not to be therefore considered as necessarily approving of the mode in which he may think fit to exercise those rights. Any one, for example, who may have voted for the removal of civil disabilities from Roman-Catholics and Dissenters, might, with perfect consistency, give the preference, as an elector, to a candidate who was a member of our Church. And in like manner a man would be guilty of no inconsistency who should, as a legislator, vote for the alteration of the law as it now stands, even though he should himself, as an elector, prefer to vote for one whom he believed to be a sincere Christian. For the question is, as I have said, not whether one not professing Christianity is well qualified for a seat in Parliament, but whether the electors should be left to decide for themselves in

each case, or should have the decision made for them:—whether, in short, there is or is not any such danger to the State, or to any of our institutions, in leaving them their choice, as to warrant our interference with the freedom of election.

And here it may be needful to observe by the way, that I do not attach much weight to the argument of those who urge that, as it is, we have no security against *insincere* professions of Christianity, and that probably several members of Parliament are in reality not more Christians than those who decline making the declaration now required. The argument was, I think, sufficiently answered in the late debate, by those who replied that the Legislature has at least not *sanctioned* the admission of such persons; that, having required a *profession* of Christianity, it has done all that it *can* do; and that we are not responsible for any unavoidable evasion of our regulations. This reply appears to me conclusive. And indeed (to take the case of bribery by way of illustration) all persons, I apprehend, would admit that it would ill become the House of Commons to allow a man to retain his seat who was *convicted* of bribery; although we must always expect that there will be cases of persons obtaining a seat by such means, and escaping detection. In like manner, if it be our duty to exclude, as far as in us lies, all persons from Parliament, or from any other situation, who do not assent to such and such doctrines, we are bound to exact a *profession*, which is all we can exact; and if any evasion of our enactments take place, we may plead that, at least, they have not our sanction.

But then it is to be remembered, on the other hand, that the Legislature does sanction the election of Roman-Catholics, and of Dissenters of all descriptions, to sit in Parliament. The words, “on the true faith of a Christian,” are not followed by “of the Church of England;” and if, therefore, it be contended that the omission of the former words must imply *indifference to Christianity*, it must be admitted that the omission of any further profession implies indifference as to *all Churches and sects* of professing Christians; including Romanists and Protestants, Mormonites and German Transcendentalists, &c., so long as a man does but style himself a Christian. It must imply what no sincere Christian of *any* denomination would admit, that all differences among those who bear the christian name are utterly insignificant.

It is quite irrelevant to urge, as some do, that the difference is *greater* between a Jew or Mussulman and a professed Christian, than between Christians of different denominations. The question is not one of *degrees*. Either the removal of a religious test implies indifference, or it does not. If it does not,—which is the principle on which all those who supported the Bill (professedly at least) proceeded,—then there is an end of the argument against that Bill. If it does, then it follows inevitably that the removal of every other religious test implies indifference as to all forms of nominal Christianity.

Evidently, therefore, unless we are prepared to acknowledge this indifference, we are at present in a false position. We are bound, in all consistency, either to go one step farther, or else to retrace our former steps.

As for those who do seriously recommend this latter course,—who are for recalling Test-Aets, and Roman-Catholic disabilities, and penal laws,—although their idea of the character of Christ's religion is one which appears to me an utterly erroneous one, they are at least not chargeable with that gross inconsistency I have just been alluding to. Their principle, which I cannot but think altogether wrong, is at least fairly followed out.

Some persons of this class are accustomed to resort to bitter vituperation of such as differ from them in opinion; denouncing them as infidels, irreligious, &c. Such "railing accusations" of course add no strength, and bring no credit, to any cause. They are to be deprecated and dreaded only on account of the scandal they occasion to the name of Christianity. But some again there are who sincerely lament this resort to fierce and violent invective in place of argument, but who hold themselves bound, in religious duty, to advocate such a system as I have been deprecating. To such persons I would suggest this consideration. There once was a man so circumstanced as to have it completely in his power to oblige all governments,—and this without need of resorting to actual violence,—to exclude from civil rights all who would not profess Christianity; nay, to oblige all men to make this profession: yet who deliberately chose to leave Christianity to be propagated among those who would *voluntarily* embrace it through the agency of persuasive means alone; though he foresaw that these means would not be universally effectual. Now was this person, or was he not, a traitor to the cause of true

religion? The greater part of the Jewish nation decided that he was; and they put him to death accordingly, for disappointing the expectations they had formed of his being about to establish a kingdom of this world.

Surely those are in reality treading in the steps of the unbelieving Jews, however vehemently they may declaim against them, who insist on fortifying the religion of Jesus with secular penalties or civil disabilities, and on establishing a legal monopoly of secular rights and privileges in behalf of Christians generally as such, or of the members of some particular Church.

No one of common sense, who reads the New Testament history with any degree of attention and of candour, can doubt that the Apostles were accused before the Romans, and were suspected by them, of designs to set up "another king, one Jesus," whose empire would interfere with the existing political institutions; in short, of an intention, as soon as their disciples should have obtained sufficient numerical strength, to compel all men, on pain of exclusion from political rights, to embrace the Gospel. Nor can any one, I conceive, have the least doubt that to these charges they pleaded "not guilty;"—that they strenuously disavowed all designs of either using secular coercion, or of monopolizing for Christians, as such, civil power and privileges, either immediately or at any future period. They must have been so *understood*; they must have *known* that they were so understood, and they must have *intended* to convey that meaning. Now, were they, in these professions and disavowals, sincere, or insincere? If they were insincere,—if they expressed themselves, to serve a present purpose, in a language which was intended to be understood in one sense by their heathen accusers at the time, and in a totally different sense by their followers in after-ages,—they cannot have been real messengers of the God of Truth. If they were sincere, and if we believe in them as God's messengers, we are bound to conform to their precepts and their example, even though by so doing we should incur the reproach of infidelity from those who "know not what manner of spirit they are of."

The question now before us, therefore, involves the whole question of the truth or falsity of the Christian religion.

These considerations are overlooked by many well-meaning persons, who allow their minds to be occupied with other ques-

tions, in reality quite distinct (as I observed above) from that really at issue. And much ingenuity and eloquence have been expended in the discussion of various points,—such as the present state of the Jewish creed and worship, &c., which are quite irrelevant to the real question to be decided. But anything that can be called an answer to the above argument has never, as far as I know, been even attempted.

As for the particular measure alluded to, no one, I believe, feels, now, any anxiety respecting that. That a Bill substantially the same with that which lately passed the House of Commons, will, before long, pass both Houses, no one of any parliamentary experience, whom I have met with, seems to feel any doubt. But my anxiety is, that the final decision of the Legislature should not appear to be a triumph *over* Christianity, but a triumph *of* Christianity, a result of the better understanding of the genuine principles of the gospel;—that it should be recognised not as an anti-Christian revolt, but as a more complete submission to the kingdom which is “not of this world.” And I have thought it right to digress somewhat from the more immediate subject of this note, in order to elucidate as clearly as possible the principles by which I have been guided in the present question. Those principles have indeed no pretensions to novelty, being, I trust, as ancient as the gospel itself, and having been applied by me to the present case about fourteen years ago, and in several publications subsequent to that time; during which interval, nothing (as far as I know) even pretending to be a refutation, has been put forward. But the grounds on which my decision has been formed being quite different from those taken by a large proportion of the advocates on *both* sides, I am anxious to avoid, as far as lies in me, any misapprehension of the principles I feel bound to maintain.

(D), page 22.

I SUBJOIN some extracts from a publication—*The Charge of 1844*—which is now, I believe, nearly out of print:—

“If we could suppose it possible for the Church, or for *any* Community of whatever kind, to subsist in a safe and prosperous condition without a Government, then, the manifest disadvantages of one kind or another which must attend every possible or con-

ceivable form of government administered by fallible mortals, would justify us in declining to try an unnecessary and hazardous experiment.

But I have spoken of "government," generally, and of "a Community," generally, because I wish to call attention to a consideration which seems to me decisive of the whole question. Let any one consider whether he has ever heard any reasons (I certainly never have) against a Church-government, which would not equally apply to civil-government also;—whether the objections urged—many of which I confess to be valid and strong objections—against a Church-synod, would not equally lie against a Parliament. No one surely will deny that party-spirit, sometimes violent and factious, does exist among political legislators;—that many of them, and also of the Electors, are subject to bias from private interests, ambition, and other feelings;—that the ill-informed or the prejudiced will sometimes obtain a mischievous influence; and that occasional injudicious legislation is the result.

For the prevention or mitigation of such evils, various schemes—many of them unwise or visionary, have from time to time been suggested. But a man would be reckoned, not injudicious or visionary, but absolutely insane, who should seriously propose to avoid such evils by a total discontinuance of Parliaments;—by dispensing with all legislative-government for ever; or again by merely *suspending* the functions of government, and *deferring* the summoning of Parliament till party-spirit should have become extinct, and till all men should have become duly qualified by perfect purity of mind and dispassionate sobriety of judgment for exercising aright the duties of Electors and of Legislators.<sup>1</sup>

No one, I say, would be considered (if believed to be speaking seriously) as of sound mind, who should, in political concerns, rest on such arguments as are, in ecclesiastical, satisfactory to many minds. In the State, that anarchy would be regarded,

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<sup>1</sup> Such an experiment, though, as I have said, it is what no one would, in the nineteenth century, seriously propose trying, is not unlike what actually was tried in the reign of Charles I. Doubtless a dread of what would be considered by him a factious and insubordinate spirit in a House of Commons, and of demands such as he would deem unreasonable, was among the reasons which induced that unhappy prince to endeavour to govern without a Parliament, or at least to defer as long as possible the summoning of one. And we all know what were the consequences.

even in prospect, with horror, which, in the Church, when actually existing, many are willing to submit to, rather than attempt the remedy.

In truth, in almost all human transactions, we can seldom hope for anything better than a choice of difficulties and disadvantages. And no one would be fit to live in the world a single day, who would accept no benefit, and take no step, unless under a perfect certainty of unalloyed good, without the drawback of any risk, or of any call for vigilant care, and exertion. No rational decision therefore can be formed from a mere contemplation of the difficulties and objections on one side, without taking into account the alternative. For in that way a case may be made out against every institution or course of conduct or measure, that can even be conceived. \* \* \* \*

I do not mean, nor did I ever mean, to be understood as deprecating all consideration of objections, and wishing them to be passed by unnoticed. I only deprecate the practice—not an uncommon one—of requiring that all objections shall be removed before any step is determined on: which amounts virtually (since, as Bacon observes, “not to resolve, is to resolve”) to a determination to take no step. So far, however, am I from recommending that objections should be left unnoticed, that what I have always urged has been to contemplate and *compare together* the objections on *both* sides of an alternative, and to decide accordingly.

If, therefore, any one is convinced, on such a comparison, that the evils to be apprehended from any form of Church-government that can reasonably be hoped for are really *greater* than either the existing evils or that increase of them which there is reason to apprehend, such a one is at least consistent in deprecating the efforts which many are now making towards the attainment of a Government. And though the number of these last is very considerable, and (as I remarked at the outset) has been for some time past very much on the increase, still, I do believe that, as yet, the predominant feeling among the greater number of the members of our Church, including many of the most influential, is one of strong apprehension of the danger of unwise decisions being adopted by any Church-government that might be established, and of a consequent aggravation of the existing evils.

Now at the first glance, it may be deemed paradoxical to infer from the very existence of these apprehensions, that there is no

ground for alarm;—to argue that we have the less to fear because much fear is felt by a great number, and by those whose opinions deservedly carry most weight; and that the greater in their estimation the danger is, the less it is in reality. But on a moment's reflection any one will perceive that in the present case such an inference is perfectly just.

In the case indeed of any kind of evil which no human efforts can avert,—such as an unfavourable season, an earthquake, or an inundation—the anticipations of *such* a calamity, by persons who are competent judges, afford just ground of alarm: and the greater the number of these persons, and the stronger their apprehensions, the greater we should conclude the danger to be. But it is quite the reverse in a case where the very persons who *apprehend* the danger are those with whom it rests to *avert* it, by the vigilance and exertion which are called forth by those very apprehensions.

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With those who maintain that the present is *not the best* time,—on account of the violence of contending parties—for the restoration of a Church-government, I so far agree, that I am convinced it would have been *much better* to have taken the step eleven years ago; before the excitement caused by one of those parties had arisen; and yet better, some years earlier still, when the removal of religious disabilities first left the Church destitute of any Legislature consisting exclusively of its own members: and that, again, a still earlier period would have been preferable, when considerable attention was for a time attracted to a work on the subject by a person, then, and now, holding the office of Archdeacon.

But it is far from being sufficient,—as seems to be the notion of some persons—to show that the present is not the *fittest conceivable* occasion for taking a certain step. Besides this, it is requisite to show,—not merely that a better occasion may be *imagined*,—or that a better occasion is *past*;—that the Sybilline Books might have been purchased cheaper *some time ago*;—but that a more suitable occasion is likely to arise *hereafter*: and *how soon*; and also, that the mischief which may be *going on during the interval* will be more than compensated by the superior suitability of that future occasion; in short that it will have been worth waiting for. And in addition to all this, it is requisite to show also the probability that when this golden opportunity shall arise, men will be more *disposed to take advantage* of it than they

have heretofore appeared to be;—that they will not again fall into apathetic security and fondness for indefinite procrastination.

This last point is as needful to be established as any: for it is remarkable that those who deprecate taking any step *just now*, in these times of extraordinary excitement, did not, on those former occasions, come forward to propose taking advantage of a comparatively calmer state of things. They neither made any call, nor responded to the call made by others.

And indeed all experience seems to show—comparing the apathy on the subject which was so general at those periods, with the altered state of feeling now existing,—that a great and pressing emergency, and *nothing else*, will induce men to take any step in this matter; and that a period of dissension and perplexing difficulty, is, though not *in itself*, the most suitable occasion for such a step, yet—constituted as human nature is,—the best, because the *only* occasion on which one can hope that it will be taken.

When the valley of Martigny in Switzerland was threatened (about twenty-five years ago) with a frightful deluge from the bursting of a lake formed by a glacier which had dammed up a river, the inhabitants were for some time not sufficiently alarmed to take steps for averting the danger, by cutting channels to let off the water. They cannot therefore be said to have chosen *the best time* for commencing their operations; for had they begun earlier,—as soon as ever the dam was formed—the work would have been much easier, and probably all damage would have been prevented. As it was, they had to encounter much difficulty, and after all were but partially successful: for the undrained portion of the lake did at length burst the barrier, and considerable damage ensued; perhaps a fourth part of what *would* have taken place had things been left to themselves. But they were wise in not deferring their operations yet longer, in the hope that matters would mend spontaneously, when they saw that the evil was daily increasing. And after having mitigated in a great degree the calamity that did ensue, they took measures to provide against the like in future.

Still, however, we must expect to be told by many that, sooner or later, matters will come right spontaneously if left untouched;—that, *in time*, though we cannot tell how soon, a period of extraordinary excitement is sure to be succeeded by one of comparative calm. In the meantime it is forgotten at *what cost* such spontaneous restoration of tranquillity is usually purchased—how

much the fire will have consumed before it shall have burnt out of itself. The case is very similar to what takes place in the natural body: the anguish of acute inflammation, when left to itself, is succeeded by the calm of a mortification: a limb is amputated, or drops off; and the body—but no longer the whole body—is restored to a temporary ease, at the expense of a mutilation. Who can say that a large proportion of those who are now irrecoverably alienated from the Church, might not have been at this moment sound members of it, had timely steps been taken, not, by any departure from the principles of our Reformers, but by following more closely the track they marked out for us?

If the ultimate result of the present state of things should be—as there seems reason to apprehend—that a considerable number of persons fall away to the Church of Rome,—a far greater number to infidelity or indifference,—and again, a great number, to some dissenting sects,—we shall be told, I suppose, that the Church—that is, what remains of it—has regained tranquillity.

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I have more than once heard the questions discussed whether Convocation—the kind of Assembly so called which formerly governed the Church, and which still, legally, though not practically, exists,—was a Body originally well-adapted for its object,—whether it would be suitable in the present age,—whether we should do well to revive it,—and whether any alterations, and what should be introduced into its constitution. I have heard, I say, these questions discussed as if they were the very ones which I have brought forward;—as if, in short, I had proposed the *revival of Convocation* in its original form, and with its original powers; and as if the point to be decided were, whether this revival would or would not be desirable.

I take this occasion therefore of reminding the reader that I am not making any such proposal, nor intend to enter at once on the discussion of any such questions. The question I have raised is—that which is obviously the preliminary one, and which ought to be first decided,—whether the Church should have a *Government*, and one consisting exclusively of *its own members*. Whether this should be termed a Convocation, or a Synod, or a Convention, or a General Assembly, or designated by whatever other name, and how it should be constituted,—these are questions which evidently should be reserved for a subsequent discussion.

To argue—however conclusively—against the restoration of the ancient Convocation, and thereupon to speak as if the whole question were decided, is manifestly irrelevant, and an utter misapprehension of my argument.

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I have even seen the paucity of new enactments by Convocation urged as a proof of the inutility of a Church government.

The constitution, or the proceedings, of the Convocation, I will not undertake to vindicate. But it certainly is a great mistake to suppose that the proper business of a legislative body is to *make laws*. Its business is, to judge whether there be or be not, in each case, any *need* for a new enactment; and to make such enactments, then, and then only, when there *is* such need; and to frame them as far as possible in such a manner that there shall very seldom be a fresh necessity for alteration.

Most persons I conceive would regard Parliament not a less but a more efficient Legislature if it passed much fewer Acts than it does, and framed them with so much more care that there should not be (as now) a necessity for fresh legislation on the same points every Session;—for “An Act to amend an Act,” &c., in a most perplexing series.

The occasions for the exercise of a certain power may be very few, and yet the existence of the power not the less important; because when such an occasion does arise, (and it is the *more likely* to arise, if there be no provision to meet the emergency,) the consequences of not being prepared for it may be most disastrous. If any one should be so wearied with the monotonous “all’s well” of the nightly guardians of a Camp, hour after hour, and night after night, as to conclude that their service was superfluous, and accordingly to dismiss them, how much real danger, and how much unnecessary apprehension would be the result.

It is to be observed, however, that, in almost every department of life, the want of government, or of good government, where such want has *very long* existed, will often be less clearly perceived, and less complained of, than in proportion to the actual extent of the evil. When, indeed, the business of a State, or a Diocese, or a Parish, has been for some time efficiently conducted, and then negligence succeeds to activity and care, every one is struck with the amount of business left undone, or imperfectly done, and complaints are likely to arise. But where neglect has

*long* existed, business seems, as it were, to dispose of itself, and wear away spontaneously; like a stream whose regular channel is choked, and which accordingly diffuses itself around till it forms a stagnant marsh, without any outlet but evaporation.

If you look to any department of Government, or to any Parish or Diocese, that has long been left to the management of apathetic or inefficient persons, you will usually find that there are few or no complaints; because complaints having long since been found vain, will have long since ceased to be made: there will be no great arrears of business undone, and of applications unanswered; because business will not have been brought before those who it is known will not transact it; nor applications made, to which no answer can be hoped for: abuses, and defects, and evils of various kinds, which ought to have been prevented or remedied, men will have learned to submit to as to visitations of Providence; having been left without redress till they have at length forgotten that any redress is due, or is possible: and this stagnation will have come to be regarded as the natural state of things.

Hence, it will often happen that in a parish, for instance, where for a long time very little has been done, it will appear at first sight as if there were in fact very little to do: the spiritual wants of members of the Church not appearing to be unattended to, because many persons will have *ceased* to be members of the Church, and many others will be unconscious that they have any spiritual wants.

And in a Church accordingly that has been long without an efficient government, the want of such government will often be very inadequately perceived, from its not even occurring to men to consider whether the enormous increase of Dissent, of internal discord, and of indifference to the Church, are evils which it comes within the province of a government in any degree to prevent or mitigate."

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I have thought it advisable to print in this place a letter written by me to a clergyman, in answer to an application made to me to subscribe to a testimonial to commemorate the holding of a Synod in the Diocese of Exeter.

I had no thought originally of publishing my answer, but it

accidentally found its way into the newspapers through the misapprehension of a friend.

And as it did thus become public, it is as well that a record of it should be here inserted.

“REVEREND SIR,—I have to acknowledge a letter of application from you relative to a proposed Memorial of a Synod held in the Diocese of Exeter.

But I do not understand (nor have I met with any one who could explain to me) the character and objects of the Memorial and of the Synod.

Whether it is designed to commemorate a meeting held *once for all*, or the *commencement* of a *series* of such meetings; and, again, whether the resolutions passed at that meeting are to be understood as merely the expression of the opinions of certain *individuals* claiming just whatever degree of deference may be thought due to those individuals personally; or whether these decisions claim to have a *binding* force (like that of Acts of Parliament, or Bye-laws of a Corporation,) on those who were not parties to them; and, on this latter supposition, whether such claim is extended to the *whole Church*, or is limited to *one Diocese*; leaving (and by example encouraging) the Bishop and Clergy of any other diocese to meet, if they shall think fit, and pass resolutions—perhaps very different ones<sup>1</sup>—on the same, and on other points;—on all these, and many other important particulars, I am wholly uninformed.”

I remain, &c. &c.

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<sup>1</sup> One Synod, for instance, might appeal, for the decision of some points to a “General Council” of the Universal Church; and another might protest against such appeal. And this difference might involve questions of great importance. For though there can be neither hope nor fear of any such council being actually assembled, many—probably most—would feel certain that if it were assembled, a large majority would be in *favour of the doctrines and practices of the Romish and Greek Churches*; since else, those Churches could not subsist in their present state. And the *principle*, of appealing, in religious matters, to mere *human* authority,—acknowledging that to be *inspired*—and holding ourselves ready to abandon, on such authority, our own conscientious convictions of Scripture-truth,—this is what many would feel bound most vehemently to protest against.

THE  
CLAIMS OF TRUTH  
AND OF UNITY,

CONSIDERED IN

A CHARGE

TO THE

CLERGY OF DUBLIN, GLANDALAGH, AND KILDARE,

DELIVERED JULY, 1852.

BY

RICHARD WHATELY, D.D.

*ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.*

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Σπουδάζοντες τηρεῖν τὴν ἐνότητα τοῦ πνεύματος ἐν τῷ συνδέσμῳ τῆς εἰρήνης.

EPH. iv. 3.

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# THE CLAIMS OF TRUTH

## AND OF UNITY.

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MY REVEREND BRETHREN,

WHEN I called your attention, last year, to some legislative measures which had been proposed, and, partially, adopted, by Parliament, in reference to what was commonly called "PAPAL AGGRESSION," this was not,—as, I trust, you were fully aware,—with any design of engaging you in discussions and contests of a purely political character; from which, as is well known, I have always endeavoured to stand aloof as much as possible. But I was anxious to impress on your people, through you, a strong conviction that they must not look for securities to their faith in legislative enactments, but in their own earnest and unremitting vigilance.

*No effectual  
legislative  
protection  
for religion.*

And most persons I believe are now convinced that the measure which occupied last year so much of the public attention, and which led to such wearisome and irritating debates, was of little avail

against the evil which alone it proposed to remedy;<sup>1</sup> and that the evil itself, however formidable as a *symptom*, was (considered merely in itself, and as that against which the law was directed) a matter of comparatively small consequence; the chief danger being not that of aggression from without, but of corruption within.

It is not improbable that, but for the tendency towards Romanism which had been manifested in our country, (and the extent of which had doubtless been greatly exaggerated by report,) the alleged aggression might never have taken place: but this at least is certain, that it could not,—and cannot,—have any effect, except so far as the inward disposition of men's minds is such as to second it.

When the kings of England retained (as they did, till of late years) the title of King of France; and when the last of the Stewarts retained that of King of England, no danger was incurred, or was apprehended, so long as the subjects of the reigning

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<sup>1</sup> As far as regards the protection of our *property* and *persons*, legislative provisions may be effectual, and may be needful. The important subject, for instance, of the law of Mortmain on which a parliamentary committee sat last year, is one well deserving the attention of the Legislature, with a view to such amendment in that law as the altered circumstances of the times seem to call for; what is called "personal" property being, now, of sufficient importance to need that protection which our forefathers confined to property in land. Some provision also for the due inspection of Institutions of a monastic character, seems both allowable and needful.

kings of France and of England retained their loyalty towards their actual sovereigns.

And it was not, we should remember, by assiduous efforts of any Romish emissary urging the claims of his church, and gradually prevailing on men to admit them,—it was not thus that the greater part of those who have seceded from our church were won over. On the contrary, most of them, in the midst of their *strenuous disclaimers* of Romanism, spontaneously introduced into their practice and their teaching such principles and such doctrines as they at length discovered to be essentially Romish. And then they probably wondered—some of them—that they had been so long blinded, and that others did still continue blinded, as to their real position. Like the soldiers of the Syrian army, whose sight had been miraculously deluded by the prophet Elisha, “their eyes were opened, and behold they were in the midst of Samaria !”

Then it was that the most clear-sighted and most consistent of those who had maintained such principles, overleaped, easily and suddenly, the very narrow chasm which had separated them from the Church of Rome, and they became, openly and professedly, what, inwardly and essentially, they had been long before.

The existence in the human mind of tendencies such as I have been alluding to, I pointed out—as you are all probably well aware—many years ago,

long before the occurrence of those secessions from our Church which have of late excited so much attention, and even before the distinct embodying of that party to which those secessions have been traced.<sup>1</sup>

*Remarkable  
phenomenon  
in the history  
of the Refor-  
mation.*

And these tendencies of Man's nature must doubtless be among the causes of a phenomenon which has been often remarked, and remarked with wonder. I mean the stationary, or even receding condition of the Reformation, for nearly three centuries. At its first outbreak, and for a short time after, it spread, as is well known, with such rapidity as to excite hopes—and fears,—of its becoming universal. But before long, it came to a stand. Not only did it cease to make any considerable advance, but even lost some portions of ground which it had gained. And for about two hundred years, both parties—its supporters and its opponents—have remained nearly stationary in their respective positions.

Now, whatever any one's judgment may be as to the question whether the Reformation was justifiable or unjustifiable—a good or an evil—all must on reflection admit that there is something strange, and at variance with what would have been naturally anticipated, in the actual course of events:—in that great movement's having at first

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<sup>1</sup> *The Errors of Romanism traced to their origin in human nature.*

advanced as it did, and having been checked as it was, and remaining where it is. Those who regard the alleged abuses and corruptions in the Church as altogether unreal, and believe that there is an infallible safeguard for its unaltered and unalterable purity—these might naturally have expected that an impious rebellion, and apostasy from christian doctrine, in professing Christians, must speedily come to an end as soon as it had received any check, and had lost the grace of novelty, and when those who had at first been taken by surprise, and struck dumb with horror, had brought forward demonstrations of the falsity of what had been alleged. And those, on the other hand, who consider the unreformed Church as having most widely and most glaringly departed from the original Gospel as set forth in Scripture, might naturally have expected that when the Bible (which all Christians acknowledge as of divine authority) had been translated into modern languages, and printed, and generally read, all men would compare with Scripture what they had been taught, and would at once reject all the corruptions and abuses which ignorant or ungodly men had introduced.

How different the actual course of things has proved, from either of these anticipations, is well known to all.

*Causes of the stationary condition of the Reformation.*

Several causes have been assigned for the phenomenon we are considering; some having a reference to particular periods of time,

and localities, and others, of more general operation. But among these causes (and doubtless there are several) those tendencies of human nature which I have been alluding to must have been not the least powerful. To those who embrace the principles of the Reformation, and who take such a view as they (consequently) must take of the system which that Reformation rejected,—to these, it must seem hardly credible that such a system should, in civilized countries, not only maintain its ground, but occasionally revive, supposing it were altogether a device of ambitious and ingenious men, and were not in great measure the spontaneous growth of the human heart. Plants brought from a foreign land, and cultivated by human care, may often be, by human care, extirpated; or may even perish for *want* of care: but the indigenous product of the soil, even when seemingly eradicated, will again and again be found springing up afresh:—

“Sponte suâ quæ se tollunt in luminis oras  
 Infeunda quidem, sed læta et fortia surgunt,  
 Quippe solo natura subest.”

*Contentions  
 among Pro-  
 testants.*

But of the more *immediate* causes, the one which has been most frequently remarked upon, is, that soon after the first outbreak of the revolt from Rome, reformers began to expend the chief part of their energies in contests with *each other*; and often showed more zeal, and even fiercer hostility, against rival-Pro-

testants, than against the systems and the principles which they agreed in condemning.

The adherents of the Church of Rome, on the contrary, though in many points disagreeing, and sometimes fiercely disputing among themselves, have always been ready to waive all internal differences, and unite actively, as against a common enemy, in opposing the Greek Church, and all denominations of Protestants. They are like a disciplined army under a single supreme leader; in which, whatever jealousies and dissensions may exist among the individual officers and soldiers, every one is at his post whenever the trumpet gives the call to arms, and the whole act as one man against the hostile army. The Reformers, on the contrary, have laboured under the disadvantages which are well known in military history, of an *allied* army,—a host of *Confederates*; who are often found to forget the common cause, and desert, or even oppose, one another.

Hence, it is continually urged against the Reformed Churches, “see what comes of allowing private judgment in religion. Men’s private judgments in such matters, all experience shows, are morally certain to differ from each other; and there cannot therefore be any reasonable hope of union and combined action, except by resolving to submit implicitly, in every case, to the decisions of one supreme central authority.”

*Private judgment an alleged obstacle to union.*

*Despair of agreement a reason for coerced conformity.*

It is told of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, who, after his abdication, occupied himself in his retirement with mechanical experiments, that, finding it impossible, with all his care, to make any two of his time-pieces exactly agree in their movements, he was thence led to reflect on the hopelessness of bringing all men to a perfect agreement in their judgments on all religious questions. And some seem to suppose that he was thus led,—or might have been led,—to suspect the erroneousness of his former procedure in attempting to force all his subjects into religious conformity. But the opposite inference would seem to be the more natural. For if any one did think it possible to bring all men's judgments to an agreement, he would endeavour to convince them by *reasons*, and would not think of resorting to force; which evidently can produce only submission, but not conviction. It is when a man *despairs* of effecting an agreement in men's individual judgments, that he will be tempted to endeavour, first, to persuade them that it is a duty to *forego* the use of their judgment on each point, submitting implicitly to the judgment of another, and next, to compel by force those who cannot be persuaded of this, at least to *profess*, and outwardly act on such a principle.

If the ex-Emperor *could* have constructed time-pieces that would all go exactly alike, there would have been no need to regulate one of them by

another; but if, finding their discrepancy incurable, he was yet resolved that they should exhibit perfect agreement, he might easily have effected this, by fixing on one as the standard, and daily regulating all the others by that.

What the Romanist means by renouncing "private judgment" and adhering to the decisions of the Church, is, substantially, what many Protestants express by saying "We make *truth* the first and paramount object, and the others, *unity*."

*Meaning of the Romanist renunciation, and of the Protestant advocacy of private judgment.*

The two expressions, when rightly understood, denote the same; but they each require some explanation to prevent their being understood incorrectly, and even unfairly.

A Roman-Catholic does exercise private judgment, once for all, if (not through carelessness, but on earnest and solemn deliberation) he resolves to place himself completely under the guidance of that Church (as represented by his Priest) which he *judges* to have been divinely appointed for that purpose. And in so doing he considers himself, not as manifesting indifference about truth, but as taking the way by which he will attain either complete and universal religious truth, or at least a greater amount of it than could have been attained otherwise. To speak of such a person as indifferent about truth, would be not only uncharitable, but also as unreasonable as to suppose a man indifferent about his

health, or about his property, because, distrusting his own judgment on points of Medicine, or of Law, he places himself under the direction of those whom he has judged to be the most trustworthy physician and lawyer.

*Unassisted study of Scripture not advocated by Protestants.* On the other hand, a Protestant, in advocating private judgment, does not—as some have represented—necessarily maintain that every man should set himself to study and interpret for himself the Scriptures (which, we should recollect, are written in the Hebrew and Greek languages) without seeking or accepting aid from any instructors, whether under the title of Translators (for a *translator* who claims no inspiration is manifestly a human *instructor* of the People as to the sense of Scripture) or whether called Commentators, Preachers, or by whatever other name. Indeed considering the multitude of Tracts, Commentaries, Expositions, and Discourses of various forms, that have been put forth and assiduously circulated by Protestants of all Denominations, for the avowed purpose (be it well or ill executed) of giving religious instruction, it is really strange that such an interpretation as I have alluded to should ever have been put on the phrase “private judgment.” For, to advert to a parallel case, of daily occurrence, all would recommend a student of Mathematics, for instance, or of any branch of Natural-Philosophy, to seek the aid of a well-qualified Professor or Tutor. And yet he

would be thought to have studied in vain, if he should even think of taking *on trust* any mathematical or physical truth, on the word of his instructors. It is, on the contrary, their part to *teach him how*—by demonstration, or by experiment—to verify each point for himself.

On the other hand, the adherents of a Church claiming to be infallible on all essential points, and who consequently profess to renounce private judgment,—these (besides that, as has been just said, they cannot but judge for themselves as to *one* point—that very claim itself) have also room for the exercise of judgment, and often do exercise it, on questions as to *what* points *are* essential, and for which, consequently, infallible rectitude is insured.<sup>1</sup> For we should be greatly mistaken if we were to assume that all who have opposed what we are accustomed to call “*the Reformation*” were satisfied that there was nothing in their Church that needed reform, or were necessarily indifferent about the removal of abuses. We know that on the contrary, many of them pointed out and complained of, and studied to have remedied, sundry

*Judgment exercised by Romanists as to what points are essential.*

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<sup>1</sup> Thus the Jansenists, when certain doctrines were pronounced heretical by the Court of Rome, which condemned Jansenius for maintaining them, admitted, as in duty bound, the decision that they *were* heretical, but denied that they were implied in Jansenius's writings; and of this latter point the Pope, they said, was no more qualified or authorized to decide than any other man.

corruptions that had crept into their Church, and which were, in many instances, sanctioned by its highest authorities.<sup>1</sup>

Sincere, one must suppose, and strong, must have been the conviction of several who both did and suffered much in labouring after such remedy. And it would be absurd as well as uncharitable, to take for granted that Erasmus, for instance, and, still more, Pascal, and all the Jansenists, were withheld merely by personal fear, or other personal motives, from revolting against the Church of Rome. But they conceived, no doubt, that what they considered Church-unity was to be preserved at *any* cost; that a *separation* from what they regarded as the Catholic [or Universal] Church, was a greater

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<sup>1</sup> The celebrated Roman-catholic Bishop Bossuet thus describes the times before the Reformation.

“A Reformation of ecclesiastical discipline had been desired several ages since. ‘Who will grant me,’ says St. Bernard, ‘before I die, to see the Church of God such as she had been in the primitive times?’ . . . Disorders had still increased since his time. The Roman Church . . . was not exempt from the evil; and, from the time of the Council of Vienne, a great prelate, commissioned by the Pope to prepare matters there to be discussed, laid it down as a groundwork to that holy assembly, ‘to reform the Church in the HEAD and the MEMBERS.’ . . . The disorders of the clergy, chiefly those of Germany, were represented in this manner to Eugenius IV. by Cardinal Julian. ‘These disorders excite the hatred of the people against the whole ecclesiastical order, and should they not be corrected, it is to be feared lest the laity, like the Hussites, should rise against the clergy, as they loudly threaten us. . . . When they shall no longer have any hopes of our amendment,’ continued this great Cardinal, ‘then will they fall upon us. . . . The rancour they have imbibed

evil than all others combined. If, without loss of unity, they could succeed in removing any of those other evils, for such a reform they would gladly labour. But, if not, to *Unity*, anything and everything was to be sacrificed.

Such seems to have been the sentiment, as far as I could collect, of a Roman-catholic Priest, apparently a man of great simplicity of character, with whom, not very long since, I had an interview, at his own desire. He spoke to me very strongly (as, I understand, he had, to several other of our bishops) of the unseemly and lamentable spectacle—as I could not but agree with him in thinking it—of disunion and contention

*Desirableness  
of Unity.*

against us becomes manifest; they will soon think it an agreeable sacrifice to God to abuse and rob ecclesiastics, *as abandoned to extreme disorders, and hateful to God and man.*”—*History of Variations*, b. i., c. 1.

This is pretty strong; but he might have cited even stronger testimonies. “The Church of God,” says Bernard, “every day finds by sad experience in what danger she is, *when the Shepherd knows not where the pastures are, nor the guide where the right way is*, and when that very man who should speak for God, and on his side, is ignorant what is the will of his master.” Nicholas de Clemangis, another Roman-catholic writer of those times, speaks thus: “The church that Jesus Christ has chosen for his spouse without spot and blemish, is in these days a warehouse of ambition and business, of theft and rapine. The Sacraments and all Orders, even to those of the priests, are exposed to sale. They sell pardons of sins, masses, and the very administration of our Lord’s body.” And further, he declares, that “the study of the Holy Scriptures, and those who taught them, were generally derided,” and that the “bishops themselves were the foremost to scoff at them.”

among Christ's professed followers. And he dwelt much on the duty of earnestly praying and striving for unity.

*Different views of what christian unity consists in.*

In reference to this point, I thought it needful to remind him that two parties while apparently agreeing in their prayers and endeavours for unity, might possibly mean by it different things: the one understanding by it the submission of all Christians to the government of one *single Ecclesiastical Community on earth*; the other merely mutual kindness, and agreement in faith. This latter, I added, seems to have been the view of the Apostles; who founded many distinct Churches,—several even in each Province,—and all, apparently, quite independent of each other, or of any one central Body,<sup>1</sup> though all were exhorted to “keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of

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<sup>1</sup> To one among the many passages which go to prove this, I directed his especial attention; that in which Paul's final interview (as he believed it) with the Elders of Miletus and Ephesus is recorded. (Acts xx.) Foreseeing the dangers to which they would be exposed, even from false teachers among themselves, and of which he had been earnestly warning them for three years, it is inconceivable that he should not have directed them to Peter or his successors at Rome or elsewhere, if he had known of any central supreme Church, provided as an infallible guide, to whose decisions they might safely refer when doubts or disputes should arise. It follows therefore inevitably that he knew of none.

I have heard it alleged as a reply, that since they had had ample opportunities of learning the Gospel from Paul's own teaching, which they were earnestly exhorted to “remember,” no further help was deemed necessary for those who would but “take heed to themselves.” And in this I fully concur; on the ground

peace." Such unity, I reminded him (for he was formerly a minister of our Church) is the subject of a special petition in our "*Prayer for all conditions of men,*" and in several others.

But our *first* object, I remarked, *Truth the first* should be *truth*. And if that could be *object*. universally attained, Unity would have been attained also; since truth is one. On the other hand, unity may conceivably be attained by agreement in error: so that, while, by the universal adoption of a right faith, unity would be secured, incidentally, the attainment of unity would be no security for truth.

I reminded him, moreover, that agreement among Christians, though an object we should wish for, and endeavour by all allowable means to promote, must, after all, depend on *others* as much as on our-

that nothing further *was*, by divine wisdom, provided for them. But Paul surely would *not* have thought that nothing more was provided, or was needed, if he had known of any central church to whose governors all Christians were bound to be subject, and from which they might obtain, whenever needed, an infallible decision of all doubtful points, and an acknowledged unerring condemnation of any heresies, such as he foresaw were likely to arise. Had any such additional safeguard existed, Paul could not but have known of it, and could not, on such an occasion, have failed to allude to it. But in the actual state of things he doubtless did judge that sufficient provision had been made for the preservation of Gospel-truth among the Milesians and Ephesians. And it is to be remembered that precisely the same is *ours*; since we have the teaching of this very Apostle handed down to us in his Epistles.

On this point I have treated more at length in a Discourse on the *Search after Infallibility*.

selves; and our endeavour may be completely defeated through *their* fault: whereas truth is a benefit—and a benefit of the first importance—to those who receive it themselves, even though they should have to lament its rejection by many others.

*Openness to conviction no indication of a wavering faith.*

And I pointed out to him that to pray and strive for truth, and to be ever open to conviction, does not (as he seemed to imagine) imply a *wavering* faith, and an anticipation of change. When any one (to advert to an illustration I then employed) prints from *moveable types*, this does not imply that he has committed, or that he suspects, typographical errors, any more than if he had employed an *engraved plate*. The types are not moveable in the sense of being *loose*, and liable to casual change. He may be challenging all the world to point out an error; showing that any *can* be corrected if they do detect one; though perhaps he is fully convinced that there are none.

*Unity an evil when made the first object.*

But above all, it should be remembered that even if any system which men have agreed to adopt for peace-sake, should be, in fact, perfectly true in itself, still it would not be true *to* those who should have acquiesced in it not from conviction, but merely with a view to union. On the other hand, the unity—whether among all Christians, or any portion of them—which is the result of their all

holding the same truth,—this unity is not the less perfect from its being incidental, and not the primary object aimed at, and to which all else was to be sacrificed. But those who have only *incidentally* adhered to what is in itself perfectly right, may be themselves, wrong; even to a greater degree than those who may have fallen into error on some points, but who are on the whole sincere votaries of truth.

I reminded him, in conclusion, that “No man can serve two masters:” not because they are necessarily *opposed*, but because they are not necessarily combined, and cases *may* arise in which the one must give way to the other.<sup>1</sup> There is no necessary opposition even between “God and Mammon,” if by “Mammon” we understand worldly prosperity. For it will commonly happen that a man will thrive the better in the world from the honesty, frugality, and temperance, which he may be practising from higher motives. And there is not even anything necessarily wrong in aiming at temporal advantages. But whoever is resolved on obtaining wealth in one

*Reason why  
we cannot  
serve two  
masters.*

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<sup>1</sup> “Either he will love the one and hate the other;” this seems to refer to cases in which a radical opposition between the two does exist: “or else he will cleave to the one, and despise [*i. e.* disregard and neglect] the other:” this latter seems to be the description of those cases in which there is no such necessary opposition; only that cases will sometimes arise in which the one or the other must be disregarded.

way or another, (“*si possis, recte; si non, quocunque modo, rem*”) will occasionally be led to violate duty: and he, again, who is fully bent on “seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,” will sometimes find himself called on to incur temporal losses. And so it is, with the occasionally-rival claims of Truth and of Unity, or of *any* two objects which *may* possibly be, in some instance, opposed. We must make up our minds which is, in that case, to give way. *One* must be the supreme,—must be the “*master.*”

*Advantages possessed by those who make unity the first object.* “But after all,” (it may be said) “Protestants do *not*—at least universally—attain truth, to which they profess to sacrifice everything; for if they did, they would all (as has been just observed) be *agreed*; whereas, in fact, their differences, even on important points, are such as to constitute the favourite topic to their opponents. When they speak of the teaching of the Holy Spirit, and profess to be under its unerring guidance, these disagreements prove that all of them at least cannot be under this guidance. And though each may be confident in himself that it is he who is thus taught, and that the rest are mistaken, he cannot, in the absence of sensible miracles, give any proof that he can expect will satisfy others. The exercise, then, of private judgment exposes Protestants to the disadvantages of divisions, and does not, after all, secure them an infallible certainty of attaining

truth; while their opponents have at least the advantage of being united against every common adversary.”

And this advantage certainly does exist, and ought not to be denied, or kept out of sight. The principle is indeed sound of making truth, as embraced on sincere conviction, the first object, and unity a secondary one; and if Man were a less imperfect Being than he is, all who adhered to that principle, would, as has been said, be agreed and united; and truth and rectitude would have their natural advantage over their opposites. But as it is, what we generally find, is, truth mixed with human error; and genuine religion tainted with an alloy of human weaknesses and prejudices. And this it is that gives a certain degree of advantage to any system—whether in itself true or false—which makes union, and submission to a supreme Authority on Earth, the first point.

If you exhort men to seek *truth*, and to embrace what, on deliberate examination, they are convinced *is* truth, they may follow this advice, and yet—considering what Man is—may be expected to arrive at different conclusions. But if you exhort them to agree, and with that view, to make a compromise,—each consenting (like the Roman Triumvirs of old, who sacrificed to each other’s enmity their respective friends) to *proscribe* some of their own convictions,—then, if they follow this advice, the end sought will be accomplished.

*Advantages of unity may be too dearly purchased.* That the advantages, great as they are, of union, are too dearly purchased at such a price, is what need hardly be said, *by me, or to you*; especially, since, besides the possibility that men may be united in what is erroneous and wrong, in itself, there is also (as I have already remarked) this additional evil, that whatever absolute truth there may be in what is assented to on such a principle, it is not truth *to* those who assent to it not on conviction, but for union's sake. And what is in itself right to be done, is wrong *to* him who does it without the approbation of his own judgment, at the bidding of others, and with a view to their co-operation.

*Application to Parties and Associations generally.* I have dwelt the more earnestly on this subject, because it is important that we should be fully aware not only of the advantages which undoubtedly are obtained by that kind of union I have been speaking of, but also of its disadvantages. For, neither belong exclusively to any particular Church or other Community, but to every kind of Party, Association, Alliance, or by whatever other name it may be called, in which there is an express or understood obligation on the members to give up, or to suppress, their own convictions, and submit to the decisions of the leader or leaders under whom they are to act.

If indeed a Church lays down, as distinctly as the imperfections of language will allow, what it is

that her Members and Ministers are required to hold, and to teach, and to do, leaving only such matters of detail as no general rules could specify, to be regulated by its appointed Officers, and if those who approve of its doctrine and worship are invited to be members of such a Church, but no one is visited with temporal penalties, or anathematized as excluded from Gospel-salvation, for refusing to be a member—this is doing no more than is evidently necessary for the constitution of such a christian Community as our divine Master evidently did intend should be constituted.

But it is quite otherwise when any Church requires *all* who would claim the christian name to assent to her doctrines and conform to her Worship, whether they approve of them or not,—to renounce all exercise of their own judgment—and to profess belief in *whatever* the Church has received, or may, hereafter, receive.

Now—to waive for the present all notice of the unwarrantable assumption (as to us it must appear) which is here implied—I wish to call your attention to one *disadvantage* to be weighed against the advantages of such a system: I mean that its adherents are deprived of the character of *witnesses*.

*Adherents of  
a Party de-  
prived of the  
character of  
Witnesses.*

When a man professes, and we are unable to disprove the sincerity of the profession, that he has been, on examination, convinced of the truth of a

certain doctrine, he is a *witness* to the force of the reasons which have convinced him. He may, indeed, be perhaps a person entitled to no great consideration for knowledge or ability; but *some* weight, much or little, is possessed by every such witness, when he solemnly declares himself to have given his "verdict according to the evidence."

But the adherents of an opposite system give in reality *no* testimony at all, except to the fact that they have received so and so from their Guide. If there were but a hundred persons in all the world who professed to have fully convinced themselves, independently of each other's authority, of the truth of a certain conclusion, and these were men of no more than ordinary ability, their declaration would have incalculably more weight than that of a hundred millions, even though they were the most sagacious and learned men that ever existed, maintaining the opposite conclusion, but having previously resolved to forego all exercise of their own judgment, and to receive implicitly what is dictated to them by a certain supreme Authority. For, the testimony (to use a simple and obvious illustration) of even a small number of *eye-witnesses* of any transaction, even though possessing no extraordinary powers of vision, would outweigh that of countless millions who should have resolved to close their eyes, and to receive and retail the report they heard from a single individual.

What I have now been saying will perhaps recall to your recollection the *Evangelical Alliance*. remarks I laid before you some years ago, in reference to a scheme (doubtless well intended) for uniting in an allied Body all those Protestants of various denominations who, though differing on several points, were agreed as to certain fundamental principles.<sup>1</sup> The object was, I presume, to obtain those advantages of union which are enjoyed by a Church demanding implicit submission to its authority, and at the same time to avoid incurring the attendant evils. For, the principles which the members of that association were to advocate were to be such as they had *already* adopted, *spontaneously*, and not on its authority.

Now this very circumstance rendered (as I then remarked to you) any formal agreement and combination superfluous, at best, and probably worse than superfluous. If members of several different Protestant Communities, independent of each other, and, in some points, at variance, are found to agree spontaneously in holding and teaching such and such a doctrine, they are so many independent witnesses in its favour. But if they then hold meetings and conferences, and *agree* to maintain it, these *can* have no effect, except it be to raise a suspicion that they maintain it not wholly on their own separate unbiassed conviction, but in

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<sup>1</sup> See *Thoughts on the Proposed Evangelical Alliance*.

*consequence* of their having agreed so to bind themselves. And as far as any such suspicion does arise, just so far is the weight of their testimony impaired.

*Definiteness of object essential to the utility of Associations.* And the like takes place in referenee to any Association, Party, or whatever else it may be called, which has not a *definite* but an indefinite object: not, for instance, the circulation of such and such specified books, or the enactment or repeal of such and such a law, but the promotion—generally—of such and such *principles*. In every case of the latter description, the danger is more or less incurred of the disadvantage I have alluded to;—the suspicion, namely, of individual judgment being in some degree waived, and of our being unduly biassed and overawed by the decisions of the majority, or of the leaders, of the Party.

But while I have always deprecated any scheme, however specious at the first glance, which tends to promote (as I believe experience has now convinced most persons was the case with that alluded to) more dissension than union, and to weaken rather than strengthen the advocates of truth, you will not, I trust, suppose me indifferent to the evils of divisions, among Christians—among Protestant Christians—among members of our own Church. Nor should we despair of mitigating to an indefinite extent, an evil which we may despair of seeing wholly removed.

We of this Church, in particular, *Advantages of Church organization and subordination.* are especially bound to avail ourselves to the utmost, of that organization, which, as a Church, we do possess. There is, indeed, an advantage, in some respects, that is possessed by a Church constituted on such a principle (that of implicit and complete acquiescence) as no Protestant Church, rightly so called, can possibly adopt. But this is far from being any just reason, why, either in opposing such a Church, or in any other of our proceedings, we should rashly throw away such advantages as we do possess, by setting at nought the constituted Authorities, and the regulations, of our Church, or by keeping them out of sight, and acting as much as possible independently of them; or by setting up what is in fact a new, self-constituted, Church, to supersede our own. Besides the culpable inconsistency of such conduct, we may be assured that nothing tends more to lower us in the estimation of those we would bring over to our Communion, and to furnish to our most determined opponents an argument against us. Even the discord and mutual animosity of Protestants of various Communions, which I lately adverted to as one of the principal checks to the progress of the Reformation,—even this, has, I am convinced, less force in unfavourably impressing men's minds, than internal dissension, and fierce partizanship, and insubordination, within each Church.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, A.

*Bitterness of  
opposition  
among those  
nearly agree-  
ing.*

It might perhaps have been anticipated by any one proceeding merely on conjecture, and without experience, that there would be at least a greater mildness of character in the disputes between those who have many points in common, and especially those belonging to the same Church, than between those the most utterly at variance in fundamentals.

But experience shows that there is often even fiercer hostility among Christians towards each other, than towards infidels; and again, that (as I observed at the beginning) Reformers have often been more zealous and more acrimonious in their internal contests, than against the unreformed Churches; and lastly, that the bitterness of some parties within our Church against fellow-members of the same Church has often been such as to exemplify but too well the Greek proverb, that "cruel are the wars of brothers."

This proverb has been in some degree explained by the great master of Grecian philosophy, in his remark that men most resent a supposed wrong when coming from those from whom it seems especially *unsuitable*;—μη προσηκοντως.<sup>1</sup> Now we are perhaps disposed to expect that those who in a manner belong to the same class with ourselves, should agree with us throughout; and to feel as if they were guilty of a sort of inconsistency in not

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<sup>1</sup> Arist. Rhet., b. ii., on *Anger*.

doing so, and were a kind of traitors to the common cause.

It may be moreover that the more remote any persons are from ourselves in all their principles of conduct, customs, institutions, and habits of thought, the more likely we are to be struck with any points of *agreement* that we perceive; and that, on the other hand, the more closely they approach to ourselves generally, the more likely we are to notice any *disagreement*. In the one case the coincidences, in the other, the discrepancies, stand forth the more prominently to our view, as something exceptional and unexpected.

But be this as it may, the fact in question is undeniable, and is an evil which we cannot but deplore, and which, as I have said, we are bound to endeavour, by all allowable means, to mitigate.

In reference to those controversies which at this time are occupying even an unusual share of public attention, I need not detain you by dwelling on those principles of procedure which, though most important to be kept in mind, and though often, practically, forgotten, are yet such as no one can be really ignorant of, except those whom it would be hopeless to attempt instructing; and which are not liable to be lost sight of in practice except through such thoughtless indiscretion, or such predominance of ungoverned passion, as would

*Principles of  
procedure in  
controversies.*

probably make all admonitions on the subject fruitless.

For instance, to abstain from all insulting or derisive language, (however suitable it may appear as regards the subject) in addressing those whom it is our object to convince and reform, would be a superfluous precept to those who are acting on the golden rule of doing as we would be done by, and who possess sound judgment and feelings of delicacy; and by those again who are wanting in such qualifications, it would be unheeded.<sup>1</sup>

And several other points there are, on which the *general principles* are what every right-minded man must have already admitted; while the particular *application* of those principles (in which the chief difficulty lies) could not be at all usefully explained except in a treatise of some length.<sup>2</sup>

But there are two suggestions, which, in conclusion, I would lay before you, as being often overlooked by well-intentioned men.

*Points of agreement to be noticed first.* (1.) The first is, that it is best, when opportunities offer of addressing those who differ from us, to *begin* with the points of agreement, rather than of difference; and to point out, and give them full credit for whatever truths may belong to their system, instead of confining ourselves to its errors.

Now it is not unnatural (as I remarked just

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix, B.

<sup>2</sup> Appendix, C.

now) in conferring with those who agree with us in several points, to be the *most struck* with the *disagreements*; and thereupon, to begin by noticing *them*, waiving, as superfluous, all discussion of whatever is admitted by both parties. But the opposite procedure is, I am convinced, that which most unites the wisdom of the Serpent with the harmlessness of the Dove. Besides being a more conciliatory course, it is also more efficacious, inasmuch as it affords a *common ground* to stand on. For there cannot be any profitable discussion between parties who are not agreed in *some* thing. We cannot expect any one to admit our Conclusion who has not admitted our Premises. And we should remember, too, that falsehood can never gain assent except by being mixed up with some truth; like a poison disguised in some wholesome substance. And as truth cannot of itself lead to error, but only to other truths which legitimately follow from it, the most effectual way of decomposing (to use a chemical expression) such a mixture, is, to ascertain first the true portion of it, and show that this has no necessary connexion with the falsehood with which it has been combined.<sup>1</sup>

And it may be remarked, in confirmation, that by far the greatest amount of conversion to reformed views that ever did occur, was produced not from

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<sup>1</sup> This has been admirably set forth in a sermon by Mr. Salmon, delivered at my last Ordination, and since published.

without—from some rival-church seeking to make proselytes—but from within an unreformed Church.<sup>1</sup> Members of that, searched the Scriptures which it receives, and examined its tenets, till they had ascertained on what grounds, good or bad, each rested; and thus, by their own efforts, winnowed away the chaff from the wheat, and laid the results of their investigation before their brethren, members of the same Church.

In further confirmation, it may be remarked that in teaching any branch of Science, we always begin with what is known to the learner and admitted; and lead him on from that to further and further deductions from it. This is, confessedly, the *didactic* procedure; and when men can be brought into the frame of mind of *learners*, seeking for true *conclusions*, and not for arguments to maintain the position they have taken up, they are much more likely to embrace truth, than when placed in a hostile attitude to repel assailants, instead of listening to one who is (in the Apostle's language) "in meekness instructing them that oppose themselves."

*Faults on our  
own side to be  
acknowledged.*

(2.) Lastly, I would suggest that it is a point of prudence as well as of fairness, to resist not only the temptation

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<sup>1</sup> This by the way is one of the circumstances which may help to account for that remarkable phenomenon above noticed, the contrast between the early and the subsequent progress of the Reformation.

to use, ourselves, any unfair argument, or false statement, but also the temptation to avail ourselves of any that may have been employed by others engaged in the same cause. And we should not be at all backward in exposing and repudiating any such fallacy, or any error into which those on our side may have fallen.

There is, I know, in many minds, a strong disinclination to the latter part at least of this precept. It is both revolting to their feelings to risk paining those they would especially wish to gratify, and also it is alarming on prudential grounds, lest they should convert into opponents those with whom they have much in common, and whose co-operation they need. If what we point out as errors, or reject as unsound arguments, are such as the others do feel confident of being able fully to vindicate, their opinion of our judgment is so far lowered. And if on the contrary they feel a lurking suspicion that they cannot offer a complete vindication, they may perhaps, for a time, be even the more displeased with any one who censures them.

It was by this road, no doubt, that that principle gradually crept in to which I formerly alluded,—that of sacrificing everything to unity. The sacrifice *first* demanded, in such cases, is, in general, not a great one. Men are led on, step by step, from silence as to some mistake, to connivance at fallacies, and thence, to suppression, and then to

misrepresentation, of truth; and, ultimately, to the support of known falsehood.<sup>1</sup>

And what adds strength to the temptation, is, the dread lest any admission of error, such as I have adverted to, should be, as it were, taken at a *premium*, and understood as implying much more than is expressed.

*Candour ultimately advantageous.* But be assured that, in the long-run, a character for candour will be established by perseveringly deserving it, and will have, sooner or later, its due weight.

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<sup>1</sup> It is scarcely necessary to say that I am not advocating what may be called the opposite extreme,—the too common practice of exaggerating differences, or setting down all who do not completely concur in all our views, as “infidels”—as “rationalists,”—as altogether “heterodox,”—as having renounced “Church-principles,”—as being “in the Court of the Gentiles,” or as “strangers to the truth as it is in Jesus,”—not “knowing the Gospel”—excluded from the number of “God’s People,” &c.

The right maxim is one that we may borrow from Shakspeare: “Nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice.” But it is worth remarking that what may be called the two opposite extremes, in this matter, are generally found *together*. For, it is the tendency of party-spirit to pardon *any* thing in those who heartily support the party, and *nothing*, in those who do not.

And nowhere has this been more strikingly exemplified than in what may be reckoned the most gigantic Party that ever existed,—the Romish Church. Towards its own members, as long as they are but submissive and devoted and zealous adherents of its system, it has usually been indulgent to an extreme, in point of moral requirements, and tolerant of whatever means are employed in its cause; while it anathematizes without mercy even the most blameless Christians who venture to renounce its dominion, or even show any disposition to limit its power.

You will, in time, be understood to be one who will never for the sake of advocating a cause you may have taken up, maintain anything of which you are not yourself thoroughly convinced; and to be protesting against what is false and wrong, not because it is held by an opponent, but because it *is* false and wrong.

And to find by experience that this course is ultimately the most expedient, will be the *reward* of him who shall have pursued it not *because* it was perceived to be expedient, but from a genuine love of truth and fair-dealing, as what is most becoming a sincere Christian and an advocate of any good cause.



## A P P E N D I X .

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(A), page 25.

I SHALL not, I presume, be suspected of meaning to deny what I have so often and so earnestly set forth, that our Church is less efficiently organized than it might be, and ought to be; especially, in its being destitute of any provision for the regular supply of any deficiencies, or introduction of any improvements, even if acknowledged such by the almost unanimous voice of its members.

On this point I need not enlarge; having treated of it in my Charge of last year,—in the Letter on the “Church and the Universities,” and in several former Publications. But it is worth while to observe how zealously and effectually two opposite classes of persons are labouring, as if of set purpose, for the defeat of their own respective objects.

On the one hand, the greater part of those who maintain what they call “Church-principles,” are eager advocates for Church-government, and yet take the very course which most tends to set men’s minds against it. By meeting in self-constituted conclaves, which manifest a disposition to usurp such power as can only belong to a legitimate Government,—by taking such steps as plainly lead to schism,—and by favouring doctrines and practices at variance with those of a reformed Church,—they excite in the public mind such alarm, and such an aversion to the very idea of a Church-government, as is likely to prove the most effectual obstacle to the introduction of any.

On the other hand, those who are perpetually complaining of such and such imperfections in our church, and dwelling on the great need of certain alterations, called for by the circumstances of the Age,—these, many of them, vehemently deprecate the *only possible* remedy that could be applied. They are fully possessed with the idea that any kind of regulating power applied to ecclesiastical matters must end in the establishment of a tyrannical hierarchy, with Romanizing tendencies.

That this conviction is not well founded, I have repeatedly endeavoured to show, in the works above referred to. But those who do entertain it should be admonished at least to abstain from all complaints of the existing state of things. It is indeed nothing unreasonable to complain of some defect, at the same time suggesting, or inviting others to suggest, an effectual remedy.

But highly unreasonable it surely is for any persons to complain of some inconvenience which they are convinced is without remedy ; and still more, when they themselves have resolved that no remedy *shall* be attempted. These ought to submit, and exhort others to submit, in patient silence ; even as to an unfavourable season, or an incurable disease, or any other uncontrollable dispensation of Providence.

And all should make up their minds, at least, while things do remain in their present state, to make the best of them, and to support and avail themselves of, in the best way they can, the actual organization which our Church does possess.

In reference to this subject I have taken the liberty to extract some passages from a recent publication, the Charge of the Bishop of Norwich.

“When the revival of Diocesan Synods was first mooted, and the experiment was made in one Diocese, I considered whether such a measure might not be the best for attaining the desired end. The conclusion at which I have arrived, however, is, that it would be unlikely to answer that, or any other practical good purpose, even were the movement exempt from some serious objections to which it is liable. Indeed, the general revival of these Synods would, I fear, endanger the very constitution of our Church, unless it were preceded or accompanied by, I will not say the revival of the functions of Convocation, but the establishment of some Body representing the Church’s collective authority. Without this, one Diocesan Synod may be at variance, in its decisions, with another, even on important points, and there would be no supreme Ecclesiastical authority to overrule the partial and conflicting judgments of these segments of the Church, by the judgment of the Church itself. Granting, that in every separate Diocese, unity within itself may be thus obtained, it would be obtained at the hazard of destroying the unity of the Church. But, would a Diocesan Synod tend to diocesan unity? We may rather expect the reverse. Whilst many would concur in such a measure, many, too, would object to it, and protest against it. If the meetings were persevered in, the dissentients would be placed in the condition of a separatist Body ; and, around the two sections of the Diocese would gather and grow more and more of the elements of disunion and discord, which, even as it is, distress and weaken us. Apart, too, from considerations of intrinsic unfitness and of danger in the general revival of Diocesan Synods, there is another consideration which ought not to be overlooked. The movement would most certainly disturb the Public mind with alarm, at what would be regarded as an attempt, on the part of the Clergy, to assume an undue and encroaching authority. Wide-spread mistrust and suspicion, which it would not be easy to allay, would attend our every act. It is a very

different thing, to keep up the functions of such a Body, when made familiar to all by uninterrupted usage, and forced, as circumstances change, into gradual adaptation to that change; and, to revive them, after they have long lain in abeyance.”

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“As for a revival of Convocation, I, for one, do not desire it. That Body was never suited to the character and requirements of our Church. It is less suitable now than ever. It represents only the Church’s Clergy. It may be doubted, too, whether so large a deliberative Assembly as would adequately represent the Church, or even the Church’s Clergy, is the most appropriate for the discussion of some of the sacred topics which would, from time to time, claim the attention of an Ecclesiastical Legislature. But, is it, therefore, impossible, that by any adaptation to existing circumstances, some form of Church Legislature should be devised, free at least from objections stronger than those which lie against our having none at all?

“My object, my Reverend Brethren, in the remarks into which I have been led, is not to stimulate agitation on the subject. Due reflection on the main impediments which are in the way, must convince us, that agitation, even if it were becoming, is a course more likely to increase than to remove those impediments. It is our duty, and our wisdom as well as our duty, calmly and candidly to estimate the difficulties which must present themselves to the advisers of the Crown, whenever such a measure may be mooted. We, recollect, are not merely the Church of the majority of the people, but, *The Church of England*. Our Church forms part of the aggregate National Constitution. What effect may be produced on the Civil Legislature, and on the people at large, by calling into activity the legislative functions of the Church, is more than any one can venture to predict. We cannot wonder at any Minister shrinking from the responsibility; and, we cannot reasonably expect that any Minister will undertake that responsibility, unless he sees some assurance of security in the tone of the Church’s language and claims. We must be prepared to concede much. This is a necessity arising out of our being the Established Church. That position is, I am persuaded, most advantageous to the great interests of religion in this country; but it is incompatible with the freedom of action which other religious Bodies are permitted to enjoy. Control and interference, on the part of the Civil Powers, to which they would not submit, we must acquiesce in, if we ever expect to have a Legislative Body with permission to exercise any functions at all.”

(B), page 28.

IN reference to this point I have thought it advisable to print here an extract from a letter to one of my clergy, (and which he afterwards obtained permission to publish), who had consulted me respecting a controversial address, which neither of us had at that time seen, but which he expected to be (as he was) before long invited to sign :—

“Every one, no doubt, who sets forth any truth, on whatever subject, may be said to be, virtually, an assailable of the contrary errors. But it makes a great difference whether this be done in a *controversial* form, or whether we proceed in conformity with the Apostolic admonition, ‘the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men,—*in meekness instructing* those that oppose themselves.’

“Let any one but reflect before he writes or speaks, what *effect* is likely to be produced on the minds of those he is addressing. I proceed on the assumption that he is fully convinced of the truth of what he maintains, and of the soundness of his arguments. But he should consider whether he is taking the best course for bringing men’s minds into a *fit state* for the *reception* of truth, and for dispassionately *weighing* arguments, or whether he is using a kind of language that will rouse their resentment, and incite them rather to consider what may be urged *in reply*, than to examine how far there may be reasons for changing their persuasion.

“Let any one reflect how *he* would feel if any one were to *begin* an address to himself by intimating that the Pastors from whom he has learnt his religion are either knaves or fools,—that he himself, and his parents, and neighbours, are all of them fools for believing what they have been taught, and that all of them are in the road to perdition. Would not most men feel strongly tempted to reject at once with scorn and indignation one who so addressed them ?

“But some one will perhaps say,—‘*I* indeed should feel scorn and indignation, because the charges would be *false* ;—because *mine* is the *true* religion ; but the persons I am addressing *deserve* these reproaches ;—*their* religion is a system of error ; *they* ought therefore to submit with meekness, and to listen patiently to all that is urged against their religion.’

“You may reply,—‘Your indignation is roused, not because your religion *is* true, but because you *believe* it true ; and you are yourself well aware that a man may firmly believe what is *not* true. If you assail with ridicule or invective what he has been accustomed—however unreasonably—to hold sacred, will he not be too much shocked and disgusted to be in a fit state of mind to

listen patiently to the arguments on both sides? Is a false religion so much *superior to a true one* in teaching men to *control their passions*, that you can fairly expect from those in error such meekness under provocation as you do not find displayed by the advocates of truth?

“It is idle to say that if men will not listen to sound arguments, and *will* hold out against the truth, *it is their own fault*. They are in fault, no doubt; but this does not exculpate you, if you have set forth the truth in an offensive style. Remember that Paul, when exhorting his hearers not to put a stumbling-block in the way of weak brethren, by doing what might seduce them into idolatry, does not pronounce those weak brethren *blameless*; on the contrary, he speaks of the danger of their ‘perishing;’ but he will not allow *their* fault to serve as an excuse for one whose reckless conduct has been the occasion of their fall. And his reasoning will equally apply to any one who should give needless offence by his mode of combating his neighbour’s errors;—who should ‘strive,’ instead of ‘*meekly instructing* them that oppose themselves.’

“A case came under my knowledge, quite accidentally, (and I am disposed to think it not a *singular* one, since it is not likely that the *only* case of the kind should *accidentally* have been made known to me) of some Roman Catholics who consulted one of my Clergy in consequence of their having met with a book which treated of several points connected with their faith in a mild, friendly, and candid tone. It was the only book, they said, on such subjects, that they could ever endure to read; all others they had ever met with being in a style of bitterness and scorn which had roused their indignation. The ultimate result was, that they are at this moment sincere members of our Church.

“And yet the author of such a book as that which was mainly instrumental, under God’s blessing, in working that conversion, must make up his mind to be accounted lukewarm and indifferent, while he is exerting himself to set forth ‘all the counsel of God;’—timid, while he is braving censure from *all* parties;—and not knowing the Gospel, and a stranger to ‘the truth as it is in Jesus,’ on account of his care to conform to the spirit of the Gospel, by ‘speaking the truth in love.’

“But some deceive themselves as to this point by the earnestness with which they protest that they are anxious for the eternal welfare of those they address. They do not consider how *they* would feel if a Mahometan, professing (with great sincerity) a desire to save them by converting them to his faith, should *begin* by bitterly reviling the Apostle Paul, and all who teach that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, and should denounce eternal perdition against their parents and all their most valued friends. They forget, that—as I have already said—the disgust this would

excite is not because Paul *really is* a true Apostle, but because *we* are fully *convinced* of it.

“It was not in a style of angry and reproachful declamation that the Apostles began their addresses to the Jews and Proselytes at Antioch of Pisidia, and to the Heathen at Athens. Yet *they* were justified in using a much more authoritative tone than would become *us* who do not display sensible *miracles* as the ‘signs of an Apostle.’

“Many, however, are misled by their admiration of what is called a *powerful* discourse; forgetting that that is the most powerful which best effects the *object proposed*. If indeed you write for the purpose of gaining applause from your own party, the discourse which gains the most applause is of course the most powerful. But if it be your object to convince any one who before thought differently, how can that be *powerful* which fails of convincing them? or which, for every convert it makes, disgusts and repels three or four who might have been reclaimed?—like some violent medicine which perhaps effects a few notable cures, but kills many more than it saves. The power of a sample of gunpowder, or of a piece of ordnance, is tested, not by the loudness of the report, but by the depth of the *impression* made on the target.”

(C), page 28.

It is, for instance, a principle most would agree on, that it is not allowable to employ either bribery or intimidation, or any promise or threat, of temporal benefit or loss, as an inducement to any one to adopt or profess our views of religion. But we have need to be sedulously on the watch, in the application of this principle, against being seduced into something that may amount to an evasion of it.

Any alleged instances of the kind I have always carefully investigated; and I shall ever hold myself ready to discountenance to the utmost the resort to any such means in the cause of truth. But the charges of this kind that have been brought, are vague and general; and the authors of them, when called on to specify cases, and to adduce proofs, have hitherto failed to do so.

And I have ascertained, that, on the contrary, many of those who have lately joined our Church have been in consequence exposed to great hardships from being turned out of the employments by which they were gaining their bread, and, not seldom, assailed with personal violence.

From such treatment it surely is perfectly fair to protect those who are really sufferers for conscience sake, even though they should be conscientiously embracing a religion we might think erroneous.

Towards such an object, therefore, I felt no hesitation in giving aid, and in inviting the aid of others. For, every one must see how widely different this is from holding out any temporal *advantages*, or the prospect of any, as an inducement to persons either to profess our religion, or to receive—themselves or their children—instruction in its doctrines. If food for the hungry, or employment for those out of work (but not *turned out* of work, *after*, and in *consequence* of, their conversion), or secular education not otherwise procurable, for their children, or any other temporal benefits, are offered, on condition of accepting religious instruction from us, to those who do not seek it of their own free will, we cannot complain if we are charged with resorting to unfair means;—means, I may add, which, in the end, will, I am persuaded, not advance the cause of truth. But if we employ only argument and persuasion, and that, to such only as voluntarily listen to us, we are surely justified in endeavouring to protect those who follow the dictates of an unbiassed conscience, from being, for conscience sake, exposed to persecution, or doomed to starvation.

I subjoin a statement put forth by the Society which has been established for this object.

#### SOCIETY FOR PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF CONSCIENCE.

“THE Committee of the Society for Protecting the Rights of Conscience, having had the experience acquired by a steady course of action since December, 1850, feel constrained to come before the public in a more prominent manner than they considered themselves warranted in doing at the commencement of their proceedings. They are now in a situation to prove that persecution for conscience sake is not confined to a few localities or a few individuals; but that, in a variety of districts remote from each other, a bitter spirit of persecution is at work; often exhibited in personal ill treatment, though generally by exclusive dealing, and a total exclusion from all the ordinary means of earning subsistence; and that such conduct has been in many cases openly recommended, by persons from whom lessons of peace and good will towards men might be justly expected.

“The Committee recognize it as the right and duty of all men, to endeavour to persuade others to adopt their views of truth; but they protest against any attempt to attain such an object by violence or persecution. They have received from various districts most painful accounts of the perishing state of men, women, and their children; who, in obedience to the dictates of conscience, in matters which they consider essential to their salvation, have felt impelled to separate themselves from the communion of a church which they believe to be corrupt.

“The Committee wish it to be distinctly understood, that the

Society does not seek to *influence* any one in exercising the rights of conscience, but simply to *protect him from persecution* for doing so. As a Committee, they feel it to be their duty to keep themselves distinct from the various societies and individuals who are engaged in the work of education and instruction; for, as was well observed by one of their correspondents, ‘The societies engaged in giving the bread of everlasting life, cannot in any way relieve temporal distress.’

“The Committee feel the importance of guarding against every thing that can have even the appearance of offering a temptation to any person, to profess opinions which he does not really hold; and they are always careful to impress upon the minds of their correspondents to whom grants of money are made, that no part of the fund entrusted to them is on any account to be given except *as payment for work done*: that it should in no case exceed the rate established in their respective neighbourhoods for similar work; and should only be given to persons who have taken a decided stand for conscience sake; and have for some considerable time given satisfactory evidence of the sincerity of their profession, by patient endurance of persecution, and continuance in well-doing.”

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*Any information which may be required respecting the Society and its operations may be obtained on application to the Rev. Cadwallader Wolseley, the honorary secretary, 133, Stephen's Green, Dublin.*

*All the business of this Society is transacted by the honorary officers.*

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Contributions will be received as follows:—

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CONVERSIONS AND PERSECUTIONS:

A CHARGE

DELIVERED AT

THE TRIENNIAL VISITATION

OF THE

PROVINCE OF DUBLIN

IN THE YEAR 1853.

BY

RICHARD WHATELY, D.D.

*ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.*

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## CONVERSIONS & PERSECUTIONS.

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IT has not been my general custom, Reverend Brethren, on such occasions as the present, to dwell much on those topics which are equally suitable for all times, and for all places,—as, for instance, on the great doctrines of our religion, the importance of our Office, and the necessity of diligence and of discretion in the exercise of it. On all such points you must have, long since, often and seriously reflected; and if I could think you had not, I could not hope that anything I could now say would impress them on your minds.

It is more suitable to an occasion like this, to lay before you any remarks that may have occurred to me, relative to whatever circumstances may be at all peculiar, and characteristic of the time and place in which we find ourselves.

§ 1. Now, if any one were asked what it is that characterizes the present time, relatively to religious concerns, he would hardly fail to answer, that it is the struggle, which is now going on, with more than usual vehemence, between our Church and that of Rome.

*Struggle between the Churches.*

The conversions to Romanism, of late years, especially in England, though a very insignificant number, compared with the whole mass of the population, yet have far exceeded anything that can be remembered by the present generation, or by the preceding. And the number of recent conversions to our Church, in this island, is very much greater still.\*

It has often been remarked, that these latter have taken place chiefly among the humbler classes of society; and that, on the other hand, the secessions to the Church of Rome have been chiefly among the Gentry and the Clergy. And a stranger might be disposed, at the first glance, to consider this as forming a presumption, that education and intelligence are favourable to the cause of Rome, and that comparative ignorance and scanty intellectual culture, predispose men to the reception of Protestant views. But, on closer inquiry, he would find that those of the educated classes who have embraced Romanism, have done so, for the most part, by their own admission, not from investigation of evidence, and on grounds of rational conviction, but by deliberately giving themselves up to the guidance of feeling and imagination. Argumentative powers, indeed, and learning, several of them

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\* It is supposed that a still larger number of natives of this island, who have emigrated to America as Roman-catholics, have joined various Protestant communions there.

possess in a high degree; but these advantages they think themselves bound to lay aside, and to disparage, in all that pertains to religion. Though well qualified, by nature and education, to weigh evidence, they decry all appeal to evidence, either for the truth of Christianity generally, or of any particular doctrines,\* and place the virtue of faith in a ready reception of what a man is told, and which is congenial to his own sentiments, without any more "*reason* for the hope that is in him," than the Pagans have for *their* belief. They are led, and consider it right to be led, by a craving for the beautiful, the touching, the splendid, and the picturesque. They deliberately prefer what will afford the most scope for the exercise of their feelings, and the gratification of fancy, and they have joined the Church which best supplies what they desire.

I am not, you will observe, casting any imputation on the sincerity of their belief of what they profess. The question is not as to the reality of their conviction, but as to the grounds of it. Of course, when a man has once resolved, through the operation of any kind of bias, to adopt a certain system, he will be likely, afterwards, to seek for plausible arguments to justify, both to others and to himself, the course taken; and may, perhaps, end by believing, and making others believe, that these arguments were the cause of his decision, when, in

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\* See Appendix A.

truth, they are rather the effect of it. And though it is not allowable to impute to any one, without proof, such a bias, even when there may be reason to suspect it,—on the other hand, when any one acknowledges himself to have been thus biassed, there can be nothing rash or unfair in attributing his decision to that cause.

All the deference, therefore, which might be due to any one's learning or intelligence, must evidently be cast aside, when he is confessedly making his religious faith a matter of mere feeling and taste. All his superiority of reasoning-powers goes for nothing, in a case where he has repudiated the use of reason; even as the most clear-sighted and the most dim-sighted are on a level, when both are led blindfold.

The humblest peasants, therefore, who have set themselves seriously to inquire not for what is the most acceptable to their taste, but for what is true, and who have carefully examined and reflected, according to the best of the powers God has given them,—these are evidently bearing far stronger testimony in favour of the faith they adopt, than even ten times as many of the most intelligent and best-informed of the human race, who shall have resolved to abstain from all rational inquiry, and all careful reflection, and to give themselves up to the guidance of their feelings.

And that I have been giving no untrue or even exaggerated description of the state of mind of at

least a very large proportion of the persons in question, any one who doubts may convince himself, by an inspection of their publications; from which I might have given copious extracts, in confirmation of what has been said.\*

§ 2. As for the prospect now before us, in reference to the struggle I have been alluding to, whatever may be any one's calculations, hopes, or fears, respecting the future, almost all, I conceive, are now agreed as to one point, whereon much difference of opinion prevailed two or three years ago; that the great alarm then excited, on account of the mere unauthorized assumption of *titles*, was very much misdirected; and that whatever real dangers threatened the Protestant cause, were not to be guarded against by legislative enactments, such as that on which, two years ago, such a vast amount of time and labour was expended. You will probably remember my expression, at that time, of a conviction, that the law whose enactment had cost so much, would most likely be seldom or never enforced, and would effect no object, that could not have been effected as well, and far better, by a royal Proclamation. And you will also, perhaps, remember how much censure—a censure I was fully prepared to expect—was incurred by those who ventured to take such a view; though now, there are very few, if any, who are not fully convinced of its soundness.

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\* See Appendix B.

And not only is it true—and a truth now generally admitted—that it is not to legislative measures we are to look for the protection of our faith,—but this also is important to be perceived, and to be constantly kept in mind, that it is rather from within than from without that danger is to be apprehended. As the great Reformation itself originally sprung up within the very bosom of the Church of Rome, and was not the work of missionaries from some other church, so, the reaction which has in some instances led men back to the principles and practices against which the Reformers revolted, was not effected by the efforts of emissaries from Rome, but arose from the tendencies of human nature—those tendencies which originally produced in the Greek, and Roman, and Armenian Churches, one by one, those departures from primitive purity of doctrine and worship with which they are chargeable. It is for us, therefore, to keep in mind both portions, and not least the latter portion, of the Apostle Paul's warning to the Elders of Miletus and Ephesus, whom he entreats to “take heed to themselves,” inasmuch as he foresees that, “after his departure,” not only will “grievous wolves enter in, not sparing the flock,” but also “of *your ownelves*,” says he, “will men arise, speaking perverse [perverted] things, to draw away [the] disciples after them.”

*Persecution  
and tolera-  
tion.*

§ 3. As for external force—in the form, at least, of persecution by the Secular Power—from this trial we of

this realm are exempt. How it will be endured, and what effects will result from it, in some of the continental nations, remains to be seen.

The opinion to which I am myself the most inclined is, that persecution, where it stops short of total *extermination*, is seldom successful in its object. It is like the sun, which, in our Lord's parable of the Sower, when it "waxed hot, withered up" the seed that had fallen on a rock, and which "had no depth of earth," but destroyed not that "on the good ground." The careless and the weak-minded, having, as He expresses it, "no root, will in time of temptation fall away." But the most sincerely earnest-minded will not only themselves bear up against temporal afflictions, but, by the fortitude they exhibit, will be likely to produce an effect on others. Such fortitude will generally—as we see in the early history of Christianity and in the early history of the Reformation—first excite attention, afterwards sympathy, and perhaps admiration, and ultimately emulation, in those around.

The sympathy felt in this country for the sufferers for conscience sake, lately, in Italy, was also felt, we may be sure, by multitudes of their own countrymen; including, probably, many who had not adopted the same faith.\*

I should be glad to think that all, whether Italians

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\* I know as a fact, that petitions in favour of these sufferers were signed by several Roman-catholics.

or British, who did feel this sympathy, were actuated by a genuine abhorrence of the principle of intolerance in itself, and of everything partaking of that character. But of this we cannot in any case feel assured merely by the sympathy manifested (however sincere, and strong, and practically active) towards those who are suffering for what we consider a true faith. For every one knows that the most intolerant bigots cry out against all coercive measures directed against themselves, or those who agree with them. The cruel treatment, a few years since, by the Russians, of some Roman-catholics in Poland, was doubtless reprobated by those (among others) who have since been parties to a similar treatment of Protestants. And we can hardly venture to feel certain that some of those who eagerly expressed their sympathy with these last, may not have been ready to advocate penal laws, or civil disabilities and Protestant political "ascendancy," and, in short, the reducing of a portion of their countrymen, on religious grounds, to a state of helotism.

*Test of tolerant principle.* That a *pure* faith ought to be tolerated and protected, and its profession and propagation left unrestrained by law, is what all would admit. The test of a man's principle is, whether he is willing to extend the same toleration to what he regards as an *erroneous* faith—whether he reprobates penal laws, or any legal provisions that are at all of that character, employed for the

repression of what he considers a false religion. For, as there is no religion whose votaries would approve of persecution directed against themselves, so, a disposition to intolerance is far from being peculiar to the Church of Rome, or from deriving its origin from that. It has been found among Pagans, Mahometans, and Christians; among members of the Greek Church, and Armenians, and Roman-catholics, and Protestants. And though toleration is far better understood and practised now than formerly, there are to be found, even at the present day, Protestants who even refuse to call persecution by its name, when employed on their own side.

I have seen it maintained, for instance, in a work which enjoyed considerable repute a very few years ago, that, "though the magistrate who restrains and coerces or punishes those that attack and seek to overthrow a false religion, opposes himself to God, and is a persecutor, the magistrate, on the other hand, who restrains, coerces, or punishes those who aim at overthrowing a true religion, and substituting an erroneous one, *obeys the command of God*, and is *not a persecutor*." Now no one can doubt that this principle would be readily admitted and adopted by every persecutor throughout the world, since every magistrate will of course maintain that his is the *true* religion, and that which he opposes a false one. It would evidently be vain for us to tell any one of them that his faith is wrong, and that he is bound first to embrace the right religion, and then employ

the civil sword to “restrain, coerce, and punish” those opposed to it. He would, of course, reply that this is what he has already done—that it is he who is in the right, and that *ours* is the erroneous faith, and that, consequently, on our own principle, he “obeys the command of God, and is not a persecutor,” in employing his power against it.

*Results of intolerant principle.* § 4. The doctrine in question therefore manifestly tends, as far as it is adopted, to make the world one great battle-field of mutual bloody persecution.

And it tends also to destroy all rational grounds for believing Christianity to have come from God, and has accordingly contributed, probably in no small degree, to the rejection of it, which in some persons we have to lament. For they see that Jesus and his Apostles did evidently mean to be understood as disclaiming all design of leading or leaving their followers hereafter, when they should become strong enough, to “coerce and punish” by secular force all opponents of their religion, or to monopolize by law all civil rights and privileges. And if, in this disclaimer, they were insincere, and really did secretly entertain such designs as they openly disavowed, they must have been hypocritical and crafty impostors, and not messengers from the God of truth.

It is for this reason, among others, that I have so often and so earnestly dwelt on the subject, and have been content to undergo the strong censures

of those who take an opposite view. For *they* naturally regard as indifferent to Christianity, or even as hostile to it, all who reprobate the employment of coercion, or of the infliction of civil disabilities in the cause. But I have felt bound to dwell on the point as one which will be found, in proportion as any one reflects attentively, and reasons correctly, to involve the whole question of the truth of Christianity.\*

Since, however, these conclusions are not perceived by all, and since the doctrine I have been alluding to is not universally repudiated among Protestants, it were to be wished that all who really do reject it would come forward with honest boldness, whenever occasion offers, to protest, generally, against *all* persecution—I mean, against what is usually understood by the word, and what they would reasonably account persecution, if exercised towards themselves. It is true, they must expect in so doing to incur ill-will from many (among others) of those who profess the utmost detestation of persecution—that is, of persecution on one side. They will be stigmatized as inconsistent, eccentric, fanciful, latitudinarian; besides many still harsher epithets. But their “heart will condemn them not, nor He who is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.” And they will also secure, ultimately, the approbation of all who really understand and adopt the true spirit of the Gospel.

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\* See Appendix, Note C.

§ 5. In behalf, therefore, of any persons whom we may consider as sufferers in the cause of truth, we should express a twofold sympathy; a sympathy not merely with the rectitude of their faith, but also with suffering for conscience' sake generally, whether the religion in question be correct or erroneous.

I have heard it remarked as a reply to what I have been saying, that it is *natural* for us to feel and to express more sympathy for our own co-religionists when exposed to persecution, than for those who differ from us. This is perfectly true; and with equal truth it might be said that it is "natural" to Man to be more solicitous about his own welfare than about his neighbour's, and to resent more a wrong done to himself or his friends than to a stranger. But this very circumstance should be regarded as a reason, not for indulging, but for taking the more care to moderate, such self-partiality. Whatever duty men are *naturally* the most likely to overlook should be, on that account, the most sedulously enforced; even as the judicious agriculturist gives his care to the irrigation of a dry upland, and to the draining of a marsh. Our Lord accordingly exhorts his disciples to "love their enemies," not because it is more *natural* to love enemies than friends, but for the very opposite reason.

§ 6. In speaking of the duty of abstaining from and protesting against whatever we should *reasonably* account persecution

*Sympathy  
with sufferers  
for Conscience'  
sake.*

*Pretended  
persecution.*

if directed against ourselves, I added the word "*reasonably*," because one may sometimes find men making such complaints as they would consider utterly *unreasonable* and groundless if coming from another, and representing themselves as persecuted whenever they are restrained from wronging their neighbour. For instance, some agitators have of late been earnestly endeavouring to raise a general clamour as against some persecuting design, on account of the proposal to subject to official inspection any institution in which it is a *possible* thing that persons may be wrongfully confined and secreted. Bitter complaints were made of the cruel and unfounded charges brought, especially by myself, against Roman-catholic Convents; and the declaimers probably trusted to their readers and hearers taking all this for granted, and remaining ignorant of the fact that I had *never brought any charge* at all against any institution whatever, or against any religious communion; but had merely pointed out that *every* institution—Protestant or Roman Catholic—in which it is possible for a person to be secretly imprisoned, must naturally be open to suspicions, well or ill-founded, which can be effectually cleared up only by investigation and publicity; such publicity as would be most welcome to those who are conscious of no wrong, and whose blamelessness it would of course be most desirable to establish.

But those who deprecate investigation, and who

moreover complain of being slandered when nothing has been alleged against them, and fabricate charges which were never brought, they it is—as will sooner or later be generally understood—who raise an unfavourable presumption against themselves. For, according to the just French proverb, “to excuse yourself is to accuse yourself.” He who steps forward to complain of, and to reply to, accusations imagined by himself, will generally be understood to imply that there is some ground for such accusations. I for my part proceeded on the principle which I have always endeavoured to conform to, of doing as I would be done by. I wish every institution with which I am connected—whether a college, a school, an hospital, an asylum for female orphans (such as that in Dublin), or whatever else, to be open to such inspection as to prevent, as far as possible, either the actual existence of abuses within it, or again, the prevalence of any *groundless suspicion* of abuse in the public mind. I call for no *supervision*, no *restraint*, and no *protection* but what shall be extended to *all* alike, of whatever religious denomination.

*Rights of Conscience.* § 7. And this leads me to advert again to the Society to which I invited attention in my last charge—that for protecting the “Rights of Conscience.” The object of the society, *as* a society (I cannot of course answer for the private sentiments of each member or contri-

butor) is to mitigate the distresses of those who are suffering temporal loss and privation purely for conscience-sake. It is not *as* a Protestant, or as a convert, that any one receives aid from the society, nor even as a Protestant-convert in distressed circumstances, but as an industrious and well-conducted man who has been *excluded* from employment, and left to starvation, merely on religious grounds. And I myself will be ready (I cannot of course answer for others) to aid *any* such person *whatever* might be the religion he felt bound in conscience to embrace.

True it is that the persons whose distressed condition did lead to the formation of the society were, in point of fact, converts to our Church, and I know not at present of any others who are exposed to the like trial. I know of no one who is now suffering persecution from the members of our Church, for having conscientiously separated from it. If I did know of such a case, I should be far more grieved than at persecutions on the opposite side; and should hasten to take measures for relieving our Church from such a reproach. But as it is, the persons who actually need protection are Protestant-converts. The society however holds out no bounty on conversions. On the contrary we wish to prevent any one from obtaining or expecting any temporal advantage from embracing our faith, except what may arise from his own improved habits of frugality, industry, and temperance.

And it was with a view to guard as far as was possible against any expectations, or suspicions of this kind that the *title* of the society was—most deliberately and advisedly—fixed on. It is indeed quite right, and highly important, that societies should exist whose object is to impart religious truth. In fact our Church is itself such a society. But too much care cannot be taken to keep every such society quite distinct from any which affords pecuniary relief, lest an appeal to worldly motives should be introduced, or should even be with any reason suspected; and lest we should be supposed to maintain the rights of conscience then only when the faith adopted is our own. Now there is a great number of persons of various persuasions, both Protestants and Roman Catholics, who profess—many of them, we may hope, sincerely—to be advocates for religious liberty, and to hold that no man who is honest and peaceable ought to be punished or molested for serving God according to his conscientious conviction, even though others may think it an erroneous conviction. And these, however they may deprecate conversions from what they regard as a true faith, cannot feel, or at least cannot acknowledge that they feel, any objection to the protecting of the rights of conscience.

*Civil right  
and moral  
right.*

But you may meet with some persons not sufficiently accustomed to accuracy of thought and language,

who confound together *civil rights* with *moral rectitude*; and who, when you speak of a man's right to adhere to his own religious conviction, will understand you to be putting truth and error on the same level, and teaching that all religions are equally right, and equally acceptable in God's sight. But we do not mean that every man's religion is *right*; only that his neighbours have no right to molest him for it. We do not maintain such an absurdity as that whatever a man has a *right* to do he is therefore necessarily *right* in doing. And you may point out to such persons as I have been alluding to, that Parliament, for instance, has an undoubted right to *pass* or to *reject* any Bill; though it would be absurd to say that they would be *equally right whichever* they might do, and that to enact or not to enact a law is a matter of indifference. Indeed it is evident that if on the one hand this *were* a matter of indifference, or if on the other hand the right of deciding were not allowed, in either case a Parliament would be utterly useless.

Again, the law gives each elector a right to vote for whichever candidate he may prefer. But to infer that all the electors possessing this legal right are, therefore, equally right *in their judgment*, whether they vote for this candidate or for that, would be to say, that it is a matter of indifference who is elected.

And you may add, that when our Lord rebuked

his disciples for wishing to call down fire from Heaven on the Samaritan village which had refused to receive him, it was not his meaning that their rejection of Him was justifiable in God's sight; on the contrary, He declared, that it would be "more tolerable for Sodom in the Day of Judgment" than for those who rejected his Apostles. But He meant that the infliction of temporal penalties on misbelievers is contrary to the spirit of his religion.

*Alleged  
bribery.*

§ 8. As for the employment of bribery to obtain proselytes, I publicly stated, as you will remember, more than a year ago, that if, in spite of the most diligent precautions, any such cases had occurred, none such had come to our knowledge, or had been *specified and proved* by those who have put forth vague *general* accusations. And from all that has occurred since, I am enabled to repeat that statement now; and to repeat it as one that has received additional confirmation.

When, in a friendly manner, I applied, a good while ago, to a gentleman of my acquaintance, who had thrown out such charges, to specify any cases that had come to his knowledge, in order that I might take steps to put a stop to such practices, the only instance he produced of alleged bribery was one which had occurred sixteen years before the famine began! And every day that passes adds to the presumption that those who continue to bring

forward such charges without giving, when invited to do so, any proof of them, have in reality no proof to give.

And this presumption is still further strengthened by their representing me (in various speeches and publications) as having myself accused the clergy of such practices, and rebuked them for their conduct. That this is totally without foundation is well known, indeed, to those who have read what I published on the subject. But this probably never did fall in the way of those to whom such mis-statements were addressed. In proportion, however, as the truth becomes known, all persons will learn to distrust altogether those who put forward such audaciously groundless assertions.

All sincere and truly upright Roman Catholics, on the other hand, as they have always given me credit for deprecating any attempt to obtain proselytes, or pretended proselytes, by unfair means, so they would, if they really believed that any professed converts were won over by bribery, rather rejoice to rid their Church (as I should willingly rid mine) of such insincere and mercenary characters.

§ 9. Persecution—including under *Different kinds of persecution.* that name every sort of annoyance, loss, or inconvenience, which a man may suffer from others on account of his religion—may be divided into three kinds. 1. Violence done or threatened to person or property. 2. Harassing dis-

putations, troublesome remonstrances and solicitations, abuse, derision, curses, and denunciations of divine wrath, and all annoyances of that description, so far as there is no offence committed that the law can reach. And 3. Non-intercourse, and privation of employment.

It is only against this last that the society in question professes to provide succour.

As for assaults, robbery, or, in short, any kind of injury against which legal protection and legal remedies are provided, of these we take no cognizance, but leave men to seek for themselves that protection and those remedies.

And with respect to the second head, men should be instructed and exhorted to fortify *themselves*, through divine help, against trials of that kind. Arguments should be met by arguments, and slander by purity of life; reproaches and revilings should be met by gentle and patient firmness; and curses, or threats of perdition uttered by *man*, should be met by confident faith in the power and goodness of God. These trials are what our divine Master has seen fit that his People should often be exposed to, and should be required to endure in his cause, in order to show how far they are heartily devoted to Him. And he has declared, that "whosoever shall be ashamed of Him and of his Word, in an evil generation, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when He cometh in his glory."

§ 10. From these trials, then, we cannot effectually protect men. Nor would it be right to attempt holding out what may be called *countervailing* temporal motives to induce a man to support them. It would not be right, for instance, to counterbalance by pecuniary reward the dread of reproaches and derision, so as to induce any one for the sake of gain to profess openly what we are convinced is his real belief, but which he would otherwise shrink from avowing when it would expose him to those reproaches. Nor, again, would it be right to resort to anything that is at all of the character of compulsion, to induce men to take the course which we have reason to think they would really prefer if left to their own unbiassed choice, but from which they are deterred by threats, and the fear of displeasing those amongst whom they live.

It is vain to say—though it may often, no doubt, be said with truth—that such and such persons would really be themselves inwardly glad of the application of some kind of compulsion, such as might furnish them with a plea by which to mitigate reproaches, and to excuse themselves to some one of whom they stand in awe, by urging that they were *obliged* to do so and so; which, in fact, they were inwardly willing to do. It may be alleged, indeed, and often, in a certain sense, with truth, that such and such a person is not completely a free agent, and that he would do this or that if left to himself, but that he is under some

influence which leads him to act against his own unbiassed judgment. But it is not allowable for others to interfere in such a case, except by reasoning and persuasion. It is, indeed, allowable when the authority he submits to is usurped, to seek to convince him of this. We may urge him to despise threats which we are well assured are empty, and to stand firm against undeserved ridicule or censure, and to throw off all undue influence. But this is *all* that is allowable. It is only when illegal physical force is employed to restrain a man, that we may resort to forcible means for his rescue. If there is any influence which he chuses to submit to (however reluctantly) we must allow him to act according to that his choice, though convinced that it is not his unbiassed choice. To do otherwise, and to resort to coercion to induce any one to do what we conceive his unbiassed judgment would prefer, would be to introduce a most unwarrantable and dangerous principle, and one whose application might be carried to an indefinite extent, and fill the world with disorder. In fact it is, most emphatically, *the REBEL'S PLEA*. For in most cases of rebellion the insurgents profess great loyalty towards the sovereign, and a desire only to deliver him from evil counsellors, who induce him to act against his better judgment.

And such is, also, the usual plea of the *Invader*. For when any country is attacked by a foreign army—as Spain, for instance, twice within the present

century, and Rome very recently—it is generally professed to be a step taken for the good of the invaded people, to rescue them not only from a bad government and faulty institutions, but from such as they would themselves, if left to themselves, disapprove. And the invader professes merely a desire to put down those bad advisers who incite them to take arms against their deliverers.

With respect, then, to persecutions (if they are to be called such) of the class I have now been speaking of, we can properly and fairly interfere only by remonstrance to the one party, and by exhortation and encouragement to the other, and by offering sound instruction to both.

But when men are punished for fol- *Allowable*  
 lowing the dictates of their conscience, *protection.*  
 by refusing them employment, though honest and industrious, and by abstaining from all dealings with them; and when it is attempted thus to compel them to abandon their religion in order to avoid starvation, this is a hardship from which, as no law can give relief, so they may, and surely ought to be, relieved by individuals, or a voluntary combination of individuals. It is a case which cannot, I think, be regarded with indifference by any one who has any feelings of humanity, any sense of justice, or any conscientious convictions of his own. And I earnestly call, therefore, on all sincere Christians to use their best endeavours to make known and to advocate the claims of a Society so benevolent and

so pious in the object it proposes, and so pure and blameless in the means it employs.\*

*Points disputed among Christians.*

§ 11. It may be worth while on this occasion to advert, in conclusion, to some cautions which are important to be remembered by all who may be engaged, now or hereafter, in giving instruction to those brought up in a different persuasion, or in anything that is at all of the character of controversial discussion.

(1.) In the first place, we should be on our guard against giving too great prominence to points *disputed* among Christians, and bestowing too little attention on some matters of high importance, but which are not at the moment a subject of controversy.

I would not be understood to imply that this caution has been recently in practice disregarded. But it is evident that, from the very nature of controversy, it must always tend to draw a disproportionate attention to the points about which the con-

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\* Any information respecting the Society may be obtained by application to the Rev. C. Wolseley, Merton, Sandford, near Dublin. Contributions will be received as follows:—

William Hogan, Esq., Treasurer, Haddington-terrace, Kingstown.

The Office of the Irish Society, Sackville-street, Piccadilly, London.

The Rev. Thomas M. Moeran, Washington-street, Liverpool.

The Rev. G. W. Grogan, Lower Close, Norwich.

The Bank of Taylor and Lloyds, Birmingham.

„ Gurney and Co., Norwich.

„ Mortlock and Son, Cambridge.

„ Wakfield, Crewdson, and Co., Kendal.

„ Manchester and Salford, by P. M. James, Esq.

troversy lies; and that, accordingly, there will be a danger of that result, unless especial care be taken to guard against it. And the history of almost every controversy that has ever existed goes to confirm this expectation. Indeed, I have myself, before now, met with persons who were well acquainted with the arguments on both sides, on the chief points of difference between our Church and that of Rome, but extremely deficient in every other portion of religious knowledge.

§ 12. (2.) Another caution that I would suggest is, to guard against being parties to or countenancing any such irregular and disorderly proceedings, in the efforts to enlighten those of another Church, as may tend ultimately in various ways to weaken our own cause.

*Caution  
against dis-  
orderly pro-  
ceedings.*

If, for instance, some such plan should be adopted as we have heard rumours of—that of sending forth from England a host of Missionaries, of Churchmen and Dissenters internixed—appointed (I may say *ordained*, since that is what it virtually amounts to) by a self-constituted Association, without any reference to the existing Authorities of our Church—without any security for their soundness of doctrine, or their discretion, or their acquaintance with the *language* of a large portion of our population—without any profession of being attached to our Church, or even not hostile to it—and without any responsibility except to the Body which thus ap-

points them—if such a scheme should be set on foot, I am convinced that any countenance given to it by any of *us*, would involve a danger (besides others) of favouring the charge brought against us, of internal disunion and indifference to our own Church.

Far indeed should we be from feeling any resentful jealousy, or offering any opposition, if Protestants of any other religious communion—even in many points opposed to us—chuse to come forward to advocate principles common to us and them. But this they can do even more effectually by acting independently, and without any formal compact with us; especially such a compact as would imply a disregard on our part of the constituted Authorities of our own Church. That Protestants are not agreed among themselves is indeed what is perpetually urged by Roman Catholics. But this evil is not at all lessened (as some might on a hasty view suppose); but, on the contrary, is much aggravated by any such Alliance of Protestants of different denominations as may be formed independently of the Governors, and in defiance of the Rules, of their own respective communities, and which must thus tend to engender fresh divisions within each.

Without being so bigoted to any particular form of Church-government as to insist that no other is permitted by Scripture, one who is an actual member of a certain Church, may consistently, and must, if he act on Scripture-principles, show a dutiful

reverence for the regulations and constituted Authorities of that Church to which he does belong.

I am convinced, therefore, that those of you who take this view are bound not only to act on it, each one for himself, but also to agree together to support each other in refusing to countenance any such irregular proceedings.

As for the Clergy of my own Diocese, they have, long since, received an admonition, which no one will disregard who has due reverence for the oath he has taken, not to admit into their pulpits (except in case of a sudden and unavoidable emergency) any stranger, without my permission; a permission which, I need hardly say, has never been refused, except on such grounds as every one would acknowledge to be reasonable.\*

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\* The following I have on perfectly good authority, which I am able to produce: A person, professing to be a Protestant clergyman, a convert from Romanism, presented himself, not many months ago, to the magistrates of Rotterdam, applying for the requisite licence to give lectures on some theological subject. On close inquiry, he was found to be a disguised Jesuit, having authority from his Superior to play the part he did.

He was detected through the inquiries of the Rev. Professor Reville, who found that, though professing to have been admitted by some *English Bishops* into the communion of our Church, he was unable to produce *testimonials from them*. In fact, he had presented himself to the Bishop of London, who had *detected the imposture*.

Should he, and others of a similar description, think fit to attempt introducing themselves among the host of missionaries who may be undertaking "to evangelise Ireland," they will probably proceed more warily.

*Irish-speaking districts.* § 13. (3.) Another suggestion which I would make, has reference to those Irish-speaking districts in which the clergy are, unhappily, ignorant of the language of a great portion of their parishioners. To every conscientious minister so circumstanced this must be a matter of deep regret. And he will not fail to endeavour to supply the deficiency by securing the services of a curate, or, at least, of a catechist, reader, parochial visitor, or assistant of some kind, who does possess a knowledge of the popular language. But in such a case double care should be taken that a person who must be so fully trusted should be fully worthy of confidence, since else he might do incalculable mischief, and bring lasting discredit on our religion.

And I would earnestly exhort at least the younger clergy, as many of them as are appointed, or are at all likely to be appointed, to such a Cure, to strive to qualify themselves to address, and freely to converse with, their parishioners, in the language with which these are familiar.

I am happy to say that in each successive provincial Visitation I have observed a progressive improvement in this point—a point on which, from the very first I have always dwelt with so much earnestness. It is much more rarely now than formerly that I hear the excuse offered that “all the Protestants (perhaps four or five per cent. of the population) understand English;” forgetting that

the rest have never had any opportunity—nor perhaps their forefathers—of receiving any Protestant instruction that they could understand.

I trust that before long this heavy reproach to our Church will have been completely wiped away.

§ 14. (4.) I cannot conclude without again adverting to the caution I have more than once given before, *Caution against violent language.* against being betrayed into the employment of any intemperate, bitter, or scornful language towards those we consider as in error. I advert to this, not as having to complain of the fault as now prevalent among the advocates of our faith, but chiefly because there has been of late so much of peculiarly violent language from some of those on the opposite side, that the utmost care is needed to guard ourselves, not only against being dismayed, and discouraged, but also against being provoked into anything like retaliatory violence. It is for us to conform to the apostolic precepts—"not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but, contrariwise, blessing" [1 Pet. iii. 9]: and "in nothing terrified by our adversaries; which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to us, of salvation." But I really have observed, and, of course, with great satisfaction, that an improvement in this respect has taken place—that the tone of Protestant controversialists is generally more moderate and discreet now than some years ago. Not that there were not always a good many—and those among

the soundest and the most zealous Protestants—who were “gentle unto all men, in meekness instructing them that oppose themselves.” But I think that this rule is now more generally understood and acted on than formerly.

Still, we must expect that there always will be some who will indulge in angry declamation, and the language of insolent scorn. And these you may expect to find vilifying as lukewarm or as timorous any one of you whose tone is courteous and modest, and to hold him up to contempt and reprobation no less than their avowed opponents.

It may be, too, that you will find that some others, and perhaps a far greater number, who in their hearts utterly disapprove of all this violent invective, will shrink from all public declaration of their disapprobation, lest they should themselves be thus denounced. Through selfish timidity they will perhaps content themselves with expressing *privately* to intimate friends their sense of the injustice done to you, and of the damage our common faith suffers from such intemperate declaimers; who thus attract, by the openness and publicity of their proceedings, an undue degree of notice, and are often reckoned as more numerous than they really are, because those of different sentiments have not enough of generous boldness to step forward and declare them.

But those who are thus assailed by their brethren, may derive, in one respect, even a satis-

faction from that very circumstance. It most effectually *disconnects* them from those whose intemperate conduct is likely to injure any cause they are engaged in. Deeply indeed is it to be lamented when a good cause does suffer damage (far beyond what opponents can inflict) from the unwise or violent conduct of any of its advocates. But as you are bound to diminish as far as possible that damage, by disavowing all participation in such conduct and all approbation of it, so, this disavowal will come with double force if you are yourselves reprobated or insulted by the very same parties. This will show more effectually than anything said by yourselves, that you and the cause you are engaged in are not chargeable with the faults of its intemperate advocates. And thus those very faults may become, under an over-ruling Providence, the means of remedying some part of the evils they produce.

Let not any one, then, while pursuing the course of christian duty, allow himself to be either provoked or discouraged by unmerited reproach and opposition; but while remembering WHO it was that sent forth His followers "as sheep among wolves," charging them to be "wise as serpents and harmless as doves," let him remember also that He, that same Divine Master vouchsafed before long to bless with success the labours of those followers, and to grant, through peaceful and seemingly feeble instruments, a glorious victory to his holy cause.

## A P P E N D I X.

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(A), page 7.

*Works on Evidences.*

I AM sorry to say that the system of deprecating any resort to Evidences, and placing the virtue of faith in a blind and uninquiring acquiescence, finds advocates among professed Protestants. A passage (by way of specimen), from the *British Critic*, the organ of the Tract party, and one from the *Edinburgh Review*, belonging to quite a different school, I have more than once reprinted in parallel columns with a passage from an avowed infidel writer, Hume, with which they strikingly agree, and with some from the New Testament, with which they exhibit a striking contrast. They were last reprinted in No. 11 of the *Cautions for the Times*. And several more extracts from other writers might have been added.

As for the Church of Rome, it has been, I find, publicly declared by high Authorities in that Church that, to distinguish the virtue of Faith from blind credulity, and to place it in "proving all things, and holding fast that which is right"—in being candidly open to conviction, and prepared to embrace heartily whatever there is good ground to believe comes from God, is a doctrine at variance with the fundamental principles of the Church of Rome.

To dispute this, would perhaps be presumptuous in a Protestant. But certain it is that all this was far from being admitted a few years ago. On the contrary, the late *Roman-Catholic Archbishop Murray* deliberately sanctioned, for the use of schools, after careful examination, the very book against which the above censure has been fulminated. And moreover the late Pope, to whom it was transmitted, had it read to him into Italian, and found it unobjectionable. Nay, during the reign of the present Pope, it has been translated into Italian by a Roman-catholic priest at Florence, with the sanction of his Diocesan.

How this discrepancy is to be explained I know not. It should seem that (as I remarked in my last Charge) those who are ready to sacrifice *every* thing for *unity*, fail, after all, to obtain even a semblance of it.

If it be true that the fundamental principles of the Church of Rome have changed within a few years, and that now those who profess to be governed by a successor of the Apostle Peter, set at nought his exhortation to be "always ready to give a *reason* of the hope that is in us," we may well exclaim "Oh ancient House, how hast thou changed masters!"\*

However, a majority of the Education-Commissioners have felt themselves bound to conform to this new decree, by prohibiting a book which had received the unanimous sanction of the Board, and had been in use for about fifteen years in the National Schools. Others of the books have also been denounced; and it is to be presumed will soon share the same fate.

I for my part pointed out that the Commissioners were bound in honour to retain books which have been so sanctioned, inasmuch as it was indisputably *on this understanding* that many persons have been invited and induced to establish schools in connexion with the Board; and that no one, whether advocate or opponent, whether approving or disapproving of the books, ever thought of such a thing as their being withdrawn. Indeed if any opponent had ever ventured to say in Parliament,—“This is all a delusion; we are wasting time in discussing the merits of books which may very likely be erased from the list next week; they are only a *bait* to attract the over-trustful, and bring them to place schools under the Board; and as soon as the deception has answered its purpose, they will be withdrawn;”—no one can doubt that such an imputation would have *been repelled with indignation and disgust*.

So great therefore, and, in my view, so unjustifiable an innovation having been commenced, I could not but see that the system which has flourished for upwards of twenty-one years, has been in fact abandoned; and I have been accordingly compelled to consider myself dismissed.

(B), page 9.

*Extracts from the Writings of Converts to Romanism.*

“So long,” says the Rev. Frederick Oakley, “as the Church of England impressed my own conscience, in spite of her many anomalies, as an adequate object of loyalty and affection, I not only elung to her, but gave myself up to her, *without examining*

\* “O domus antiqua, heu quam dispari dominata domino!”—Cic. *de Off.*

*the question of her historical claims upon my acceptance. And so now, without knowing definitely how Rome makes out her pretensions from the history of past ages (a most interesting question nevertheless, and one which I am delighted to think is so soon to receive elucidation), I bow myself before her, because she plainly corresponds with the type of the Catholic Church, which is deeply and habitually impressed upon my whole moral and spiritual nature.*—*Letter on Submitting to the Catholic Church*, p. 318. And, again, “I find absolutely nothing in the system of the Anglican Church to correspond with *these instincts* of which, nevertheless, I am conscious; on the contrary, everything to disappoint and repel them. . . . I am as sure as I can be sure of anything, that the thought of a Christian bishop ought to elicit a train of *reverent and affectionate emotions*. . . . Now I am actually, and have long been, *conscious of feelings* which, in such an object of devoted loyalty and affection, would find *their adequate and only correlative*. *To the best of my belief, these feelings* would, in the Roman Communion, be allowed their free range and proper satisfaction.”

“It is not,” says Mr. Ward, “that she [the Catholic Church] has called on her children to receive her *doctrines* because they are satisfied of her *authority*. She has never allowed them to *examine* her authority any more than her doctrines. ‘Put away from you doubt’ has been her language, ‘put away from you doubt, as being sinful: *believe* what you learn, and act on it: you will sufficiently prove to yourselves both the truth of what I say, and of my authority for saying it, by *means* of believing and acting.’ . . . The *very same principle* has been at work throughout, in that remarkable movement within our own Church, of which so much has been said. . . . When the eyes of English Churchmen were opened, by God’s grace, some twelve years ago, to discern the fearful precipice towards which religious opinion was hastening among us, they *altogether eschewed the idle and ridiculous child’s play of examining between rival doctrines by means of patristic and scholastic studies*. Had *such* been their course, our Church might have been finally ruined, while they were sitting at home and making up their mind. No! they saw at once that *authority* was the element which was wanting, and they stepped forward as advocates for authority. There *was* a recognised and standard *principle* of authority in the English

Church; to that they appealed,—on that, as on a firm basis, they took their stand,—on that they planted the lever which, so they hoped, might disturb, overthrow, revolutionise the system then dominant in the Church. To this the Anglican view of doctrine, they at once summoned others; this view they *accepted themselves with undoubting confidence*; well knowing that the mere carrying it into effect would sufficiently ensure its being borne onwards into its full proportions, should it really want consistency; or crumbling from its own rottenness, should it be really untenable. True it is that the language of many among them was rather of free inquirers into the Fathers, than of upholders of the principle of faith; but this is only one out of innumerable instances in every age, where serious and holy men act rightly, and defend their acts wrongly. And whoever will at the present day carefully peruse Mr. Newman's work on the *Prophetical Office* . . . will see that *he* based his adherence to Anglicanism on those principles of Faith, which he has so prominently witnessed.

“And what has been the result of this most pious and religious procedure? . . . The principles which have been, throughout, the centre rallying point and spring of the exertions that have been made,—these have so fruitfully expanded and germinated in the mind of many that had embraced them, that we find, oh! most joyful, most wonderful, most unexpected sight! *we find the whole cycle of Roman doctrine gradually possessing numbers of English Churchmen.*”—*Ideal*, pp. 363—365.

Elsewhere he quotes with approbation, from Newman's *University Sermons*, p. 40, the following passage: “A truth is implied all through Scripture, *as a basis on which its doctrine rests*—viz., that there is no necessary connexion between the intellectual and moral principles of our nature: that on religious subjects *we may prove anything or overthrow anything, and can arrive at the truth but accidentally*, if we merely investigate by what is called reason; which is, in such matters, but the instrument at best, in the hands of *the legitimate judge, spiritual discernment.*” This “spiritual discernment” Mr. Ward calls “conscience;” and of “conscience” he gives the following account; all parts of which I do not profess very clearly to understand, but the general result of it seems to be that “conscience” (in this sense) describes certain feelings of blind deference to authority, veneration, and spiritual taste. “Conscience, viewed in the

abstract, has no power of discovering more than the immutable principles of morality. But in proportion as it is pure and well-disciplined, it discriminates and appropriates moral and religious truth of whatever kind, and disposes the mind to listen to this external message rather than to that: while each new truth thus brought before it from without, in proportion as it is deeply received and made the subject of religious action and contemplation, elicits a deep and hitherto unknown harmony from within, which is the full warrant and sufficient evidence of that truth. Viewed then in the concrete, as found in the devout believer, we may regard *conscience* and *faith* to be one and the same faculty: considered as submissively bending before external authority and ever deriving more of doctrinal truth, we call it faith; considered as carefully obeying the precepts of which it has knowledge, and as laboriously realizing and assimilating the truths of which it has possession, we call it conscience. And thus we see in part the reasonableness of unquestioning belief; for, on the one hand, it is by this very act of firm belief, that we are able really to grasp a moral opinion, and derive from it the full treasure of truth with which it is charged; while, on the other hand, our preservative against real error, is not the balancing of evidence, but the witness of a good conscience. The external opinion may be in greater or less degree erroneous; but the inward *belief*, the impression which we derive from it in our innermost heart, in our Spiritual nature (so only our conscience be pure) may be inadequate indeed, but so far as it goes, is true and sound.”—*Ideal*, pp. 512, 513.

I will add an extract from Mr. Newman's *Lectures on Justification*, which I find in Mr. Ward's book:—"The Apostles then proceeded thus: *they did not rest their cause on argument*; they did not appeal to eloquence, wisdom, or reputation; nay, nor did they make miracles necessary to the enforcement of their claims. They did not resolve faith into sight or *reason*; they contrasted it with both, and bade their hearers believe, *sometimes in spite*, sometimes in default, and sometimes in aid, of sight and reason. They exhorted them to make trial of the Gospel, since they would find their account in so doing, &c., for faith, as a principle of knowledge, cannot be analyzed or made intelligible to man, but is the secret, inexplicable, spontaneous movement of the mind (however arising) towards the external word,—a movement not to the exclusion of sight and reason, for the miracles appeal to both, nor

of experience, . . . but *independent of sight or reason before, or of experience after.*"

Many more extracts might be given both from those who already have, and those who have not yet joined the Church of Rome, but these are surely sufficient.

(C), page 15.

*Civil Disabilities on Religious Grounds.*

IT was on these grounds, and not on political calculations, or for the sake of gaining the favour of any class of persons, that I always have advocated the removal of civil disabilities from those of every religious persuasion. If a *monopoly*, established by law, of civil rights in favour of Christians, as such, or of members of any particular Church, does not, as far as it extends, go to make Christ's kingdom a kingdom of this world, I do not understand what *can*.

When a bill for removing Jewish disabilities was brought in this session (having, I believe, for the fourth time passed the House of Commons), I was again compelled to explain my views on the subject, because they differ so much from those not only of the opponents, but of many of the advocates, of the bill.

The eulogies and apologies on the one side, and the various arguments on the other, against the propriety of a Jew's sitting in Parliament, are equally and entirely irrelevant to the question that was before my own mind; which is, not whether a Jew is or is not a fit person, or the fittest person, to have a seat in the House; but whether the *electors* should be left to decide for themselves in each particular case, or ought to be left under a virtual, (though *accidental*,) restriction in their choice, by retaining certain words in an oath which all admit were never *designed* to have that effect; the oath being meant as a profession not of orthodoxy but of loyalty.

To the arguments which I used on the late, and on several former occasions, I have never heard even the least attempt at an answer. All that has been said and written on the subject—in some instances with much ingenuity—has reference to a different question from that which I was considering. And accordingly, the more numerous and the more able are the advocates of the restriction in question, the more I am confirmed in my own view; on the ground, that if the reasons on which it is

based would admit of refutation, they would surely have received one before now.

And indeed this seems to be now admitted on both sides. For when, on the last occasion, I once more urged that if to remove Jewish disabilities must *unchristianize* the Legislature, it must equally *unprotestantize* the Legislature to remove Roman-catholic disabilities; and *unchurch* the Legislature to make Dissenters admissible—that if the one implied *indifference to Christianity*, the other must equally imply indifference to our own Protestant Church; and that consequently, to be consistent, we must retrace our steps, and repeal all acts of toleration—when this was urged, it was distinctly admitted on the opposite side that such was a perfectly clear logical conclusion. But it was contended that in religious questions all the deductions of reason ought to be disregarded, and that our decisions ought to be based not on arguments, but on feelings. And this, though not *expressly* stated by all who voted on that side, seemed to be tacitly admitted by all; since none of them came forward to disclaim such admission, and to offer proof that the conclusion did *not* follow.\*

Now this may be considered as a great step gained. For though any erroneous principle may prevail, and may be acted on for an indefinite time, as long as the reasoning on which it rests is supposed to be sound (even though the fallacy may have been clearly pointed out by a few), when once it comes to be *generally admitted* that there *are* no rational grounds for it, not many years will elapse before it is abandoned. For a time, indeed, there will be many who will urge that “so and so is true in *theory*, but does not hold good in *practice* ;” but the number of these will gradually and steadily diminish, and before long men will summon courage to act on what they have already admitted to be the conclusions of sound reasoning.

When the fallacies on which was based what is called “The Commercial System,” which had been acted on for Ages, were first exposed by Adam Smith and others, men clung for a time to the old system, in *practice*, even after its unsoundness had been acknowledged to have been proved. Habit, and aversion to trouble, and a vague dread of change, and the self-interest of a

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\* It is observed by Hobbes, that “When reason is against a man, he will be against reason.”

few individuals, contributed to prevent *confessedly* sound principles from being *at once* carried out. But when this confession has been *generally* made, a certain and not very remote practical triumph of such principles may be anticipated.

I cannot doubt, therefore, that within a very few years at the utmost, an alteration of the law will be adopted, and that we shall no longer have to witness the painful spectacle of a disagreement between the two Houses of Parliament (and that continued in several successive Parliaments), on a point in which such an opposition is the more strikingly unseemly, inasmuch it relates to the qualifications required of a member of the *House of Commons* for taking his seat ; of which accordingly *that* House may not unreasonably claim to be a fair judge.

And I trust that some better remedy will be provided for this evil than has hitherto been attempted ; that instead of a Bill for the *relief of Jews*—as if *their* benefit alone were contemplated—a Bill will be passed for the *relief of electors*, by removing all requisitions of a profession (which was in reality *never designed*) of a man's religious faith, and leaving the choice of the electors practically free, in a matter wherein it was never intended to fetter them.

I myself, if consulted privately by any friend as to the disposal of his vote at an election, should advise him to give a preference not only to a professed Christian, but to one whom he believed to be both a sincere Christian and a sound member of our Church. But to withdraw the matter from his own choice, and that in a case where it is not even pretended that any danger to the Public is to be guarded against, and where the very oath in question is known not to have been framed with any such design, does seem to me—besides the discredit it reflects on our religion (the consideration which, with *me*, far outweighs all others) to be an unwarrantable interference with freedom of election.

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THOUGHTS

ON

CHRISTIAN MORAL-INSTRUCTION:

THE NECESSITY, AND THE MODE OF  
IMPARTING IT.

A CHARGE,

DELIVERED TO THE

CLERGY OF THE DIOCESES OF DUBLIN, GLANDALAGH,  
AND KILDARE,

AT THE VISITATION,

*In June and July, 1854.*

BY RICHARD WHATELY, D.D.

*ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.*

LONDON:  
JOHN W. PARKER AND SON, WEST STRAND.  
DUBLIN:  
HODGES AND SMITH, GRAFTON STREET.

MDCCCLIV.



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# A C H A R G E,

ETC.

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MY REVEREND BRETHREN,

ALTHOUGH I have on several former occasions adverted to the struggle which for some time past has been going on with much more than ordinary ardor, between those who are supporting and endeavouring to extend the principles of our Reformation, and their opponents, open and secret, you will be neither surprised, I trust, nor displeased, at my repeatedly returning to the subject; because not only is it one of great interest and importance, but there are moreover many *different* points connected with it; each of which is well worthy of a separate and most attentive consideration.

*Struggle between the Reformed and the Unreformed Churches.*

On one or two occasions accordingly, I called your attention to the questions concerning legislative enactments in favour of our religion,—penal laws,—and all, whether aggressive or protective, interference of the Civil Power in that cause.<sup>1</sup> I have also adverted, on some late occasions, to some important changes in doctrine which appear

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<sup>1</sup> See Note A. at the end.

to have taken place in the Romish Church; what was not merely tolerated, but deliberately sanctioned and recommended by the highest authorities in that Church, for above twenty years, being now denounced, by equally high authorities, as unsound and dangerous.

Which of the two are the wiser, in reference to the system of that Church,—whether it be favourable or unfavourable to that system that any knowledge of anything at all connected with religion, and not imbued with exclusively Romish doctrine, should be diffused among the mass of the People—this is a question which I do not undertake to decide. It is one on which the late, and the present holders of the highest offices in the Church of Rome are completely at issue. And in my examination, lately, before a parliamentary Committee, I was unable to offer any explanation on this point.<sup>1</sup>

Of the course pursued by myself, I was enabled to give, I trust, a satisfactory account. For, whatever doubts there may be as to what is expedient

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<sup>1</sup> Though the evidence taken before this Committee is not yet published, a portion of it, consisting of important correspondence (more full than that in the Appendix to the "Address" I published last summer) has been printed by the order of the House of Lords, where it can now be had. Perhaps, however, the most decisive testimony is that of opponents. Not only in private whispers, but in published Periodicals, it has been represented that my removal from the Education-Board originated in my endeavouring, contrary to the principle I have always adhered to, to *compel* children to read books of which their parents conscientiously disapproved. And in every

or inexpedient with a view to the interests of the Church of Rome, or for any other object, I cannot see what doubt there can be as to the plain duty of a public servant employed for a certain specified purpose. As for undertaking the office of carrying on a well-known and long-established system, with a design to subvert it—misapplying public money, by employing it in a way different from the known design with which the grant was made—taking advantage of some subtle interpretation of the letter of a law, in order to defeat its known intention,—and breaking faith with the Public, by withdrawing rights secured by a virtual promise, fully understood as such by all parties, and on the strength of which, co-operation had been invited and obtained—how all this is to be reconciled with those principles of rectitude which we expect in all human transactions, I am as much as ever at a loss to understand.

Another point to which I have more than once adverted, is the alleged employment of bribery, or

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one of the most important points, statements equally contrary to fact have been so boldly and so industriously circulated, that some whom I believe to be quite incapable of wilful falsehood have been misled by them. For, the very audacity of an assertion will often, for a time, impose upon the Public; it being thought inconceivable that any one should put forth mis-statements open to easy and speedy refutation. And in fact, hardly any one, however unscrupulous, would do so, except in a desperate cause, for which nothing can be urged with truth. Such mis-statements therefore become, ultimately, a strong testimony in favour of the party assailed by them.

some form of worldly inducement, for the winning of proselytes.<sup>1</sup> The authors of this accusation have, as I suppose you are well aware, proclaimed themselves unworthy of credit, and regardless not only of truth, but even of the semblance of it, by representing *me* as having imputed such conduct to the Clergy; when the very Address referred to, containing no hint of any such imputation, was actually before the Public, in print.

True it is, I have often put forth earnest warnings against doing anything that might even raise a reasonable suspicion of a resort to unfair means. But I have no doubt that you also (and indeed all Christian Ministers, whether Roman Catholic, or Protestant, of every Denomination,) are accustomed to *warn* your hearers, from time to time, of the various temptations they may be exposed to. And it is not usual to consider each Minister as *imputing* to the members of his Congregation, every fault against which he cautions them; else, a most unfavorable conclusion will be drawn, either against him, or against them.

When, however, I earnestly warn you to be scrupulously careful about the character of any Scripture readers or other Agents you may employ, and to watch and scrutinize their conduct afterwards, with the utmost vigilance, and to sift accu-

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<sup>1</sup> See an excellent Article (the first) in the *Irish Church Journal*, for June, 1854.

rately every statement made respecting the progress of Gospel truth, and every religious profession, lest you should be imposed on by the fraudulent, or give ear to exaggerated representations,—when I earnestly warn you to be on your guard against such dangers, I shall perhaps be represented as imputing dishonesty to those you employ, and insincerity to the converts; and, to you, rash credulity, or wilful misrepresentation.

Again, on some other occasions, I have dwelt on the evil done, by the employment, in a good cause, of violent or contemptuous language; as more likely to irritate than to convince or persuade those in error. And in this point also, I was so far from imputing this fault (against which we cannot be too sedulously guarded) to Protestants of the present day, that I took occasion to remark on the improved tone which has of late years prevailed: though still there are some who do great damage to the cause even now, either by their own deficiency in christian courtesy and meekness, or by thoughtlessly lending their countenance to others who use such intemperate language as they would never employ themselves. So prone is Human Nature to let a just abhorrence of gross and destructive corruptions of religion, degenerate into animosity against the *persons* who hold such errors, that we should not be content with merely ourselves abstaining from offensive expressions, but should also protest against and discountenance all those who

in their language depart from the Apostles' admonition, not to "strive, but to be gentle unto all men, in meekness instructing them that oppose themselves."

All these points, to which I have before now called your attention, and several others besides, though closely connected with the subject of conversions to, and from, Romanism, are yet quite distinct from each other, and deserving each of a separate and attentive consideration.

*Christian moral-instruction.* § 2. In laying before you some remarks on the subject of moral teaching, both generally, and especially as given to Converts, I shall perhaps be exposed to the same misrepresentation as I have just noticed in reference to charges of bribery. I shall perhaps be represented as imputing to the recent converts, and to you, a neglect of moral duties. But if any one does but take care so to express himself as never to be misunderstood by well-disposed and candid hearers, he need not be disquieted at any wilful misinterpretations. *They* will, before long, bring discredit not on him, but on their authors and propagators.

That those who have recently joined our Church, have, as a general rule, exhibited a marked improvement in their moral conduct, I have reason to be fully convinced. But I would warn every one against being led by this, into a hasty security as to that point. For, you should remember that

those who have been among the first to dare to encounter obloquy, derision, privations, and often severe persecution, in embracing on deliberate conviction, what they regard as a true faith, will have been actually practising a very difficult virtue; and will therefore be such as may be expected to make the rest of their life of a piece with that beginning. The sacrifices already made by them will have both *proved* and *fortified* their virtue. But as persecution abates, and converts multiply, it may be expected that more and more persons will join their ranks, whose moral principles are less pure, or less firm. And moreover, the secondary motive (and though a secondary, it is a legitimate, and a very strong motive) of wishing to recommend the cause one has embraced, by marked correctness of conduct, and to dread bringing any discredit on it,—this is always found to operate the most strongly at the *beginning*, and when the cause is supported by but a small minority. In proportion as any cause becomes popular and strong, its adherents are apt to become more secure, and to relax their vigilance as to their own and their companions' conduct.

We may see instances of the operation of that secondary motive I have been speaking of, and of its subsequent relaxation, in the history of many Sects and Parties, including the most erroneous. For instance, that most extraordinary modern sect, the Mormonites, began by pretensions (among

other things) to a peculiarly strict morality. And it is certain, that, for a time, their conduct was, apparently at least, so conformable to these pretensions, as to have contributed not a little to the attracting of proselytes. It was not till after they had gained great strength, that they introduced and sanctioned that outrageous profligacy which had been by their original laws strictly forbidden. And again, the moral code of the Koran, and the practice of Mahomet and his first adherents, became relaxed, as is well known, in proportion as their numbers and their strength increased.

And that this is not a danger to which *false* religions alone are liable, we have abundant proofs in Scripture. Even so early as the times of the Apostles, we find that many had begun to join the Christian ranks whose conduct was such as to bring discredit on their profession. We find,—besides many other earnest warnings to this effect—Paul speaking to Timothy of men “considering the profession of Christianity as a source of profit.”<sup>1</sup>

I would press then very strongly on all christian Instructors, and not least, on the instructors of recent Converts,—the Apostle’s precept to Titus; (ch. iii. v. 8), “These things I will that thou affirm constantly,” (*i. e.* “insist on earnestly;”)<sup>2</sup> in order that they who have believed in God may be *careful* to maintain good works.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is manifestly the sense of the original; (1 Tim. vi. 5.) not “supposing that gain is godliness.”

<sup>2</sup> διαβεβαιῶσθαι      <sup>3</sup> φροντίζωσι καλῶν ἔργων προϊστασθαι.

§. 3. And this caution is perhaps even peculiarly needed when the question is between the Reformed and the unreformed Churches; because the chief difference between them many persons would describe by saying that the one teaches “Justification by Faith,” and the other, “Justification by Works.” And this description might be set forth in such a manner as to lead the one side to adopt, and the other to impute, the teaching of what the Apostle James calls a “dead faith,” without good works.

*Romish and  
Protestant  
views of Justification.*

But the above description cannot be received as a correct one without considerable explanations and modifications. For (1) in the first place, the Romanist cannot be said to reject or to disparage Faith. He is taught to believe—and to hold it essential to salvation to believe—(besides many important doctrines held by our own Church also) much that to us appears mere human device. He has faith in the infallibility of the Church of Rome,—in the efficacy of prayers addressed to the Virgin and other Saints,—in the supposed sacrifice of the Mass,—in priestly Absolution,—and in many other things which Protestants reject. And moreover, many even of the good works by which he seeks to obtain the divine favor, are most emphatically the fruit of faith—though to us it appears an utterly misplaced faith—in his Church; since they are such as are not dictated by any natural moral principle, but are practised solely

on the ground of a supposed divine injunction or sanction: such as Pilgrimages, Penances, and various ceremonial observances, which no one would account naturally and intrinsically virtues, or could ever think of practising except through faith in a supposed divine injunction.

On the other hand, the expression is not quite correct, that a Protestant looks for Justification *by* faith. "*Through* faith," is the more exact language. And though the word "by" is used (doubtless through inadvertency) in the XIth Article, the meaning of our Reformers is quite clear, not only from their language elsewhere, but from the original Latin of that very Article; which speaks of justification not "*propter fidem*," but "*per fidem*." "*Propter*," they apply to the meritorious sacrifice of Christ; ["*propter meritum*"] which corresponds with the language of the Apostle—"By Grace are ye saved, *through* Faith."<sup>1</sup>

In fact it is plain that if the believer were saved—strictly speaking, *by* his faith—he would be as much himself his own saviour as if he were saved by his works.<sup>2</sup> But faith is, as some have justly

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<sup>1</sup> Eph. ii. 8.

<sup>2</sup> When our Lord said to the woman who had touched the hem of his garment, and on other occasions, "Thy faith hath saved thee," He is only using a mode of expression such as we often use ourselves, when we would call attention to some *distinguishing* circumstance; to which we attribute something

expressed it, merely the *hand* with which he lays hold of the free offer of divine mercy. And faith, such as our Reformers taught, must be both rightly directed—towards an object which we have good ground for relying on, and also, must be what they call a “lively” [*i. e.* living] faith, bringing forth good works as a necessary fruit.<sup>1</sup>

§ 4. All this is of course what you hold, and mean to inculcate: for I am not addressing myself to Antinomians: but there is need of a caution against some indiscreet and exaggerated language into which well-intentioned persons are occasionally betrayed, in their zeal against some particular error, and which may lead weak-minded or thoughtless hearers into other and not less dangerous errors.

To take one instance: you may have heard the expression “all our righteousness is as filthy rags” introduced as a condemnation of the error of a

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that has taken place, without meaning, or being understood to mean, that it is the real efficient cause, but merely the one circumstance out of many which makes the *difference* between the case before us, and others. For instance, we speak of some tender plant which has perished in the winter *in consequence* of its being *left uncovered*; though we know that the *frost* was the *cause* of its destruction; but we mention the circumstance which alone *distinguished* it from some other plants of the same kind. Even so, that woman was one among many who had equally the power to approach Jesus, and several of whom probably had need of healing; but what distinguished her from the rest, and through which she obtained relief, was her superior faith.

<sup>1</sup> Art. 12.

man's claiming merit in God's sight for any good actions. But this is an utter misapplication of the words of the Prophet; who is speaking not disparagement of men who had been obedient to God's laws, but, on the contrary, of those he had been describing as most emphatically the reverse: "Behold," says he, "Thou art wroth, for we *have sinned*; . . . . we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness is as filthy rags, and we all do fade as a leaf, and our *iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away*, and there is none that calleth on thy name."<sup>1</sup> His expression is only another way of saying "we are quite destitute of all righteousness," even as the same Prophet [Is. i.] describes a like condition by saying "thy silver is become dross."

True it is indeed that it would be most absurd for any one—Jew or Gentile—to claim merit in the sight of his Maker for even a more perfectly righteous course of obedience than any man can pretend to have practised. But this is surely a truth which may be, and which ought to be, established and inculcated without resorting to a perversion of any passage of Scripture into a different sense from that of the inspired Writer. And any such misapplication (or, as some call it, "accommodation") of Scripture, besides that it is in itself a blameable presumption, is likely to

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<sup>1</sup> Isaiah, lxiv. 5—7.

damage the cause of truth,—to mislead those we are instructing,—and to give an advantage to opponents. These last may represent us as teaching—what after all is not true—that the “keeping of Christ’s commandments,” which He has Himself declared to be the only proof of our “loving Him”—the “bringing forth of much fruit,” by which He has said that “his Father is glorified”<sup>1</sup>—that all this is regarded by Him as “filthy rags.”

And not only should no such interpretation of Paul or of James be given as shall set them in opposition (since no Church, as our XXth Article expresses it, “Many so interpret one part of Scripture as to contradict another,”)² but care should also be taken to point out how they are to be reconciled, in what they say of the justification of Abraham. For surely those who do represent the teaching of these two Apostles as at variance, must have a most confused and incorrect notion of both. James is manifestly speaking (Ch. ii.)

<sup>1</sup> John xv.

<sup>2</sup> Those commentators—for unhappily there are some few such—who interpret Rom. vii. 14—25 not, as a description, generally (which was doubtless the Apostle’s meaning) of the condition of a man under the Law and not under the Gospel, but as a literal account of Paul’s own actual state at the time, make this portion of Scripture contradict not only other parts, but even the very next passage in the same Epistle: Ch. viii. v. 1—13. For it is clearly impossible for the same man to be at the same time “sold under sin,”—“brought into subjection to the law of sin,” &c. and also “made free from the law of sin,” and “walking not after the flesh but after the Spirit.”—(See *Essays on the Dangers*, &c. Essay i. § 4.)

in disparagement of a faith consisting in mere assent of the understanding. "Thou believest," says he, "that there is one God: thou doest well: the Demons' also believe and tremble." Now can any one really suppose that the saving Faith insisted on by Paul was this faith of Demons? Or again, can it be believed that James, when speaking of good works, meant mere outward acts, without any reference to the inward motive—the faith, from which they spring? And this too, when he expressly says, "I will show thee my faith by my works?"

If any one had suggested to this Apostle such an interpretation of his words, he might have refuted the error exactly in the way he does refute the one he is opposing. He might have said, "It is a good thing to proclaim Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God—to do so, is a good work: the Demons whom Jesus cast out, did this: they found themselves compelled to cry out, 'I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God:' but this did not make them acceptable before God; for, works good in themselves, but not done from a good motive, are as much the *works* of Demons, as mere intellectual belief is the faith of Demons."

If any one then should ask whether we are to be justified *partly* through Faith and partly through

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<sup>1</sup> The word "devils" which occurs here and elsewhere in our Version is a manifest mistranslation of Daimonia. The word Diabolos is never used in the plural number; being the designation of a single individual.

Works, you might reply that the question is as idle a one as if he should ask concerning a house that had been destroyed by fire, whether the conflagration was to be attributed to the wood and other combustible substances within it, or to the firebrand which fell on them, or partly to the one, and partly to the other. We all know that no quantity of combustibles could at all contribute to the breaking out of a fire, if no spark fell on them; and again, that a firebrand, if it fell on a stone pavement, would produce no effect at all. And in like manner, in this case, neither a faith which does not show itself in obedience, nor again good works which do not spring from faith, can go one step towards recommending any one to God; but only as the Apostle expresses it, “faith which *worketh* by love.”<sup>1</sup>

§ 5. As for those who do need to be warned against the error of imagining that a man can earn salvation for himself by good works, and that these can establish a claim of merit before God, you will find these persons, I think, to fall under these three classes:— (1.) Those who mean by “good works,” not a life of what can be called christian virtue, but outward ceremonial observances, such as the Judaizers of old trusted to.<sup>2</sup> (2.) Secondly, such as are very far

*Supposed Merit of Good-Works.*

<sup>1</sup> Galat. v. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, in our Lord’s Parable of the Pharisee and Publican, the good works on which the former “exalted him-

from leading, on the whole, a moral life, or even striving to do so, or themselves thinking that they have attained it, but who pride themselves on the practice of some one or two [supposed] virtues, which they trust to as not only compensating for all failures in other points, but moreover entitling them to reward: and (3.) thirdly, such as imagine

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self" were "fasting twice in the week, and scrupulously giving tithes." And our Lord expressly charges them with being, while thus scrupulous as to the tithes of sweet herbs, neglectful of "the weightier matters of the Law, Justice and Mercy." Hence He requires of his followers that their "righteousness should *exceed* the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees," if they would "enter into the kingdom of Heaven." For, those "Works of the Law" by which they "went about to establish their own righteousness," (Rom. x. 3,) and of which Paul says that a man is "justified *without* them," (Rom. iv. 6,) were manifestly the "works" of the Ceremonial Law.

No doubt he *would*, if he had ever met with the case (which it does not appear he ever did,) of a man seeking self-justification by a life of moral virtue, have denounced that error. But as it is, the persons he was actually censuring as trusting in their "own righteousness which is by the Law," were such as trusted in the Ceremonial Law.

That this portion of the Mosaic Law, though far from being the most important portion, should yet be often called, emphatically, "The Law," is quite intelligible, since it was the *distinguishing* portion of it;—that which marked the difference between the Jews and the Gentile. See Philipp. ch. iii., where Paul speaks of himself as being "touching the righteousness which is of the Law, blameless;" not, surely, as attributing to himself perfect *moral rectitude*; for, his "zeal in persecuting the Church," which he speaks of in that very passage, he always bewailed as a grievous sin; but evidently, an exact compliance with the Ceremonial Law.—See *Essays on the Dangers, &c.* Essay i.

that a strictly virtuous life *would* earn immortal happiness, but who are fully conscious of not being, *themselves*, qualified to make this claim, and who accordingly trust in the divine mercy for themselves, *without* good works; considering that it is only so far both as they are *sinners*, that a divine Saviour is at all needed. And none are more likely to “continue in sin that Grace may abound,” than those who imagine that a life of eminent virtue would merit Heaven; and that, consequently, one who should be endeavouring to lead such a life, would be seeking not to embrace the Gospel-offers, but to supersede and dispense with them.

But as for the case of a man deliberately and habitually striving to conform his moral character and whole conduct to the Gospel-standard, and believing that he succeeds in this endeavour, and thereupon trusting in this his virtuous life as establishing a claim of merit, and entitling him to a happy immortality—such a case, if it ever does occur, is, I must think, a very improbable and very rare one. You will best know what your own experience has been. I, for my part, am not aware of having ever met with an instance of the kind; though of the other three above-mentioned, I have known many. As far as my own observation extends, those who the most assiduously labour to lead a christian life, I have always found the very furthest from setting up any plea of merit,

or at all dreaming of self-justification. And it certainly will not be the most profitable course, to dwell continually and almost exclusively on the inefficiency of a life of thorough-going christian virtue to merit eternal happiness, when addressing hearers of whom one portion have no thought at all of leading such a life, while the remainder have no thought of thus meriting heaven. It will be more edifying to the hearers, though not perhaps more acceptable, to provide what after all is the surest safeguard against the errors above noticed, by giving men correct notions of what are the true principles of moral conduct, and urging them to act on these.

*Correct view of moral duty.* § 6. (1.) Let it be pointed out, in the first place (as may be easily done, to any one of even moderate capacity), that no one can claim merit, or be entitled to a reward, for merely paying a *debt*; and that evidently all obedience to God's laws must be a debt strictly due to Him, and could therefore claim from Him, if perfect, nothing beyond exemption from punishment, except on the ground of his own free and bountiful promise. "When ye have done," says our Lord [Luke xvii. 10], "all things that I have commanded you, say, we are *unprofitable* servants; we have done that which it was our duty to do."

(2.) It should be pointed out also, that even our *power* to do anything well-pleasing in the sight of our divine Master, must come from Himself,

the “true vine, of which we are the branches,”—even from his “spirit which helpeth our infirmities.” For “without me,” says He, “ye can do nothing.” The guests at his “wedding-feast” must indeed themselves be clad in the “wedding-garment” of christian holiness of life; but it is He who provides the garment which the guest is required to put on.

(3.) Men should also be reminded that “good works,” in the sense of external acts, are not, in themselves, even virtuous; but can only be so called, as far as they are indications of that inward disposition which alone is strictly to be called virtuous. For it is evident that the very same act may be either morally good, or evil, or indifferent, according to the motive it springs from.

(4.) And, lastly, men should be warned that they are not to look (as some are disposed to do) for express commands and prohibitions in Scripture, as to everything they are to do or abstain from; regarding themselves as blameless so long as, and so far as, they have not transgressed any distinct precept delivered on divine authority.

*That* is indeed a safe rule as to what relates to positive precepts respecting things that are in themselves indifferent. But as regards moral conduct generally, the Scriptures do not profess to lay down any complete ethical system, but exhorts Christians to think on and practise “*whatsoever* things are

pure, whatsoever things are honest, and lovely, and of good report;”<sup>1</sup> and “giving all diligence to add to their faith, virtue, and temperance, and patience,”<sup>2</sup> and the like.

Our Lord and his Apostles do indeed warn men against the particular faults to which the particular persons they were on each occasion addressing, were especially liable, and urge on them the practice of whatever duties they were most likely to neglect; but they never address themselves as to persons wholly destitute of all moral faculty, needing to be taught the difference, generally, between virtue and vice. They supply occasional *cautions* as to our moral conduct; they bring forward strong *motives* for holiness of life, such as no human system or precepts could afford; and they hold out promises of such heaven-sent support and aid as human weakness needs: but they evidently proceed always on the supposition that men do use—and always have used—such words as “virtue” and “vice,” and have always attached some meaning to those words, and understood that the one is preferable to the other.

§ 7. It might seem superfluous to set forth such obvious truths, were it not that a contrary doctrine is maintained by some writers, and, among others, by so able and justly-celebrated an author as Dr. Paley,

*Theory of those who deny a Moral-sense.*

<sup>1</sup> Phil. iv 8.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Pet. i. 5.

in a work which has been used as a text-book in some of our universities; and, moreover, that his views on this point are advocated by some—and those not a few—who are very far indeed from concurring with his views on other points.

He—as you are doubtless well aware—maintains that Man has no moral faculty whatever, and feels naturally no disapprobation of ingratitude and baseness, or approbation of gratitude and integrity, nor, in short, perceives any distinction at all between virtue and vice. All our notions, according to him, of what is called moral obligation, are derived from conformity to the will of a Superior, with a view to our own interest. And the distinction accordingly between what are commonly called “moral precepts” and “positive precepts”—things commanded because right, and things right because commanded—he completely does away. And I cannot but think that ordinary men will be likely, so far as they adopt his view, to fall into that error I have just been noticing—of looking in Scripture for precise directions as to each point of conduct, laid down as plainly as the directions, for instance, respecting the Passover, to the Israelites, or the institution of the sacraments, to Christians: and to consider themselves as bound by nothing but such express commands and prohibitions as they meet with. For one cannot expect that above one person in a hundred will follow out those subtle calculations by which Dr. Paley

deduces all moral conduct from conformity to the divine will.

And this conformity we are to aim at, according to him, with a view solely to our own eventual benefit. "The difference," he says, "and the only difference, between an act of prudence and an act of virtue is, that in the one case we consider what we shall gain or lose in the present life; and in the other case, what we shall gain or lose in the next life." And then he goes on to say, very strangely, that those who have no knowledge, or no belief, of a future state, must frame the best theory of virtue they can for themselves; unless they can show that virtue produces the greatest amount of happiness in this world. It is wonderful that so acute a writer should have failed to perceive that according to what he had just said, they *could not possibly* form *any* theory at all of Virtue as distinguished from Prudence; since if they did teach (as in fact the ancient Heathen Philosophers did) that what we call Virtue does conduce to happiness in this life, this would never have enabled them to draw a *distinction* between prudence and virtue, but would have made them identical. For it is evident that to remove the "difference, and the only difference" between any two things, is to make them perfectly alike. And he had just before said that the only difference between prudence and virtue depends on the distinction between the present and a future life.

His doctrine, therefore, is completely overthrown by the Writings of the Heathen: not by any assumed *correctness* of their views, but by the very words they employ. For their using such words as “Virtus” and Ἀρετη, — their distinguishing between “Utile” and “Honestum,” — between συμφερον and καλον, — proves that they must have perceived a distinction, which, on Dr. Paley’s theory, they could not possibly have perceived, and must have formed notions such as could no more have entered their minds, were that theory correct, than a man born blind could form a notion of colours.<sup>1</sup>

The heathen Philosophers had, indeed, in their moral systems many errors and deficiencies which the Gospel serves to correct. But, after all, they did teach morality; and the systems moreover which they framed are much superior to what many suppose and represent them, who have never read them, and judge only by hearsay. The great deficiency in their systems was their lack of such motives as the Gospel supplies, and of that divine support and aid which is promised to the sincere Christian. A heathen Moralist resembled the fabled Prometheus of old, who is said to have fashioned a complete and well-formed human body, but could not endue it with the principle of *life*,

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<sup>1</sup> See Dr. FITZGERALD’S *Introduction to a Vol. of Selections from Aristotle’s Ethics*.

till he had ascended to Heaven to fetch down from thence a vivifying fire. And any Christian Minister who should confine himself to what are sometimes (erroneously) called “practical sermons,”—i.e., mere moral essays, without any mention of the peculiar doctrines of Christianity—is in the same condition with those heathen philosophers; with the difference, that what was their misfortune, is his fault. Unenlightened however as those philosophers were, they did perceive and teach those distinctions in human actions, which, on Dr. Paley’s theory, they could not possibly have had any notion of. As for all that he says elsewhere, of men’s having observed the good effects of honesty, temperance, &c., and the ill effects of their contraries, and thus acquiring a habit of approving the one and disapproving the other; this does not affect the present question; since all these observations and reasonings could never generate the idea of *duty*,—of *moral* rectitude,—and of *sin*. For, observation and experience have equally taught intelligent cultivators the beneficial effects of properly manuring the land, and of rotation of crops, and the ill consequences of neglecting such rules. And even the veriest savages have learnt from experience what wild fruits and roots are nutritious, and what unwholesome. But men have never formed a habit of extending to such matters *moral* approbation and disapprobation. And no more

would they, on any other points, have formed any notions of moral right and wrong, were the theory I have been considering a correct one.

§ 8. But there are (as I have said) some persons who, though very far indeed, from adopting Dr. Paley's views on other points, yet concur with him in this; at least in the language they use. They speak in such strong terms of the depravity—at least since the Fall—of Man's nature, as in fact to do away that depravity altogether, and put an end not only to all Virtue, but to all Vice also. For it is plain, on a moment's reflection, that a Being who is incapable of perceiving any difference (as is the case with the brute creation) between moral good and evil, or of forming any notion of such a thing as Duty, cannot, however odious, in our eyes his acts may be (as are those of a wolf or swine) be taxed with *sin* and moral guilt. And accordingly no one does apply those terms to a brute, or a new-born infant, or a complete idiot. Nor, in like manner, do we apply the term "folly" to the acts of animals destitute of reason. We always consider "folly" as consisting in acting against the dictates of reason; and, consequently, as *implying* rationality; and "sin," as a transgression of the rules of moral rectitude which we know, or which we possibly might have known: rules which men have, according to the Apostle Paul, some notion of, however imperfectly they

*Incautious  
language re-  
specting human  
depravity.*

may conform to them in practice; “their conscience,” says he, “also bearing witness, and their thoughts accusing, or else excusing, one another.”<sup>1</sup>

And as for the introduction of any positive laws—the issuing of commands—by one possessing the power to enforce them,—a revelation of the divine Will, made to a creature wholly devoid of moral faculty,—that would not at all change his character in this respect, though it would influence his external acts. To comply with the will of one fully able to enforce that will, would be regarded (and this indeed is precisely Dr. Paley’s view) as a matter of *expediency*: but the words “right” and “wrong” would be, to such a Being, as unmeaning as ever. If any one, for instance, were to fall into the hands of robbers who commanded him on pain of death to surrender his property; or if he had been subjected (as several nations of Europe now are) by a merciless tyrant, he might judge it advisable to comply, and submit, if he had no hope of resistance or escape; but he would never think of such a thing as moral Duty and rectitude in such submission. And precisely similar would be submission to the divine laws, in such a Being as Dr. Paley represents Man.

One circumstance which probably contributes to confusion of thought on this subject, in the minds of some persons, is this: that in this or that *parti-*

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<sup>1</sup> Rom. ii. 15. See *Cautions for the Times*, No. 27, p. 464.

*cular point*, a divine command may *make* that a duty which was not so before. But this can only be when the command is given to a Being possessing a moral sense which enables him to perceive that there *is such a thing* as duty, and that God has a *rightful claim* to our obedience. And, in like manner, a telescope will enable a man possessing the sense of sight, to see objects invisible to the naked eye. But the revelation of a divine command could no more *originate* the notion of Duty, generally, in a Being destitute of moral faculty, and to whom, consequently, the word “duty” could convey no meaning, than a telescope could confer sight on a blind man.

§ 9. But many persons (as I have already hinted) agree with the doctrine I have been speaking of, in the language they incautiously employ, without really meaning what their words express. It may seem paradoxical to speak of any one’s not knowing his own meaning. But in many cases you may make it plain even to the party himself, that his real belief on some point is not what he—with perfect sincerity of intention—declares it to be. If any persons, for instance, state it as their conviction that the foundation of all our moral notions is the Will of God,—that it is our knowledge or belief of what He requires or forbids, that constitutes the whole of the distinction we perceive between Right and Wrong,—you may ask them whether they con-

*Real meaning  
different from  
what is ex-  
pressed.*

sider obedience to the divine will to be merely a matter of *prudence*, or, over and above this, of *moral duty* also? whether they regard the Almighty as a *good* Being, or merely as possessing supreme power? whether his commands are *right*, and *justly* claim our compliance, or merely are such that it would be very *rash* to resist them?

If they reply,—as the great majority will,—that moral goodness, as well as power, is an attribute of the Most High,—that his commands are *right*, and that obedience is *justly* due to Him—then they will have admitted that our notions of moral rectitude are *not* originally derived merely from that of conformity to the divine Will, but are a part of the constitution of the human mind; since else, it would be nugatory and absurd to speak of the divine goodness, if our only idea of moral goodness were, what God wills. And to say that his commands are *just*, and that it is *right* for men to obey them, would only be a circuitous way of saying, (as indeed Dr. Paley himself is compelled to admit) that what is commanded is commanded, and that the divine Will is—the divine Will.

I think therefore that you will usually find it not very difficult to explain (as it will often be very desirable to do) to a person of tolerable intelligence and candour, who may have been incautiously using such language as I have been alluding to, that his own real opinion is different from what he had described and supposed it to be; and that

while intent on setting forth in the strongest manner God's glory and Man's sinfulness, he had, by rash and exaggerated expressions, done away completely the moral attributes of the Deity, and the existence of any such thing as sin.

And you may point out also, that the appeal often made to the moral excellence of the Gospel in confirmation of its divine origin, is wholly destroyed by the use of such language. If an infidel be asked, "how it happens that a set of ignorant Jewish peasants should have discovered and taught a purer morality than the wisest of the heathen Sages had ever discovered?" he will be at no loss for an answer, if you describe Man as having no notion of moral right and wrong except a conformity to the teaching of those very peasants. Your argument will then become precisely similar to the alleged miracle by which the Mahometans profess to prove the divine origin of the Koran. All the best Arabic scholars, they urge, agree as to the superior,—and as they say,—superhuman—purity and beauty of its language, and find all other compositions more or less approaching perfection, according as they approach more or less to the style of the Koran. But then it comes out that they have all agreed to establish the style of the Koran as the standard, and judge of the purity and beauty

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<sup>1</sup> *Cautions for the Times*, No. 29, p. 506.

of each word and phrase by a reference to that: so that the argument is a manifest circle.

And it would be no less proceeding in a circle to speak of the purity of the Gospel-morality, and of the goodness of God, if Man were a Being destitute of all moral faculty.

And you may add also, that there can be no blameable presumption in us Creatures forming these judgments respecting the moral attributes of the Creator, which He has Himself expressly *told us* to form. “Are not” says He “my ways equal? are not your ways unequal?”<sup>1</sup> And “why, even of yourselves, judge ye not what is right?”<sup>2</sup>

§ 10. On many a particular point *Scripture view of moral obedience.* indeed we must often be unable to perceive the reasons of God’s dealings with his creatures, from our ignorance of many of the circumstances of the case; and we are bound (as I observed just now (p. 29) ), not only to obey his commands, but to trust in their wisdom and goodness even when we cannot understand them. But all this is of a piece even with what we feel and do towards our fellow-men. A dutiful and affectionate child,<sup>3</sup> for instance, will be fully convinced (and not without reason) of the goodness and the superior judgment of a kind and sensible parent, and will comply cheerfully with his di-

<sup>1</sup> Ezek. xviii. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Luke xii. 57.

<sup>3</sup> See Essay on the *Imitation of Children.*

rections, even when not understanding the reasons of them;—all the more cheerfully, on the ground of that very conviction, and not, as merely yielding to superior power, and calculating on reward or punishment. So also, a friend on whose worth and discretion we fully rely, will perhaps take some measures which, on that very ground, we presume to be the right ones, before we have sufficient knowledge of particulars to judge of the case itself. And we should think it strange to have it inferred from this that our whole estimate of his character was nothing but a blind partiality, and that we had no notion at all of what *are* good or bad measures, except as they are or are not, his.

Again, in all that regards conduct, you may easily, I think, point out that not only—as was said just now—the Sacred Writers all along proceed on the supposition that “right” and “wrong” are not, to their hearers, mere unmeaning sounds, but also that one most important declaration<sup>1</sup> of our Lord’s must become unintelligible, and utterly absurd, on the supposition of a total absence of moral faculty: “The servant who knew not his lord’s will, and did commit *things worthy of stripes*, shall be beaten with few stripes.” Now that one who “knew his lord’s will and did it not” should receive the heavier punishment, is a rule which one may readily understand: but that one who “knew *not* his

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<sup>1</sup> Luke xii. 48.

lord's will"—that is, who had not received any express command—*could* "commit things worthy of stripes" is utterly inconceivable on the supposition of Man's notions of right and wrong being originally derived entirely from a knowledge of the divine Will.

But in truth, as Bishop Butler justly remarks, "what renders any one justly liable to punishment, is, not the *expectation* of it, but the violation of a known duty." Many of the brutes, as we all know, are capable of being incited by reward and deterred by punishment; yet we do not regard them as moral agents; though, on the theory I have been speaking of, they would be as much so as Man.

And I must say, that, considering what sound and clear views of the nature of duty that great Moralist Bishop Butler had put forth, it does seem strange that any persons having his Works before them, should turn from these, and go back to the theory of Hobbes and others of that school, who destroy all *moral* obligation properly so called, and resolve all *obligation* into submission, from views of self-interest, to arbitrary physical force. It is as if the Prodigal, in the Parable, had turned aside from the feast prepared for him, to feed by choice, on the husks.

§ 11. The true sense in which it may be said that all our notions of moral duty are derived originally from the Will of God, is this: that it was

*Origin and  
culture of  
the Moral  
faculty.*

his will to create Man a Moral-agent—a Being endowed with a conscience, and distinguished from the Brute-creation, in great measure by that. It is a faculty developed in very various degrees in different individuals; often left grievously uncultivated, or depraved and corrupted; but one which is capable of improvement, and which we are required, and through divine help, enabled, profitably to cultivate. And so far is it from being anything hostile, or anything of a rival, to Religion, or a pretended substitute for it, that on the contrary it is by this only that we are enabled to perceive that God is not merely a ruler who is *able to enforce* obedience, but is justly entitled to obedience, and a proper object of our gratitude and love.

And let no one apprehend that by clearly setting forth and earnestly dwelling on these truths, he will run any risk of leading men to think too highly of their own moral proficiency, or to trust in their good works for salvation. The very opposite is the real state of the case: for it is only so far forth as any Being does possess some Moral-sense, that he can possibly feel any conviction of *sin* when he has transgressed any divine command; or indeed can, strictly speaking, *commit* any sin. Without this, he might indeed apprehend *danger* from offending a powerful superior; even as we should do in embarking on a stormy sea; but of guilt, and moral turpitude, he could have no notion whatever. And the more highly cultivated any one's moral

judgment is, the more clearly will he perceive and the more strongly feel, whatever imperfections are still adhering to his character; even as a strong light admitted into a chamber that had been partially darkened, makes conspicuous every stain on its walls that had before been scarcely perceptible.

§ 12. I have dwelt thus earnestly  
*Works the*  
*fruit of Faith,*  
*in what*  
*sense.* on several points, which, to most of you, probably, have been long since familiar, because at this particular time you will, many of you, have to impart almost the first rudiments of christian morality to some who have been hitherto nearly strangers to the practical influence either of Religion altogether, or of a true religion: men who have either learned to disregard the religious system in which they were brought up, without putting any other in its place, or who have been accustomed to regard good works as consisting principally, not, as Paul describes them, in “things good and profitable to mankind;”<sup>1</sup> but in pilgrimages, fasts, indiscriminate alms to street-beggars, telling of beads, and the like.

Now when these, and when all men, are taught, as they certainly ought to be, the importance of a pure, and well-founded, and firm christian Faith, and that a life of christian virtue is a necessary and invariable accompaniment of such a faith, it should be kept in mind that this truth,—and it is a

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<sup>1</sup> καλα και ωφελιμα. Tit. iii.

most essential truth,—requires to be inculcated with such explanations and practical admonitions, as shall guard it against its being misunderstood, and most hurtfully misapplied. For it may be so understood and applied as to lead to either of two contrary results;—to *carelessness*, or to the utmost *carefulness*, respecting practical morality.

On the one hand, if any person so understands the truth that a genuine christian faith must always produce the fruit of christian holiness of life, as to conclude that his religion will *make* him a good man, without any study, or exertion, or care, on his part, as to his moral improvement,—that he has only to attend to the faith, and trust to the works following spontaneously,—such a one will consider himself, not, according to the Apostle's illustration, as one “striving” for the “Mastery,”<sup>1</sup> and prepared to “run with patience the race set before him” and resolved, through divine help so to “run that he may obtain,” but rather as a passenger who has embarked on board a ship, and who, if we have but been careful to fix on the right vessel, will be *carried* to the destined port without any further care, or any exertion on his part. And he will be in great danger of becoming one of those whom the same Apostle speaks of, who having “cast away a good conscience, concerning the faith have made shipwreck.”<sup>2</sup> For, not having

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. ix.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Tim. i. 19.

been, as Paul enjoins us, “*careful* to maintain good works,” his moral defects will, instead of being corrected by his religion, have gradually corrupted his religion. His “mind and conscience will have been defiled,”<sup>1</sup> even as the pure rain from the heavens becomes tainted by being received in an impure vessel. The plant whose roots alone have received careful culture, and whose foliage and flowers have been left unheeded, will perhaps receive a fatal blight on these, which will work downwards through the stem, and gradually decay the roots themselves.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, one who so understands the inseparableness of a christian life from a genuine christian faith, as to consider the redeeming mercy of God in Christ as inciting us, and his promised aid by the Holy Spirit, as enabling us, to “work out our salvation with fear and trembling,” because trusting that “it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do, of his good pleasure”—such a one will become a fruitful branch of the “true Vine:” not, either a branch which cannot bear fruit, of itself, because “not abiding in the Vine,” nor again a barren branch which is “taken away” from the Vine, because it “beareth not fruit.” And such a Christian will never lose sight of either

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<sup>1</sup> Tit. i. 15.

<sup>2</sup> This is clearly and forcibly set forth in an *Ordination-Sermon*, by the Rev. CADWALLADER WOLSELEY, delivered last autumn, and since published.

portion of that most important admonition, “Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.” He will *watch*, as if *every* thing depended on himself; and he will *pray*, as if *nothing* depended on himself.

§ 13. I cannot let this occasion pass without adverting to the subject of the *Society for Propagating the Gospel.* SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL, the Anniversary of which was the occasion that lately called me over to London. In advocating the cause of that Society, I remarked (as many of you probably have seen in the Reports of the public Journals) that the term “Foreign Parts” is not unlikely to mislead some persons; or at least, to keep out of sight that the main object of the Society is to provide religious instruction and superintendence for our fellow-subjects—many of them our fellow-countrymen or their children—in nearly thirty dioceses in portions of the British Empire beyond the seas. And the enormous tide of emigration that is now pouring from these Islands into our Colonies,—Colonies likely to form, before long (as has been already the case of the United States) great Nations, imposes peculiarly heavy responsibilities on those who call themselves a Christian People.

As for the accusations which have been brought against the Society, of a supposed tendency in several of its members towards a certain Party,—a Party of which, as you well know, I was one of the earliest, and have been one of the most persevering

opponents,—I remarked that these charges—which I believe to be not a little exaggerated—may be the most effectually *made* to be true,—and that all the unfavourable predictions thrown out, may be the most effectually verified,—by the withdrawal of all support to the Society by all who disapprove of such views;—by thus throwing the whole guidance of this powerful engine into the hands of the very persons whose principles, or whose application of them, we object to.

Let sound members of the Church, on the contrary, come forward as active supporters of a Society whose *object* they cannot but highly applaud; and they will then be enabled to suggest any improvement in its constitution that they may think requisite, with a fair prospect of being listened to; which is what avowed opponents cannot of course expect. And if persons of all shades of opinion allowed by our Church have a voice in the proceedings of the Society, it will be—what is all we can reasonably hope for—a fair representative, as it was always deigned to be, of the Church itself.

But if any one's disapprobation of the views and practices of certain individuals be a reason for his abandoning a Society of which they are members, he should consider that, on this principle, he will be led, if consistent, to quit our Church also; if not to abandon altogether Christianity itself.

But as for certain specific charges which have been brought against the Society itself, *as* a Society, of partiality and unfairness in the allotments of its pecuniary grants, these charges have been, as you are probably aware, distinctly disproved by authentic documents. And it is to be hoped that the authors and circulators of such misstatements will show by a public retractation, that they were guilty only of a very culpable rashness, and not of a wilful and deliberate calumny.

As for the practice which has long prevailed of publishing the annual Sermons along with the Reports, I have been convinced long since of its inexpediency; because it lays the Society itself under a responsibility, in the eyes of the Public, which was never designed, and is altogether undesirable. I have therefore strenuously advocated its discontinuance; each preacher, being, of course, left to publish his own Sermon, or not, as he may judge best. The anniversary Sermon accordingly which I delivered this year will not be published by the Society.

§ 14. Another Society, established in these dioceses, that of the Parochial Visitors, I trust you will never fail to recommend to the support of all, both Clergy and Laity, according to the opportunities that may offer, as an Institution which has produced perhaps as much benefit in proportion to its very scanty funds as any in existence.

*Parochial-  
Visitors-  
Society.*

*Clergy-Widows-Society.* As for the Clergy-Widows-Society, to most of you, my Rev. Brethren, it would be superfluous to recommend it. And there is something of a difficulty in the way of your zealously urging its claims to support, on the Laity, because you might be considered as aiming at advantage to yourselves. But I would have you avail yourselves of any opportunities that do offer, consistently with delicacy, for making the Institution known, and for pointing out to those who have so often liberally come forward to relieve individual cases of distress among the widows and orphans of clergymen, how much more desirable it is, on all accounts, that appeals of this kind should be superseded by an Institution such as this. And those of the Clergy who have not yet become members of the Society, I would exhort to come forward without delay, to recommend it to the Christian Public, at least by their own example.

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NOTE A. TO P. 5.—At the time when what was called “The Catholic Institution” was in agitation, many of the advocates for retaining civil-disabilities, apprehended the influx, if these were removed, of a vast number of Roman-Catholics into Parliament; and the Roman Catholics themselves, if the Emancipation-Bill has been rejected, would probably have represented, and perhaps believed. that, but for these disabilities, the English People, left to their own free choice, would have returned a large proportion of Roman-catholic Representatives. But when we compare these conjectures with the facts, we find, that, at the last Election, all England returned but *one* Roman-



ERRATUM.

Page 44, Note A, *for* 'Catholic Institution,' *read* 'Catholic  
Question.'

Catholic Member ; and that one, through the influence of a Protestant !

Meantime, of that (not inconsiderable) number of Clergy and Gentry who have gone over to Romanism, and of above ten times as many more, who have adopted principles and practices essentially Romanist, not one, as far as I know and believe, has been influenced by the removal of legal disabilities, or by any efforts of emissaries of the Church of Rome, but altogether by the development and application of the principles advocated in the earlier Numbers of the "Tracts for the Times;" whose tendency was ably exposed nearly twenty years ago, in the Pamphlet entitled the "Pope's Pastoral," which is now reprinted among the posthumous Works of Bishop Diekinson.

In one of the Periodicals which are considered the organs of the Tract-party, a reviewer of the "Remains of Bishop Copleston" lately published, assures us, with apparent gravity, and with earnest solemnity, that "there are greater dangers to the church than the inroads of Romanism ; and that Cardinal Wiseman is not our most formidable adversary." To express a hearty concurrence in this opinion, would be as superfluous, as it was, to address such an assurance to one who had been, for about a quarter of a century, earnestly and repeatedly setting forth that very truth ;—pointing out that our danger is much more from within than from without ;—that the errors which we censure in the unreformed churches have their origin in human nature ;—and that the insidious arts of those professed members of our Church who are labouring to "unprotestantize" it, and who, while agitating all England with efforts to establish and extend their principles, deprecate the "revival of by-gone and forgotten controversies,"—trying to persuade men that all the danger is over—that these, are far more to be dreaded than any avowed emissaries of Rome.

But the reviewer probably was writing for such as he trusted had never read, nor were likely to read, any of the Works in which these warnings have been put forth.

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THOUGHTS

ON THE

NEW DOGMA OF THE CHURCH OF ROME.

A C H A R G E,

DELIVERED TO THE

CLERGY OF THE DIOCESES OF DUBLIN, GLANDALAGH,  
AND KILDARE,

AT THE VISITATION,

*In June, 1855.*

By RICHARD WHATELY, D.D.

*ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.*

LONDON:

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# A C H A R G E,

ETC.

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MY REVEREND BRETHREN,

YOU will not probably feel any wonder that I should at this time take occasion to advert to a subject which has of late occupied so large a share of public attention as the recent promulgation of a new dogma in the Church of Rome.

*Public attention excited by the New Dogma.*

And yet the very circumstance that so much has been said—and in many instances, very ably and eloquently said—on the subject, would probably have induced me to keep silence on it, had I fully concurred in the views which many persons take. But I cannot help thinking that the alarm and the indignation felt by them are greatly disproportionate to the occasion.

In the few observations therefore which I propose to offer on the subject, I shall not either enter on any laboured refutation of the doctrine in question, or put forth any special protest against the arrogance of its promulgation; because, first, I attach no great importance to the doctrine itself, and secondly, I see no claim on the part of the Church of Rome implied in its promulgation, that had not been made long since.

*Mariolatry  
no Novelty.*

1st. With respect to the doctrine itself of what is called the immaculate conception, I cannot think—nor can any one, I suppose, imagine—that its recent assertion will cause a single human Being to become a worshipper of the Virgin Mary who was not so before. It is notorious that for ages there have been two parties in the Romish Church at variance as to this very point; and they have always vied with each other in their adoration of the Virgin, as well as of other Saints. And if they had had a distinct declaration in Scripture—in that Scripture whose divine authority has been fully attested by sensible miracles—that God had exalted a created Being—whether *originally* sinless, or completely *purified from sin*,—to such a state as to be able to hear the prayers of worshippers in millions of different places, and to procure their fulfilment—no one could have taxed either of the parties with inconsistency in invoking her.

And again, any pious Protestant would be ready, if Peter or Paul or any other of the Apostles were now living, and present before him, to ask his prayers, (though of course without offering anything like religious worship) although knowing him to have been originally a sinful mortal.

Simon Magus incurred no rebuke for making that application to Peter: and Protestants are accustomed, in conformity with the Apostle James's

exhortations to pray for one another, and to ask each other's prayers. The reason why we do not invoke *departed* Saints, is, not because we know them to have been originally partakers of human frailty, but because our now addressing them would be to attribute to them the divine Omnipresence, and exalt them into gods.

On the other hand, it is believed by many Protestants—probably most—(who however do not make it an essential Article of Faith)—that the holy Angels are, and always have been, exempt from all taint of sin: yet they would think it sinful to pray to them.

The doctrine therefore which we are now considering is one of which the admission could not *introduce* the worship of the Virgin; and experience shows that its rejection never did or could *prevent* that worship. The true state of the case is, no doubt, that this Mariolatry was the *cause*, not the effect, of the origination and reception of the doctrine; an idolatrous veneration having, naturally, when grown into practice, suggested theories for the exaltation of the Being thus adored.

On the whole then it does not appear (as I have already said) that this doctrine is in itself at all more unscriptural, or of more dangerous consequences, than several others that have long been taught in the unreformed churches. In particular the doctrine that the invocation of the Virgin, and of other Saints is allowable and right—a doctrine

which, we have seen, is not dependent on the one now before us—is no mere speculative dogma, but most intimately connected with daily practice.

And, secondly, as for the recent *Probable effects of the New Dogma.* authoritative declaration, I cannot see that it gives any special ground for alarm or indignation, as implying any claim on the part of the Romish Church beyond what has been made long since; or calling for any special protest from ourselves. The doctrine is one which it is well known, has long existed, and been permitted by the Authorities of Rome, though not enforced by them. It has been hitherto a doctrine *in* that Church, though not a doctrine *of* the Church. The only novelty is, its having been now added to the list of fundamental Articles of Faith. And the Decree announcing this addition has hardly any other effect than to raise doubts and dissatisfaction *within* that Church, and to condemn as heretical a great number of persons among whom are several who have been usually reckoned bright ornaments of their Church; and not a few of these its canonized Saints.

It is probable that great part of the dissatisfaction felt by many Roman Catholics arises from apprehensions as to the future. To us, indeed, it is well known that numerous and far more important changes have been introduced into the Church of Rome since the days of the Apostles. But those who have been trained from childhood to

shut their ears to all evidence of this, and to believe theirs to be the original Faith, and that it is the Reformers that were the innovators—these may well be alarmed at the avowed introduction of a New Article of Faith, and may apprehend that more may hereafter be introduced by adepts in the art of development. They will be unable even to conjecture what their children and grandchildren may be called on to receive as the doctrine of the Catholic Church.

But in truth, the Romish Church, if by that term we understand the Authorities of it—the Romish Hierarchy—never has, strictly speaking, *introduced* any doctrine, but has only *sanc-tioned* from time to time, such as had already become prevalent. And it was gradually and insensibly that each one of those that we regard as spurious additions to the pure gospel did become prevalent. Whence it is, that we so often hear it maintained that the peculiar tenets which Protestant Churches reject, have *always* been held from the Apostolic times downwards; because we are unable to point out with certainty the precise time at which each of them crept in. We know, however, that there was a time, and can plainly point to it—when there was nothing but wheat in the field, and now we find tares mixed with it; which is a sufficient proof that “an enemy hath done this,” though we may be unable to fix on the

*New doctrines  
not devised by  
the Romish  
Hierarchy.*

precise time when these tares were first sown. We see plainly that the adoration, for example, of the Virgin Mary, was a thing wholly unknown to the Apostles, and their immediate followers; and its prevalence therefore now in the Romish and Greek Churches, is a proof that it must have been introduced at *some* subsequent time, though we may be unable with certainty to specify the time. And the like with the other doctrines which we reject.

All the innovations then with which evangelical truth has been overlaid in the several unreformed Churches (for, in most points, the Romish, the Greek, and the Armenian agree) are to be traced not in the deliberate devices of a Hierarchy, but,—as I have long since endeavoured to show,—to the spontaneous tendencies of human nature, of whose errors and infirmities advantage has been taken; and doctrines have thus been at length formally acknowledged, and engrafted upon Christianity—many of them far more important than the one now in question—in consequence of their having already obtained popularity.

*The Church is authorized to frame Creeds.* Now it is true,—and we should be careful never to lose sight of that truth—that a Church has the right,—and it is one which has very frequently been exercised—of making alterations and additions from time to time, in those Formularies called Creeds or Confessions of Faith; not however as introducing anything new in doctrine, but as protesting against newly-arisen errors, and

professing adherence to tenets which have been for the first time controverted. And this, the real design and proper use of Creeds, is what I would wish you assiduously to point out and explain to your people.<sup>1</sup> Thus the Nicene Creed *e. g.* makes assertions as to several points (such as our Saviour's divinity, and others) which in the Apostles' Creed had been left unnoticed, because there had not formerly been any doubt about them, and later heresies had created a necessity for distinctly putting them forward. And thus again in our Articles, which constitute in fact the Creed of our Church, it is declared among other things, that community of goods is no part of the christian scheme; because this doctrine, and the practice founded on it, had been then newly broached by some German Anabaptists.

But widely different is the present case. The doctrine now first authoritatively laid down (and the like may be said of several that were laid down by the Council of Trent) is not one which has been recently denied or doubted for the first time, but on the contrary has been for ages a matter of dispute in the Church of Rome; and for ages before was never thought of at all. The recent decree is manifestly not a mere new declaration of a point of faith hitherto undisputed, but the sanction of a new development of doctrine.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Cautions for the Times*, No. XXV.

*Development of Doctrines.* Whether such a development is allowable according to the principles of the Church of Rome, and, if it be, whether its introduction rests with the Pope alone, or requires the sanction of a General Council,—these are questions disputed within that Church itself. It would be presumptuous for *us* to undertake positively to decide such questions; nor do they, in fact, concern us. To *us* it would perhaps appear indubitable that if the Apostle Peter was really appointed by our Lord his Vicegerent and Representative, with the same absolute authority over the Church as his to whom was “given all power in Heaven and in earth,” and if the Pope be the successor, in all points, of Peter, and the inheritor of all that was bestowed on him,—it must follow that we have only to listen to the Pope’s Decrees, as we would to those of our divine Master in person. But on this point, there is, as I have just observed, a difference of opinion among Romanists themselves; a difference which, it should seem, each of them has no means of deciding except by the exercise of his private judgment; though the very necessity for *having* it decided, arises from the alleged incompetency of his private judgment.

*Doubtfulness of the Seat of Infallibility.*

Yet Protestants are perpetually taunted with their divisions, and the uncertainties to which they are subjected, for want of an infallible guide

clearly to be recognized, and readily accessible. The offer of such a guide would doubtless be accepted by every one, who could but receive reasonable assurance that such a guide does exist on earth, and *where it is to be found*. But supposing it proved satisfactorily that *somewhere* in the Church of Rome this unerring guide does exist (which would be granting more than we conceive there is any ground for) still nothing is gained, if it be still doubtful *where* the infallible authority is lodged. It is in vain to tell the mariner that there is a certain star by which he may steer his course with unerring certainty, if he is left without any way of ascertaining what star it is. And divisions and doubts without end may prevail in a Church of which some of the members acquiesce in the Pope's decisions as infallibly right, while others maintain that he has exceeded his powers, and that his decision is both invalid and actually erroneous.

But we, to whatever other mistakes or perplexities we may be exposed, are at least safe from all danger of this. There can be no fear of *our* being led to adopt any doctrine on the authority of any pretended successors of Peter; of one whom we do not admit to have had any successor in the apostolic office, and whom moreover we do not find to have himself exercised or claimed any supremacy, or any power to lay down Articles of Christian Faith on his own authority.

*Contrast between Peter and his pretended Successor.* And, indeed, in what relates to the development of a doctrine, the contrast is peculiarly striking between Peter as described in Scripture, and his pretended successor. For, Peter did receive a commission to be the principal instrument in developing a most important doctrine, at that time most unexpected and startling; viz., that the Gentiles were admissible into the Christian Church without becoming previously proselytes to the Mosaic Law. This had been darkly hinted at in several of our Lord's parables, which were not so understood, or meant to be so understood, when spoken; but which served, when a clear revelation was afterwards made, to show that there was not in the Most High any *change of purpose*, but that the Gentile-believers were (as the Apostle Peter expresses it) "elect according to the foreknowledge of God." No doubt it was the hitherto despised Gentiles that were represented by the *labourers in the vineyard* called at a late hour of the day,—by the wanderers in the highways called to the *wedding-feast*,—by the *prodigal son*, and by the *beggar Lazarus*. But these parables only contained, as I have said, the undeveloped germ of the doctrine which was in due time made known, as new;—new, not in the divine design, but in the communication of that design to the Church. The explanation of the full meaning of these parables was reserved till that due time should arrive.

And how was this knowledge imparted? Not by an authoritative decree from Peter as Christ's vicegerent; not by any process of reasoning on the christian system, as a conclusion drawn after long discussion and controversy, from a consideration of what is "congruous, desirable, pious, decorous;" not as an opinion ripened gradually into a Dogma by its general prevalence; but by a *direct revelation*, running counter to all existing expectations and prejudices; a revelation established by a concurrent series of miracles; first the vision of Cornelius; then, the coincident vision exhibited to Peter; then the intimation from the Holy Spirit to Peter that he should "go with the messengers;" and lastly, the miraculous descent of the Spirit on the Gentiles while Peter was addressing them. And so far were the Jewish Apostles and Elders of the Christian Church from acquiescing as a matter of course in whatever Peter might declare or do, that they took him to task for "going in to men uncircumcised;" and he, instead of claiming any personal supremacy, vindicates himself by recounting the miracles that had taken place; and concludes by saying "what was I, that I should withstand God," on account of this new revelation. And *we* shall be ready to do the like, when similar miraculous evidence of a revelation shall have been produced. We require no more, and we will accept no less, of evidence than was deemed needful for the Church in the days of the Apostles.

*Superfluous to  
disprove the  
doctrine in  
question.*

But as it is, it would be superfluous, I must think, for any of us to go about to disprove a doctrine which does not even profess to be established either by Scripture,<sup>1</sup> or by a revelation attested by undeniable sensible miracles. And it would be worse than superfluous for our Church as a Body, to come forward with any fresh formal Protest either against the claims to supremacy of the Romish Church, or against any one of its peculiar tenets. Our Church *has* already protested, once for all, against those claims;<sup>2</sup> and a repetition of a public solemn Protest tends rather to weaken than to strengthen it. When indeed any of us individually is occupied in giving pastoral instruction to his People, we warn

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<sup>1</sup> When I say that this doctrine does not even profess to rest on Scripture, I mean that no pretended *direct* proof of it is adduced from Scripture. Indirectly and by implication, every dogma of the Church of Rome, past, present, or future, may claim scriptural authority, if it be but once granted that the scriptural declaration, "Thou art Peter, &c.," signifies that the Bishops of Rome are Christ's vicegerents on earth, and endowed by Him with infallibility and universal supremacy. For, this would give the stamp of Scripture to everything they may set forth.

<sup>2</sup> Many persons indeed suppose that the name of "Protestants" arose from their protesting against the claims and the doctrines of the Church of Rome; though it is well-known that in fact it arose from the Protest of some German Reformers against a breach of faith, in withdrawing the liberty of conscience and exemption from secular penalties, which had been promised them; and the title then came to be extended to those who agreed with them in their revolt from Rome.

them repeatedly against any sin or error they may be thought liable to fall into; (which certainly is not the case with the doctrine now under consideration;)—we reason with them, to induce them to adopt what we consider right views; we exhort, —persuade,—remind, and caution them, again and again. But when any declaration has been once formally put forth, to repeat this, would suggest a suspicion at least that it was something originally invalid or insufficient. A renunciation of Romish supremacy, if valid at all, must stand good for ever.

And as for those peculiar Romish doctrines which our Reformers expressly censured, we should remember that these had been for ages received in our country as of apostolic authority; and unless distinctly condemned, there was a danger that they might survive the separation from Rome; as, in fact, the greater part of these errors are retained in the Greek Church, and in the Armenian.

But when after three centuries of separation a new doctrine is promulgated on the authority of the Romish See, to protest specifically against that, (while we do *not* protest against such and such a dogma of the Baptists, or of the Quakers, or of the Lutherans, &c.)—this could have no effect but to suggest the idea that we do owe some allegiance to that See, when its decisions are *not* exceptionable, and that we are craving for a return to submission whenever such and such specific obstacles to a re-union shall have been removed. And thus

according to the well-known and important maxim that “an exception proves a rule,” we might be understood as acquiescing in everything we might *omit* to protest against ; and should take on ourselves the task of again and again remonstrating against, and refuting, each fresh papal Decree.

*The Church of Rome if sound could have no control over ours.*

Rejoiced, of course, we should be, if the Romish Church should renounce its errors, and return to the condition in which the Apostle Paul left it.

But though we should then be on terms of friendly intercommunion, we should no more be a dependent branch of the Church of Rome, than, in Paul’s time, and long after, the Churches of Philippi or Thessalonica,—of Corinth or of Ephesus were such. We should still be as independent of the Church of Rome as we now are of the Protestant Churches in Switzerland or in Denmark. Our standard is Scripture ; and we claim as full a right to judge of the sense of Scripture as any other independent Church. We have no need—nor should we be wise in undertaking the task—to censure or to refute again and again, either the interpretations of Scripture, or the non-scriptural developments of doctrine, which any others may think fit to adopt.

*Danger of using weak Arguments.*

We are not at all called on, as I have already said, to take upon us the burden of proof, by coming forward to disprove, even by the soundest arguments, any doctrine resting on the authority of a

church which we have solemnly denounced as erroneous, and which has condemned us as heretical. And unsound arguments, or such as at least admit of a plausible answer, may do more harm than good to the cause of truth, by giving—though not a real, yet—a seeming triumph to the advocates of error. *E. g.* It has been urged by some as an argument against the doctrine we are speaking of, that the Virgin Mary speaks of God as her “Saviour,” and that if she had been exempt from sin, she would have had no need of a Saviour. Now to this a Roman Catholic might reply, that, not from sin only, but from death—from Satan, or any other enemy,—from danger or affliction of any kind—a person may need and wish and pray to be *saved*, and may obtain the deliverance he seeks; and that whoever does save him from any evil, is rightly to be termed his “Saviour;” and that we ourselves, in the prayer for times of war, pray to be “*saved* and delivered from the hands of our enemies:” so that the Virgin’s calling God her Saviour does not at all imply any consciousness of sin. Such arguments as these are at the best ineffectual; and may, with weak minds, even tend to confirm them in error. But, for us, no arguments either weak or strong are needed against any Article of Faith not deducible directly from Scripture.

In reference, generally, to the claims which our Church resists, and the doctrines she repudiates, I may take this occasion again to remind you (and you

*Dangers from within more than from without.*

will not wonder at my repeating the warning at a time like the present) that the dangers we have chiefly to guard against are not from without but from within; and that it is not by secular penalties, or by any legislative measures, but by our own care to understand, and to maintain, and to inculcate, sound principles that we should seek protection against such dangers.

A good many years ago, before any of those open secessions to the Church of Rome had occurred which have so greatly alarmed many persons, and before the publication had begun of those Tracts which contributed to those secessions, I perceived, and gave warning of, an impending danger from those tendencies of human nature by which the corruptions of the unreformed Churches were originally produced. And experience proved that though to many persons my warning was addressed in vain, my apprehensions were far from vain.

And it was not by the persuasions of any Romish emissaries—much less, in consequence of the removal of civil disabilities from Roman Catholics—that Romanist doctrines and practices made the advances they did make among many members of our Church; but by a spontaneous process gradually going on in their own minds. Indeed, among those who have more or less openly adopted Romish views, are to be found many who had been the most vehement opponents of what was called

“the emancipation ;” while those who had been all along the advocates of that emancipation have remained, with hardly an exception, the steady adherents and champions of Protestant principles.

I have known it urged however on the opposite side, that a considerable number of conversions to Romanism have in fact taken place since the relief of the Roman Catholics from penal laws and civil disabilities; whence it was inferred that the one must be attributed to the other. It was acknowledged that no connexion could be pointed out between the alteration of the laws, and those conversions. The argument was confessedly that of “post hoc ergo propter hoc:” the one must be regarded as the cause of the other, it was urged, simply because it preceded it. By this rule then, the conversions on the opposite side, in this country, which are about ten times more numerous, must be attributed to the same cause.

*Conversions  
to and from  
Romanism.*

But I am convinced that there does exist a connexion between the altered state of the law, and the altered state of our Church, at least with respect to places of worship. During the whole of the last century, when the penal laws were in force, great as was the increase of population only five new places of worship were opened in this Diocese; and in the first half century after the abrogation of those laws, nearly sixty.

But as for those who have gone over to the

Romish Church, the process which took place with them seems to have been, not that they first gave in their adhesion to the Church of Rome, and thereupon felt bound to subscribe to all its doctrines; but on the contrary, that having adopted, step by step, those doctrines, as many of them as were even tolerably clear-sighted, and at the same time had anything of honest consistency, perceived the necessity of following out their principles by submitting to the Church whose system they had already embraced.

In several instances probably, this *Disingenuous course recommended by some writers.* course was hastened by some tracts and volumes which were published several years ago,<sup>1</sup> whose object was to show how men might pursue an opposite course; so as to quiet their conscience, and defend themselves against censure, while adopting Romish principles and yet professing to be members of our Church, and holding preferment in it. This object was to be effected by a system of subterfuge and forced interpretation such as might make anything out of anything—such a system as might

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<sup>1</sup> The most remarkable of these, No. 90 of the Oxford *Tracts for the Times* has been lately reprinted (with an Introduction and Notes) conformably with a permission announced in the earlier portion of the Series.

It is a work which every one ought to possess who takes an interest in the important subject treated of.—See No. XIII. of the *Cautions for the Times*.

enable an infidel (and this it appears has actually occurred on the Continent) to hold a Professorship of Theology in a christian university. These publications were likely, I conceive, to do good rather than harm; because the disingenuousness was—much of it, at least—too gross to mislead any upright man; and it was calculated to show those who had not before examined the matter carefully, their real situation. “Their eyes were opened and behold they were in the midst of Samaria;” and thereupon as many of them as were careful about consistency and truth made their election one way or the other, and abandoned either the Church or else the system which were so plainly incompatible with each other.

On a later occasion than the one just alluded to, I came forward, as you will remember, in opposition to the prevailing feeling, at that time, among my countrymen, to point out of how small consequence are empty Ecclesiastical Titles, when implying claims not already admitted by the persons concerned. The title, for instance, of “King of France,” retained for ages by our Sovereigns, gave no uneasiness to the French people, and only exposed ourselves to ridicule, till it was, within our own memory, wisely dropped. And the last Stuart Prince, who, to the last, called himself King of England, excited so little of either fear or resentment, that he was actually in the enjoyment of a pension from our

*Ecclesiastical Titles.*

own royal family. In like manner, if the people are not Romanists or inclined to be such, in a certain English or Irish city, the assumption by a Romish Bishop of a title from that city, will not make them so. And if they *are*, from other causes, Romanists, the prohibition by law of that title, will never convert them to the Protestant faith. And in the present case also, as there is not, that I can see, any ground for special indignation at the arrogance of a claim which has been made for many ages by the Romish Church, to dictate Articles of Faith to all the world, so, neither is there any ground for alarm at the recent exercise of that claim, or any reason for our making a special protest against it. Such a Protest against the papal Decree would probably be as little regarded by Roman Catholics as the Decree itself is by Protestants. And the promulgation of that Decree is far from being likely either to confirm or to extend the power of the Roman See. Our Church is a tree which we may be assured will withstand all storms from without till it shall have become inwardly decayed and hollow.

*Dangers from disunion.* In saying that we should be on our guard more against dangers from within than from without, you must understand me to be alluding not merely to the danger of the adoption of Romish doctrines or practices, but to everything that may tend to impair the efficient working of our Church, to lessen the respect felt for it, or to retard its progress.

Disunion in various shapes creeping in among us, is one danger—or rather one class of dangers—against which we must be constantly on our guard.

Among other forms of this danger, one against which we should sedulously keep watch, is, whatever may tend to impair the union between the English and the Irish portions of the Church.

My zealous anxiety for the maintenance, intact, both of the political union of Great Britain and Ireland, and of the ecclesiastical union of the Churches of England and Ireland,<sup>1</sup> is no new feeling that has arisen in me since occupying my present position, but has always, from the time I was capable of forming an opinion, been the same as now.

A few years ago I came forward, as you will remember, in conjunction with the Lord Primate and the other Irish Prelates, to protest against some language which had been employed—merely, I believe, through inadvertency—such as had the appearance of disowning the Ecclesiastical Union. And when, very lately, there seemed ground for apprehending something of a similar kind, I immediately proceeded to take the requisite steps for obviating the danger. And I am happy to say,

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<sup>1</sup> It may be worth mentioning, that I was lately represented, by mistake, in a newspaper report, as having said at a public dinner, that I was a zealous advocate for the *union of Church and State*. But that subject I was not at all adverting to. I was speaking of the union of the *English and Irish* branches of the Church.

many English Bishops with whom I conversed on the subject, seemed to be duly impressed with the conviction that the safety and welfare of *both* branches of our Church, depends on the preservation of their union.

In what relates to unity, and to regularity of action, we might sometimes take a profitable lesson from the Church of Rome itself. Far be it indeed from us to set the claims of unity above those of truth,—to prefer the Church to the Gospel,—or to pay such obedience to human authority as is due only to divine. Far be it from us to imitate the Church of Rome in any of its errors. But that there is a danger of a dread of those errors leading incautious Protestants into the opposite, and making them underrate the just claims of a Church, and introduce noxious irregularities, and discord, this is what a man of any sagacity would have conjectured as antecedently probable, and what abundant experience must have taught to any one capable of profitable observation.

*Undesigned Schism.* Well-meaning and zealous but inconsiderate persons, when perceiving or fancying that they perceive, some deficiencies or faults in our Institutions or in those who administer them, are likely to be tempted, instead of taking steps for removing or mitigating those evils in a regular way, in conformity with the existing laws, and under subordination to the constituted Authorities,—to set themselves at once to provide

remedies by their own self-assumed authority, in such a way as must tend to subvert our Institutions altogether; since the same liberty and power which one set of men take to themselves, others, of perhaps widely-different principles, will equally claim and seize upon; and the result must be interminable and hopeless confusion. There never probably was a large army in which some of the soldiers were not—at least in their own opinion and that of some comrades,—better qualified for command than some of the actual officers; and some of the inferior officers better qualified than the general. And if thereupon they were to hold themselves authorized to band themselves into self-constituted regiments, and to elect for themselves officers who were to act each according to his own discretion, it is plain that instead of a well-organized army, we should soon see a rabble of disorderly Guerilla-parties; to the great advantage of the common enemy.

Now instances sometimes occur of a corresponding procedure in matters pertaining to religion. I have known some well-intentioned but rash and unthinking persons form themselves into a self-constituted Church, and elect a Synod for its government, to whom was intrusted the office of framing a creed to be subscribed, and (after due examination) of ordaining preachers, to go forth and instruct the ignorant and convert infidels, heretics, and irreligious persons of all descriptions;

and all this was done by persons most of them professing (I believe with no insincere design) full adherence and submission to our Church, and utterly unconscious that they were at all violating its regulations; though our Twenty-third Article distinctly declares 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. And those we ought to judge lawfully called and sent which be chosen and called to this work by men who have *public authority given to them* in the congregation to call and send ministers into the Lord's vineyard." Which Article, by the way, is one that might be agreed to, and which is in fact virtually acted on, by almost every religious community in existence.

But what concealed from the persons alluded to the real character of what they were doing, was their employment of different *names* from those commonly used to denote the same *things*. They did not call themselves a *Church*, but a *Society*; their *Creed* went under the name of a "confession," and of "points of Faith:" their appointed governors they did not *call Bishops*, or a "Synod" or "Convocation," but a "Committee;" their ministers were not said to be *ordained* such, but selected and "appointed;" and they were called not *Preachers*, but *Missionaries*; and so, of the rest.

And I have known some persons to be so com-

pletely blinded by this difference of *names*, as to have failed to perceive any essential distinction between such a Society as I have been speaking of, and others of quite another character; such as for instance, the Church-Missionary-Society, which employs *regularly-ordained clergymen* of our Church, and places them under the superintendence of each colonial Bishop, as his curates.

The degree to which (as Lord Bacon observes) men's thoughts and views are influenced by language, instead of their bearing rule over it, is one of the most curious, and of the most practically important and interesting phenomena of human nature. The Romans after the expulsion of the Tarquins could never be brought to endure the degradation of being governed by a *King*; though they submitted tamely to be under the most cruel despotism of Dictators and Emperors. And the title of King was one which Oliver Cromwell never could venture to assume, though he exercised the regal office under that of Lord Protector. And even so, there are men who would shrink from assuming, and others, from pretending to confer on them, the episcopal *name*, even when the most important functions of the Office were exercised without scruple.

Cases may indeed occur — as I observed to you a good many years ago<sup>1</sup>—in which a strong necessity would justify and would require such

*Cases which justify departure from general rules.*

<sup>1</sup> See Essay II. *On the Kingdom of Christ.*

proceedings as would, under ordinary circumstances, be highly blameable : and this holds good equally with ecclesiastical and with civil affairs. Either in secular, or in religious concerns, it would be most unfair, on the one hand to censure men for taking a course to which they were driven by the circumstances in which they were placed, or, on the other hand, to make this a precedent for those in totally different circumstances. “Suppose, for instance” (as I took occasion to remark to you a good many years ago), “a number of emigrants to be shipwrecked on a desert island, such as afforded them means of subsistence, but precluded all reasonable hope of their quitting it: or suppose them to have taken refuge there as fugitives from intolerable oppression, or from a conquering enemy; (no uncommon case in ancient times) or to have been driven to throw off the yoke of such monstrous tyranny as no one could be expected to endure, or to be the sole survivors of a pestilence or earthquake which had destroyed the rest of the nation; no one would maintain that these shipwrecked emigrants, or fugitives, or emancipated serfs, were bound, or were permitted, to remain—their posterity—in a state of anarchy, on the ground of there being no one among them who could claim hereditary or other right to govern them. It would clearly be right, and wise, and necessary, that they should regard themselves as constituted by the very circum-

stances of their position, a civil community; and should assemble to enact such laws and appoint such magistrates as they might judge most suitable to their circumstances. And obedience to those laws and governors, as soon as the constitution was settled, would become a moral duty to all the members of the community: and this, even though some of the enactments might appear, or might be, (though not at variance with the immutable laws of morality, yet) considerably short of perfection. The King, or other magistrates thus appointed, would be legitimate rulers; and the laws framed by them, valid and binding. The precept of 'submitting to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake,' and of 'rendering to all their due,' would apply in this case as completely as in respect of any civil community that exists.

“And yet these men would have been doing what *in ordinary circumstances*, would have been manifest rebellion. For if these same, or any other individual subjects of our own or of any existing Government (imperfect as all Governments under fallible men must be) were to take upon themselves to throw off their allegiance to it, *without* any such necessity, and were to pretend to constitute themselves an independent Sovereign-State, and proceed to elect a King or Senate,—to frame a Constitution, and to enact laws, all resting on their own self-created authority, no one would doubt, that, however wise in themselves those laws might be,

and however personally well-qualified the magistrates thus appointed,—they would not be legitimate governors, or valid laws: and those who had so attempted to establish them, would be manifest rebels.

“A similar rule will apply to the case of ecclesiastical communities. If any number of individuals,—not having the plea of an express revelation to the purpose, or again, of their deliberate conviction that the Church from which they (whether avowedly or virtually) separate, is fundamentally erroneous and unscriptural—or that it has utterly failed, — after all applications and remonstrances had been tried,—to fulfil its manifest duties,—if they should take upon themselves to constitute a new Church, according to their own fancy, and to appoint themselves or others to ministerial offices, without having any recognised authority to do so, derived from the existing religious community of which they were members, but merely on the ground of supposed personal qualifications, then, however wise in themselves the institutions, and however, in themselves, fit, the persons appointed, there can be no more doubt that the guilt of Schism would be incurred in this case, than that the other just mentioned would be an act of rebellion.”

As for a resort to any kind of secular coercion for preventing or putting down these or other such irregularities in religious matters, it would be, I

trust, superfluous for me to say how much I should deprecate anything of the kind. But I wish that what really is Schism should be perceived to be Schism; and that it should be avoided by sincere and sound members of a Church, not through fear of any civil penalties, but from a sense of duty.

It is my belief however that the greater part of those who engage in any such scheme as I have been alluding to, have had no thought of that which it in reality amounts to,—attempting a REVOLUTION. I am far from saying indeed that an Ecclesiastical Revolution should never be attempted; but I do say that it should never be attempted but as a last resource, in a case of manifest and extreme necessity. And when it *is* attempted, all who are engaged in it ought clearly to see that it *is* a revolution. Nor will any wise man engage in such an attempt without providing all practicable security that the issue shall not be something more intolerable than the evils originally complained of; without providing beforehand the means of substituting some better constitution, or some safer rulers, for the framework which he seeks to break up, and the Governors whom he endeavours to depose.<sup>1</sup>

*Ecclesiastical  
Revolutions.*

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<sup>1</sup> “ Our own happy political Revolution in 1688 owed its success mainly, under God, to the prudence with which it was planned—the forecast that was used—and the care that was taken to ensure that the weight and influence, the rank and the wisdom of the country, should be at the head of the movement.

*Danger of overlooking the rightful claims of a Church.*

These remarks I have thought not unsuitable to the present occasion, because never are the rightful claims of a Christian Church more likely to be forgotten or under-rated than when claims the most unwarrantable and presumptuous have been advanced. For it always has been, and will be, an infirmity of human nature to rush with unthinking eagerness from one extreme into its opposite. Thus, the corruptions introduced into the Mosaic system by the Jewish Rulers, and again, the eagerness of those Jews who did acknowledge Jesus, to bring the Gentile-converts under the yoke of the Law—seem to have greatly contributed at least to the rise of the very early heresy of the Gnostics, who denied that the Mosaic Law had proceeded from the Supreme God. But the Apostles, and Paul especially, to whom it chiefly appertained, steadily opposed *both* errors: always

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Yet even that unparalleled movement took a turn in the event—fortunate, indeed, as it proved, yet quite different from what the majority of those who at first engaged in it, ever expected—the Settlement of the Crown first upon King William, and then upon the House of Hanover, with a total exclusion of James II. and his direct male heirs. Again, look to the case of France. However satisfactory any one may think the present state of things there to be, no one can doubt that the men of *republican* principles who dethroned Louis Philippe in 1848, were as far from expecting the actual result, as they were from desiring it. So hard is it to calculate beforehand what will be the issue of a great change in an old established Society!”—*Cautions for the Times*, No. XXVIII., p. 494.

maintaining the divine origin and authority of the Mosaic Law, but no more conceding infallibility to its interpreters and teachers, than we do to the Church of Rome: that mighty river so pure at its source, but which has gradually become more and more turbid as it rolled onwards.

It is our part, my Reverend Brethren, while ever ready, on suitable occasions, to explain the proper office of a Church, and to maintain its rightful claims;—it is for us to give the people as little cause as possible for disputing, or even inquiring into those claims. If you are assiduous in giving sound christian instruction — in consoling the afflicted — in enlightening those in error — in awakening the negligent—and above all (since children are the morrow of society) in seeing that the rising generation are as well trained as possible, you will be impressing on your people in the most effectual way, a practical and habitual conviction of the value of a regularly-constituted Christian Church, by imparting to them the advantages for the sake of which a Christian Church was instituted; and they will rightly understand and duly appreciate the means through which such beneficial ends are attained.

LONDON:  
SAVILL AND EDWARDS, PRINTERS, CHANDOS-STREET,  
COVENT-GARDEN.

THE RIGHT PRINCIPLE  
OF THE  
INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE,

CONSIDERED IN REFERENCE TO

THE EUCHARIST,  
AND THE DOCTRINES CONNECTED THEREWITH.



A C H A R G E,

DELIVERED

AT THE TRIENNIAL VISITATION OF THE PROVINCE OF  
DUBLIN.

BY RICHARD WHATELY, D.D.,

*ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.*

LONDON:  
JOHN W. PARKER AND SON, WEST STRAND.

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HODGES AND SMITH, GRAFTON STREET.

1856.

LONDON:  
SAVILL AND EDWARDS, PRINTERS, CHANDOS STREET,  
COVENT GARDEN.

TO THE  
BISHOPS AND CLERGY OF THE PROVINCE OF DUBLIN,  
THIS CHARGE  
IS INSCRIBED,  
WITH EARNEST PRAYERS FOR THEIR WELFARE,  
AND THAT OF THE PEOPLE COMMITTED TO THEIR CARE,  
BY THEIR SINCERE FRIEND AND FELLOW-LABOURER,  
THE AUTHOR.



## ADVERTISEMENT.

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THIS Charge, of which the chief part was reported in the newspapers, is now printed entire. It was too long to be delivered at any one place; and accordingly portions of it were omitted, some at one Visitation, and some at another. But I always retained the greater part of those passages, in which I have endeavoured to set forth what appears to me to be a most important principle of interpretation, and one which, though not overlooked, is not in general so strongly dwelt on as it deserves to be—namely, that of looking, in the first instance, to *the sense in which the hearers were likely to have understood*, and must have been known to understand, what was said to them; the presumption being that this is *the true sense* (in any matter of vital consequence), unless they afterwards received some different explanation of it.



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# A C H A R G E,

ETC.

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MY REVEREND BRETHREN,

§ 1. YOU will not, I feel confident, think any prefatory apology necessary for adverting to an important subject, respecting which, though I have no complaint against *you*, there is hardly one of you, probably, that has not to complain, more or less, of several of his flock; I mean, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. There are few of you, I fear, if any, that have not observed, and observed with great sorrow, that a large proportion—frequently a great majority—of a congregation, withdraw from the celebration of that solemn ordinance; and that, of these, though some are occasional communicants (on one or two of the greatest Festivals of our Church), many are altogether strangers to the duty; and regard it, if they regard it at all as a duty for themselves, as something to be reserved for the death-bed, and to stand in the place of the (so-called) sacrament of Extreme Unction of the Church of Rome. Habitually to communicate is what they have no notion of as a duty, to Christians as such, but only to persons who undertake to lead a life of a certain pre-eminent holiness, and pretend to a kind

*Deficient attendance at the Lord's Table.*

of Saintship beyond, and quite distinct from what is suitable for Christians generally.

Accordingly, an intelligent stranger coming among us from some distant heathen land, and judging from his own observations and inquiries, as to the character of our religion (I mean, even that of our Church; putting out of account all other Denominations), would be likely to conclude that Christianity is not *one* Religion, but two; designed for two different classes of persons, communicants and non-communicants; both servants, indeed, of the same Master, but having, by his authority, different kinds of religious observances allotted to them respectively.

When we seek to form some calculation as to the effect of our exhortations, the Communion-table often furnishes something of a test, though only on the negative side. For though we cannot venture to assume that all who attend it are induced to do so by our persuasions, or that all of them are in a proper frame of mind, on the other hand, every one who withdraws is a manifest instance of our failure.

I am not speaking, you will observe, of persons altogether irreligious, or who are neglectful of any acknowledged christian duties. Some such, indeed, we must always expect to meet with. But I am speaking of those whose neglect of the particular duty in question arises from some kind of misapprehension as to its character.

It is *our* part, of course, to study to remove from men's minds whatever misapprehensions may exist; addressing ourselves in each case to the particular error which, from private inquiry, we shall find to be the most prevalent.

§ 2. Among the causes which have led to the neglect of the Ordinance of the Lord's Supper by many, and in one christian Sect, to the absolute rejection of it, must be reckoned, I cannot doubt, the superstitions that have prevailed on the subject. For, every kind of superstition, besides the intrinsic evil of it, has a tendency to cast discredit on any doctrine or institution that has been abused by an admixture of human devices. The "wall daubed with untempered mortar," which has been built up by presumptuous Man, has a tendency to bring down in its fall the original and sound parts of the building. And thus the superstitious adoration of the elements of bread and wine—not to mention that it has exposed to contemptuous rejection the religion itself of which it was represented as a part—led, by a natural reaction, to the entire exclusion of the Sacrament itself, which had been thus abused, from the list of christian Ordinances. The paradoxical and revolting character of the doctrine of Transubstantiation, and the superstitions resulting from it, caused a well-known Sect to reject the Eucharist altogether.<sup>1</sup> And among ourselves there have

*Superstitious notions respecting the Eucharist.*

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<sup>1</sup> See Note A, at the end.

arisen, of late years (and this is one of my reasons for now calling your attention to the subject), persons teaching strange mystical notions respecting this Sacrament, such as can hardly be distinguished from the theory of Transubstantiation, and which have probably contributed to lead several of themselves and of their admirers to take the consistent step of openly joining the Church of Rome. Theories have been maintained by some professed members of our Church, that are in manifest contradiction to the express words of our Article; an Article which they explain away in a "non-natural sense," in such a manner, that anything might thus be made out of anything.<sup>1</sup>

We are told that "The wicked and such as be void of a lively faith, when they do carnally and visibly press with their teeth the sacramental bread," are really partakers (though to their own condemnation) of the body of Christ. And a strong presumption is thus created in favour of a Church which, consistently with this doctrine, teaches the

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<sup>1</sup> It is maintained that the declaration that no change of the substance of bread and wine takes place, is to be interpreted to mean that a change of the Substance does take place, the Accidents only remaining unchanged; which is notoriously the very doctrine our Reformers were opposing.

It would be well if any such writer and his admirers would consider what might be the result of taking similar liberties with *his own* expressions; which might, without any greater violence, be made to signify that he had no belief at all in Christianity as a divine revelation.

*sacrifice* of the Mass, and calls the Communion-table an *Altar* (an expression which, unfortunately, many Protestants have inadvertently adopted), and inculcates the *adoration* of the *Host*—the victim supposed to be offered up on that Altar. And those who have accordingly gone over to that Church—mistaken as we believe them to be—show at least a higher moral principle than those who practise or who approve the system of covertly holding and teaching doctrines utterly opposed to those of the Church they profess to adhere to.

§ 3. Some Protestants, however, we meet with who congratulate themselves on their exemption from Romish error, in this and in other points, but who need to be reminded that they are themselves guilty of a worse fault than what they censure in their brethren; from many of whom they might take an example to their own profit. For we find but too many Protestants (as was observed just above) withdrawing from the Lord's Table, in disregard of his plain injunction; while Roman Catholics do perform what they conceive to be a duty, though under what we hold to be erroneous notions concerning it.

And yet, there is much more reason for *them* to shrink from it under that kind of mysterious dread which so often keeps back Protestants. For, what *we* have to trust to, is the divine commands and promises, together with that faith and devotion of our own, of which we can judge from our own con-

*Neglect by  
Protestants of  
a known duty.*

sciousness. But the Romanist has to rely, in addition, on the inward INTENTION of the Priest. If *he* be a secret infidel, not intending, nor believing it possible, to convert the bread into the Lord's body, and inwardly regarding the whole Service with disdainful mockery—(and this is what, we know, hundreds of Priests in France declared of themselves, at the time of the first Revolution)—the whole Sacrament is nullified.<sup>1</sup> So that no Romanist can have a reasonable certainty that he is not adoring a morsel of common bread. Yet many of them perform, nevertheless, what they sincerely believe to be their duty, while many a Protestant omits what he acknowledges to be his.

*Erroneous views respecting the Eucharist to be met by appeal to Scripture.*

§ 4. As for those semi-Romish theories (as they may be called) which I have adverted to, I shall not attempt any particular examination of them, as they are so mystically obscure that it

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<sup>1</sup> It is true however that this doctrine of "intention" is not brought prominently forward and pressed on the attention of the Roman Catholic laity. On the contrary, many of these will be found, on inquiry, even ignorant that their Church has any such doctrine, and ready to deny it; though it is a doctrine which the Council of Trent puts forth with an Anathema.

It should be added that even if the officiating minister be himself sincere, the same nullity is incurred if there be an absence of the requisite "*intention*" in the priest who baptised him, or in the bishop who ordained him, or in those who baptised and ordained and consecrated that bishop, &c.—in short, if there be a flaw in any one of the innumerable links of that enormous chain on which the validity of a Sacrament is made to depend.

may be well doubted whether even the framers of them attach, themselves, any distinct meaning to their own language ; and it cannot be doubted that, to plain ordinary Christians, they must be altogether unintelligible. But I would remark, in reference to the doctrine of Transubstantiation itself, and to any others closely approaching it, that it is not advisable to resort (as some eminent Divines have done) to metaphysical arguments relating to the properties of Matter, or to appeals to the bodily senses, or to allegations of the abstract impossibility of such a miracle as is in this case pretended. At least, any considerations of this kind should hold a secondary and very subordinate place ; and the primary and principal appeal should be made to the plain declarations of Scripture in their most natural sense.

Such was the procedure of our Reformers, who, in the twenty-eighth Article, instead of entering on any subtle disquisitions, declare that the doctrine of Transubstantiation “cannot be proved by Holy Writ, but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture.”

If we are fully convinced that the Scriptures contain a divine revelation, we are required to receive whatever they distinctly assure us of, however little we may be able to understand its possibility. But then, if it be something extremely paradoxical, we may fairly expect to have—if it *is* to be an Article of Faith—a more distinct and un-

mistakeable declaration of it in Scripture than if it had been something antecedently probable, and in harmony with the rest of what is revealed.

Now, to the present case this principle will apply. It is, indeed, not correct to say (though it is very commonly said) that the alleged miracle of Transubstantiation contradicts the senses. For, all that is testified by the senses is, the *attributes* [the accidents] of any material object—the appearance, for instance, and smell, and taste, of bread; and all these attributes the advocates of Transubstantiation admit to remain unchanged. Our belief that that which has these attributes is the substance of bread, is an *inference* which we draw *from* the testimony of our senses; but however correct the inference may be, it is not the very thing which the senses themselves testify, but a conclusion deduced from the perception of those qualities which the senses do present to us. To state the matter in the briefest form. The procedure of Protestants, and, in all other cases, of Roman Catholics also, is this: Whatever has all the accidents of bread, is the substance, bread; this that is before us has those accidents; therefore it is the substance, bread. Now, of the two premises from which this inference is drawn, it is the minor only that the senses attest; and it is the other premiss that the Romanist denies. But he draws a like inference with ours from the testimony of his senses in all other cases; though he maintains, in this one case, not that our senses deceive us, but that there

is a change of the substance of bread into that of a human body, while all the accidents (as they are called) of which—and of which alone—the senses take cognizance, remain unchanged. And if asked how this can be, and how a body can be at once, and entire, in thousands of places at once, he replies by a reference to the divine omnipotence.

§ 5. But it is admitted that all this is extremely paradoxical, and that the alleged miracle is a complete contrast to the acknowledged miracles of Jesus and his Apostles, which were appeals to the senses; *signs* (as they were usually called) of a divine mission; *proofs* as a foundation for faith; not matters of faith to be received in consequence of our being already believers in the Religion taught. The miracles that are recorded in Scripture cannot even be reckoned *improbable*; for, great as is, no doubt, the abstract improbability of any miracle, considered simply in itself, it is plain that (as is well observed by Origen) the propagation of Christianity by the sole force of miraculous claims, supposing them unfounded—the overthrow of the religions of the whole civilized world by a handful of Jewish peasants and fishermen, destitute of all superhuman powers—would be far more improbable than all the miracles narrated in Scripture. Even if we had, therefore, less full and distinct statements in Scripture of the miracles of Jesus and his Apostles than we have, there would have been a

*Alleged miracle of transubstantiation, a contrast to those recorded in Scripture.*

strong presumption that these men could not have done what they did but by the display of miraculous signs.

But as for the alleged miracle of Transubstantiation, it is but reasonable that we should at least require a very strong and clear declaration of it in the inspired Writings. And here it may be worth while to remark by the way, that it is not only paradoxical, but at variance even with the very description given of it by those who maintain it. For if you ask any one of them to state what was, for instance, the first miraculous sign displayed by Moses, he will say it was the change of the Rod into a Serpent; that which had the form, colour, motion, and, in short, all the "accidents" of a serpent, being in reality Moses's rod; and he will say, not that the serpent was *changed into a rod*, but, on the contrary, that the rod was changed into a serpent. In like manner, therefore, if that which has the appearance and all "accidents" of bread, be, in reality, a human body, he should say, not that bread is converted into the body, but that the *body has become bread*. And if he say, that that which was originally bread is changed into the Lord's body, he must yet say, also, that that body is, immediately after, re-converted into bread.

*Right principle of interpretation of Scripture.*

§ 6. All this surely requires, as I have said, very clear and strong scriptural authority to establish it. But when we ask for this, we are referred to

such a passage as—"This is my body;" which is parallel to many others that every one understands figuratively; as when our Lord is called a Lamb, a Vine, a Shepherd, and a Door; and when He says, in explaining his Parables, "The seed *is* the Word of God;" "The Reapers *are* the Angels;" and the like. Thoroughly familiar as the Disciples must have been with such figurative expressions, it cannot be doubted that they must have so understood Him when He presented to them "bread, saying, this is my body." If indeed He had not *in person* instituted the Rite, but his Apostles, after his departure, had, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, introduced it, using the words, "This is the Lord's body," there might have been perhaps some little danger—though but very little, even so—that some disciples might have supposed a miraculous though invisible change of substance to be meant. But, as if on purpose to guard against this, He Himself began the celebration of the rite; knowing, as He must have known, that the Apostles could not have thought that He was holding his own literal body in his own hands, and giving it to them, but would feel sure that He was speaking of a representation—a symbol—of his body. And to most of them—probably to all—would occur what they had heard from Himself just before, "The flesh profiteth nothing; it is the Spirit that giveth life;" implying—what is of itself evidently reasonable—that the real literal flesh of the human body of the Son of

Man, even if it could literally be received by our bodily organs, could not, of itself, and merely as flesh, have any spiritual efficacy as regards the soul.<sup>1</sup>

It seems inconceivable, then, that any one of common sense can really doubt that the Apostles understood their Master to be speaking at the last Supper, of the bread and wine as symbols of his body broken and his blood shed for them. And we may surely presume that, if this their belief had been erroneous, they would have received afterwards, on so important a point, a correction of their mistake, and whatever instruction was needed.

Now, we know from their own writings that they not only received no such correction, but continued in their original belief; since we find Paul, for instance, speaking to the Corinthians of “the *bread* that we break;” besides frequent incidental allusions, in the Book of Acts, to the “breaking of bread” as a well-known and established Christian Ordinance.

There can be no doubt then, surely, in any rational mind, that the Apostles did understand literally and not figuratively, our Lord’s injunction, “Do this in remembrance of Me,” as what was to be obeyed (as they did obey it) by a real literal partaking of the bread and wine; and that they did

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<sup>1</sup> And accordingly, the bread and wine at the Lord’s Supper must be regarded (as I have elsewhere remarked) as not only a Sign, but a sign of a Sign; being a Sign of his Body and Blood, which are a Sign of “the *Spirit* which quickeneth.”

understand figuratively and not literally, his words, "This is my body."

§ 7. Now, the safest test to apply in any case of possible doubt as to the right sense of anything said by our Lord or his Apostles, is, to look to the sense (when we can ascertain it) in which their hearers understood them. And we may fairly presume that, if any mistake were made by those hearers as to the meaning of what was said on some essential point, that mistake would be rectified, and the right explanation given, either immediately or afterwards.

*Test of literal  
or figurative  
interpretation.*

Thus, when the disciples understood Jesus to be speaking literally of the "leaven" of bread, He at once explained to them his real meaning. When He spoke of his resurrection, and they "understood not," but supposed Him to be speaking figuratively, and "reasoned among themselves" what this could mean, his actual resurrection afforded them an explanation. And their belief that the benefits of the Gospel were to be confined to Jews by nature, and those Gentiles who should conform to the Mosaic Law, was a mistake corrected by an express revelation to Peter.

Now, in the present case, no correction was made of the sense in which the Disciples must certainly have understood our Lord's words. And I need hardly remind you how earnestly, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the oneness of Christ's sacrifice is

contrasted with the continually-repeated sacrifices of the Levitical Law; plainly showing that the Eucharist was understood to be, not a fresh sacrifice, but a feast of the one sufficient sacrifice made “once for all,” and that the breaking of his body, and the shedding of his blood, is commemorated, but not repeated.<sup>1</sup>

*Errors concerning the Eucharist, not sprung from erroneous interpretation of Scripture.*

§ 8. Among the errors, therefore—and doubtless there are many and great ones—which have arisen from an erroneous interpretation of Scripture, this is, I think, not to be reckoned. It must have arisen from human teaching, by pastors, and to a people, little acquainted with Scripture, and paying little regard to it; and accordingly the doctrine does not appear to have existed for the first thousand years and

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<sup>1</sup> “This man after He had offered one sacrifice for ever (εις το διηνεκες) then sat down on the right hand of God; . . . for by one sacrifice He hath perfected for ever (εις το διηνεκες) them that are partakers of sanctification;” not *ηγιασμενους*, “them that are sanctified,” in the *past* tense, but *αγιζομενους*, in the present. And as for our Lord’s expression, “my flesh is meat indeed (αληθως), (which is followed in our Church Catechism, which says that his body and blood “are *verily* and indeed received by the faithful,)” the Apostles must have understood Him as when He said “I am the *true* vine”—*αληθινος*—which denoted not his being a vine in the *literal* sense, but in the highest and most *important* sense; even as Paul says that “that is *not* circumcision which is outward in the flesh,” (which, *literally*, it clearly is,) but that “circumcision is of the heart;” *i.e.*, in the noblest and best sense.

more. But when introduced, and prevailing, Scripture was afterwards wrested into a sense that might seem to support it.

And this will always be readily acquiesced in, if done by a Church, which is believed to be the divinely-appointed, infallible guide in all religious matters. It is but lost labour to prove to a man's own judgment that a certain interpretation of Scripture is forced and unnatural, as long as he is fully convinced that he ought implicitly to submit his own judgment to that of his Church. He will acknowledge that there is a mysterious *difficulty*, which it is his duty to disregard; but no valid *objection*.

There are to be found—and I suppose always will be—persons of such a disposition as to be glad to allow others to think for them, and to relieve them of the responsibility of forming judgments for themselves. Among Protestants, one may sometimes find the leaders of parties assuming (while they disclaim in words all claim to infallibility) the right of deciding for their followers; who cut short all discussion by at once denouncing all who do not agree with that Party, as “not knowing the Gospel,” and who take for granted that whatever views on any point are adopted by their Party, are to be received as the undoubted decisions of the Holy Spirit; putting, in reality, though not in words, a (supposed) infallible Party, for an infallible Church.

But it is a remarkable fact, that of the persons who have even gone over to such a Church, a large proportion are of a character the very opposite to that from which most would have anticipated such a result. They are persons not distinguished by extreme self-distrust, or a tendency to excessive and unreasonable deference and submissiveness, and a readiness on slight grounds to acquiesce in what is said; but in all respects the very opposite of all this: arrogant, self-confident, wilful, indocile, disdainful of any one who opposes their views, and inclined to demand stronger proof of anything they are called on to believe than the case admits of, or than a reasonable man would require. Yet such persons are found yielding to one of the worst-supported claims that ever was set up, and assenting to a long list of most paradoxical propositions, every one of which has a vast mass of evidence against it, and hardly anything that can be called an argument in its favour.

§ 9. The case seems to be that a *Reaction in favour of blind acquiescence in groundless claims.* re-action takes place in a mind of this description, and the individual rushes with a vehemence that is quite characteristic, from one extreme to the opposite. He is weary of inquiring, discussing, investigating, answering objections, and forming a judgment on a multitude of separate points, and so resolves to cut short at once all this disquieting fatigue by accepting implicitly the

decisions on all points of an authority which demands submission, not on the ground of a conviction of the understanding, but as an act of the *Will*, commanding us to stifle doubts, and shun inquiry, and set evidence at defiance.

Such is almost the very language of one of the converts in question:—"Don't stand at the door arguing, but enter the great home of the soul—enter, and adore. . . . Faith ever begins with a *venture*, and is rewarded with sight. . . . Such a person is under no duty to wait for clearer light. He will not have—he cannot expect—clearer light *before conversion*. Certainty in its highest sense is the reward of those who *by an act of the Will*, embrace the Truth, when Nature like a coward shrinks. You must make a venture. Faith is a *Venture*, before a man is a Catholic, and a grace after it."—(*Loss and Gain*.)

Such a man is like one who, being the proprietor of some great manufacturing, or commercial, or agricultural concern, becomes weary of looking after a multitude of details in the various departments of the business, and watching the various persons employed in it, and thereupon resolves to throw the whole superintendence into the hands of an agent, provided with an ample Power-of-Attorney, and entrusted with unlimited control throughout. This may be a very wise course, *supposing* the agent fixed on to be one whom there are good grounds for thus trusting, as thoroughly well

qualified both in point of skill and of integrity. But nothing can be a more monstrous absurdity, supposing him fixed on at random, on no grounds but his own boastful and unsupported pretensions, and merely because the proprietor resolved that he *would* fully trust *some* one, and only *one*. He has indeed thus cleared himself of a multitude of responsibilities, but at the risk of a universal and total ruin. And the convert who proceeds in an analogous manner has exchanged a number of questions on this, that, and the other point, for *one* which, however, comprehends in it all the rest together, and presents a great difficulty, besides, of itself. For he who has adopted a multitude of errors in the lump, on the authority of a guide whom he has no reason to trust, is responsible for all and each of those errors, and for that of choosing, by a mere act of Will, such a guide, in addition.

A man who adopts this course is likely to obtain ultimately little or nothing of that tranquillity of mind which he had hoped for, and for which he had paid so dear. In proportion as he is intelligent and thoughtful, he will be haunted with the suspicion, "Is there not a lie in my right hand? Was I justified in shutting the eyes God gave me, and giving myself up to be led by a blind guide? Is not the well-compacted fabric of my faith built on a foundation of sand?" And the more he resolves to turn away his thoughts from evidence, and to banish doubts, the more he will feel that there *are*

doubts unresolved; and that evidence is against him. A firm determination of the *Will* to believe, he will find to be far different from a real firm belief. And he will probably end—where some, it is likely, have begun—in securing that alone which alone does lie within the reach of Will, a vehement protestation of belief, and inculcation of it on others, with a full conviction indeed of the usefulness of his religion, as a means of influencing the vulgar, and satisfying their craving for some devotional exercise, but with little or no conviction of its truth. If such a person avows that he has maintained what he does not inwardly think, because it was “*necessary for his position,*” he may well expect to be believed in that avowal, if in nothing else. And we may feel some suspicion that some of his disciples, who do *not* make that avowal, may be inwardly of the same mind.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Such a state of mind is likely to be fostered—perhaps generated—by some writers of no small popularity in the present day. One of them, deriding and censuring all appeals to evidences of the truth of Christianity, urges men to embrace it merely from “feeling the want of it.” He himself at one time embraced Socinianism, and at another German Transcendentalism, from such feelings of *want*. And the “want” of a deliverer from the Roman yoke led the Jews of old to reject the true Christ, and to follow false pretenders.

Again, a reviewer of the life of Gibbon attributes the historian’s infidelity to his study of the evidences of Christianity. And he would have people taught that the truth of the Gospel was never denied by any one!

Another reviewer (of the life of Baxter, in the *Edinburgh*),

§ 10. Such expressions as “sacred *Ambiguity of the word “mystery.”* mystery,” “awfully mysterious,” and the like, are often very successfully employed to stifle inquiry where inquiry might be dangerous, and to deter people from examining carefully what it is that they are called on to assent to, and whether the Scriptures do really teach it, or rather contradict it. And the word “Mystery,” when erroneously or indistinctly understood, has contributed, I cannot doubt, both to cherish superstitions in some, and to create groundless terror in others. It was employed by our Reformers—agreeably to a use of the word which is frequent in the New Testament—to denote a *symbol*, emblem, or representation, of one thing by another. And they used it interchangeably with the words “sign” and “sacrament,” as you may see—for instance, in the Twenty-ninth Article. In the Epistle to the Ephesians the Apostle Paul speaks

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tells us—with marvellous ignorance, or trust in the reader’s ignorance—that “the Apostles denounced unbelief as sin”—not, as is the fact, because they offered “many infallible proofs,” but without any proof at all. And he assures us that inquiry into the Evidences of Christianity is likely to lead to disbelief of it.

That an avowed infidel should say this, is nothing strange; but it is truly wonderful that writers apparently zealous in the cause of Christianity should not perceive that they are defeating their own object, and that a declaration from a *professed believer* that examination of evidence is likely to end in rejection of Christianity, does more to produce infidelity than the most ingenious objections of all the professed unbelievers in existence.

of marriage as an emblem (*μυστηριον*; in the Vulgate, “Sacramentum”) representing the union of Christ with his Church. And in like manner, in one of the post-communion prayers we speak of those “who have duly received these holy mysteries”—viz., the bread and wine. So also in the baptismal service, we speak of water “sanctified to the *mystical* (i.e., figurative or symbolical) washing away of sin.”

But the ordinary colloquial use of the word “mystery” suggests the idea of something obscure and unintelligible; and thus the way is prepared for an indefinite amount of superstition, and, among others, for superstitious dread and aversion.

On the one hand, in any matter which a man conceives to be quite unintelligible—or unintelligible to *him*—many a one will be disposed to believe and do whatever is solemnly and vehemently urged upon him by his spiritual guides, without presuming to inquire whether there is any ground for such faith and practice. And, on the other hand, anything unintelligibly mysterious, and at the same time connected with something of danger, many a one will be inclined to shrink from with a kind of undefined dread, and not only to avert his thoughts from the subject, but practically to withdraw from having anything to do with it; even as a traveller in some unknown region would dread to pass through a forest which he suspected to abound with beasts of prey and venomous serpents.

But by the word “mystery,” as applied to the sacraments, our Reformers (as I have said) understood a symbolical representation. Concerning the efficacy, indeed, of our Lord’s death itself for man’s redemption, they do not—as is, unhappily, the practice of some—attempt to give explanations beyond what the Scripture writers have revealed to us. But far as that mystery surpasses—as the most modest and wisest men perceive—the reach of human understanding, the early disciples, when once assured on sufficient authority that the death of Jesus *was* a sacrifice, could have found nothing difficult or strange in the idea of a feast on a sacrifice; since, both in the Jewish and in the heathen sacrifices, they had been accustomed to see the worshippers partake of the victim. And to this custom, as a well-known one, Paul alludes, in writing to the Corinthians.

§ II. And it is worth observing, that, besides the many distinct and express declarations of the Sacred writers of the sacrificial character of Christ’s death, the very institution of the Eucharist was itself sufficient to impress this on men’s minds; considering who and what the persons were to whom these declarations were made. If He had been merely a martyr—the greatest of all martyrs—to the cause of divine truth, it would indeed have been natural that his death should have been in some way solemnly com-

*Sacrificial  
character of  
the death of  
Christ, indi-  
cated by the  
Eucharist.*

memorated by the Church; and perhaps by some symbolical commemoration of the *death* itself; but not, by the *eating and drinking* of the symbols of his body and blood. As is well remarked by Bishop Hinds, in one of his works, not only is the bread *broken*, and the wine *poured out* (which might have sufficiently represented the wounding of his body, and the shedding of his blood), but both are *partaken* of by those who celebrate the rite. And this would be an unmeaning and utterly absurd kind of ceremonial in celebrating a mere martyrdom, such as that of Stephen, for instance, or of any other martyr, however eminent. Even if we had not, therefore, such numerous allusions as we find in Scripture, to “Christ our Passover as sacrificed for us,” and entering “into the most holy place with his own blood,” as a sacrificing priest as well as a victim,—even if we had much fewer of such statements and allusions than there are—still, the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, early and generally established as we know it was, would be a decisive proof that the early Christians must have understood, from the very character of that ordinance itself, that our Lord’s death was not a mere martyrdom, but a true sacrifice, similar to—though far surpassing—the expiatory sacrifices which they had been familiar with under the Law, and which we find so often referred to as types of the offering of Christ.

The passages in which such reference is made,

and in which the sacrificial character of that death is strongly set forth, are so numerous, and of course so well known to you, that it would be superfluous to cite or even to refer to them. We are not called on to receive this doctrine, remote as it is from all the anticipations of human reason, and beyond our powers of explanation, on the strength of two or three slight and oblique hints, capable of equally well bearing either that or some other signification;<sup>1</sup> but the statements of the doctrine, and allusions to it, in Scripture are—as might fairly have been expected—numerous, and distinct, and full.

§ 12. But attempts have been made from time to time, and are still being made, to explain all these passages as figures of speech. And this is one of my reasons for now adverting to the subject. What then, it may be asked, is the test by which we are to decide *what* expressions are to be understood literally, and what figuratively? The adherents of a supposed infallible Church represent an implicit deference to the decisions of such a Church as the only safeguard against all conceivable wantonness of interpretation; against an indefinite amount of error, from understanding figuratively what is meant to be taken literally, and literally what is not literally meant, according to each man's private judgment, as his own fancy may dictate.

*Attempts to explain away the doctrine of the Atonement.*

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<sup>1</sup> See Essay VI., Second Series, § 2.

And certainly if we could have proof of the existence of any such infallible authority on earth, and also a clear indication where it is lodged, to this guide we should be bound to resort as a safeguard against erroneous interpretations. But in the absence of any such proof, an implicit deference to the interpretations of some earthly guide would be only substituting one man's caprice for another's. We have, however, in most cases a very safe guide, by looking to the sense in which the hearers of our Lord and his Apostles understood them. For, as I have already remarked, we may fairly presume that this must have been, in any matter of vital importance, the true sense of what was said, unless a mistake was pointed out and corrected. Thus, as I observed just now, if the Apostles had been mistaken in supposing—as they undoubtedly did—that what Jesus was holding in his hands and distributing to them, was not his own literal body, but a symbolical representation of it, their mistake would have been corrected. Again, our Lord's expression "Son of God," as applied to Himself, is one which indeed might conceivably have borne the meaning of his being merely a highly-favoured prophet. But we know that his judges did understand Him as claiming a divine character; and if this had been a mistake of theirs, we may be sure He would have corrected it; else He would have been bearing false witness concerning Himself. So also, if all the early Christians had been mistaken

in their interpretation of anything that was said concerning our Lord's death, this their error would surely have been removed, and a different explanation given. Now, what they did understand there can be no rational doubt. The idea of redemption by a sacrifice, however inexplicable, was one with which they were perfectly familiar; and they could never have thought, unless expressly assured of it, that the real literal sacrifices of the Levitical Law were types, not of any real sacrifice, but of a figure of speech; that "the shadow of good things to come," which that Law contained, was much more substantial than that which it represented. Nor could they (to revert to a former remark), familiar as they were with the idea of a feast upon a sacrifice, have thought that a mere martyrdom was to be celebrated by eating and drinking the symbols of the martyr's body and blood. The very same test, therefore, the appeal to what must have been understood at the time, serves to guard us against the opposite errors, of understanding figurative expressions literally, and of explaining away as a figure what was meant to be literally understood.

§ 13. As for the latter of these errors, I have no doubt that the attempts of some persons to interpret as mere metaphor all the declarations of Scripture concerning Christ's offering of Himself, have been greatly encouraged, and probably in

*Danger of  
rash attempts  
at explanation.*

many instances caused, by unwise and presumptuous endeavours to explain what Scripture has left unexplained, and to confirm what is there revealed to us, by reconciling it with theories of man's devising. For, when objections which at least appear to some to be unanswerable, are brought against any such theory, it is too late to resort to the plea that divine mysteries are beyond the reach of our understanding, and that we must not venture to try them by the standard of human reason. Every one who brings forward a theory of his own, does in fact appeal to the tribunal of human reason, and binds himself to make his explanation intelligible and satisfactory. And when he fails to do this, the result will too often be that the doctrine itself which he seeks to elucidate and support by his explanations, will be supposed by many to be dependent on these, and will be rejected along with the untenable theory.

It is our wiser and safer course, therefore, as well as the more modest and humble, to confine ourselves, in these matters, to the express declarations of the inspired writers, and to warn men against listening to any one who ventures to go beyond these—who presents us with “developments” (as they are sometimes called) that are to fill up the omissions of Scripture, and who is thus in reality setting himself up as knowing more of the divine mysteries than was revealed to the Apostles, or at least more than they were commissioned to reveal to *us*. An humble,

unlearned Christian, of ordinary common sense, may understand that he is guilty of no arrogance in rejecting any such teacher, however learned and ingenious, and that he is bound to do so.

None more learned or more ingenious are the generality of men likely to meet with than Bishop Butler, who thus expresses himself on this subject: "Christ offered Himself a propitiatory sacrifice, and made atonement for the sins of the world. . . . And this sacrifice was, in the highest degree, and with the most extensive influence, of that efficacy for obtaining pardon of sin, which the heathens may be supposed to have thought their sacrifices, and which the Jewish sacrifices were, in some degree, and with regard to some persons. *How, and in what particular way, it had this efficacy, there are not wanting persons who have endeavoured to explain; but I do not find that Scripture has explained it.*" . . . Again, "Some have endeavoured to explain the efficacy of what Christ has done and suffered for us, beyond what Scripture has authorized; others, probably *because they could not explain it, have been for taking it away, and confining his office of Redeemer of the world, to his instruction, example, and government of the Church; whereas the doctrine of the Gospel appears to be, not only that he taught the efficacy of repentance, but rendered it of the efficacy it is, by what He did and suffered for us.* . . . And it is our wisdom thankfully to accept the benefit, by performing the condi-

tions on which it is offered, on *our* part, without disputing how it was procured, on *his*.”

Such is the sober statement of that truly great theologian, in his *Analogy*.<sup>1</sup> He was one who sought to know no *less*, and was *content* to know no *more*, of divine mysteries inscrutable to Man's Reason, than the inspired writers tell us; and he guarded against the error of those presumptuous speculators, who, when the illumination from Heaven—the rays of Revelation—fail to shed such full light as they wish for, on the Gospel dispensation, are for bringing to the dial-plate the lamp of human philosophy.

And it is important that you should point out to your people, when needful, how much allied are the two opposite errors alluded to by Bishop Butler. It is a similar want of humble faith that leads one party to reject what they find it impossible to explain, and the other, to resolve to find an explanation of what they admit.

§ 14. These latter, even if their explanations were really as satisfactory as, to themselves, they may appear, if they did possess some knowledge beyond that of the Apostles—or beyond, at least, what the Apostles have imparted to us—yet could not, on that ground, claim the virtue of faith. For faith, it is plain, is to be measured

*Faith shown  
by contented  
ignorance of  
divine myste-  
ries.*

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<sup>1</sup> Part II., c. 5.

rather by our ignorance than by our knowledge. Some knowledge, indeed, there must be, as a *foundation* for any intelligent faith to rest on; but the province of the faith itself, distinct from the basis on which it is built, must be that which we do *not* clearly understand. For "faith is the evidence of things not seen." There would be no proof of faith in assenting to truths which are plainly demonstrated to our Reason, or in obeying commands whose reasonableness was clearly perceived. Faith—as distinguished from blind credulity—is shown, in taking the word of another whom we have good reason to rely on, for something which we do *not* clearly see or fully understand. Any one who in a dark night, at sea, believes on the Pilot's word, that the ship is approaching the haven, shows more faith in that Pilot than others who fancy that they see the land before them. He may be convinced that they are deceiving themselves, and are gazing on a fog-bank, which they mistake for land; but, at any rate, they cannot claim superior or equal *faith* to his.

You cannot, perhaps, better illustrate to your people this truth—which, evident as it is, is often overlooked—than by referring to the trial made of Abraham, whose pre-eminently-confident trust in God is so strongly dwelt on in Scripture. His trial was quite different (and this we should point out to our people, because it is sometimes strangely overlooked) from what a similar command would have

been to another man—to Noah, for instance, or to Moses—because, as is remarked in the Epistle to Hebrews, the command was seemingly at variance with the promise he had received, that “in Isaac shall thy seed be called;” but “he trusted that God was able to restore him even from the dead;” and his faith and obedience were rewarded by the blessing pronounced; on which occasion doubtless it was, when he did receive his son from the dead in a figure [parabolè] that he “saw the day of Jesus, and was glad.” But if he had known beforehand how the transaction was to end, there would have been no trial of his faith, and no pre-eminent virtue in his obedience. He had the knowledge, indeed, on which his faith was based—the knowledge that he had received a promise, and also a command which appeared to nullify that promise; but how the two were to be reconciled, he was left ignorant till the trial was completed; and it was in his firm trust in the promise, and ready compliance with the command, while in that ignorance, that the virtue of his faith consisted.

§ 15. Such, then—we should point out to our hearers—is the example *Abraham's faith to be imitated.* held out by Scripture for our imitation, of the faith of Abraham.<sup>1</sup> If Abraham,

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<sup>1</sup> And, we should add, of Isaac also. For though his is not expressly mentioned, it is evident that as he must have been a consenting party to the sacrifice, so he fully partook of the

instead of prompt and trustful compliance with the command, had set himself to devise interpretations of it, or demanded an explanation, he would have bewildered himself in presumptuous conjectures, and have forfeited the blessing. He had received a promise, and also a command seemingly at variance therewith, from One whom he had good reason fully to trust; and he saw that it was his part not to raise questions about a divine command, but to obey it. Even thus, a dutiful and affectionate child of a wise and kind parent will say, "My father tells me to do so and so, and his will is reason enough for *me*. Doubtless there *are* good reasons, though unknown to me, for his command; and these he may perhaps hereafter explain to me; but, in the meantime, it is my duty to obey."

Such a child, we should observe, does not presume to pronounce that his father *has* no reason for his command, except that such is his pleasure; which would be to attribute to him caprice. On the contrary, he doubts not that there *is* good reason, both for giving the command, and for withholding the explanation of it. That such is the father's will, would be no good reason, to the father, for *giving* the command, but is a sufficient reason, to the child, for *obeying* it. For the child, therefore, to insist on it that his father *had* no

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promised blessing; which had reference to Abraham's posterity through him; for "in Isaac shall thy seed be called."

reasons, except his own will, for what he does, because he has not seen fit to make those reasons known, would be, not humility, but the height of rash presumption.<sup>1</sup> And we ought, no less, to trust, as no doubt Abraham did, that the Most High has good reasons, even when not revealed to us, for all His dealings with mankind.

Why, and how, it was necessary that the innocent blood should be shed for Man's redemption, we know no more—at least, from what the Scriptures tell us—than Abraham did, why he was commanded to offer up his son. And if we are asked how we know that this sacrifice was necessary, we should answer, because the Scriptures assure us that it did take place. It must, therefore, have been necessary, under the actual circumstances. We have no right to frame any metaphysical theories to prove that this necessity would have existed under any other, quite different, or even opposite circumstances. The actual state of things was, we know,

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<sup>1</sup> "Those," says Calvin (and the same language is to be found in the writings of many of his followers, and of Augustine's) "whom God passes by, He condemns; and that, for *no cause whatever, except that He CHUSES to exclude them from the inheritance*" ["*neque alia de causa nisi quod illos VULT excludere.*"]

This is called by such writers setting forth the divine "sovereignty;" and yet there is not even any earthly sovereign who would not feel himself insulted by having it said or insinuated, that, when he announces, "our will and pleasure is" so and so, he had, himself, no reason at all for the command issued, except that such was his will and pleasure.

that the majority of the Jewish nation refused to receive Jesus as the Christ; it being plainly the divine decree that they should not be compelled to receive Him against their will, by external force. And they thereupon condemned Him to death. We have no right to maintain that his death *would* have been necessary under the opposite supposition of a universal acceptance of his claims. On the contrary, we are expressly told by the inspired writers, "I wot that *through ignorance* ye did it; as did also your Rulers." (Acts iii.) "*Because* they knew Him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets, they have fulfilled them in condemning them." "For if the princes of this world had known the wisdom of God, they *would not* have crucified the Lord of Glory." (1 Cor. ii.)

"It may be needful," (says Bishop Butler, in a note,) "to mention, that several questions which have been brought into the subject before us, and determined, are not in the least entered into here; questions which have been, I fear, rashly determined, and perhaps with equal rashness, contrary ways. For instance, Whether God *could* have saved the world by other means than the death of Christ, consistently with the general laws of his government? And had not Christ come into the world, what would have been the future condition of the better sort of men . . . ? The meaning of the first of these questions is greatly ambiguous; and neither of them can be answered, without going upon that infinitely

absurd position, that we know the whole of the case. And perhaps the very inquiry, *What would have followed if God had not done as He has?* may have in it some impropriety.”<sup>1</sup>

It is our part, then, to warn our people against mistaking for a pre-eminent faith what is rather a deficiency of faith, and, for humility, what is in reality presumptuous rashness; and against being misled either by those who frame theories to explain what Scripture has left unexplained, or by those who, finding such theories untenable, reject what Scripture does assure us of.<sup>2</sup>

§ 16. And the same really humble, unhesitating, submissive, and practical faith which we are required to have in the atoning Sacrifice of the Son of God,

*Practical  
faith, in refer-  
ence to the  
Eucharist.*

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<sup>1</sup> *Anal.*, b. ii. c. 5.

<sup>2</sup> But seek not thou to understand  
The deep and curious lore  
With which full many a reckless hand  
Has gloss'd these pages o'er.

Wait till He shall Himself disclose  
Things now beyond thy reach;  
But listen not, my child, to those  
Who the Lord's secrets teach;

Who teach thee more than He has taught,  
Tell more than He revealed,  
Preach tidings which He never brought,  
And read what He left sealed.

the same is called for in reference to that Feast on his sacrifice which we celebrate in the Eucharist; the Ordinance which, as I just now observed, is not only a *commemoration* of his death, but also a strong confirmation of its *sacrificial* character. The numerous and distinct declarations, indeed, to that effect, of the Sacred Writers, would alone afford sufficient grounds for the conviction of the understanding; but it has seemed good to divine wisdom that we should not be left to search out passages of Scripture, and on these alone lay down the doctrine as a well-established Article of our Creed, but that we should moreover be continually reminded of it by the often-repeated celebration of a Rite which clearly implies the doctrine and forcibly impresses it on the mind.

And as with respect to the doctrine itself, so also as to the Ordinance, which is a Seal and a Monument of it, men have fallen into corresponding faults. While some have presumed—as I observed at the beginning—to frame theories not warranted by Scripture, others have been led, partly from that very cause, to reject or very much to neglect the Ordinance itself. Fanciful speculations respecting the nature of Substance and Accidents tend naturally to cast a discredit, in the minds of the rash and unthinking, on a divine Institution, which has been thus deformed by an admixture of human devices; just as rash attempts at explanation of revealed mysteries that are quite beyond human

reason, have led to the rejection, along with the human theories, of the doctrines themselves which are revealed. Anything quite alien from all notions of natural Reason, it is allowable to regard so far with distrust, as to require that it should be fully established by a sufficient Scripture proof; and if not so established, we do well to reject it. But if it does appear to be plainly declared in Scripture, it then becomes a reasonable and suitable trial of our faith. Reason itself would pronounce that there must be much in the counsels of the Most High that is beyond the reach of Reason; and that positive commands respecting things originally indifferent, must justly claim obedience when coming from lawful authority. For if we are to believe merely what we can fully understand and explain, and to do merely what appears to natural conscience to be a duty, independently of any command, this would be to make the word of our divine Master go for nothing.

§ 17. But it is remarkable that we may sometimes find even the very same persons objecting to what Scripture reveals or enjoins, unless they can see reason for it independent of Scripture, and yet expecting to find in Scripture what is not contained in it—exact precepts for every point of moral conduct.

*Natural and  
Positive Du-  
ties.*

One may sometimes find persons pleading, when they wish to evade some moral [*i.e.*, natural] duty,

that there is no injunction as to this or that in the Bible;—that so and so is nowhere forbidden in Scripture; as if we had no Moral Faculty, and were to expect in Scripture a distinct and complete enumeration of things to be done and avoided, instead of the general precept, “Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, and honest, and of good report, to think on those things.”

And then, again, some, and perhaps the very same persons, when positive precepts are in question, will ask what efficacy there can be in a sprinkling with water, or in partaking of bread and wine. Why, if these did possess any such natural efficacy as we know our ordinary food has for sustaining the natural life, there would be no trial of our obedient faith in doing what the Lord commands, simply on the ground of that command. If the water of the pool of Siloam had been some medicinal spring that had the natural virtue to cure blindness, the blind man would have given no proof of faith in using it. But if, because there was no such virtue, he had refused to do what he was told—or if, like Naaman the Syrian, he had claimed a preference for some other waters—he would have remained blind.

But with respect to this point—I mean the distinction between what are called moral [*i.e.*, natural] duties and positive duties,—things commanded because they are right, and things right because commanded,—there exists in many minds a strange

confusion of thought. Any one who makes inquiries on the subject, for the first time, of those around him, will be surprised to find the extent to which this confusion prevails, even among persons not uneducated, nor, generally, deficient in intelligence.<sup>1</sup> And if you take occasion from time to time to put before your people such explanations as may guard them against these indistinct and confused notions on the subject, your labour will not have been superfluous or ill-applied.

§ 18. Far the greatest number, however, are kept back from the Lord's Table by a kind of misdirected reverential feeling of dread lest they should be "unworthy" partakers; as supposing that the ordinance is designed for those only who have attained to a certain perfection in holiness beyond what is required of Christians generally. It is for us to take occasion to explain to them, not only from the pulpit, but also (as will often be more effectual) in private conversation, that the unworthiness which the Apostle, and which our Reformers refer to, is a *careless and irreverent* partaking; a fault which in former times appears to have been prevalent; while in our own, a far different and rather opposite kind

*Groundless  
scruples.*

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<sup>1</sup> The well-known "Assembly of Divines" at Westminster were men whom even those who are far from accepting their dogmas, would not consider as destitute of intelligence or of learning. Yet on this point they seem to have been utterly abroad.

of error is the one most to be guarded against. It will not be difficult to explain to any one who is really influenced by conscientious scruples, that, though it is true there would be sinful profanation in coming to the Lord's Table thoughtlessly, and without any sincere devotion, the same may be said of *all* divine *worship*, and the receiving of *religious instruction*, and the *perusal of the Scriptures*. All these are duties, and so is the receiving of the Lord's Supper: and *all* these duties men ought to practise, *voluntarily, sincerely, and heartily*. We ought to be far from wishing to *compel* any one (supposing that were in our power) to do *any* of these things against his will, or from urging him to go through the outward acts when his heart did not accompany them. But we should exhort men to pray and strive for those real sincere feelings of devotion which alone can make those acts well-pleasing to God.

And in confirmation of anything we ourselves may urge, when seeking to allay groundless scruples, we have the advantage of being able to direct the attention of our hearers to the written words of the Communion Service itself, which disclaims all trust in our own righteousness—all meritorious “worthiness to gather up the crumbs of the Lord's Table.” And we should remind them also of the words of the Catechism respecting what is required of those who partake of this Sacrament. It can be easily explained to any one who is sincerely well disposed,

that it is not the *communicant* alone, but every Christian who would hope for God's favour, that is required to "examine himself whether he repent him truly of his former sins, steadfastly purposing to lead a new life, and to have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death, and to be in charity with all men." Preparation for the Lord's Table, therefore, he can easily be brought to perceive, is the same as preparation for the whole christian life, and for a christian death, and for a joyful resurrection. The communicant, consequently, does not take on himself any new obligation that did not lie on him before. He will, indeed, be the more *likely* to lead a christian life, from his availing himself of the appointed means of grace; but the *obligation* to lead such a life is absolute and complete already. And it would be a manifest absurdity to imagine that a happy immortality could be attained on some different and easier terms by those who withdraw from the Lord's Table; that a refusal to comply with one of his commandments would exempt men from obedience to the rest of them. Any one, therefore, who deems himself not good enough to receive this Sacrament, and accordingly absents himself, waiting till he shall become better prepared, is acting as the prodigal son in the parable would have done if, instead of arising at once to go to his father, he had waited till he should be in a more prosperous condition, when it was his

father only that could supply food and raiment to the destitute returning outcast.

All this being what hardly any one would deliberately deny, it is found accordingly that most of the non-communicants have a design to communicate at some future time before their death. And they seem to suppose that he who shall have done this will have sufficiently complied with our Lord's injunction. You will find many a one, accordingly, who will need to be earnestly and repeatedly reminded that *every time he refuses* the invitation to partake of the Lord's Supper, he is committing a fresh sin—a distinct act of disobedience to his divine Master. And, therefore, instead of preparing himself to be a more “meet partaker” of the heavenly feast, he is habitually alienating himself more and more from his Saviour, by thus resisting, time after time, his repeated calls.

Others again, and not a few, we meet with, who do present themselves at the Lord's Table on some solemn occasions of rare recurrence, and who consider this as absolutely preferable to an habitual and frequent attendance, from finding that their devotional feelings are more strongly excited by a celebration that takes place at long intervals. But we should remind them that (though this is undoubtedly true) if they were to act on such a consideration throughout, they would discontinue daily prayer, and habitual attendance on all public worship; since these would certainly more strongly

affect the feelings if they were of very rare occurrence. But the object to be aimed at is, we should point out to them, not an occasional, fervid, and probably transitory emotion, but an habitual, effectual, and lasting influence on the whole character, and daily life ;—not a passing gleam of enthusiasm, but a steady daylight that shall enlighten our path and guide our steps.

§ 19. Such errors as I have adverted to you will often, as I have said, be the best able to combat in private conversations, adapted to the peculiar habits of thought and tone of feeling of each individual. And of all the occasions for doing this, none can be more suitable than that of preparing young persons for the Rite of Confirmation. For the earlier any erroneous notions are counteracted, the less is the danger of their leading to an inveterate practical habit. It is of great importance, therefore, that those confirmed should have the earliest possible opportunity of attending at the Lord's Table, and should be earnestly pressed to avail themselves of it at once. And you will then be able to correct the mistake, which is sometimes to be met with even in religious parents, of imagining that a young person may be unfit, in point of religious knowledge or of feeling, for receiving the Eucharist, and yet fit to be presented for Confirmation. It may easily be explained to them that, as this is manifestly a groundless notion, at variance with all reason, so it is no

*Connexion of  
Confirmation  
with the Eu-  
charist.*

less at variance with the decisions of our Church. That all the members of the Church should be Communicants, is not only in many places implied, but is expressly laid down in a Rubric. And the only limitation given of this word “*all*” is, where it is enacted that those only shall come to the holy Table who have “*been confirmed, or are ready and desirous to be confirmed;*” which plainly implies that at least all who *have* been confirmed are bound to attend that Table. This we should take care to impress on the minds of our people. And, universally, we should use all the means in our power for removing every obstacle, of whatever kind, to that full and frequent attendance at the Lord’s Table which our Reformers, in conformity with apostolic usage, manifestly designed.<sup>1</sup>

I do cherish a hope—a hope in some degree fortified by experience—that by sedulously availing ourselves of such occasions as I have been adverting to, we may at least somewhat diminish that great

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<sup>1</sup> The great length of the entire Church-Service, when the Eucharist is administered, probably tends to foster the notion that our Reformers—since they could not have designed anything physically impossible—could not have meant that *all* the parishioners should be regular communicants. In some populous parishes accordingly there is, several times in a year, an early celebration, at which the Communion-Service alone is used. And this, besides other advantages, tends to do away that notion just alluded to.

On another point connected with the same subject, there are some remarks in *Bishop Copleston’s Remains*.

and crying evil, the open practical neglect by a large proportion of our congregations, of an acknowledged duty: an evil which you must have often contemplated both with grief for the individuals, and with shame on account of the scandal it brings on our Church. At any rate, let no exertions be wanting on our part to set before our people what their duty is, “whether they will hear or whether they will forbear;” so that *we*, at least, may not be chargeable with neglecting our own duty, and may be “pure from the blood of all men.”

§ 20. Another point there is, on which, however, I shall not now enlarge, wherein most of you have reason to complain of a considerable portion of your congregations; I mean the practice of entering a place of worship after—sometimes very long after—the Service is begun. On this subject, I published some time ago an Address, which some of you may perhaps find it useful to circulate, with the addition of such remarks of your own as may occur to you; setting forth not only the irreverence to God which the practice in question manifests, and the disturbance and disgust caused to the more punctual worshippers, but also the scandal brought on our Church in the eyes of “them that are without.”

*Early attendance at Church.*

And, moreover, I am inclined to think that if this fault were corrected, a portion at least of the painful disputes and complaints with which some of you are

occasionally troubled relative to sittings in church would be diminished or removed. For, those who find seats pre-occupied which they have been accustomed to, and to which they believe themselves to have a right, may be brought to consider how unreasonable it must seem to a punctual attendant to be required to leave seats unoccupied for the possible use of those who absent themselves till perhaps nearly half the Service is over.

*Hymns.* § 21. I take this opportunity of mentioning—though to most of you, probably, it is already known—that a collection of Hymns has just been published by the Association, which it would be very desirable should be generally adopted, with a view to bring about something of uniformity in that important portion of public worship. The selection has been made with great care, so as to insert those Hymns only which have been most generally approved, as best adapted to congregational use. And the price fixed is so very low as to enable almost all persons to provide themselves with copies.

## NOTE A (to p. 11).

Of course the same divine authority which instituted the Sacraments, may modify or annul them. And accordingly if any one declares that they are no longer to be literally celebrated, professing to be "moved by the Spirit" to say so (which is precisely equivalent to the expression of the ancient Prophets, "thus saith the Lord"), he is to be obeyed, provided he gives the requisite *proof* of his divine commission by the display of those sensible miracles which were "the signs of an Apostle."

But in the absence of any such proofs, such a pretender and his followers must be accounted guilty of a most profane presumption.

Barelay, in his *Apology*, notices the demand made of such miraculous proofs from those of his persuasion. And he attempts to meet the objection founded on the want of those proofs; which indeed was no more than needful; since the claim to a direct commission from Heaven is the very key-stone of their whole system—the one first link of the chain on which the whole depends.

He alleges that there is no need of miracles to confirm their doctrines: since these are *what were taught by the Apostles*, who did establish their claim by miraculous proofs. But this holds good only with respect to doctrines admitted by *all* Christians. When any interpretation is taught wherein Christians are not agreed, and is declared to be established by a direct divine revelation, miraculous proof is needed of the truth of that interpretation. Thus, no fresh miraculous sign was required to convince the Jews of the divine authority of their prophetic writings; but when these were interpreted to denote the admis-

sion of "the Gentiles to be fellow-heirs," which the Jews did *not* acknowledge, then a miraculous proof was needed, *and was accordingly given* (Acts xi.), of this interpretation. But to assume that a certain doctrine, contrary to what is generally received, is that of the Apostles, and thence to infer that those who teach it are inspired, is a most palpable begging of the question.

THE END.

# THOUGHTS

ON

## THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

### A CHARGE,

DELIVERED AT THE

VISITATIONS OF THE DIOCESES OF DUBLIN AND GLANDELAGH,  
AND KILDARE,

*JUNE*, 1858.

BY RICHARD WHATELY, D.D.

*ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.*

Προσεύχομαι τῷ πνεύματι, πρὸς σέβωμαι δὲ καὶ τῷ νοῷ.

1 COR. xv. 14.

LONDON :

JOHN W. PARKER AND SON, WEST STRAND.

DUBLIN :

HODGES AND SMITH, GRAFTON STREET.

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# A C H A R G E,

ETC.

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MY REVEREND BRETHREN,

§ 1. I have many times called your attention to the duty of giving religious *instruction* to the People; not as imputing to you any negligence in that point, but because it is not only the most important (all would, I suppose, admit it to be *one* of the most important) of our duties, but what may be said to *characterize* our office, as established by the Apostles, and maintained in our Church, and as distinguished from the office of the *sacerdotal* priest under the Levitical law, and of the priest in the unreformed churches, whose chief function is, not so much instruction, as the offering of a supposed sacrifice on behalf of the people, and the administering of (supposed) sacraments.<sup>1</sup> In our Church, indeed, as in almost all others, the administration of the Sacraments is generally committed (very naturally and properly) to the clergy. It is a thing evidently suitable that a Christian Minister should take the lead in the

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<sup>1</sup> See Note A at the end.

public worship, and especially in the most solemn portion of it, the celebration of the Sacraments. But it is remarkable that all the Apostle Paul says in his Epistles to Timothy and to Titus of the duties of Christian ministers (which is not a little), has reference to the instruction of the people, and contains no allusion to the administration of the Sacraments. And this certainly does seem to indicate at least what *he* considered as the most *essential* portion of their office.

In reference to this business of instruction, I dwelt in my last Charge on the necessity and the importance of giving your people *explanations* of Scripture, instead of confining yourselves to merely hortatory discourses, or statements of christian doctrine, derived indeed from Scripture, but given in your own words. The Inspired Writers, I remarked to you, if they are but fully *understood*, will preach the Gospel more effectually than *we* can. And though I did not mean to impute to you a neglect of this highly important portion of a pastor's duty, I thought it the more needful to be earnestly dwelt on, because there is, in *this*, so so much less room for the display of striking eloquence,—so much less of *immediate* effect produced,—though the effect is likely to be more lasting—than in discourses of a different character, that there will often be a danger of giving too little attention to the *explanatory* branch of our teaching, unless the importance of it be from time to time brought strongly before the mind.

§ 2. And what has been said concerning explanations of the Scriptures, *Explanations of the Prayer-Book.* will equally apply to explanations of the Prayer-Book. As the benefit of Scripture is so far diminished in proportion as parts of it are indistinctly or erroneously understood, so the benefit of our Church-Services is impaired to those who do not “pray with the spirit, and pray with the understanding also.” And it would be a mistake to conclude that no elucidations of anything in the Prayer-Book are needed except for persons who come forward with objections, or with complaints of perplexity. On the contrary, very great familiarity with the *words* of any composition will frequently cause men to overlook their own imperfect apprehension, or *misapprehension*, of the sense. The earlier any one has been taught to repeat forms of words of which he does not understand the meaning, the greater will be the difficulty of subsequent explanation, and the less likely he will be to seek for, or to perceive that he needs, any explanation. If you inquire of some persons what they understand by such and such passages, which they have heard and read many hundred times, and perhaps can readily repeat by rote, you will be surprised,—and perhaps they themselves also, no less,—to find how indistinct and confused are the notions they have formed of the meaning. For, in all matters, *familiar acquaintance* is apt to be mistaken for *accurate knowledge*.

What I have been saying, every minister will be able to confirm from his own experience, who has been in the habit of much personal intercourse with various classes of his people. And *without* such intercourse, he cannot be a competent instructor. Whatever his learning and ability, he will be (as I lately remarked to you) like a physician undertaking to practise from mere book-knowledge, without having ever visited a sick-chamber. And if he has had intercourse only with certain classes,—if, for instance, he has conversed only with adults of the higher orders, and not with children and the uneducated,—he will be deficient as an instructor, in reference to these latter. Neither his oral nor his written instructions will be well-suited to them. And (as I observed in my last Charge) if you should meet with any one who maintains that he himself, or that another, who has had little or nothing of such intercourse with the humbler classes, is qualified either to give lectures, or to write books, well-fitted for their instruction, you may conclude that (if he really means what his words express) he is altogether an incompetent judge of the subject.

*Suggested alterations.* § 3. As for the questions which have of late excited much and continually increasing interest, respecting a suggested revision of our Prayer-Book, on these I shall not at present enter. You are doubtless well aware how fully and how earnestly, many years ago, both I and my much valued friend,

Bishop Dickinson, dwelt on the importance of our being provided with some kind of government for the Church, distinct from that of Parliament; which is, and which is manifestly conscious of being,—unfitted for that office.<sup>1</sup> What we advocated was, not a mere temporary Commission, expressly and avowedly established for the *remedy of some specific alleged evils*,—which is likely to be *more alarming* to men's minds, and at the same time must fall short of what is needed,—but, some power that should be competent, in all points, to inquire and to decide (subject, always, to the control of the Civil Legislature)—whether any, and what, regulations or alterations are needed. This, we remarked, would be likely not only to provide remedies, when wanted, for any actually existing inconveniences, but also to give increased satisfaction and confidence as to a multitude of points wherein *no* change would be proposed; since men would understand that (as is the case in secular matters) whatever was left unaltered was so left, not because there was no power to alter it, but from a deliberate judgment that the alteration would not be desirable.

It was urged, on the other side, and with perfect truth, that there are difficulties and objections in the way of every proposed plan for accomplishing

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<sup>1</sup> See Charge of 1844. Bishop Dickinson's *Appeal in favour of Church-government*, first published as a pamphlet, is reprinted in the *Remains*. (Fellowes, Ludgate-street).

such an object. And this consideration might be accepted as decisive, if there were no objections,—no evils of any kind—on the opposite side; or if these latter were not still greater, and were not continually on the increase. The difficulties in our way are undoubtedly not only great, but much greater than they were a century and a half ago; and were greater then, than when the illustrious Bacon wrote on the subject; who remarked that to represent continual revision as needful indeed, in secular concerns, but that ecclesiastical matters required none, would be like maintaining that though houses and castles need being repaired from time to time, churches and chapels will stand for ever without repair. And it may be added, that the now existing difficulties, great as they are, are yet short of what *will* present themselves some years hence, when the urgency of the call for encountering them will have increased in a still greater proportion.

When one of the valleys of Switzerland was transformed, not many years ago, into a vast lake, through the damming up of a river by a glacier, it would have been no wise policy for the neighbouring people below to wait in tranquil security till the barrier should burst of itself. If they had begun earlier than they did, to cut channels through the ice for letting off the water, their work, though not without difficulties and risks, would have been easier and far more effectual. As it was, they did set themselves to the work,

though later than was desirable. The barrier did burst before they had completed their task; but the damage done, though very great, was not more than, probably, a fourth part of what *would* have ensued, had they left matters to take their own course.

Those persons are at least consistent, however mistaken, who while complaining of certain alleged defects in our Bible Version, or in our Formularies, suggest, whether wisely or unwisely,—some remedial measures: and the same may be said of those who deprecate every change, from a conviction that everything is in a satisfactory state. But those are surely deserving of blame who are always complaining of some supposed faults, while they strenuously oppose every measure by which it is possible that a remedy can be applied. They are inconsistent, and culpably so, in the strictest sense of the word. Any evil or inconvenience to which you not only expect that no remedy *will* be applied, but are resolved that, as far as lies in you, none ever *shall* be applied,—this, you ought to submit to in patient silence, as to an unfavourable season, or an incurable disease, instead of making complaints of which the only tendency is to produce fruitless discontent.

Sometimes, however, we are told that the *present* time is ill-suited for taking such and such steps, because there are *parties* within the Church; as if any reasonable man could look forward to a time when parties should no longer exist! And I have

even seen an argument against any revision of our Authorized Version of Scripture *as yet*, on the ground that all the existing MSS. of the Original have not yet been collated, and that all scholars are not *as yet* agreed as to all the readings to be preferred, and the renderings to be adopted. It argues great simplicity, if not something worse, to profess readiness to adopt a certain course when certain events shall have taken place, which we may be sure will be as far off a century hence as now. Such reasoners—or at least those who listen to them—may remind one of the rustic alluded to by Horace, who stood on a river's brink, waiting till all the water should have flowed by.

But not to detain you longer on matters which I have fully discussed long since, I will only add that a remark I made last year in reference to the Authorized Version of Scripture, is equally applicable to the Prayer-Book; viz., that whether alterations, greater or less, or none at all, be made in it, there must always be need of *explanations* of it, to a large portion at least of our People; and these it must always be an important part of our duty to supply.

§ 4. I would suggest, that, as a preliminary to any exposition of particular portions of any of our Services, it will be advisable to offer some remarks on the design and character, generally, of a *Book* of Common Prayer—beginning, as one might say, your expla-

*Common  
Prayer.*

nations with the title-page; for the very meaning of that title-page is, by some of the least-educated portion of our congregations, not understood, and by some others not sufficiently attended to. You will find, I apprehend, on inquiry, that some of the most untaught and unthinking understand by *Common Prayer* that which is in *ordinary use* and will need to have it pointed out to them that what is called in the Prayer of Chrysostom "our common supplications," is the *united* supplication of the congregation—that which they *agree* in offering up. Many, however, who are not so ignorant as to make the mistake now alluded to, will yet be often found not to have sufficiently attended to the full force of the words "Common Prayer," and the high importance of what they denote. They will need to be reminded that the use of a Book of Common Prayer in our own language is one of the characteristics of our Church, distinguishing it, on the one hand, from those churches—of which there are several—in which the prayers are read by the minister in a tongue not understood by the people; and, on the other hand, from all those communities which have no fixed form of prayer at all, but in which the people have to listen to the extemporaneous effusions of their pastor.

These two latter systems, though widely different in some respects, yet agree in this,—that neither of them can carry out, except very imperfectly (if at all), the design of congregational joint-worship;

since, in each, the people—at least the far greater part of them—are rather overhearing another man's prayer, than uniting in prayer themselves. In the Romish, the Armenian, the Coptic, and the Russian Churches, although the learned few—perhaps one in a hundred—may understand the language of the Service, the mass of the congregation will be, as the Apostle Paul expresses it, “Barbarians to him that speaketh, and he that speaketh a barbarian to them.”

§ 5. And in the case of extemporaneous prayer delivered by the minister, it is likely, though understood, not to be *so* understood by the people as to be adopted as *their own address* to the Most High, but rather as an address to themselves by their minister. And, accordingly, it generally is very much of the character of a sermon thrown into the form of a prayer, and more of an exhortation or instruction to the congregation, than a petition offered up jointly *by* them. The very novelty which causes them the more easily to keep up their attention without any wanderings of thought (which is the chief difficulty with *us* who use fixed forms)—this very novelty, I say, makes it next to impossible that they should, more than very partially and imperfectly, so go along with what is spoken as to make it their own at the moment.

When, indeed, a minister who habitually officiates in the same congregation makes a practice of con-

stantly introducing the same topics, nearly in the same order and in the same words, this amounts in practice to a fixed form of prayer, only recited from memory. The difference is, that it is the composition of the individual pastor, and has not the distinct and deliberate sanction of a Church.

Now, to compose a sermon, and to compose a prayer for congregational use, are not so completely on the same footing that every one who is competent to either must be equally so to both. For a sermon may be on the whole edifying, though containing some passages which part of the hearers may not fully assent to, or even some which they may be right in not assenting to. And, at any rate, they are not themselves *parties* to it, or required to adopt it as their own. But as far as this is the case with a *prayer*, so far it fails of the object of being the joint prayer—the “common supplication”—of the congregation.

Several authors have written in vindication of the *allowableness* of forms of prayer; adducing the example of the Jewish Church, sanctioned, as it appears to have been, by our Lord, who Himself taught a form to his disciples; and also the practice of the early Christian Churches. And, again, many have urged, and with good reason, the great utility of established forms of prayer in preserving *sound doctrines* that are embodied in those forms, and bringing them habitually before the minds of the

people, so as to act as a safeguard against any corruption or any omission, of Gospel-truths. For want of such a safeguard, some religious communities have, it is well known, gradually slid into a religious system the most opposite to what was held by their first founders.<sup>1</sup>

Many, again, have dwelt on the excellence of our own particular Liturgy, and on its superiority to what the far greater part of christian ministers would be likely to pour forth extempore.

All these are topics not unprofitable to be noticed.

*Joint Worship.* § 6. But the point which should be the most prominently put forward and dwelt on, is the solemn promise of our gracious Lord that “where even two or three are gathered together in his Name, He will be in the midst of them.” And He plainly teaches us the purport of that promise, as relating not to the mere meeting together in the same building, but to their coming together for joint prayer; “*agreeing together touching something they shall ask in his Name:*” a kind of agreement which can but very imperfectly, if at all, take place, without the use of established and known Forms of Prayer. This consideration you can easily show to be far the most important of all, and in truth decisive of the whole question. And yet it is remarkable that it has been not seldom

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<sup>1</sup> See *Cautions for the Times*, No. 24.

overlooked. Among others, the celebrated Scotch Reformer, John Knox, though he was so far from disapproving of Forms of Prayer as not allowable, that he actually drew up one for the use of his own church, yet left the employment of it optional with each minister. He seems to have designed it as an aid to those ministers who had not what is called the "gift of prayer;" just as our Homilies were drawn up for those not qualified to be preachers. And he might have foreseen that no pastor would be likely to proclaim his own deficiency by resorting to such an aid. The consequence was, of course, the universal adoption of extempore Prayers, which are open to the objection I have adverted to.

The book, however, called the *Directory*, put forward by the Republican Parliament, as designed to supersede the Prayer Book, leaves everything to the extemporaneous effusions of the minister. It merely gives admonitions as to the general character of the prayers and of the sermons. Of the book I have alluded to, copies are extremely rare; which is a remarkable circumstance, considering how many thousand copies of it must have been at one time in circulation. But to those who have access to public libraries, it will be worth while to inspect it, in order (among other things) to observe how completely it is sheltered against all that host of objections—whether well or ill-founded—which

have been brought, or may be brought, against various passages in our Prayer-Book.<sup>1</sup>

No cavil can be urged against any prayer in the *Directory*, because it contains none. It merely directs, in general terms, that the prayers (as well as the sermon) shall be intelligible, and scriptural, and pious, and edifying, and so forth; directions which no one can object to, but which can be no *guide* to any one. If a physician were to tell a patient that he ought to take proper medicines, and to use a suitable diet, no one indeed could say that this ought not to be done; but the instruction would be as unprofitable as it is unexceptionable.

But if any minister to whom that book had been issued as his guide, delivered prayers that were unsound in doctrine, or unedifying, the blame would be laid on *him*, individually, not on the book; because *that*, it would be urged, had charged him to let his prayers be scriptural and edifying. Of any fault, on the other hand—real or imaginary—that may be found, or fancied, in *our* prayers, the blame is thrown, not on the minister, but on the book itself, and on the Church which sanctions it.

And, indeed, a similar kind of unfair advantage to that which I have been describing is enjoyed by the opponents of Christianity, many of whom in the present day have adopted a fashion of professing themselves Christians, while they censure and

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<sup>1</sup> See *Cautions for the Times*, No. 25.

deride every kind of what they call “book-revelation,” and would have each man set up himself as a kind of prophet to himself. When I speak of the similarity of the two cases, I do not, of course, mean to put our Prayer-Book on a level with Scripture, or to claim for it infallibility. But they agree in being both *books*; and no book ever existed, or can exist, against which objections may not be brought—attacks either in the form of open and deliberate censure, or of half-disguised sneer, such as sometimes appear in popular Journals. As we all know, objections have been urged against the Bible—objections from which those who urged them are completely sheltered by, themselves, referring to no book at all for which any one is to be held responsible except the individual writer.<sup>1</sup>

We should do well, therefore, to warn our people against being misled by an immunity from immediate and direct censure, which is purchased by the danger of much ultimate evil and by the sacrifice of much utility. They should be reminded (to take an example from secular matters) that we enjoy a great advantage in living under a constitutional government and fixed laws. Not that our constitution professes to be perfect, or our laws exempt from all inconveniences, or that we ought not to seek by legitimate means to remedy any imperfections; but that we are incomparably better off than

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<sup>1</sup> See Note B at the end.

the subjects of despotic monarchies, in which the sovereign, and the officers appointed by him, command, and enact, and decide, in all cases, at their own discretion. Yet these are completely sheltered, by the absence of fixed laws and constitutions, against all such objections as they might allege (sometimes with plausibility) against ours.

§ 7. I would suggest, in the next place, that it will be advisable to call the attention of your people to the absence of Liturgies, Creeds, and Catechisms in Scripture. Of this subject I have long since treated very fully, pointing out what a decisive evidence is afforded of the *superhuman* guidance under which the sacred Writers of the New Testament must have lived, from their omission of what, humanly speaking, it was morally impossible they *should* (all of them) have omitted. And I also called attention to the *superhuman wisdom* shown, in providing, indeed, in Scripture sufficient instruction in the fundamental *doctrines* of our religion (which are unchangeable), but leaving to each Church the drawing up of such Offices for public worship, such safeguards against particular heresies, and such catechetical instructions, as should be judged best suited to each particular age and country.

But whatever may be any one's private opinion, either as to the merits of our Prayer-Book in particular, or as to the use of *any* prayer-book at all,

*Absence of  
Liturgies in  
Scripture.*

it is plain that every Minister of a Church which *does* use fixed Forms is bound, not only to adhere to them, but to put before his People, from time to time, such comments and explanations as may be needed.

§ 8. These comments and explanations will fall naturally under two heads:—(1.) In reference to the design and general drift of each of the several portions of our Services; and (2.) In reference to the meaning of particular passages that may be obscure, or liable to misapprehension, either from the occurrence of obsolete words, or from any other cause.

*Comments.*

With respect to the former of these heads, most of you probably have found in the course of your experience, that as children and others of the more ignorant require to be *informed*, so the better-educated classes need to be frequently and earnestly *reminded*, that some of the prayers are appointed to be said by the People along with the Minister, and others by him alone in the name and on behalf of the People; they giving audibly their assent, and signifying their adoption of what is said, by the solemn Amen, or other response appointed. The duty of thus joining and taking the proper part in the public worship, some appear to be utterly ignorant of, while others, who know better, are too often careless and neglectful of it.

And most of you, I fear, will have had the painful and mortifying office of admonishing many

of your People concerning the gross irreverence of habitually absenting themselves from a large portion of the Service, and dropping in, from time to time, in the midst of it; as if the *sermon* were the only matter of any importance. In the Pastoral admonition on this subject, which I circulated not very long since, I expressed a hope and belief that those who are guilty of this fault are not guilty of it through a wilful and *designed* irreverence towards the Most High, and would not wish to hold up our religion to the scorn of our Roman Catholic and other dissenting countrymen, but act as they do from mere thoughtlessness. But you should assiduously and earnestly press on their attention that in such a case as this, careless thoughtlessness amounts to a sin of no small magnitude.

On this subject, however, I need not now enlarge further, as the Tract just alluded to is in your hands.

*Creeds.* § 9. Among the portions of our Services of which the design and general purport may need some explanation or remark, I will particularize the Creeds. That a Creed is something of a totally different character from a Prayer, some persons who have not had much of the requisite experience, might think it superfluous even to mention to any one; and they might be surprised, and almost incredulous, on being told that not only by Roman Catholics, but by many of the ignorant among Protestants, it is a practice to

recite the Apostles' Creed even as a part of their private devotions.

But among those who are far better taught than to confound a profession of faith in certain doctrines with an address to the Almighty, you will find not a few who suppose a Creed to be designed as a summary of all the most essential points of Christian Faith. And this misapprehension is the more needful to be guarded against, because it does appear that the framers of our Services—at least of the Baptismal Service, and the Catechism—must have regarded the Apostles' Creed as a compendium of necessary christian doctrine. And this mistake has been fostered by the writings of some very well-known Divines of much learning and ingenuity, but who have taken altogether a wrong view of the subject.<sup>1</sup>

The fact probably is that they had in their minds so strong an association of our Lord's *Sonship* with his *Divine Nature*, and of his *death*, with his *atonement*, that it never occurred to them to examine carefully whether these doctrines were distinctly stated, or clearly implied, in the Creed: a Creed which may be, and I believe is, adopted by Soci-nians. These, moreover, are likely to argue from the omission of any such doctrine in the earliest Creed, that it was not held in the Primitive Church.

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<sup>1</sup> See WHEATLEY, ch. iii. § 14. See also *Cautions for the Times*, No. 25.

And the argument admits of no answer, from those who consider a Creed as a summary of all essential doctrines. It is of vital importance, therefore, to explain to our People that this is quite an erroneous view; that the object of a Creed is, not to instruct men in all points of Gospel truth, but to guard against the heresies most prevalent in each age and country. Creeds, therefore, correspond not to the houses we build as our dwelling-places, but rather to the sea-walls which are erected to protect this or that part of the coast from the encroachments of the ocean. And according to this view (which you may easily show to be undoubtedly the correct one) the omission of certain doctrines in the earliest Creed, goes to prove, not that they were not *held*, but that they had then *never been doubted*. The heresies of the first Ages were quite of a different character. And the point *then* needing to be insisted on was not the *divine* nature, but the *human* nature of the Lord Jesus; not the atoning character of his sacrifice, but the *reality of his death*. For this, as you are doubtless well aware, was denied by those early heretics called Docetæ, whose strange theory is still maintained by above eighty millions of persons, who acknowledge Jesus to have been the true Messiah: the Mahometans, who have it as a tradition.

It will be desirable, again, to point out to your People that the Creeds have, according to our Church, no *independent* authority, nor any claim to

reception derived from General Councils, or Tradition, but rest only on their conformity to Scripture; as our Reformers have been careful to set forth in the Article on Creeds.

§ 10. With respect to the Communion Service, most of you probably will have before now found it needful to explain to your People the design and general drift of the *exhortation*. That has often been so understood as to deter altogether many persons from attending at the Lord's Table, under the idea that if they are conscious of sinfulness they would be "eating and drinking damnation to themselves" as unworthy partakers. It is not difficult, and it is highly important to explain that the unworthiness which the Apostle and which our Reformers had in view, was that careless irreverence of which, in the present day, there is little or no danger: the prevailing fault among *us* being the lamentable *neglect* of the holy ordinance. Certainly any stranger coming among us from some distant land, when he saw the multitudes pouring out of our Churches, when the celebration of the Lord's Supper is about to commence—a multitude whose coming to the Church at all proves that they are not unbelievers, nor totally careless of religious duties—would not fail to conclude that Christianity is not one religion, but two distinct ones; that for communicants, and that for non-communicants. And if he were then assured that all these persons agreed in acknow-

*Communion  
Service.*

ledging as their divine Master and Redeemer Him whose last injunction, confessedly extending to all his followers, they deliberately and habitually disregarded, he would be almost disposed to disbelieve this assurance as incredible.

It would be foreign from my present purpose to say more on this painful subject, especially as I have so lately treated fully of it. I will only add that I trust you will persevere (not disheartened by any failures) in your efforts to remove, or at least lessen, this grievous scandal to our Church, and which is at the same time so perilous to the souls of its members. With a view to this object, one most advantageous occasion is afforded in the preparation of candidates for Confirmation: an occasion of which I believe most of you have often availed yourselves, and with good effect.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The number of candidates confirmed this summer was 1878. This opportunity is the more advantageous, from the practice I have always adopted, of administering the Lord's Supper immediately after the Confirmation, and as a part of the Service. This tends (besides other advantages) to guard against the notion of Confirmation's being a distinct *Sacrament*, or of any one's being fit for the one Rite, and not for the other. And as I have always taught that the persons confirmed ought to receive the Communion on the *earliest possible* opportunity, so, I feel bound in consistency to set them the example of adhering to the like rule. If *they* are bound to *receive* it on the earliest opportunity, *we* are bound to *administer* it on the earliest possible opportunity.

And it is very satisfactory to observe how many of the rest of the congregation come forward on these occasions, to attend, some of them for the first time, at the Lord's Table.

There are in the Communion Service some passages on which, though they are not at all obscure, it will be desirable to make a remark, in order to call the attention of your People to the general design of our Reformers in the words they have employed: I mean the passages in which they have introduced the word "*Sacrifice.*" They were anxious to guard against the doctrine taught in the unreformed Church, of what is called "the Sacrifice of the Mass:" the doctrine that the literal material body of the Lord Jesus is actually offered up by the Priest when he celebrates the Eucharist; and that accordingly there is daily made, in thousands of places, that sacrifice which Scripture distinctly assures us was made "once for all," and whose efficacy is there set forth expressly on the very ground of its not needing to be (like the typical sacrifices under the law) repeated again and again. To guard against this doctrine, and also, it would seem, against that other notion which some adopted, of the Eucharist being a sacrifice of bread and wine offered up to God, our Reformers not only advert (in the Consecration Prayer) to the "one oblation of Christ once offered by Himself," but also introduce the word, in a different and figurative sense, in the Offertory, and again twice in one of the concluding prayers; speaking of the sacrifice of our *alms* ("with which God is well pleased")—the sacrifice of our *prayers*, and the offering up of "ourselves to be a rational, holy, and

living sacrifice." It was not thought enough to abstain from all mention of any such thing as the Sacrifice of the Mass; but every other and true sense in which the word sacrifice could be rightly employed is resorted to, in order to exclude the more effectually the wrong acceptation of it.

I mention this instance as a specimen of those passages on which it may be useful to comment, though no explanation of any difficulty is called for.

§ II. There is a passage in one of the Post-Communion prayers which does, to many readers, need some explanation. I mean that in which the word "Mysteries" occurs. It is a word so commonly employed in the present day to signify "something that cannot be understood," that it will be useful to point out its meaning in this passage, as equivalent to "symbol" or "emblem;" the "holy mysteries" which the communicants are described as having "duly received" being the bread and wine, considered as symbolically *representing* the body and blood of our Saviour; even as the Apostle Paul speaks of *marriage* as a "mystery" ("sacramentum" in the Vulgate) when considered as an emblem representing the union of Christ and his Church. In like manner we read, in the same prayer, of the "mystical" [*i.e.*, figurative] body of Christ; which is the blessed company of all faithful [believing] people: and in the Baptismal Service, of the water employed for the "mystical"—*i.e.*,

figurative or emblematical—“washing away of sin.”

Still more important is it to explain that the word “*Testament*,” which occurs in the Consecration prayer, is to be understood as signifying “Covenant” or “Dispensation.” The ordinary sense of the word, to denote a Will by which a person bequeaths his property, destroys the chief force of our Lord’s expression; whose disciples must have perceived,—if not at the moment when He was speaking, at least shortly after—his allusion to the words of Moses when, sprinkling the People with the blood of a victim, he said [Exod. xxiv. 8] “Behold the blood of the Covenant.” It is thus (as I remarked in my last Charge) that our Translators themselves wrote, in their version of the Book of Exodus; though unhappily [in Heb. ix. 15] they have altered the word in the very passage cited from Exodus. And this is the more to be regretted, because the rendering that has been adopted affects the very title itself by which the Sacred Volume is known among us. And it renders totally unintelligible that most important passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews which goes to establish so clearly the *sacrificial* character of our Lord’s death.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> I remarked to a learned and ingenious friend, who seemed disposed to maintain the Authorized Version at all hazards, that the whole passage, as it stands, conveys to me not merely no satisfactory sense, but no intelligible sense whatever; and

*Obsolete words.* § 12. There can be no need to detain you by entering on any enumeration of the words and phrases that will call for comment or elucidation from you. Attentive perusal with that view, and your catechetical instruction of the young, and conversation with various classes of your parishioners, will bring those expressions under your notice; and I cannot suppose you will be at any loss to give such explanations as are needed.

In reference to passages which have become somewhat obscure, or liable to be mistaken through the changes in our language, you will doubtless have observed, both in our Version of the Bible, and in the Prayer-Book, that the words which have wholly gone out of common use are very few compared with those which, though as much used as ever, have been greatly modified in their signification. The word "reasonable" *e.g.* is in common use now, but not in the sense of "rational" [*i.e.*, possessed of reason], which is what it bore at the time when our Authorized Version and Prayer-Book were composed. The like may be said of the

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that the more I examine it, the more hopelessly perplexing does it appear. And I suggested to him to consult (as I had done long since) the many learned and intelligent friends, and ample libraries, to which I knew he had ready access. As this was several months ago, I cannot doubt that if any even tolerably satisfactory interpretation could have been found, I should have heard of it before now.

word "lively," which, as you are aware, formerly signified "living." And both these words occur in their ancient sense in one of the Post-Communion Prayers.

The words "prevent" and "let," again, have almost reversed the signification in which we sometimes find them in the older writings, though they are quite as much in use as ever. And the word "incomprehensible" is not unfrequent in modern use, though in a sense utterly remote from what it bears in the Athanasian Creed, as equivalent to the Latin original "immensus," "*not bounded by space.*" You may meet with not a few among what are considered the educated classes, who accordingly misunderstand the word, and in consequence the whole passage where it occurs. And universally those words must evidently be the most likely to mislead which are not totally obsolete, but obsolete in their ancient sense, though commonly used by us in a different sense. The wholly obsolete words are likely to convey *no* meaning at all, and the others to convey a *wrong* meaning. To take one instance out of a multitude: I have known the writer of a book find fault with a passage in our 21st Article, which lays it down that doctrines or decisions of a Council are not to be received as of authority, "unless it may be *declared* that they be taken out of Holy Scripture." This, he says, affords us no sufficient security, unless the question be satisfactorily answered "declared by whom?"

He evidently understands the word "declare" in its modern sense. But any one who consults the Latin Original will see that it is the translation of "*ostendi*," and that it is employed in its ancient meaning, which was to "*make clear*," to "prove."

On the ambiguity of the word "*Hell*," which is a translation of two quite different words in Greek, I offered some remarks in the Charge of last year. Many like instances will readily occur to you; such as "faithful" for "believing;" "*wealth*," in the sense of "prosperity;" "*estate*," for "external circumstances;" "*convenient*," for "proper and becoming;" "*after*," for "according to;" "passion," for "suffering;" "offend," and "tempt," in a sense considerably different from what they now convey; and several others.

§ 13. Such expositions as I have  
*Explanatory*      been recommending, you will find it  
*Teaching the*      advisable to give not merely in dis-  
*least admired.*      courses from the pulpit, but also in  
 private conversation, and especially in instruction  
 of catechetical classes.<sup>1</sup> This last branch of our  
 duty is one which no rightly conscientious pastor  
 will be content to hand over altogether to a parish  
 schoolmaster, or to such chance-assistants as may  
 offer themselves; however competent these may be

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<sup>1</sup> A very useful course of lectures on this subject was lately delivered by one of my clergy, who I hope will be induced to publish the substance of them.

to teach children to *read* correctly the words of the Bible and the Prayer-Book.

I cannot conclude, however, without again warning you that that branch of our duty which I have now been treating of, is one which you must not expect to find the most striking in its immediate results, or which will be, to a considerable portion of your congregations, the most interesting, or the most productive of admiration. It is for that very reason that it is the more needful, for me, and for you, to take every precaution against the temptations to neglect what is clearly a part, and a very important part, of our duty. And such instruction as I have been recommending, will, if diligently and skilfully conducted, produce effects, gradual indeed, and somewhat slow, but deep-rooted and of lasting benefit.

If you find that your sermons are very attractive to that portion especially of your congregations who care for little *except* the sermon—who seldom or never approach the Lord's Table, and who are negligent in all that relates to public *worship*, this should operate on you rather as a warning than as a source of self-gratulation. If, on the contrary, you find your people more and more careful not to absent themselves from the early portion of divine service—more and more attentive and earnestly devout in their demeanour, and apparently impressed deeply with a sense of the high privilege they enjoy in our Lord's gracious promise of his

own especial presence in the midst of those “assembled in his name,” and “agreeing together touching something they shall ask;” and if you find an increased and increasing number of habitual attendants at the Lord’s Supper, then, indeed, you may confidently hope that the Lord’s blessing has been bestowed on your exertions—that you have been in some degree successful as feeders of his beloved flock which He has committed to your care; and that when He, the Chief Shepherd, shall appear, you will have a joyful meeting in his presence with many whom you will have brought, or will have kept, within his Fold.

## N O T E S.

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### NOTE A, page 5.

THESE words are taken from an able writer in the *Cautions for the Times*, No. 24. The whole passage is here subjoined:—

“In thus insisting on the claims of the appointed teachers of the Church, we may possibly have appeared to some of you unduly to exalt the christian ministry, and to approach too near the Romish notions of the dignity of the priesthood. But you will perceive, on reflection, that the very reverse is the case. Many of those who pay less deference than we think they ought, to the teaching of Church-officers, do in reality approach, far more than we do, to the Romish notions as to the functions of these officers. For there are some who, while they think themselves quite justified in chusing their *teachers* as they please, would consider it wrong that the public Prayers of the Church should be conducted by any but regularly-ordained clergymen; or who, at any rate, would be shocked to receive the Sacraments from any other. Now, does not this feeling imply a persuasion that it is not teaching, but officiating before God, which forms the distinguishing function of the christian Ministry? In the case, indeed, of *heathen* priests, it is true that the offering of sacrifices was *their* sole duty, and that the giving of instruction was no part of their office. And so likewise in the case of the Jewish priests; their peculiar office was the making atonement for the sins of the People; while Jews of any tribe were freely admitted to expound the Scripture in the Synagogues. (See Luke iv., and Acts xiii.) You are aware, also, that in the Romish Church similar views are entertained as to the priestly office, and that what constitutes with them the distinguishing function of the priest is the power of consecrating the Eucharist, and thereby, as they believe, offering up sacrifice for the living and the

“ dead. But it is very remarkable, that in the Bible the word “ *Hierens* (or sacrificing priest, in Latin, “ sacerdos”) is applied “ to no officer of the Christian Church, but is reserved for our “ Lord exclusively. The sacrifice offered on Calvary is expressly declared to be final, and one which needs not to be “ followed by any other atonement ; and the duties ascribed to the “ Christian ministers are not the making atonement for the sins “ of the People, but the proclaiming the Gospel-Message, and the “ setting forth of its doctrines. If then we meet with a person “ who behaves as if he thought that all had equal authority “ for public teaching, while he acknowledges that all have not “ equal authority to minister in the public ordinances of the “ Church, is he not unconsciously entertaining views regarding “ the Christian Ministry more nearly resembling those which “ the heathens and the Jews held, and which the Romanists “ still hold, with regard to their priests, than any which can be “ fairly collected from the New Testament?—that he must consider the priest as one who is to do something with God on “ his behalf, or in his stead, rather than as one whose principal “ office is the communicating instruction to the People?”

NOTE B, page 19.

The same observations will apply to the case of *subscription* to any Formulary, whether a Liturgy, or a “ Creed,” “ Articles of Religion,” or “ Confession of Faith.” Those belonging to some Communion which uses nothing of the kind,—that is, nothing *formally agreed on*, written down, and *published*,—sometimes make it a matter of boast that they have no test of orthodoxy framed by Man, but refer only to the Holy Scriptures. They do, however, in some way, ascertain the soundness, according to their own views, of each man’s interpretation of Scripture ; so that the only difference between them and us is, that they trust *everything* to the discretion of those who act as examiners,—the TRYERS, as they were called in the times of the Commonwealth.

Yet they may allege objections, to an indefinite extent, against any written Formularies, safe from having any pre-

cisely similar objections retorted ; because the blame of anything that may be open to blame is laid on *individuals*, and not on the Church which leaves to those individuals an unlimited, and perhaps unsafe, discretion.

There is, however (as was observed in the *Cautions for the Times*, No. 26), “no Christian community which does not, in some way or other, apply some other test besides the very words of Scripture. Some Churches, indeed, do not reduce any such Test to writing, or express it in any *fixed* form, so as to enable every one to know beforehand precisely how much he will be required to bind himself to. But nevertheless, those churches do apply a test, and very often a much more stringent, elaborate, and minute test, than our Liturgy and Articles. In such Communities, the candidate-pastor of a Congregation is not, to be sure, called on to subscribe in writing a definite Confession of Faith, drawn up by learned and pious persons after mature deliberation, and publicly set forth by common authority. But he is called upon to converse with the leading members of the Congregation, and satisfy them as to the soundness of his views ; not, of course, by merely repeating texts of Scripture,—which a man of any views might do, and do honestly ;—but by explaining *the sense* in which he understands the Scriptures. Thus, instead of subscribing the Thirty-nine Articles, he subscribes the sentiments of the leading members—for the time being—of that particular congregation over which He is to be placed as Teacher.

“And thus it is that Tests of some kind or other, written or unwritten [*i.e.*, transmitted by oral tradition], fixed for the whole Body, or variable, according to the discretion of particular Governors, are, and must be, used in every Christian Church.”

THE END.

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# THE PAROCHIAL SYSTEM:

BEING

## THE CHARGE

DELIVERED AT

THE TRIENNIAL VISITATION OF THE PROVINCE  
OF DUBLIN,

*IN JUNE, 1859.*

By RICHARD WHATELY, D.D.

*ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.*

— αὐτοὶ γὰρ ἀγρυπνοῦσιν ὑπὲρ τῶν  
ψυχῶν ὑμῶν, ὡς λόγον ἀποδώσοντες·

[HEB. XIII. 17.]

LONDON:

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THE  
PAROCHIAL SYSTEM.

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§ 1. THERE are, as you are well aware, in the Ordination-Service (a Service which should be frequently and attentively perused, by the Members, and especially the Clergy, of our Church), distinct, though brief, references to the several parts of the Ministerial duty;—to the administration of the Sacraments,—the public instruction of the People out of Scripture,—and also the private Visitation of individuals.

*Distinct  
branches of  
Ministerial  
duty.*

On several of these points, I have taken occasion, from time to time, to offer some remarks. On the subject of the two Sacraments I some time ago put forth such observations as I thought called for, on account of the too prevalent neglect of one of them, and some misapprehensions that are afloat respecting both. And on some later occasions I adverted to the duty of giving *explanations* to the People, of the Holy Scriptures, and also of the Book of Common-Prayer;\* not as designing to impute to

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\* *Tracts on "the Sacraments," and on "Explanations of Scripture and of the Prayer-book."*

any one a neglect of that portion of duty, or as meaning to disparage other portions; but because hortatory pulpit-cloquence is something so much more showy and striking than those other, not at all less important ministrations, that there must sometimes be a temptation, which we should sedulously guard against, to bestow on these an insufficient degree of attention.

And the same will apply, most emphatically, to the duty of private Visitation of individuals; which is one of those distinctly and strongly set forth in the office for the Ordination of Priests.

The candidate for Holy Orders is called upon publicly to pledge himself, first, to “instruct out of the Scriptures, the people committed to his charge;” and next, “faithfully to minister the doctrine and Sacraments and the discipline of the Church, and to teach the people under his charge to keep and observe the same.” And afterwards he is required to engage to use “private, as well as public monitions and exhortations, both to the sick and the whole within his cure, as need shall require, and occasion shall be given.”

In addition therefore to the duties of public Ministration, there is a distinct head mentioned of private Ministration also.

§ 2. And this, comparatively inconspicuous, but certainly not least important branch of Ministerial duty, belongs most especially to what may be called the

*Pastoral care  
of a Parish.*

*Parochial System* of our Church. If public preaching, and the administering of the Sacraments were all that was needed, there would be no necessity for dividing a christian Country into any such districts as we call Parishes, and confiding each to the superintending care of its own Pastor. It would be only needful to provide a sufficient number of places of Worship, and of Preachers; leaving those preachers to make whatever arrangements among themselves might suit their convenience. But our Church (and I believe I might say *every* christian Church) has felt, and practically recognised the need of something besides this;—of that private superintending care which is provided for by the parochial system. And such a system there can be, I think, no doubt, was established in the very earliest times. For (to omit other proofs) we may be sure that it could not have been of *mere preachers* that the Apostle is speaking when he exhorts Christians [1 Thess. v. 12] to “know them which labour among them, and are over them in the Lord, and admonish them; and to esteem them very highly for their work’s sake:” and again [Heb. xiii. 17], to “Obey them that have the rule over them, and to submit themselves: for they watch for their souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief.”

As for instituting any inquiry into the *comparative* utility or dignity of the several branches of

Ministerial duty, this would then—and then only—be pertinent, if an *alternative* were before us;—if one, or else another, of these, must necessarily be neglected. But a conscientious man, who has several distinct duties imposed on him, will occupy himself, not in considering which of them deserves a preference, but, how he can best fulfil them *all*.

It may sometimes however be worth while to consider *which* of our duties we may be the most frequently tempted to neglect, by reason of its having less connexion with personal celebrity and popularity, and being of a less striking character, than others. And corresponding care is called for to guard against any such temptation.

I am not, of course, supposing the case of a man who makes human applause his idol, and who deliberately prefers the reputation of an eloquent preacher to the edification of his People, and the discharge of his duty. If there *were* any one of such a character, he would not be likely to listen with profit to any admonitions on the subject. But (as I observed on a former occasion) any one who, possessing the valuable gift of attractive and popular pulpit eloquence, should take for granted that he cannot be in any danger of over-rating the importance of this, and unduly depreciating, or partially overlooking, other branches of ministerial duty—such a one is, by his rash security, the most exposed to that danger.

Public instruction and exhortation from the

Pulpit, I am so far from undervaluing, that I am fully sensible of an advantage, in some respects, which a discourse delivered to a *congregation*, possesses over private admonitions to an individual. It is well known that a multitude will often be more easily and more strongly impressed by anything that is forcibly said, than those same persons would have been by the very same words addressed to each of them singly. Mutual sympathy, and mutual consciousness of that sympathy, tend very greatly to heighten any kind of emotion that may have been excited. And thus a powerful effect is often produced on a large audience composed of persons no one of whom could have been equally influenced separately.

It should not be forgotten however, that any sudden and very violent excitement, though it certainly does sometimes leave permanently good effects, yet will very often be succeeded (if not watched with judicious care—if the metal when heated be not duly moulded)—by a dangerous kind of *collapse*—a sort of reaction—which will more than undo any good that may have been done: “and the last state of that man will be worse than the first.” A *torrent* (we should remember), however copious and rapid, is no *permanent* stream; its very name being taken from a word which denotes *parching* drought. And in the Parable of the Sower, the seed which fell on a rock underwent what may be called a new birth; since it imme-

diately sprang up ; but when the sun waxed hot it withered away.

§ 3. And there are also peculiar advantages on the side of private administration. In private converse with an

individual, you perceive, and can accommodate yourself to his particular character and habits of thought, and can then supply just the kind of instruction or advice that especially suits that individual. You learn what are the particular difficulties or objections that most beset him ; and again, the particular excuses by which each may have soothed his conscience ; and which perhaps are what you would never have conjectured. The particular temptations to which one individual is most exposed, are often quite different from those of another man. And these you will best come to understand in private intercourse.

And I may add that you will thus best be able to increase the efficiency of your *public* ministrations. For, with a view to *them*, it is most important to ascertain what has or has not been clearly understood ;—what may have been *misunderstood* ;—and how far any individual may have evaded the personal application to *himself* of something that had been said, and may have applied it solely to his neighbours. Often will the Minister who makes such inquiries as he ought to make, be surprised at the result of them. He will often find that much of what he has said, and which had

been listened to with reverence and with apparent attention, and had been received with ready assent, has been in part very imperfectly and indistinctly taken in, and in part grossly misapprehended.

Much intercourse with our fellow-men is essential to that knowledge of *Mankind* without which no one can be a profitable instructor of others. The solitary student will be likely to judge of the feelings and notions of others too much from his own; and will be misled by what Bacon calls "the Idols of the Den" [*idola specús*]. And again, one who has had but little intercourse except with some *one class* of persons, will be the less qualified as an instructor of other, very different, classes.

Even with a view therefore to really profitable public preaching, private intercourse with the members of the congregation is highly important. For (as I took occasion to observe in a former Charge) no one can be completely well-fitted to be the instructor of any class of persons, who has not had considerable private intercourse with individuals of that very class.

And the private intercourse of the Pastor with his people should not be confined to that which indeed could scarcely be with propriety called *intercourse*;—merely *speaking to* them on religious matters. He should also *listen* to them, and encourage them to open their minds freely to him. And that too, not on their spiritual concerns only, but on any others also on which they naturally and allowably

feel much interest, and have a craving for sympathy. All detraction indeed, and criticism of their neighbours, should be repressed; but on concerns of their own, such as the prospects in life of themselves and their children, they should be listened to with friendly sympathy. And finding you take a kind interest in their temporal welfare, and that you do not look down on them with disdainful unconcern, they will the more readily communicate with you and listen to you on religious subjects. And it may be added that you may in this way best bring them to understand that Religion is not to be reserved as a distinct occupation for one day in the week, but is to operate practically in the ordinary business of life.

And when you find any one holding any erroneous notions, you will find it best to *begin* by ascertaining what there is of *truth* in his views; since thus there will be some common ground for both parties to stand upon. And after dwelling on the points of *agreement*, you may then the better proceed to refute what is erroneous, and to convey more correct ideas.

It should be considered moreover, that the impression which may be produced by a public discourse, is sometimes more liable to be *transient*, and before long to fade away and be forgotten, than a similar impression made in private conference. A Sermon will perhaps have suggested to a man a doubt as to the correctness of his belief or his prac-

tice in some point;—he will have been strongly urged to adopt views at variance with his prejudices, or to act against his habitual inclination,—and he feels perhaps that the reasons given are such as he is unable to answer. But then, there is *no one calling on him* to answer them;—no one pressing him either to express his conviction and act accordingly, or else, to show sufficient cause for refusing. And he will be not unlikely, nor perhaps unwilling, to let the doubts or the convictions that have been produced gradually pass away and leave no trace on his mind. He will perhaps say, virtually, to some argument with which he had been impressed at the moment, “Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee.”

But in private conference, there is the reverse of this. A man is naturally and fairly called on to express his assent to what he cannot deny, and to acknowledge the obvious consequences of what he has distinctly admitted. And he must either convict himself of wilful and perverse inconsistency, or else must at least profess an intention of acting up to what he acknowledges to be true and right.

§ 4. Accordingly, some important effects are occasionally produced in individuals by this kind of conversational intercourse, when they would have remained — perhaps *had* remained — practically un-

*Important results of domestic visiting.*

moved by the most striking eloquence in public discourses.

Many of you probably could confirm what has been said, by instances coming under your own experience. Of those that have come under mine, I will mention one, and only one, as an illustration of the above remarks.

There was a parish (of moderate extent) under the care of a conscientious and zealous Minister, who had to lament, as to one point, the utter failure of his efforts. The Lord's Table was attended only by some six or eight persons, all members of one family. The rest of the congregation continued to absent themselves from the ordinance, notwithstanding his delivering sermon after sermon, filled with the most cogent reasons, and the most earnest exhortations. The People continued to attend at Church, and listened (and perhaps listened with approbation) to the Sermons, as if to something not at all designed for *them*, but altogether for some different class of persons. Another Minister, to whom this state of things was known, succeeded to the charge of the parish; and he resolved to try another course of procedure. He went round to the several families of the Parishioners, giving instructions,—explanations,—reasons,—exhortations,—remonstrances,—according to what each case required. And the result was, that on the very next occasion of his celebrating the Lord's Supper, instead of six or eight, he had *above ninety* communicants.

In this instance there was an immediate and evident result ; showing publicly, the utility of these private ministrations. But this is not what is to be ordinarily expected. It will oftener be found that the good effects—when any do result—will be gradual and slow, and, after all, but little noticed, and little known, except by a very few persons. You may be the means, under the divine blessing, of doing most important service to many an individual, while scarcely any one except the parties immediately concerned is even at all aware of it. You may be enabled, in your private ministrations (as doubtless most of you *have* been) to console the afflicted—to fortify the wavering—to convince the doubting—to reclaim the vicious—to correct the erroneous—to rouse the careless—and to reconcile those who are at variance ; and yet these services may be but little known beyond a very small circle ; and perhaps, even *when* known, not estimated very highly. If you faithfully and well discharge these duties, you will indeed obtain, besides the inestimable testimony of a good conscience, the approbation of the most judicious and worthiest men : but with most of the unwise and unthinking, far greater popularity will be gained by something more striking and splendid. There are men whom the Apostle Paul describes as “having itching ears :” —whom the Apostle James alludes to as being “hearers of the Word, and not doers ;” whom he compares to a man “beholding his face in a mirror ;” .

and whom Ezekiel, long before, had described as listening to him as they would to one who "hath a very pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument." For it is not merely in *their* times, but doubtless in *all* times, that such may be found;—persons who have a craving for the excitement of brilliant and impassioned eloquence, and care for little else; estimating each Minister entirely according to the degree in which he proves attractive to a congregation; and flattering themselves that they are making religious progress, because the oratory they delight in has a *reference* to Religion. Such a one may be compared to a cloth which has received a dye, but without the application of a *Mordant* to fix it, and whose colour, however brilliant, will easily be discharged.

§ 5. But others, again, there are who are aware of the utility and of the necessity of private pastoral superintendence, but regard this branch of ministerial duty as a very *humble* one; inferior in importance and far lower in point of dignity. But a rightly-conscientious and faithful Pastor, who undertakes and who retains, the charge of a parish, will not allow any temptation so to draw him off from this duty, as to leave uncared for those "souls he is bound to watch over, as one that must give an account."

And in truth, this branch of duty is not only highly important, but is also one which requires

qualifications different indeed, in kind, from those of the public preacher, but not at all less valuable. Sound good sense, and discreet cautiousness, are most especially requisite in the Minister's private intercourse with his parishioners. And they are qualities which (in a high degree) are not more common, nor less needing assiduous cultivation, than brilliant eloquence.

And besides good sense and conscientious diligence, there will also be usually an especial call for *patience*, in this branch of ministerial duty. In dealing with numbers of persons of various dispositions, and many of them of untutored minds, many, and very various, trials of patience will be likely to arise. Some persons, perhaps, will be inattentive even to the most judiciously offered instruction, or will even resent the kindest advice. Some will show no gratitude for the pains bestowed on them; and some will be unreasonable in their demands on the Pastor's time and labour, or perhaps jealous of that which is bestowed on their neighbours. In all these ways, the patience of a diligent Pastor will often be greatly tried: though, on the other hand, he may hope often to meet with cheering encouragements.

It would be superfluous to enlarge on the evils that may ensue,—in all departments of duty, and not least in this that I am now alluding to—from indiscretion, or from impatience of temper. To be intrusively troublesome,—to interfere in an indelicate

way in domestic concerns,—to rebuke with harshness,—to weary with admonitions those whose minds are pre-occupied,—to assume an arrogant tone of dictation,—all these are faults which you must be well aware will render well-meant private ministrations more hurtful than beneficial. And I need hardly add, that the dread of such evils ought not to tempt you to neglect this branch of duty, but to incite you to use the more care in guarding against any such errors.

§ 6. But it may be worth while to suggest that care will sometimes be needed to guard against what may be reckoned an opposite danger. You will perhaps find that some of the best-disposed of your flock are inclined to assign, not too little, but too much authority to their Pastor. Men are apt, in this matter, to be misled by a false analogy, between the Clerical profession on the one hand, and the Medical and Legal on the other. As a man places himself under the guidance of a physician, and of a legal-adviser, whom he thinks trustworthy in their respective departments, and implicitly relies on them, without setting up himself as a judge of the directions they give, and without undertaking the study of medical or legal science, so, many a one proceeds in a corresponding way, in what regards his religion. I have heard, as probably some of you have, a distinct avowal of this principle: but you will much more frequently find it acted on. If

*Danger of  
overrating hu-  
man Authority.*

a Pastor is very assiduous, and is much beloved and admired, it will perhaps be found that many of his People place him (in their own minds)—not indeed distinctly and avowedly, but practically—almost on the same level with the inspired Apostles :—that they receive doctrines, in fact, on his word, and give an uninquiring and unhesitating assent to all he says, simply because said by him. And indeed I have myself known a Protestant Minister congratulate himself on finding this to be the case with several of his People ; forgetting apparently that two-thirds of his parishioners, were, on the very same principle, adhering to a religious system which he, and which I, considered erroneus and dangerous.

Now it is evidently an error to receive doctrines on human authority, even supposing all that is actually thus received to be in itself true. The Apostles, we know, received a direct supernatural revelation, attested by miraculous signs ; and they,—very reasonably,—called on men to receive them as immediate messengers from Heaven. And our Lord taught,—as *He* had a right to do—“as one having authority, and not as the Scribes ;” appealing to his “mighty works” as the proper proof of his pretensions. The Scribes in their teaching referred to the written Law ; saying, “It is written so and so ; and this or that appears to be the meaning.” And thus, even if their expositions were in any point erroneus, their hearers had in their hands the means of correcting the error. Now it is evident that *we* are to

teach as the Scribes, and not, like our Lord, as having independent authority. We must refer our hearers to Scripture and to Reason for the establishment of what we say; unless we can exhibit those miracles which, we are expressly told, were "the signs of an Apostle."\*

All this might seem too obvious to be at all liable to be overlooked. But experience shows that there is a danger of putting human authority too nearly on a level with divine. A large majority, as you are aware, of professing Christians in the world, are members of Churches which distinctly claim infallibility; a claim which could never have been established, if men had not been predisposed to admit it. And in fact, there is, I believe, no one cause that has had so much effect in retaining, and in enlisting adherents to the Church of Rome, as the craving after an infallible guide on earth, universally accessible, and competent to decide without the possibility of error, among all conflicting opinions, what is the right sense of Scripture, and what is the divine Will. And even where no claim to infallibility, under that very title, is either allowed or put forth, something very nearly amounting to the same, in reality, may often be met with. There is, as you are aware, a Christian sect whose preachers distinctly

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\* Signs, that is, attesting the claim of one who did claim to be an Apostle. For though others besides the Apostles possessed miraculous powers, without making any such claim, those who did make it were bound to produce this infallible proof of their pretensions.

profess to be "moved by the Holy Spirit" to say whatever they do say. And supposing this claim to be well-established, all that they utter would be completely on a level with Holy Scripture. For, the very foundation of our confidence in *that*, as infallible, is, our belief that those we commonly call "the Inspired Writers" really were "moved by the Spirit" to say what they did. But then, any one who ventures thus to proclaim, with the voice of one of the Prophets of old, "thus saith the Lord," or, "the Holy Spirit moveth me," may fairly be required to display "the miraeulous *signs* of an Apostle," or else must stand convicted of impious presumption.

There are others, again, who though not using precisely this language, yet so express themselves as to be at least very likely to be understood in nearly the same sense. For instance, I remember seeing in some Publication, the description given by a preacher (I forget of what denomination) of his addressing some persons, "not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but with demonstration of the Holy Ghost and of power." He was, apparently, so ignorant as not to know that the Apostle meant by "demonstration of the Holy Ghost and of power," the proof he exhibited of his divine commission by the display of *miraculous* powers conferred on him by the Holy Spirit. But there was clearly a claim,—or at least what would be understood as a claim,—to an inspiration equal to that of the Apostle. Again, a Minister of another Church,—whom I well knew personally,—a

man of more than average learning and intelligence, declared to me his conviction that our Lord's admonition to his Apostles not to "take thought or premeditate what they should speak, for that it should be given them in the same hour what to say," was applicable to ourselves at this day, and one which we are authorized and bound to act on. Perhaps it did not occur to him, but it certainly would to most who heard him, that the very ground on which this admonition rested, was,—“it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost that speaketh in you.”

But a Minister who is far from designedly putting forth for himself any such pretensions, may nevertheless find a tendency in some of his flock to fall into something of the error I have been alluding to, unless distinctly, and earnestly, and frequently, cautioned against it.

*Distinction between inspired and un-inspired teachers.*

§ 7. And in giving such cautions, it will be necessary to point out, and explain, and dwell upon, some important distinctions: what some perhaps will call nice and subtle distinctions, but which are indispensably requisite for a right faith. For instance, the Pastor cannot but believe the opinions which he puts forth in sincerity to be *true*; else they would not *be* his opinions. Yet he must not allow his People to adopt them on his authority. He cannot, again, but wish them to receive his doctrine; but he must refer them to Holy Scripture, and leave them to judge,—as the candid Bereans did of old—“whether those things are so.” It is not enough

that they should hold what is in itself right, if they believe it on wrong grounds.

And, again, he cannot but believe, and must teach, that "every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above," and that for whatever truth there may be in anything he teaches, he is bound to be thankful to the divine Giver. So he is also, for everything that is morally *good* in his *conduct*; for "the fruit of the Spirit is in all *righteousness*" as well as in all *truth*; and yet, as he cannot claim *sinless* perfection, so neither can he claim infallibility in doctrine. "If we say that we have no *sin*, we deceive ourselves;" and we should equally deceive ourselves if we should say that we have no *error*. The Pastor therefore must be careful to point out the distinction between himself and the Apostles who received manifest and sensible divine inspiration; even when his doctrine, as well as theirs, may be true and entitled to belief. The truth of what *they* said was to be *inferred* from the instruction from above which they received; the sensible miracles which they displayed being the proof of their divine commission. With a mere human teacher on the other hand—one who is (in the ordinary acceptation of the word) uninspired, the case is the opposite. Any enlightening grace of the Holy Spirit that may have been bestowed on him, is to be inferred *from the truth* of what he teaches; the proof of that truth being attested not by miracles wrought by him, but by an appeal to the Inspired Writers themselves. *They* claim

assent on their own word, and he, on theirs. Now if any one is inclined to call this an over-nice and subtle distinction, he will do well to reflect whether it is not on this that the whole difference turns between being servants of God or of Man.

And it is important to point out to your people that in the New Testament history, every out-pouring of the Spirit such as called on men to receive what was said as a message from Heaven, was always attested by undeniable miracles, not to be mistaken for imposture, or for the delusions of an excited state of feeling. The Disciples on the day of Pentecost did not utter an unmeaning jargon and call that the Gift of Tongues, but spake languages which they had never learnt, but which were understood by the men of various nations whom they addressed, and recognised by them as "their own tongues wherein they were born." This sign, and the healing of the sick, and the raising of the dead, were the proofs given of a direct communication from the Most High. But there is no record of any such signs as shrieks, faintings, convulsions, and hysterical fits. All the *violent* manifestations that we read of, were what the Sacred Writers attributed to the agency of Evil Demons. But the manifestations of God's Holy Spirit seem to have been as *calm* as they were powerful.\*

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\* When Paul was "struck down," it was by a miraculous light, which *was seen by his companions*. And they heard a voice speaking to him though they did not distinguish the words. (See Acts ix. and xxii.)

The cautions I have now been recommending have evidently a reference not only to private ministrations, but to public preaching also; and perhaps even still more to this latter. For in private conference, any misapprehension that your hearer may fall into, you will be likely immediately to perceive, and can correct at once. But in a sermon, something said may be dangerously misapprehended, without the error's coming to your knowledge.\*

§ 8. But there is one case in which the danger I have been alluding to has reference exclusively to the Pastor's private intercourse with his people; I mean, that of consultation as to cases of conscience, and private confession of particular sins. Auricular confession, enjoined as an habitual and necessary duty, though it is felt as a grievous burden by many of those belonging to Churches which do enjoin it, is a burden which could never have been originally imposed on men without their own consent. And there can be no doubt, I think, that the

*Confession  
and Absolution.*

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\* Any one who has been accustomed to see or to hear reports of discourses which may have been delivered by himself, or which he has heard—discourses perhaps very clear in style and in delivery—will often be surprised at the misapprehensions afloat;—misapprehensions sometimes destroying, or even reversing the real sense of what was said.

Such misapprehensions we must guard against in all cases, as well as we can: but it is in private conference that they can the most easily be corrected.

practice must have grown up in consequence of men's craving for the relief of what is called *unburdening* the conscience, or (as it is sometimes styled) "making a clean breast." And one proof that might be given of this, is, that something nearly approaching to that system of particular confession has been introduced by a Protestant sect, which does not recognise priestly absolution.

If our Lord had bestowed on his Apostles and other Ministers the faculty of reading each man's heart, and foreseeing the future course of his life, they might thus have been enabled to pronounce positively of an individual that his sins were pardoned by the Most High, and his salvation secured. But this gift He did not think fit to bestow on any one. His Disciples therefore were merely authorized to pronounce, not, what *particular individuals*, but what *kind* of persons should have remission of sin against God; namely those whose penitence and faith were seen by *Him* to be sincere.

And even as the power conferred on the Disciples, "of binding and loosing,"—*i. e.*, of enacting, altering, or repealing rules of conduct, cannot extend to alterations in the essentials of the Gospel-scheme of salvation, or in the fundamental principles of morality, but only to church-regulations as to ceremonies, formularies, public worship, and religious festivals, even so, the remission of sins, as sins against God, can be proclaimed by Christ's Minis-

ters, only as promised, *generally*, in Scripture to the truly and rightly penitent.

But the power of remitting or retaining sins, has been, as you are aware, misunderstood as implying a power (one which neither the Apostles themselves, nor any other man can possess) of absolutely pardoning sins as against God. He who does any wrong to his neighbour, and by the same act is guilty of an offence against the community he belongs to, and also of a sin against God, may be forgiven by his neighbour, for the wrong done to that neighbour; and may receive the pardon of the community for the offence done to *it*; but it is God alone that can forgive the sin against God. In fact, we are, all of us, not only authorized but bound to "forgive every man his brother their trespasses;" that is, trespasses as against ourselves. And it is a right not only conferred by our Lord on his Church, but necessarily inherent in every kind of Society, to inflict, retain, and remit, the censure of the Society, on any transgressor of its rules. But neither any individual man, nor any Society, can have a right to go further, and to pretend to forgive sins against the Most High.

This distinction, which men have often been found prone to overlook, and which some may call a subtle and nice distinction, is one which the Pastor is clearly bound to point out and to explain, if he would guard his flock against most deadly error. And I cannot think that a man of good

sense will find it very hard to be explained. A child may surely be brought to understand that though he may remit a debt due to *himself*, he cannot remit a debt due to another—to a third person; and that (by parity of reasoning) though *he* may pardon a wrong done to him, *no one else* can have power to pardon that wrong.

But be the distinction a subtle or an obvious one, and difficult or easy to be explained, some explanation of it the Pastor is bound to give, and to guard his people against attributing to him an authority which no man can possess.

§ 9. As for questions respecting the particular mode, and the degree, in which any Church ought to exercise, or does exercise, a power of remitting or retaining offences as against itself, on these I shall, of course, not enter on this occasion. But it is worth while to remark that there is one point whereon our Church may be said to have delegated this power to her Ministers and to exercise it through them. The Minister is authorized and bound to act according to the best of his knowledge and discretion in admitting to the *Eucharist* or excluding from it. In the general, public administration of the ordinance in the Church, he is to exclude those only who are “open and notorious evil-livers,” or are in avowed enmity against their neighbours. But in the private visitation of the sick, cases will arise, and in populous parishes

*Admission to  
the Eucharist.*

will be of no unfrequent occurrence, in which there will be a call for much anxious deliberation, and need of much sound discretion.

Suppose a man who has been, and confesses himself to have been, leading an utterly ungodly life, or to have committed some heinous crime, for which he might reasonably have been excluded from christian communion, to be alarmed at the probable near approach of death, and to send for the Minister to his sick bed, desiring to receive the Lord's Supper. The Minister, when applied to, *must* say either "I will," or "I will not." If the applicant appear to be sincerely and rightly penitent, and in that suitable state of mind which is briefly described in our Church-Catechism (in answer to the question "What is required of those who come to the Lord's Supper?") then he will administer the Rite; and in so doing he will have taken upon him to remit, on the part of the Church, that penalty of exclusion from the Lord's Table which the man's former life might be thought to have incurred. Whether he use, or not, the very word "*absolution*," he will have pronounced an absolution for the offences committed *as* offences against the Church. And he may also express his strong hope and confident *belief* (a belief implied by his administering the Eucharist) of the penitent's acceptance with God; though this is only the belief of a fallible man, not gifted with the power of reading the heart. But as for absolving, or unconditionally proclaiming absolution, for sin as

against God, not only has no man any power to do this, but it does not appear that the Framers of our Formularies had any such meaning. This may be inferred not only from their language in many other places, but from a prayer introduced in the very office for the Visitation of the Sick ;—a prayer *for* divine forgiveness, coming *after* that Formula which is called the *Absolution*.

If, on the contrary, it should be found that the man was *not* a sincere penitent,—if it appeared that he was cherishing feelings of enmity against his neighbour, or was in some way in an unfit state for receiving the Holy Ordinance,—in that case, you would, for the present, withhold the administration of it till he should be brought to a better mind. And in so doing, you would be, on behalf of the Church, and as far as regards the offence against that,—“retaining” his sin, till he should become rightly penitent. You would therefore virtually, if not in words, have retained or withdrawn what is, practically, a sentence of excommunication. And such I conceive to be the true purport of that declaration of our Lord to his Apostles, which is introduced into our Ordination Service.

Against a wanton or unwise exercise of the office thus entrusted to our Ministers, there is a provision in the reference which is directed to be made to the Bishop. But *some* such power *must* be lodged *some*-where, if a Church and the christian ordinances, are to be anything more than an empty name.

§ 10. The Minister however who shall resolve never to shrink from faithfully fulfilling his duty by the bed of sickness, must expect sometimes to be exposed to complaint and obloquy for so doing. As I observed in a work published about thirty years ago,\* it is a grief to the Ministers of the Gospel to be so often applied to, on the approach of death, by those who have not prepared at all for the great change, during their life:—whose seed-time has been delayed till harvest; and who flatter themselves that there will be a saving efficacy in our speaking and reading to them, and praying over them, and interceding for them, on their death-bed. “Give us of your oil” (they seem to say) “for our lamps are going out.” And the Minister is sometimes even blamed as hard-hearted and unfeeling if he refuse to hold out a confident hope, in some case where he can find nothing in Scripture to warrant such confidence. Some perhaps are even tempted by this consideration, and by the desire of being thought good-natured, and by a really benevolent wish to soothe at least the last hours of a dying man,—some, I say, are perhaps thus tempted into holding out hopes which they themselves believe to be delusive. And perhaps they are thus tempted to administer the Holy Sacrament to one whom they perceive to be wholly unfit to partake of it, from being totally

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\* *Lectures on a Future State.*

mistaken as to the whole character and design of the Ordinance,—unrepentant of the sin of having hitherto neglected it, and full of a superstitious trust that it will operate as a kind of charm to ensure the salvation of any one who receives it just before his death. Indeed I have myself known the case of a man who believed himself to be dying, and who solicited the administration of the Rite avowedly on that ground, acknowledging that he would have declined it if he had expected to recover.

One of the evils resulting from this mistaken benevolence, is the danger that surviving friends may thus be encouraged to go on in a course of sin or of carelessness, by seeing one who has so lived departing in a triumphant confidence of salvation, derived from the assurance of a Minister of Christ. Nothing can be more natural than that *they* also should listen to the delusions of the same Tempter, who whispers to them, as to our first Parents, “Ye shall not surely die:”—that *they* also should wait for a death-bed repentance, and propose to themselves to send, when the time shall arrive, for the same Minister who has given such bold and comfortable assurances.

If we were disposed to magnify our office, we should pretend, like the priests of corrupt Churches, to be able to ensure any one's salvation by our mediation, and by such a ceremony as Extreme Unction, and by saying Masses for the repose of his Soul. God knows they do often procure the

*repose of the soul* ; but it is only in *this* life. They administer a deadly opiate, which relieves present pain, and lets the disease gain ground unchecked. And they “strengthen the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his evil way, by promising him life.”

In this branch then, as much as in any, of your private Ministerial duty, there is need, in addition to benevolent and zealous assiduity, of a degree of sound judgment, as well as unflinching adherence to truth, which are not perhaps more common, and certainly not less important, than pulpit eloquence.

§ 11. There is, connected with the Parochial System, an occasional inconvenience, for which partial, though not complete remedies may be provided. Many parishes are too extensive, and many too populous, to be properly attended to by the Pastor, even with aid of one, or of two Curates. And many Churches are too distant from great part of the parishioners, to be regularly attended by them, or too small for the congregations. Hence the necessity of Chapels and other licenced places of Worship, and of Ministers to officiate in them. And that most valuable Institution, the Additional-Curates-Society, has done much, (and would do much more, were its funds as adequately supported by christian liberality as it deserves,) towards supplying the deficiency.

*Licenced  
places of  
Worship.*

The Ministers of the Chapels that are subsidiary to the Parochial System as far as regards public

ministrations, are occupying a most useful and important place. But neither they, if they are worthy and sensible men, nor any of the members of their congregations, who are rightly disposed, will regard *their* office as one of higher importance, or of greater dignity, than that of the Parochial Clergy, to whom they are thus supplemental.

§ 12. With respect again to domestic ministrations, the Parochial Clergy have often, with the best effect, availed themselves of the assistance of Laymen, in such offices as our Church allows to be entrusted to these. In my own dioceses, for a good many years, most beneficial aid of this kind has been supplied, in a systematic and orderly mode, by persons regularly appointed as Parochial-Visitors, who are approved by the Society established for that purpose, nominated by the Incumbent of each Parish, and finally authorized by the Diocesan.

These Visitors do not, of course, assume any of what are strictly clerical offices; nor encroach on or interfere with, the rights and duties of the Parish-Minister; but aid and facilitate his labours. They ascertain, by friendly visits, what persons are, or are not, attendants on divine Worship, or frequenters of the Lord's Table; what degree of education is possessed by each, and what, is provided for their children; *who* are, and who ought to be, preparing for Confirmation; and what kind of life, generally, is led by each. They occasionally read to those

who are ignorant of letters : they are the bearers of inquiries or applications of any kind, from the parishioners to the Pastor, and of advice and admonition, and other communications, from him to them : and they are often enabled to ascertain, and to report to him, what has or has not been rightly and profitably understood, of his teaching.

Moreover, as most of the Parochial Visitors are young men preparing for the Ministry, there is, in this Institution, besides the immediate benefit to the Pastor and his People, an incalculable advantage to the parties themselves who are employed, in the training they thus receive in a most important part of ministerial duty, under the superintendence of experienced men, before taking on themselves the more difficult and more responsible office of the clerical charge of a parish. I have conversed with very many clergymen who had held the office of Parochial Visitor ; and almost all of them have spoken in the strongest terms of the advantages they had derived in their profession from this preliminary training. And I may add that the Divinity-Professors of the University of Dublin bear the strongest testimony to the benefit of the Institution, as subsidiary to their Lectures, and supplying a most important portion of the requisite education for the Ministry.

I will conclude by once more reminding you that in dwelling on the advantages of the parochial system, and on the importance of the private minis-

trations of a Parish-Pastor, I am far from meaning to disparage either theological studies, or missionary enterprise, or public preaching of the Gospel: but merely inviting the attention which I think is justly due, to a less conspicuous and imposing, but not less important or less difficult branch of the christian Minister's duties.

THE END.

# THOUGHTS

ON THE

PROPOSED REVISION OF THE LITURGY.

BEING

## A CHARGE,

DELIVERED AT

THE VISITATION OF THE DIOCESES OF DUBLIN  
AND KILDARE,

*On the 14th and 15th June, 1860.*

By RICHARD WHATELY, D.D.

*ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.*

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# A CHARGE,

ETC.

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YOUR attention, no doubt, has been of late often turned to the question so much agitated for some time past, of proposed *revisions of our Liturgy*; and it is a question on which you will perhaps expect that I should put before you some remarks, and offer some suggestions as to your own proceedings; although it is a question on which you must be aware no Bishop individually has the power to decide, either generally or for his own diocese; and on which, even if he had such power, he could not hope so to decide as to give universal satisfaction.

§ 1. No one, I think, of good sense and of candour can deny that on both sides—by the advocates and by the opponents of a revision—much has been advanced that has considerable weight, or at least much plausibility.

*Reasons  
urged for a  
Revision.*

On the one side it has been urged that our Reformers neither possessed nor claimed infallibility; and, moreover, that even supposing them to have had the most undoubting confidence that

everything they appointed was the very best possible, at the time and under the circumstances, they would not themselves have thence concluded, that it must be equally suitable for all future ages and for all changed circumstances. If, indeed, it had been possible for any system either of public worship or of ecclesiastical polity, to be equally adapted for all times and all countries, we might have expected to find in *Scripture* an exact description of it, and a strict injunction for adherence to it. But there is nothing enjoined in *Scripture*, nor anything even recorded as to the particulars of the apostolic regulations and practices. And (as I have long since endeavoured to point out) the *omission* of such particulars as some of the Apostles or of their immediate attendants would have been likely, humanly speaking, to have recorded, and which I cannot but think some of the sacred writers *would* have recorded, had they not been by divine command withheld, is a strong indication both of the divine superintendence exercised over them, and also of the will of God's providence that each Church should be left at large in all non-essential points, to enact, alter, and abrogate—in short, to “bind and loose” under heavenly sanction, according to the best of their human judgment, in reference to each time and place.

And our Reformers accordingly were so far from holding that “traditions” (meaning traditions as to such points as I have been alluding to) should

be everywhere “the same and utterly alike,”\* or that everything they enacted should be like the laws of the Medes and Persians, “which alter not,” that we read in the preface to the Prayer Book, that “it hath been the wisdom of the Church of England to keep the mean between too much stiffness in refusing, and too much easiness in admitting alterations.”

And our Reformers evidently always calculated on the continued existence of a regular Church-government, able and ready to introduce, from time to time, any such changes as circumstances might call for. They contemplated the continued action of Convocation,—not perhaps the best-constituted Body for such a purpose, but still a governing Body, and one which might conceivably be so remodelled as better to express the voice of the Church. And they contemplated a Parliament consisting wholly of members of the Church, and not so obviously ill-adapted as our present Houses of Parliament (however well-fitted for their other functions) to legislate for the *Church*.

And it is urged by the advocates for revision,—not certainly without some show of reason,—that our very Reformers themselves, were they now living, would probably be among the very first to recommend some modifications of what they never designed to fix as unalterable.

To take one instance out of many, in a matter

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\* See 34th Article.

that is intrinsically of no very great importance, but which may serve equally well to illustrate what has been just said. If you look to the opening of the Confirmation-Service, you will see that the Address there given has reference to the practice of the un-reformed Church, of administering the Rite to very young children; a practice which was very properly and wisely changed:—  
 “To the end that Confirmation may be ministered to the more edifying of such as shall receive it, the Church hath thought good to order, that none hereafter shall be confirmed but such as can say the Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, and the Ten Commandments; and can also answer to such other questions as in the short Catechism are contained: which order is very convenient to be observed,” &c.

This announcement of the rule laid down, and of the reasons for it, was suitable, and at the time needful; but it is inconceivable that the framers of our Services could have designed that a change which has been fully established for 300 years, should continue for ever to be publicly announced to the congregation, and explained and vindicated. They would, doubtless, if now living, be among the first to propose that the words, if retained at all, should be retained as a *rubric*, and not as an *address* to the candidates for Confirmation, and to the rest of the congregation.

Then, again, the same principle which led them to change the practice of having the public Service

in a "tongue not understood of the people," would doubtless have led them to change, from time to time, both in the Liturgy and in the Bible-version, such words and phrases as might have become so far obsolete as either to be not understood or (which is far more important) *mis*-understood. The words, as I formerly remarked to you, which are now entirely out of use, are much fewer in number, and far less liable to mislead, than those which are still in use, but with a considerable change of meaning. For example, the word "*convenient*," which occurs in the passage just cited, is not that which would now be used to express the sense designed. Nor would it now be used in the passage of Scripture where we read of "foolish talking and jesting, which are not convenient." So, also, the word "constantly," which is now obsolete in its ancient sense of "firmly" or "earnestly," would now be replaced by one of those words. The word "damnation" again, (intended as a translation of *κρίμα*), is now understood by a large portion, at least of the less educated classes, to imply eternal perdition; and when so understood, has probably contributed to keep away many from attendance at the Lord's Table. And other like instances,\* as you are doubtless well aware, might be specified.

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\* Among many others may be mentioned the word "declare," which formerly signified to "make evident;" and the word "allow" (derived from the French "allouer," Latin "ad-

Our Reformers, again, would doubtless have modified the language of the hortatory warnings to those who are disposed to be communicants, when it was found that the danger of rash, irreverent, and in that sense “unworthy” partaking, is one that hardly exists now, and has been succeeded by a too general neglect of the ordinance altogether; many being inclined—in some measure, probably, from the language of those exhortations—to consider that to absent themselves wholly, or at least to defer communicating till the death-bed, is to keep on the safe side. Their interpretation indeed of the language of those exhortations is far from a reasonable one; but we must not calculate on all men’s being perfectly reasonable, nor disregard the scruples and fears of weak brethren. And accordingly it is usual, and is a practice seldom if ever objected to, to abridge the exhortation in the *Notice* given for administration of the Sacrament. And the Rubric has long practically been disregarded which requires that all who design to partake should send in their names beforehand. There

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laudare”), which originally signified to “approve.” (See Psalm xi. 6, P. B. version; and Luke xi. 48.)

I have seen in some publication a comment on the 21st Article, in which the writer understands the word “declare” in its present sense. And in an Essay “on the National Church” (in a volume of *Essays and Reviews*, p. 182) the word “allow” is taken in its modern sense. In each case the whole argument turns on the misapprehension of the meaning of the words in question.

are Many ministers, again, who read, instead of the word “damnation,” “condemnation;” which is in fact only *translating* a word into a “tongue understood of the people.” But it is surely better that these things should be done under competent authority, and by a regular sanction of the Church, than by *connivance* at a departure from rules not formally abrogated.\*

Then, again, if our Reformers, supposing them now living, had found that the combining together of several Services, made the whole so long as to exhaust the attention of many persons, it is likely that they would recommend a curtailment of some portions. For instance, they might probably have directed a smaller portion of the Psalms to be used each day; so as to spread out over half a year what is now gone through in a month.† Excellent as the Psalms are, no one can think them entitled to such a *preference* over the rest of Scripture as to make it necessary that they should be publicly read so *many times oftener* than almost any other part of Holy Writ.

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\* Much greater liberties than what I have now been alluding to, are taken by some persons, who, at the same time earnestly deprecate any alterations *regularly* introduced by competent authority, and wish that all existing regulations should remain unchanged; while they, in practice, assume for themselves an unlimited power of departing from those regulations to any extent, at their own individual discretion.

† Some will urge in reply that there are persons—and such persons as we all of us *ought* to be—who can very well keep up

And when it was found that there was a large portion of the People whose attendance on *both* morning and evening Service could not be calculated on, and that many of the humbler classes could attend only at the afternoon Service, it would probably have been thought advisable to make some change in the Lessons appointed for each, so as to have some parts of the *Gospels* occasionally read in the afternoon. And, indeed, a complete re-arrangement of the Second Lessons seems very needful. For as these are, with a few exceptions, fixed in reference only to the days of the *month*, the result is, that the portions of the New Testament that are read on *Sundays* (when alone a full congregation can be expected) appear, practically, to be taken quite at random. And it might also be thought advisable to make a larger selection of Scripture-Lessons, and to spread these over two or three years, instead of having the same chapters constantly read every year ; while there are above a hundred chapters, (many of which no one would account less edifying

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their attention to two or three hours of devotional exercise ; and that there are others who can hardly keep up their attention for ten minutes. For, in this case, as in many others, many men fall into the fallacy of assuming that *every one* must belong to one or other of two classes the most widely remote ; when in truth perhaps nine tenths of Mankind belong to neither, but are intermediate between them.

Some of my clergy have proposed—and I have readily sanctioned the practice—to use the Litany by itself, as a special Service on ordinary week days.

than the others,) which are never read publicly at all.

Again, if it were found that in many congregations the Athanasian Creed was either not understood or misunderstood, and that parts of it gave a shock to the minds of some, and required long explanations, which to many would prove either not intelligible or unsatisfactory, it may be fairly concluded that the framers of our Services would consent to leave the use of that Creed, or of the Apostles' Creed instead of it, *optional* with each minister, as he might find best suited for his own flock.

If, therefore, such changes as those alluded to, and a few others of a similar character, were now introduced, this would, it is urged, be far from implying any censure of our Reformers, or even any departure from their designs, but would be only what we may fairly suppose they would themselves, if now living, have approved, and even recommended. And the introduction of the General Thanksgiving, many years after the first drawing up of our Liturgy, might be cited as an instance in which this principle was acted on without giving offence or causing alarm to any one.

§ 2. On the other hand, it has been urged that if any, even the slightest change in what is now established, should be even contemplated, many would rush forward, each with some proposed improvement of

*Objections  
urged against  
all Change.*

his own, and each disposed to be more dissatisfied than ever, if his favourite scheme were not adopted. There is hardly any part of our Services, it is urged, that *some* one might not think called for revision; and that which satisfied and conciliated some, would be likely to displease even a greater number of others. So that many and great alterations would be called for, which, if introduced, would cause more dissatisfaction than exists now.

Now it is true, that there is such an incurable diversity in men's judgments on practical points, that to give universal and complete satisfaction is hopeless. But if this be made a decisive argument against every proposal, we should come to the conclusion not only that no change at all should ever be introduced in any system, law, or institution, but that no system should ever be even *established*. For if we were to wait for a universal concurrence, and to allow of no government or code of laws that was not regarded by every one as the best possible, we should be sentencing ourselves to remain for ever in a state of anarchy.

Another objection which has been urged against any change, however small, is that our clergy, who have deliberately given their assent to our Formularies as they stand, cannot fairly be called on to assent, now, to anything new, and which, perhaps, they might—whether with or without good reason—consider objectionable. And this is certainly a decisive objection against the introduction of any

such change as should affect any *point of doctrine*. If, for instance, it were proposed to introduce (as has been lately done in another Church) some new dogma on a point which had hitherto been left open, and to insist on every one's subscribing to it, on pain of being denounced as heretical, this might justly be complained of. But where there is no matter of doctrine concerned, but only (as in the instances I have alluded to) some curtailments, and some change of obsolete words for such as are better understood, the objection does not apply. And accordingly it may be remarked, that the occasional prayers that are put forth from time to time, under the sanction of Orders in Council, and which contain nothing novel in doctrine, are usually acquiesced in and used without objection. Where any scruple respecting them does exist, it is a scruple, not against the Forms in themselves, but as to the *legality* of the use of them ; it being held by some—and certainly not without at least some show of reason—that the adoption of them is a violation of the Act of Uniformity. But I believe that all those who do feel the scruple, would feel none, if by an Act of Parliament that authority were conferred on the Council, which they consider to be wanting.

§ 3. It has been urged, however, and I must say, not without reason, that there are some changes which may be, and which have been proposed, as involving no variation in point of doctrine, which yet are liable to

*Omission  
construed as  
Rejection.*

be understood as implying such variation, from the mere circumstance of their being *changes*. A passage which might be such that no one would have excepted against it, supposing it to have been *originally* so framed, may prove objectionable if brought into that form by the *omission* of certain words—an omission which is liable to be interpreted as a *rejection* of what those words expressed. It is vain to say that this inference *ought* not to be drawn, and that the mere absence of what might allowably have been absent, from the first, ought not to be regarded as any rejection. We may be assured that such an inference is likely to be, in fact, drawn; and that wherever there is, if I may so speak, an *amputation*, there will be a wound and a scar. And hence arises one of the chief difficulties attending most schemes of improvement.

To take a familiar illustration. There are several christian Communion which do not introduce into their public Services the Decalogue, nor recite any of the Creeds, but which are not on that ground considered as holding Antinomian doctrine, or as having abandoned the Articles of Faith which the Creeds contain. But if any Church, which had formerly used the public recital of the Commandments, and of a Creed, should afterwards *expunge* these from its Services, no one, I think, can doubt that such a suspicion would be likely to arise, and could not easily be allayed.

The principle which I have been endeavouring to illustrate has been overlooked by some in the

changes they have proposed; actuated, no doubt, by a sincere desire to make our Church as comprehensive as possible, to allay disputes, and to satisfy the scruples of some, without requiring of the rest any unbecoming compromise. They wish to put an end, by fair means, to those disputes in particular which have long agitated the Church, in reference to the Sacrament of Baptism. And this they think could be effected without an express *assertion* of the doctrines held by some of the clergy—doctrines which are at variance, I do not say with those of the Church, but with the most simple and *obvious* sense of some passages in our Formularies. The proposed alterations seek to satisfy all parties by leaving the question open, by a general and neutral language, not *asserting* the doctrines alluded to, but merely *excluding* an assertion of the opposite.

It has been proposed accordingly that for the word “regeneration” we should everywhere substitute “admission into the visible Church.” It may be said, that *all* parties *agree* in accounting Baptism an admission into the visible Church; and that the question might thus be left *open*, whether the Church is, or is not, a *spiritually endowed* society; and whether any, or what *benefit*, beyond a mere empty name, is conferred on the recipient of christian baptism.

I shall not now enter on any discussion of the doctrinal points on which the disputes have arisen which it is proposed in this mode to

settle or to allay. In a former Charge (the substance of which was after re-published in a little tract on the two Sacraments), I endeavoured to show that, at least in many instances, those disputes would be found, on careful and candid examination, to be altogether *verbal*; and that, therefore, the unmeasured vehemence, and too often hostile bitterness, exhibited, were as uncalled for as they were unbecoming. It is a remarkable circumstance, and well deserving to be kept in mind, that those expressions in our baptismal and other Services, which are by many persons complained of, now, seem to have created no dissatisfaction for a great number of years (at the time of the Reformation, and long after), during periods at which a very considerable portion of our clergy had more or less leaning towards Calvinistic views. It would seem as if some of the ministers of the Church, now, had introduced a new sense of certain words, such as was unthought of by our ancestors, and that they now seek to re-model our Formularies in conformity with this innovation.

There is, however, something plausible, at the first glance, in the proposal of adopting a neutral and general language, in which all might agree, though they would not all understand it in the same sense. And this might be very reasonable, if we were founding a *new* Church, and framing *original* formularies. But if any words are deliberately *expunged* from a passage in which they formerly

stood, and which has been long in use, this could not fail to be interpreted—whether justly or erroneously—as a *rejection* of the doctrine which those words were supposed to imply. And this supposed rejection would be likely to displease at least as many as it would conciliate. An objection, therefore, presents itself, which appears to me insuperable, against such proposed changes as those which I have now been alluding to.

§ 4. Hitherto I have been speaking of persons who profess (as I cannot doubt, most sincerely) to have no thought of making any changes in the Church's *doctrine*, and who merely aim (as a matter of expediency) at what may be properly and fairly termed a “revision of the *Liturgy*.” But there are others who evidently aim, and some of them avowedly, at a reformation, at the same time, of our Church in its *doctrinal teaching*.

*Liturgical  
Revision and  
Doctrinal Re-  
forms distinct.*

Now if any one holds that the tenets of his Church are fundamentally erroneous and unscriptural, he is clearly justified in seeking (as our Reformers did) to have these errors removed. And even those who may not agree with him as to what really is or is not an error, yet cannot blame him for endeavouring—in a modest, and charitable, and christianlike spirit—to rectify whatever he is convinced is fundamentally wrong, and to bring his Church,—or indeed *any* Church,—to a conformity with Scripture. But it is neither wise nor fair to

blend together, by the employment of one *name*, two things which are quite distinct, and which are not inseparable; and to seek for a radical *change of doctrine*, under the name of a *revision of the Formularies*. If any one is of opinion that both a doctrinal reform, and also a revised Liturgy are necessary, he ought to come forward frankly, and avow his views, without any insidious disguise. But evidently it is at least conceivable that a person may wish for the one of these and not for the other. He may see nothing unsound in the doctrines taught by our Church, and may deprecate any departure from them; and yet he may, without inconsistency, wish for some alterations in the arrangements of our Services—for the abridgment of some that are found tediously long,—and for a change of some words or phrases that are obsolete or ambiguous.

Now any such person, whether judicious or not in his views, has a right to complain of any others who come forward, nominally concurring with him, but in reality cherishing widely different designs, and such as he utterly disapproves. It surely argues either excessive confusion of thought, or else disingenuous artifice, to seek ostensibly for a modification of our Church-services, and then under cover of that, to aim at introducing some different views of Scripture-doctrine.

To take a familiar illustration: any one who is about to make his Will, puts into the hands of a

lawyer a memorandum, stating in untechnical language his wishes as to the disposal of his property. The professional man draws up for him accordingly a Will in legal form, such as shall give effect to his intentions. If he thinks some of the bequests unwise, he may, as a friend, advise his client to alter them. But if he should, unknown to the other, slip in, under colour of *merely altering the language*, some words which would have the effect of completely defeating the testator's designs, every one would denounce such a procedure as most grossly unfair.

In such a case, and in that to which I have brought it forward as a parallel, every sensible and fair-minded man will guard against either misleading others or suffering himself to be misled, by confounding together under a common name, things essentially distinct; and against covertly introducing changes of *matter* under the disguise of changes of *form*.

§ 5. Let any one suppose the case of a priest of one of the unreformed churches, arriving at the conviction that the sacrifice (as it is called) of the Mass, and the invocation of departed saints, and other tenets and practices of his Church are fundamentally erroneous. What would be his procedure, supposing him a man of common sense and of scrupulous honesty? Surely he would not call for a mere *revision of the Mass-book*, but for a fundamental *reformation in doctrine*. He would at

*Fair Procedure for any one desiring Change of Doctrine.*

once suspend his ministrations in that Church, and cease to administer ordinances which he believed to be unscriptural and superstitious. He would earnestly call on his Ecclesiastical Superiors to *reform the doctrines* and the practices of their Church; and if they steadily refused to do so, he would abandon its communion, and resign any office he might hold in it.

But on the other hand, no one would be called on to take such steps as these, who was occupied merely about a question of expediency, not of principle, and who did not desire any doctrinal reform of his Church, but merely such changes in its Services as did not involve any points of faith, and which he might consider as tending to greater edification.

Suppose again, the case of a clergyman of the Church of Rome, or of any other Church, who should wish for the omission of expressions in its Formularies containing assertions of certain points of doctrine which he thought not *essential* to be insisted on, though he himself had *no scruple in admitting them*, and was seeking for this omission merely for the sake of some who did feel a conscientious scruple on these points, and were thereby forced into dissent: this proposal might seem not unreasonable, and at least worthy of some attention. But if he *himself* had long been convinced of the *falsity* of the doctrines in question, and sought the alteration for his own comfort's sake, on the very ground that

he was himself, by his own showing, in the daily habit of doing violence to his own conscience in the use of these Formularies, for the sake of retaining his office in his Church, such a man's conscience would not be thought to deserve any tender consideration. He would stand self-convicted of unscrupulous sacrifice of principle for worldly ends.

It may, perhaps, appear superfluous to have dwelt, even as briefly as I have done, on distinctions which are so very evident. But that confusion of thought which I have been noticing—or that artifice—whichever it may be in each instance,—is so prevalent at this time, that you cannot be too carefully on your guard against it.

I cannot wonder that from this cause has arisen so much suspicion and dread of any proposal for even the most cautious and moderate revision of our Liturgy, that many are prepared strenuously to oppose it, who think that it is in itself desirable, and what might be effected with safety, were it not for the inconsiderate rashness of some who call for it, and the insidious designs of others. Of all obstacles to improvements of every kind, in all departments of life, there is none so great as a dread—especially when it is a reasonable dread—of a mischievous revolution. Even when nothing is actually proposed that is at all exceptionable, any connexion of the proposers with persons who have given indications of having ulterior and dangerous designs, will naturally excite suspicion and alarm.

*Right Procedure for Advocates of Revision.* § 6. I would, therefore, suggest to any one who thinks—as I am free to confess I do myself—that the introduction of some small and well-considered alterations might be attended with great benefit to the Church, and might be so brought about as not to cause alarm or disgust,—I would suggest to any such person who has not finally abandoned all hope of this, that he should take occasion to protest as strongly as possible against all great and sweeping changes, and most particularly against such changes as would involve a departure, or the suspicion of a departure, from the doctrines of our Church, disguised under the form of an improved Liturgy. That every alteration, however slight, does not necessarily disgust the members of a Church, or unsettle their minds, and fill them with a dread of continual fresh innovations, is proved by experience. When a totally new form of words—the General Thanksgiving—(which I just now alluded to) was introduced into a Liturgy which had long been in use without it, no objection or alarm appears to have arisen; and in the American Episcopal Church—an off-shoot from ours—some other and more considerable modifications of their Church-service have been introduced, apparently without causing dissatisfaction in any quarter.

But any one who is an advocate for moderate and cautiously considered alterations, is the very person who ought to show himself the most vehe-

ment in opposing and deprecating all rash, and great, and sweeping innovations.

Those, again, who are convinced that the doctrines of our Church are essentially erroneous, and require a fundamental reformation, should be earnestly called on to avow their object frankly and openly. Be their theological views right or wrong, it cannot be fair and honourable to bring forward covertly a change of faith disguised as a liturgical revision.

And those who are sincerely attached to the doctrines of the Church, should be carefully warned not to allow themselves to be deluded into undesignedly furthering the object of others who are in reality aiming at a departure from those doctrines.

Great as are the impediments that have been raised to any moderate, well-considered, and salutary alterations in our Services, by injudicious, and by disingenuous advocates of alteration, I do not even yet despair of some beneficial changes being warily introduced, provided the cautions are attended to which I have now been pressing on your attention. No change, indeed, in anything, nor again any retention of an unchanged state, can be expected to give full satisfaction to *all*. But I must repeat my full conviction that anything which should clearly be shown to be no departure from the principles of our Reformers, but on the contrary a manifest carrying out of their prin-

principles, would be highly satisfactory to most, and would offend or alarm merely some few (and that only for a short time) of the most unthinking, and the most unreasonably timid.

Any judicious revision of our Formularies would proceed I think on the same principles which I set before you in a former Charge, in reference to the proposed revision of our *authorized version* of Scripture. I suggested that in such a work, an altered rendering should never be at once introduced into the text, except when it was such as one might fairly conclude would be approved by all—or very nearly all—of those who could be regarded as at all competent judges; that again, where there might be supposed to be a very general, yet not quite universal agreement, the amended Version should be placed in the *margin*, and the substitution of it for the other left *optional* with the reader; and wherever there were any considerable differences of opinion, the passage should be left unaltered.

Now a like course I think it is plain ought to be pursued in any revision of the *Liturgy*: that is, any alteration which it might be presumed all would approve, should be introduced at once; and those likely to be approved by a large majority, but not by all, should be left *optional*; each minister being allowed to use this Form or that, and to read or omit certain passages, according as he may judge will be the most edifying to his own flock.

I have thought it right, my reverend brethren, to lay before you these remarks, in the hope that they may suggest to some of you matter for useful reflection, with a view to emergencies that are likely to arise, if not while I remain among you, at least not long after my departure. I think it not improbable, and it certainly is not impossible, that, notwithstanding the great obstacles to such a measure as the revision of our Services—obstacles chiefly created by the advocates of it—renewed attempts in that direction will be made, whether wisely or unwisely, and whether with or without success: and it behoves, therefore, every sincere, and zealous, and judicious friend of the Church to be prepared beforehand with sound views on the subject, and to have made up his mind deliberately as to what he should advocate, and what he should oppose.

§ 7. In the mean time, it is the duty of each of our Pastors (as I pointed out in a former Charge) to be diligent in *explaining* to his People, our Liturgy and all our Formularies; that they may be taught to “pray with the spirit, and to pray with the understanding also.” And in this work you may derive assistance from some publications that are easily accessible, and some of which are such as no one need be ashamed to resort to for that assistance.\* I may add that explanations may be

*Advantages  
of our Prayer  
Book.*

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\* See *Lectures on the Prayer Book*, by the Rev. H. H. Dickinson. (Parker. West Strand.)

needful of many passages that are not at all in themselves obscure, but are ill understood merely through that inattention to the *sense* which is so often the result of very early and very long *familiarity* with the sound of the *words*.

And pains should be taken to point out to your People the great and various excellencies of our Prayer Book; which are apt to be in a great measure overlooked by many persons, through very early and long familiarity. In all matters, such familiarity is likely to blind men to excellencies more than to defects. And accordingly, I have observed (as probably some of you have) that persons brought up in some different Communion, and who at mature age have joined our Church, have usually a higher admiration of the beauties of our Liturgy than most of those who have been members of the Church from childhood.

That Liturgy does not indeed claim to be an inspired work; nor are we bound to maintain that it is absolutely perfect: but, for sound doctrine, and pure and fervent, and yet calm and sober piety, our Prayers may well challenge a comparison with any human compositions extant. You should teach your People therefore that they will be more profitably employed in using aright, and in studying, our Prayer Book, than in listening to critics who seek to display their ingenuity by looking out for defects in it. If, instead of having the use of such a book, our congregations were left (accord-

ing to the practice of some Churches) to listen to the prayers composed by their respective pastors, though some of these might be very edifying, it can hardly be thought that all, or that most of them, would be superior, or even nearly equal, to the Forms we use. And it should be remembered by every one who by his example, or otherwise, encourages the practice of substituting (either wholly or partially) extemporaneous prayer in a Congregation, for fixed Forms, that however sound, and discreet, and every way well qualified, he may *himself* be, he is giving a *precedent* likely to be followed by others who may be very much the reverse, but who may have equally great confidence in themselves. For, it would be idle to think of laying down as a rule, that those only are to adopt a certain practice who are judicious and thoroughly competent for it; leaving each to judge for himself of his own competency. A large proportion of all the evils that have ever existed in the world may be traced in great measure to the ill-following of precedents good in themselves.

Some confirmation of what I have been saying is afforded by many pamphlets and tracts that are extant—many of which have recently appeared—composed by persons who were writing expressly in disparagement of our Liturgy, and advocating, in preference, prayers framed by themselves and their fellow-labourers. In perusing many of these tracts, a man of sound sense and good taste will be

likely to consider, when he observes how little there is to approve in what these writers have *deliberately committed to paper*, that a congregation which should have to substitute for our Prayer-Book the *extemporaneous* effusions of such authors, would be far indeed from being profited by the exchange.

You should also point out to your People the advantage of the *incidental instruction* in christian doctrine that is to be derived from our Prayer-Book; which thus furnishes a standing check, and a corrective of any Pastor's teaching who may be unsound; and in some degree supplies the deficiencies of one who is negligent. Any minister of our Church who should deprave or keep out of sight the main doctrines of the Gospel, would be, when reciting the words of our Liturgy, bearing witness against his own errors.

Some of those Churches, accordingly, which have repudiated the use of all fixed Forms, have (as you are doubtless well aware), experienced the consequences of the absence of such a check. In the United States of America, in particular, and also on the European Continent, and even in our own country, not a few Congregations have gradually and insensibly slid into a religious persuasion the most widely removed from that of their original founders.

It may indeed be urged that the doctrines fixed in an established Formulary may conceivably be erroneous. And no doubt there would thence be

a great danger of permanent adherence to error, in any Church that claims—which ours does *not*—complete *infallibility*. But it does not follow from this admission, that no degree of fixedness and of uniformity of doctrine is desirable. Doctrines deliberately and advisedly laid down, and, if needful, deliberately and advisedly altered, if judged on careful consultation to require it, are surely not *more* likely to lead men astray, than the unchecked teaching of a great variety of ministers, of very various degrees of intelligence, and of learning, and of sound sense. It is possible indeed that a ship may, under the guidance of a rudder, and compass, and charts, be steering a wrong course; and as soon as the mistake is detected, it ought carefully to be rectified. But no safety would be attained by leaving the vessel to be driven about at random by every wind that blows.

§ 8. On the employment, generally, of fixed Forms for Public Worship, many writers have treated, who have maintained the *allowableness* of them, and have spoken of the *antiquity* of the custom, and the sanction given to it by HIM who taught his disciples a form of Prayer. But I do not think they have always sufficiently dwelt on what appears to me by far the most important consideration: which is, that the use of a pre-composed Form is, if not essential, at least, by far the most conducive, to the attainment of that especial blessing which is pro-

*Advantage  
of fixed  
Forms.*

mised to *joint-prayer*—what is called in the prayer we adopt from Chrysostom, “common supplications.” Our Blessed Lord, in addition to what He had said about private prayer in the closet, has promised to worshippers gathered together in his Name, and “*agreeing together* touching something they shall ask,” that his and our Heavenly Father will listen to them with especial favour.

Now this agreement it will often be impossible, and generally difficult to obtain, in a prayer which the worshippers hear for the first time. Each hearer must not only *understand* each passage that is uttered, but must reflect on it, so as to consider whether he can adopt it as *his own*, and heartily join in it; and in the mean time it is likely that another and another sentence will have been uttered, before he has had time to give or to withhold his assent to the first; and the result will often be, that the congregation will not have been really themselves praying, but rather *overhearing* another praying. And, more frequently still, the so-called prayer will be rather a *sermon*, couched in the form of a prayer, than a real supplication to heaven—rather a hortatory address *to* the congregation, than an address *of* the congregation to God.\* Now,

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\* The following instance, which came under my own knowledge, may serve as a specimen of an occurrence not unlikely to take place:—

A Clergyman having delivered a lecture in which he expounded a certain portion of Scripture, another Clergyman who

though a sermon is, of course, not in itself deserving of censure or neglect, it is better that it should be delivered *as* a sermon and not disguised in a precatory form; which is likely to mislead the hearers, who perhaps listen to it with attention and with interest, but deceive themselves with the belief that they are actually engaged in *prayer*, when in fact they are not.

There is a distinction which, though very evident, is sometimes overlooked, between congregational *prayer*, and a *sermon*, in this respect, that it is not necessary for the hearers to give their *assent* to everything they may hear in a sermon; while a prayer, on the other hand, is not a prayer of *theirs*, unless they *agree* in it. A *sermon* may be on the whole very useful and edifying, and may be so esteemed by the hearers, and yet may contain some things which they do not approve, or concerning which they feel a doubt; but evidently it is not so with a *prayer* which professes to be the *joint-prayer*—the “common supplication”—of the worshippers.

This, again, appears to be sometimes forgotten

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was present, and who entirely disagreed with the former in his exposition of the passage, concluded the business of the Meeting with an extempore prayer, in which he introduced an interpretation of the passage in question completely opposed to that of the Lecturer who was kneeling beside him. Whatever may be said in favour of religious controversy, this surely is the most objectionable form in which it can be carried on.

(though quite evident) by some very zealous advocates of extemporaneous prayer, who disparage the use of pre-composed Forms, and all adoption of another's devotional language,—that no prayer can possibly have the freedom of extempore prayer except to the *one individual* who utters it. If any one delivers an extempore prayer in a congregation, they, if they join in it, and really pray with him and with each other, are just as much adopting another's words, and using a Form, as we who employ a fixed Liturgy. His prayer may be conceivably either better or worse than ours, which were deliberately and carefully framed; but it is necessarily a *prescribed form* to every one except the one person who utters it.\*

Let our people then be induced, if possible, not indeed to take upon them to censure, or to exult over, those of other Communions, but thankfully to avail themselves of the advantages possessed by our own, in having a fixed Liturgy, and such a one as, though not pretending to inspiration, or to complete perfection, has excellencies which may enable it, as it is, to challenge a comparison with almost any human composition extant. That any composition, or any system or institution, is not absolutely incapable of improvement, is no reason

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\* See the Bishop of Cork's *Letter to his Clergy*.

why we should not appreciate its merits as it is, and make a profitable use of it.

And it should be pointed out to the People, that they should not suppose there is necessarily more piety shown, or more edification obtained, by attending irregular Meetings, and listening to the extemporaneous effusions of self-appointed teachers (some of whom may chance to be not discreet or otherwise well qualified) than in careful and devout attendance on the regular ministrations of our Church. That those ministrations *may* be so conducted by diligent and judicious pastors of our Church as to meet what may be called the extraordinary demand for public Services which has arisen in some places under that strongly aroused religious feeling known by the name of "Revival,"—this is what has been fully ascertained by experience. A man of sound and sober-minded, though fervent christian zeal, will seek so to avail himself of any such excitement, as to guard against the many and great evils which may ensue from it, and at the same time to turn it to good account. The same strong gale of wind which drives the ship of a careless or unskilful navigator on to shoals or rocks, will help that which is wisely steered to reach "the haven where they would be."

Such a man will not, on the one hand, hail with thoughtless exultation, as an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, any fanatical outbreaks, or screams,

faintings, and hysterical fits, and transports which have, in several late instances, ended in hopeless insanity; nor will he presume to compare manifestations of this kind with the miraculous gifts bestowed at the day of Pentecost; nor will he encourage any to believe, when their feelings are strongly excited, that their christian reformation is completed, and their salvation secured, without need of their daily "giving diligence to make their calling and election sure;" nor, on the other hand, will he shrink with dread, or disgust and contempt, from every appearance of newly-awakened religious feelings, on account of the faults and follies which in injudicious hands have often resulted. Such faults and follies will almost always be found attendant, along with good effects, on every agitating movement of human minds. And those especially to whom religion itself is almost a novelty—novel, at least, as a thing to be seriously attended to—will be very likely to have an inordinate craving after novelty, and (as the Apostle Paul found in his own times) to "heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears." We all know, for instance, the extravagant fanaticism that arose at the time of the great Reformation, among the Munster Anabaptists and many others; and which, doubtless, contributed to keep many persons in subjection to a corrupt and tyrannical Church; like mariners clinging to a barren rock for fear of being lost in

the waves. And the like took place among the *Fifth-Monarchy-men* (as they were called) in our own country, and the pretended *French Prophets*. When the numbing frosts of winter are succeeded by warm summer showers, which rouse up nature from its torpor, it is to be expected that rank weeds will spring up, and if unchecked, will flourish along with useful plants; and it would be a folly to neglect either rooting out the one, or sedulously cultivating the other. He who sends rain and sunshine on the earth, the same has endowed us with bodily and with mental powers to enable us to make use of his gifts: and these powers we should thankfully, and diligently, and carefully employ, if we would obtain the good, and avoid the evils, that are placed before us.

Let men, then, be duly warned that if they are truly influenced by God's Holy Spirit they will "bring forth the fruits of the Spirit;" and that "the fruit of the Spirit" is not extravagances of any kind, but "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

Let them be warned that the seed which fell on the rock may be said to have experienced a "new birth," inasmuch as from a grain it sprouted and shot up into a plant; it had undergone what may be called a CONVERSION, being converted from a bare seed into a growing herb: but having no deep root it withered away and "brought no fruit to perfec-

tion." But let them be encouraged to trust that if, through divine help, they "run with *patience* the race that is set before them," "in due season they will reap if they faint not." Let them be taught to "work out their salvation with fear and trembling," "since it is God that worketh in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

THE END.

# DANGER FROM WITHIN.

## A CHARGE,

DELIVERED AT THE

ANNUAL VISITATION OF THE DIOCESES OF DUBLIN  
AND GLANDELAGH, AND KILDARE.

*June, 1861.*

BY RICHARD WHATELY, D.D.

*ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.*

‘Καὶ ἐξ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν ἀναστήσονται ἄνδρες λαλοῦντες διεστραμμένα,  
τοῦ ἀποσπᾶν τοὺς μαθητὰς ὀπίσω αὐτῶν.’—ACTS xx. 30.

‘Are there not with you, even with you, sins against the Lord  
your God?’—2 CHRON. xxviii. 10.

LONDON :

PARKER, SON, AND BOURN, WEST STRAND.

DUBLIN :

HODGES AND SMITH, GRAFTON STREET.

1861.



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## DEDICATION.

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MY DEAR MR. DIXON,—

For a considerable portion (perhaps the most important portion) of this Charge I am indebted to a suggestion from you. It seems therefore no more than reasonable that the Publication should be inscribed to you.

Moreover there is an Article from your pen (and though it is anonymous, I do not apprehend you have any wish to make a secret of the Authorship) in the Periodical called the *Christian Advocate*,\* so closely coinciding in substance with a great part of what I have here said, that any one who reads both the one and the other, can hardly fail to conclude that one of the two (as is the fact) was taken from the other.

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\* Published by Wertheim and Macintosh.

I feel bound therefore to counteract, as far as lies in myself, the belief which would be likely to arise, that I am the Author of both.\*

I take this opportunity of publicly acknowledging my obligation to you, for many years of valuable services as one of my Chaplains.

Believe me to be

Very sincerely yours,

RD. DUBLIN.

*To the*

REV. ROBERT V. DIXON, A.M., EX-F.T.C.D.,

Rector of Clogherny.

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\* It is the more needful to guard against any such mistake, because there are some Articles in that Periodical which really were written by me.

# A CHARGE,

ETC.

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§ 1. THESE are times, my Reverend Brethren, in which (as no one, I conceive, can doubt) an unusual degree of agitation prevails, among all who feel an interest in what pertains to Religion. Hopes and fears,—anxieties and apprehensions,—curiosity and expectations—of various kinds—are felt both by friends and by adversaries of our Church. And many feel themselves called on to use efforts, or to excite others to exert themselves, either to introduce what they consider beneficial changes, or to guard against some apprehended dangers.

*Prevailing  
Agitation of  
Mind.*

On the causes of some of these apprehensions, I have on former occasions laid before you such observations as occurred to me. In particular, I, last year, adverted to the eager desire shown by some persons for alterations in the Services of our Church, and to the aversion and alarm evinced by others, at any proposal of the kind. Among those who feel such alarm, there are not a few who fully admit the desirableness, in itself, of some abridgments, and some changes of expression in portions

of our Formularies, but who dread,—and not without reason,—a surreptitious introduction of fundamental changes of *doctrine*, under the disguise of mere alterations of form, or of *expression*. Any one may be a sincere and faithful Minister of our Church, though advocating—whether wisely or unwisely—the curtailment, for reasons of mere expediency, of Services which he considers tediously long, and the change of some ambiguous or obsolete words and phrases. But if a Minister of any Church—whether our own, or that of Rome, or any other—is convinced that its teaching is erroneous and unscriptural, he is bound as an honest man, while calling for a reformation of doctrine, to do so plainly and avowedly; and in the meantime to forego his ministrations in that Church, and renounce the emoluments of its offices. But when a *disguised* hostility is detected in some professed members of our Church, a suspicion is raised not only against *them*, but also against all others who advocate any kind of change. For, it is one great evil of any disingenuous procedure, that it generates a universal distrust. And thus it is that the greatest obstacle to any proposed Revision, is raised by some of the very advocates of it themselves.

Still greater alarm however has of late been excited by some who are very far from calling for any change of language in our Formularies, but who advocate a system of *interpretation*, both of *them*, and of the Scriptures, in a kind of “non-natural

sense," such, that anything may be made of anything; and that a person who believes no more of the religion of our Church, and of the Bible, than of the Heathen Mythology, may yet rank himself among our Ministers.

The alarm and agitation of mind thus excited, must itself tend, in one respect, to augment the danger. For whatever is *thought* to be formidable, *is* formidable; since the dread that any attack excites, adds force to the attack. An army that is in reality weak, may effect a conquest, if it is *believed* to be irresistibly strong. The arguments (however in themselves weak) and the cavils pretending to novelty, but in reality stale, and long ago refuted, that are brought forward, will be supposed to be very powerful, if it be found that they create a general dismay. And when even the most opposite Parties among the Members of our Church are found uniting together in the most vehement protests and denunciations of some assailant, this will be understood as a proof that it is against no contemptible foe that they are thus combined.

Moreover, it is not unlikely that something of a *reaction* of feeling may arise, in favour of any persons who may appear to be (in the popular phrase) hunted down by clamour. Vehement censure and declamation, proceeding from persons of whom few have brought forward any strong argumentative answer to what they condemn, and of whom many know nothing of it except from reports at second

or third hand, will be likely, not only, as has been said, to suggest the idea that it is something very powerful, but also to awaken sympathy in behalf of those who are so opposed.

*Right of Private Judgment.* § 2. And we may expect (indeed something of the kind has, I believe, already taken place) that an outcry will be raised against a supposed attempt to restrict that right of private judgment which is the characteristic claim of all Protestants;—to make an appeal to Church-decisions, instead of to Truth and Reason, and to substitute what is called the “personal argument”—the *argumentum ad hominem*, as applying to certain individuals—for a refutation of what they maintain.

Now in all this there is a great proportion of fallacy, though of such fallacy as is likely to prevail widely. No doubt the main point to be ultimately established is the truth or falsity of whatever is taught: but it does not at all follow that the question of *who*, and what, the teacher is, and under what circumstances, is a matter quite insignificant, and which ought to be wholly dismissed from our thoughts. The personal argument is not necessarily unfair. A man who is maintaining even doctrines in themselves true, is deserving of severe censure, if he continues a nominal Member and Minister of a Church opposed to those doctrines, and a recipient of its emoluments. Even supposing, therefore, that the teaching of our

Church were fundamentally unsound, this would be no justification of any one who,—thinking this,—still continued, from motives of personal advantage, to subscribe to Formularies, and to administer Rites, which he himself believed to be unscriptural. And if the Bible itself were in reality destitute of truth, this would not excuse, in point of honesty, one who—with that conviction—called himself a Christian, and officiated as a Christian Minister.

No one could deprecate more sincerely than myself any attempt to infringe liberty of conscience, and the right of private judgment. But this does not imply that a man should be free to hold office in any society whose principles he rejects, or whose rules he sets at nought. This restriction is universally admitted and acted on, in all secular concerns. Any Club, for instance, or other such Association, though not compelling any one to become, or to remain a member, yet requires every member, while he continues such, to comply with its regulations. Domestic Slavery, again, is unknown in this Realm; but it would be absurd for any one who chose to engage in the service of another, to continue receiving his wages, yet hold himself free to disregard his Master's orders. Those therefore who so conduct themselves in reference to a Church which they are at liberty to withdraw from if they see cause, are justly deserving of censure, whether their private

judgment be right or wrong on any particular point.

Our Church does not presume—like the Romish—to denounce, as excluded from the christian Covenant, all who do not belong to her Communion: but it excludes from that Communion (as every Church must do) those whose views are at variance, in fundamental points, with its teaching. And any one whose conscience revolts from the doctrine and practice of the Church, and yet permits him to hold office in it, and to partake of its endowments, must have a conscience most strangely perverted.

*Causes of wrong Decisions.* § 3. But when men decide wrongly in any matter, this will generally be found to proceed, partly or wholly, from their placing before the mind, not the question that is really the one at issue, but some other, which, whether rightly or wrongly decided, is nothing to the purpose; and thus turning off the attention to what is irrelevant.

Thus, a Jury will perhaps acquit a Prisoner of whose guilt they feel no doubt, because the question which they put before their own mind, is, whether he deserves so severe a penalty as the Law awards.

When the question is as to a man's obligation to fulfil an engagement which he has entered into, some will perhaps turn aside into a discussion of the question whether he was wise in *making* the

engagement. If it be inquired whether toleration shall be extended to those of a religious persuasion which we think erroneous, you will perhaps be met by an inquiry as to the erroneousness of their Creed. And when the question is whether a man shall be allowed to spend his income and to educate his children in the way he himself thinks best, or, shall be under the control of others, the question which will perhaps be brought forward will be whether his mode of procedure is the best.

Thus, again, if you ask whether it is justifiable for a Minister of our Church to set aside the authority of Scripture, or to interpret it in a sense quite remote from that of the Church, you will perhaps be met by a reference to some (so-called) philosophical principles, and to conjectures respecting supposed probabilities; or you will be called upon to discuss questions about liberty of Conscience in the abstract; or you will be asked whether you claim infallibility for our Church.

And, again, if you inquire whether it is allowable for any one continuing to hold office in our Church, to advocate fundamental changes in its doctrines, you will perhaps be met by discussions as to the soundness and scriptural warrant of its doctrines.

All these are questions which it may be very right and important to discuss; but they should be discussed separately and distinctly, and not confusedly blended together, and substituted for one another.

§ 4. In considering any question, however, connected with the claims of our Church, there is one point which it is important not to overlook, and which is one of the characteristics of that Church, as distinguished from the Romish; namely, that its claims are *definite*, while the claim of the Church of Rome is *indefinite*. A Minister, or any other Member, of our Church, has placed before him distinctly what he is called on,—as such,—to subscribe to, and to believe, and to do. Be the doctrines sound or unsound—the formularies wisely or unwisely framed—at any rate we know beforehand what they are. But a Member of the Church of Rome, on the other hand, is required to receive not only whatever *has* been laid down by that Church, but whatever *may* be hereafter. He subscribes as it were to a blank paper; and may be required at any time (as we have seen in a recent case) to accept, on pain of being condemned as heretical, some doctrine which great multitudes of Divines of that very Church had for Ages rejected.

Now this it is which may properly be regarded as constituting that Church a *Party*; while ours is not such. Were our Confessions of Faith, and our Formularies more stringent than they are,—were they even unsound and erroneous,—still, as long as they are definitely laid down, they would not give our Church the character of a *Party*. The very essence of *Party*, is, its being a *general and*

*indefinite* bond of union—a combination of persons agreeing to do, or to assent to, *whatever* shall be resolved on by the majority, or the leading members of that Association. It is not because our Church is scriptural, or because moderate, or charitable, but because it is *definite*, that the character of *Party* does not apply to it. Our Church, in short, or any other such Association, is of the character of that kind of partnership which is under the system of what is called “*Limited liability*;” in which each partner is responsible only to a certain definite amount, and risks no more than what he had deliberately staked. A member, on the other hand, of any *Party*, is, at it were, engaged in an ordinary partnership, in which each is responsible for *all* the acts, and all the debts, of the Firm, and has staked his whole property.\*

§ 5. One mode (it is worth re-  
marking) by which some persons justify  
that inconsistency which I have above  
alluded to, is, by fixing on some *portion* of our For-

*Unfair Modes  
of Interpretation.*

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\* One point of difference, however, there is, which it is worth while to notice, between the Romish Church and most other Parties. A Roman Catholic is bound not only to submit implicitly to the decrees of his Church, but also to *avow* this distinctly, and make public profession of ready obedience. With most other Parties it is the reverse. A man is usually allowed, and sometimes even required, while strictly complying with all that his Party enjoys, at the same time strenuously to disavow all party-feeling, and endeavour to persuade both others and himself, that he is acting entirely according to his own unbiassed judgment.

mularies to which they attach a meaning at variance with some other portion, and then explaining away, or disregarding altogether, such portions as they do not fully approve. This process is a very easy one; and it is one which has often been applied to Scripture itself. That is, some passages of Scripture have been found which could be brought to bear a sense contrary to the obvious meaning of some other passages; and then, these latter have been either wholly passed over, or else tortured into a conformity with the interpretation put upon the others.

Thus, some heretics in the earliest Ages of the Church, denied the reality of our blessed Lord's human nature, because they so expounded the declarations of his *divine* nature. And in a later Age, the converse doctrine was taught by those who maintained his simple humanity, and denied his divinity.

Some have so interpreted the Epistles of Paul or of James, as to make those Apostles contradict each other; and some have so explained some portions of the writings of Paul himself, as to be inconsistent with other portions.

So also some have placed the whole of Christianity in the performance of (supposed) good works; and others have so dwelt on the importance of Faith, as in effect to inculcate the Antinomian views of the ancient Gnostics.

And many other such instances might be added.

But any one not destitute of good sense and of candour, would, in studying any composition for which he felt a respect—as, for instance, our Formularies—endeavour to ascertain the real design of the Framers, by comparing one passage with another, and adopting the interpretation that would fairly reconcile them together. And if he found in the Formularies of any Church such a discrepancy on essential points as was quite insuperable, so that one portion taught an important truth, and another, the falsehood, opposed to it, he would regard this as a sufficient cause, compelling him to renounce his position in that Church. He would not think it allowable to put his own sense on one part of a Document, and ignore (as the modern phrase is) all the rest ; or expound it in some “non-natural” sense ; nor would he discard as a Myth every portion of Scripture that did not agree with his preconceived notions.

But when one party in the Church censure severely, and not without some reason—another party, for explaining away, to suit their own views, one portion of our Formularies, while they themselves put a no less forced construction, for their own purposes, on another portion, and incur, for so doing, an equally strong, and equally just, censure from their opponents, it seems but too plain that neither party really disapprove of such a procedure on account of its intrinsic unfairness, but merely when it makes against themselves. And

any liberty which either may claim to use this lax mode of interpretation, they must expect to find equally claimed by others who think quite differently from them.

*Recent Attacks on our Religion.* § 6. As for those recent bold speculations, which I adverted to in the early part of this Charge, as having of late excited so much alarm, you will not, of course, expect me, on an occasion like the present, to enter on a full examination of them. A very considerable and most important portion of the publication I allude to, was evidently designed (though I believe many persons are not aware of this) as an answer to the edition of Paley's *Evidences*, published a short time before. And I accordingly lost no time in publishing a reply, in the form of a Postscript to that Work. And of that Reply no refutation (as far as I know) has ever been even attempted. I did not, however, *name* any Author or any book; as I had no wish to engage in personal controversy, or to draw attention to Works of a dangerous tendency, and thus give them increased circulation. I thought it best therefore merely to bring forward what I thought satisfactory reasons, leaving each person to apply them as he might see occasion.

At present I will only suggest a few considerations which I think are applicable in *all* cases of the kind.

In the first place, we should be prepared to

expect that much which is in substance far from novel, will from time to time be brought forward with some novelty of form, and will be paraded as a grand discovery, exciting much admiration in some, and not a little dismay in others.

“In the pure and in the Physical Sciences,” (says an able writer in the *Edinburgh Review*,) “each generation inherits the conquests made by its predecessors. No Mathematician has to re-demonstrate the problems of Euclid; no Physiologist has to sustain a controversy as to the circulation of the blood; no Astronomer is met by a denial of the principle of gravitation. But in the Moral Sciences the ground seems never to be incontestably won: and this is peculiarly the case with respect to the sciences which are subsidiary to the arts of administration and legislation. Opinions prevail, and are acted on. The evils which appear to result from their practical application lead to inquiry. Their error is proved by Philosophers, is acknowledged by the educated Public, and at length is admitted even by Statesmen. The policy founded on the refuted error is relaxed, and the evils which it inflicted, so far as they are capable of remedy, are removed or mitigated. After a time, new theorists arise, who are seduced or impelled by some moral or intellectual defect or error to re-assert the exploded doctrine. They have become entangled by some logical fallacy, or deceived by some inaccurate or incomplete assumption of facts,

or think that they see the means of acquiring reputation, or of promoting their interests, or of gratifying their political or their private resentments, by attacking the altered policy. All popular errors are plausible; indeed, if they were not so, they would not be popular. The plausibility to which the revived doctrine owed its original currency, makes it acceptable to those to whom the subject is new; and even among those to whom it is familiar, probably ninety-nine out of every hundred are accustomed to take their opinions on such matters on trust. They hear with surprise that what they supposed to be settled is questioned; and often avoid the trouble of inquiring, by endeavouring to believe that the truth is not to be ascertained. And thus the cause has again to be pleaded, before judges, some of whom are prejudiced, and others will not readily attend to reasoning founded on premises which they think unsusceptible of proof."

This Writer's general remarks are—as I hardly need remind you—perfectly applicable in all matters connected with religion. Anything, whether true or false, that has long been laid by, and lost sight of, will, when revived (as it is likely to be) after a considerable interval, be regarded as a novelty, and will, to most men, practically *be* such.\*

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\* Something not unlike the system of Epicurus, as set forth by Lucretius, was maintained in the last century, by the French Philo-

And thus perhaps some long-neglected truth may be condemned as a perilous innovation, or some long-exploded error will be announced as a grand discovery. Thus, on the one hand, most Romanists are taught to believe that the Reformation, which was an attempt at a *Restoration* of primitive Christianity, was a *new* religion invented by Luther. And on the other hand any false doctrines, or any objections either to Christianity generally, or to some particular Church, which have at one time obtained currency, and have been answered and refuted, and nearly forgotten, will perhaps be revived under new names, and with some slight change of form, and will then take most persons by surprise: and the battle will have to be fought over again.

A city which has successfully stood a siege, will often be found, after a long interval of peace, with its fortifications decayed, and its suburbs crowded with houses and plantations, that may afford shelter

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sopher Lamarck; and after being then opposed and (as was thought) finally refuted, has been revived, with some slight modifications, in our own time.

Again, the doctrine which denies the Moral-faculty of Man, and all intrinsic distinction of moral right and wrong, independent of express precept,—this doctrine, which was well known in Aristotle's time, and noticed by him, was brought forward, long after, by Hobbes; and having been then strongly opposed, and believed to be finally exploded, was revived by Paley, in a Work which was made a University text-book. And many other similar instances might be found.

to an assailing enemy. And any one who, in a time of peace, foresees this possible danger, and wishes to put the city into a defensible state, will perhaps be censured as an alarmist, and as seeking to cause unnecessary expense and labour.

And in like manner, any one who attempts to bring before the mass of ordinary Christians the Evidences of their religion, so that they may be "ready to give a reason of the hope that is in them," will perhaps be, by some derided, as undertaking a useless and hopeless task, and by some, even censured as filling men's minds with doubts, and preparing them to become unbelievers. And then, when some unexpected assault is made on our Faith, the very persons who had despised timely preparation, are overwhelmed with sudden alarm.

§ 7. The other suggestion that I would offer, is, that whenever any false doctrine is promulgated, we should make it our first inquiry what *admixture of truth* there may be in it, and what *opposite error* may have been prevalent, from which it is a reaction. For, falsehood, we should remember, will seldom, if ever, gain admission, in a simple and undisguised form. It is accepted not for its own sake, but on account of the truth that is combined with it. Poison is usually administered with an admixture of wholesome food. And a Fallacy,—at least any that is likely to deceive,—“is (as the late Bishop Copleston used to say) a combination of

*Neglected  
Truths, and  
Reactions  
from Errors.*

truth and falsehood in which the ingredients are so intimately blended that the falsehood is—in chemical language—*held in solution*; and a drop of sound Logic is needed, as a chemical test, to precipitate the foreign body.”

And any truth which has long been unduly neglected, will sometimes be at length as unduly over-rated, and brought forward in such an exaggerated form as to amount practically to error. And the exposure and refutation of some wrong notion that has long prevailed, will often be followed by an eager welcome of some contrary extreme.

And, again, it will often happen that the advocates of Truth shall have incautiously laid down, in support of their cause, some unsound principle, which may be adopted by an opponent, and logically followed out to some conclusion which they had not thought of, and which they would deprecate.

By looking out, then, for the operation of these causes, we shall be enabled to trace any error to its fountain-head; and shall be the better qualified to oppose it.

For instance, one of the doctrines of which the recent promulgation has excited alarm, is, that a belief in Christianity has no foundation in any miraculous evidence;—that any belief in miracles, if it exist at all, must be an *effect*, not a *cause*, of the reception of the Religion;—that Religion altogether must be a mere matter of *feeling*; and that

each person is to believe whatever is suited to his own wishes, and to the wants of which he is conscious.

Now all this is very much what has been maintained by some zealous advocates of Christianity; and we cannot wonder that opponents should take advantage of such an admission. The late Mr. Coleridge, for example, says (along with much more to the same effect), "Evidences of Christianity! I am weary of the word; make a man feel the want of it, and you may safely trust it to its own evidence." Now, something might be said for this maxim, if all men were agreed in a desire for whatever is really excellent, or if it were easy to "*make every man feel*" such desire. But as it is, men's tastes and wishes, and the "wants" they are conscious of, differ widely, according to their several dispositions, natural and acquired. And they will therefore be likely, when acting (as men are apt enough to do) on the above maxim, by seeking, each, a religion *suited to his own disposition*, and embracing it on that evidence alone—to pursue various courses. The majority, for instance, of the Jews of old did not "feel a want" of a religion which taught patience under wrongs, and love to enemies: they *wanted* a temporal Christ who should free them from the Roman yoke, and exalt their nation to great earthly power and splendour; and accordingly they were "weary of evidence," and rejecting Jesus of Nazareth, followed pretended

Christ, whose only evidence was a promise to lead them to victory and vengeance. The majority, again, of the Pagans, "felt a want" of a religion which provided splendid shows, and often bloody spectacles, and which tolerated and sanctified bacchanalian revels and foul impurities. The Hindus again feel the want of a religion which sanctions ferocious cruelties and gross debauchery; and this is the evidence on which they adhere to the worship of their gods. The Musulmans "feel the want" of a sensual Paradise such as their Prophet promises to those who fight bravely in his cause; and a Musulman rushes with enthusiastic valour on the hostile ranks, declaring that he sees the Houris waving their green handkerchiefs to welcome him to the Mahometan heaven.

And, lastly, among those who profess some forms of Christianity, there is a large proportion who "feel the want" of an infallible guide on Earth, and of the full assurance conveyed of pardon for sin, by priestly absolution, after due performance of penance; and of repose for their souls by paying for Masses to be said after their death.

But a right-minded Christian who receives the Gospel, because he has good grounds for believing it to be TRUE, endeavours, not to seek and embrace, *a religion conformable to his character*, but, on the contrary, *to make his character conformable to his religion*.\*

When however an unexpected attack is made

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\* Postscript to Paley's *Evidences*, pp. 405-6\*.

on our Religion—unexpected, I mean, by the unwise and unthinking, who censure or deride all preparation against attacks—all appeal to rational evidence—they are overwhelmed with dismay, and have nothing but impotent rage and empty declamation, wherewith to meet an opponent whom they have themselves contributed to raise up.

For when it has been laid down that Miracles are not at all *needed* for the establishment of the claims of the Gospel, it is very natural to proceed to the denial that any were ever wrought. And accordingly it has been maintained that no Miracle (in the received sense of the word) ever did or can take place; and that all that have been recorded as such, were mere natural occurrences,—though perhaps rather unusual ones—which enthusiastic credulity magnified into supernatural signs of a direct communication from Heaven.

Now does not this theory derive some countenance from the language of some of the advocates of real Christianity? Is it not a very prevalent practice to apply the words "*miraculous*" or "providential" to any unusual and remarkable occurrence, that conduces to some end which is considered desirable and important? as if divine Providence had nothing to do with ordinary events. A great advantage is given to anti-Christians by this rash and presumptuous language coming from advocates who professing pre-eminent piety, thus venture to proclaim (virtually) that

“thus saith the Lord; when the Lord hath not spoken.”\*

§ 8. There is reason to think that the rash language of daring pretension used by some religious enthusiasts has conduced to foster and spread the rationalistic extravagances which are now causing so much alarm. When Men speak of being “moved by the Spirit” to say what they do say—which is, in other words, to claim inspiration—when they describe themselves as speaking (as Paul did) “with demonstration of the Spirit and of power”—when they regard every thought or design that is “strongly borne in on their minds,” as an “answer to prayer,” and an undoubted direction from Heaven—when they speak of following the “inward light” they possess as an infallible divine guide—when they interpret every remarkable occurrence as a sign from Heaven, and reckon any event that furthers their object, as a manifest divine interposition in their favour—the Rationalist may step forward and say “This is all just what was

*Dangers  
from pre-  
sumptuous  
Language.*

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\* A Clergyman having pointed out (in conformity with our Lord's declaration Luke xiii.) that we are not warranted, in the absence of a distinct revelation to that effect, to speak of the late famine as a special judgment from Heaven on the sufferers, and a sign of divine wrath against the nation for extending toleration to Roman Catholics, was, for this, denounced, publicly, in print, by a brother-clergyman, as denying all revelation!

Well may our Religion say, “Save me from my friends, and I fear not my enemies!”—Paley's *Evidences*.

done by the first promulgators of Christianity. Any remarkable event, they called a Miracle; just as you do. Like you, they considered as a divine revelation, or direction from above, any strong conviction, or strong impulse. Their miracles were only strongly-coloured pictures of such things as are taking place around us. Their inspiration—their guiding inward light—were only those vivid impressions, and those grand designs, which are common to you with them. Both cases are alike miraculous or non-miraculous; and in both, belief in the miracle is not the *cause*, but the *effect*, of the reception of the doctrine.”\*

Thus it is that presumptuous and unwise Christians prepare the way for the inroads of covert infidelity, which, by making *every* thing miraculous, makes, in fact, *nothing* miraculous, and virtually destroys the whole character of inspira-

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\* This conjecture, which was first thrown out a good while ago, has been since precisely verified in the language of an anti-christian Periodical.

But it is not from these alone that we hear such language. The following passage from a Newspaper is likely (whether the report be accurate or not) to have a wide circulation:—

“*Dr.* — on the *Irish Revivals*.—On Sunday night, *Dr.* — preached to a crowded congregation, and in the course of his sermon he introduced the subject of the revivals in Ireland. He had not, he said, himself personal evidence of this ‘awakening,’ but he had had communications from clergymen of different persuasions, and from laymen; and these and his own reflections convinced him that this was indeed the work of the Lord, and that we were really in the midst of the time prophesied by Joel, when ‘your sons and

tion, by making it universal. A King would be virtually dethroned, if all or most of his subjects were elevated to regal power.

Little damage, comparatively, would be done by the assailants of our Faith, if they were not thus unconsciously aided by its injudicious defenders.

There is also encouragement afforded by that incautious language to which I have been alluding, to a certain modern school who teach a most objectionable kind of optimism; namely, that success proves, — and indeed constitutes—right; and that the most cruel oppressor and lawless conqueror is to be regarded as justified and as having a declaration of Heaven, on his side, if he do but prevail. This is one of the instances of what I

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daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men see visions.’”

Again, the following is an extract from a sermon delivered before the General Assembly of a Presbyterian Church in 1860:—“If they wanted a proof of the truth of the doctrines and polity of the Presbyterian Church, they had it in this Revival. Upon whom had God showered down His blessings? Upon the Presbyterian Church. It was *her* pastures He had watered and made green and flourishing. Some wished to represent that this Revival was breaking down distinctions of creed, inasmuch, they said, as that God was pouring out his Spirit on all Churches alike. Such was wholly incorrect. God had blessed the Presbyterian Church; thus giving a proof that in her Jehovah took delight. The Presbyterian Church did not substitute for the Supremacy of Christ, Succession, and CONFIRMATION, and other forms and rituals of man’s inventing, but took his own Holy Word as their standard: and God had given them and the World, in the Revival, a proof of the truth of Presbyterianism.”

have already alluded to; the distortion and exaggeration of a truth into a falsehood.

*Rash Appeals to Scripture.* § 9. Again you will not need to be informed—hardly even to be reminded—of the damage which has been done to the christian cause by a rash reference to Scripture on matters of *Physical Science*. The celebrated decree against Galileo, which aimed at arraying Astronomy against Christianity, probably drove many persons into downright infidelity. It may be said that they ought (as doubtless the more intelligent portion did) to have distrusted their blind guides, and to have considered, that in order to make a right use of any book, we should keep in mind the design of the author; and to have perceived that Scripture was intended to instruct us not in Astronomy but in Religion. But it was not to be expected that the great mass of mankind would perceive these distinctions. And when they were assured by Theologians who professed to have made Religion their study, that every Christian was bound to believe that the Earth is at rest, and that the Sun moves round it, while they were convinced from demonstration that the fact is the reverse, they would be likely to rush to the conclusion that the Bible is a tissue of obsolete fables.

Others, again, in later times, without avowedly rejecting Christianity, have denied all claim of Scripture to any special authority, and teach us

that the Bible is to be “read like any other book;” that is, as *not* containing any record of a divine revelation, but as being—like every other book,—the production of mere unaided Man. In short, we are to begin the study of the Bible, by taking for granted, in the outset, the falsity of its pretensions! Scripture having been applied to for instruction in matters *out of* its proper jurisdiction, a reaction ensued; its authority within its own rightful province, was set at nought, and liberty was claimed to reject or accept any portion of it according to our own judgment or inclination.

And what has greatly tended to increase this kind of re-action, is, the confused and desultory mode which is but too prevalent, of studying—if that can be called *study*—the Holy Scriptures: as if the Bible were *one* book, instead of being, as it is, a collection of many books, written at various times, and with very various objects. And this Sacred Volume is often perused in a mode which would be thought absurd even in the perusal of any *one book*; by opening the volume almost at random, and fixing on, and employing without regard to the context, any passage that may chance to meet the eye, if it can be brought to suit some particular purpose. One may even find some persons citing, under the title of “divine commands or prohibitions,” or “God’s Law,” such portions of the Mosaic Institutions as may appear to favour some particular object; while at the same time they

make no scruple of setting aside the rest, at their pleasure.\*

Now this procedure is even more indefensible than the doctrine of those ancient judaizing Sectaries who held the eternal and universal obligation of the whole Levitical Law; since *they* were at least consistent.

But the result of their error, in the way of a reaction, was that other, of the absolute condemnation of the whole of the Old Testament, as not proceeding from the Most High. And something very nearly approaching this, has, from a like cause, appeared among ourselves in these days.

And the New Testament itself is likely to be also brought into disrepute with the rash and thoughtless, by that confused mode of employing it to which I have just adverted. If any one—to adopt an apt illustration of the late Dr. Arnold—should have received a great number of letters from a justly venerated father, written to him at various periods, from the time when he was a mere child, till after he had reached manhood, and should lay them by very carefully, and whenever he needed counsel, should take up any one of these letters at random, and make that his guide, he would be thought destitute of all rationality. Yet this is analogous to the use—or rather the abuse—which some persons make of the Bible.

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\* See *Thoughts on the Sabbath*. See also Bishop Copleston's *Remains*, p. 39.

It is not therefore strange that such an error should give rise to,—or at least greatly favour such other errors of an opposite kind as are now exciting so much alarm.

§ 10. Again, great damage, I am convinced, has been done to the cause of truth by the rash speculations and attempted explanations of obscure points, which some have indulged in, with more confidence than modest caution. I cannot doubt, that the rejection, by some persons, of doctrines which Scripture (whose authority they acknowledge) does seem very plainly to declare, has been greatly encouraged, and, in many instances originally caused, by unwise and presumptuous endeavours to explain what Scripture has left obscure, and to confirm what is there revealed, by reconciling it with theories of Man's devising. For, when objections which will at least be thought by many to be unanswerable, are brought against any such theory, it is then too late to resort to the plea that divine mysteries are beyond the reach of our understanding, and that we must not venture to try them by the standard of human Reason. Every one who brings forward a theory of his own, does in fact appeal to human Reason, and binds himself to make his explanations intelligible and satisfactory. And if he fails of this, the result will too often be that the doctrine itself which he has been trying to elucidate and support by his

*Daring  
Attempts to  
explain Mys-  
teries.*

explanations, will be supposed by many persons to be *dependent* on those explanations, and will be rejected along with the untenable theory. Blameable as those may be who draw such a conclusion, those are not free from blame who lead them to it, and thus place a stumblingblock in the way of a weak brother.

*Unwise*  
*Defenders of*  
*Religion.* § 11. I had not, of course, any design to enter on a complete enumeration and discussion of all the causes that have conduced to the prevailing alarm and agitation of the public mind; but I have thought it advisable to notice some of those which may be traced to some imprudences or omissions, or mistakes of those engaged in the *defence* of our Religion. It might have been, perhaps, to some persons more acceptable, to have dwelt exclusively on the faults of opponents; but it may be more profitable, to look to those on our own side, and which it may therefore be, in some degree, in our power to remedy, or at least to guard against, so as to prevent adversaries from taking advantage of them.

And I would warn you, in conclusion, not to regard *any* error (in matters at all connected with Religion) as harmless or as insignificant, merely because it may be so in itself, and in its immediate and *direct* results. In its indirect and remote effects, it may lead to dangerous consequences, to others, at least, if not to ourselves. A man for

instance, may be a good Christian who believes that the sun moves round the Earth; but if he believes and teaches this (which was done by the decree against Galileo) as an essential *point of religious doctrine*, his mistake, when it is discovered, may overthrow the faith of weak brethren: the "Wall daubed with untempered Mortar," may bring down in its fall the sound parts of the building.

Thus, again, any one who expects the occurrence of certain political events, or a speedy termination of the World,\* may be himself a good Christian, even though erroneous in his expectations; and may do no damage to the faith of others, so long as he puts forth his conjectures merely *as his own* conjectures. But if he insists on others receiving as a vital point of Faith, his interpretations of prophecy,—and if he censures all who do not adopt the same opinions, as *not "knowing the Gospel,"* or as not "taking much *interest* in Religion"—then, if events turn out differently, the mass of mankind, who are incapable of nice discrimination, may have their religious confidence altogether shaken: "You have taught us [they may say] that Jesus of Nazareth came from God, and is to come to judge the quick and the dead; and you have also taught us, as a part of your Religion, that his coming was to

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\* The statutes of Oriel College, which was founded above 500 years ago, open with an announcement of the speedy end of the World: "Appropinquante jam Mundi termino."

take place some years ago;\* now we know from our own experience that you were mistaken in the one point; and therefore we conclude that you are likely to have been mistaken in the other also.”

Of course, a still greater danger will result from the detection, or even the suspicion, of anything that is at all of the character of a *pious fraud*;—any wilful suppression of truth, or inculcation of what is not sincerely believed.† Put forth, therefore (I would say), nothing as a point of christian Faith, which you have not good reason to be fully convinced of, not only as *true*, but as an essential portion of clearly-revealed Truth. Any opinion which you may have formed on other points, you are bound—I do not say, to suppress, but—to put forth merely as an opinion of your own. Do your best, indeed, to detect and refute by fair arguments the errors of opponents of our Religion; but be still more carefully on the watch

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\* A Preacher, of no small celebrity, fixed the year 1847 as the time of our Lord's second Advent. But this is only one instance out of a multitude.

† I have known a person to incur severe censure for teaching people that the Bible was not originally written in English, and that the Bible we commonly use is a Translation from the Hebrew and Greek original. This, it was thought, would “unsettle men's minds.”

I have also known an objection made, on a like ground, to the informing of the people that the divisions into *chapters* and *verses* were not made by the Sacred Writers themselves!

against the errors of its defenders. And if we thus unite the Wisdom of the Serpent with the harmlessness of the Dove, we may hope that by the wise appointment of divine Providence, the now-existing difficulties and disturbances, may, not only pass away harmless, but may even tend ultimately to the furtherance of the Gospel.

THE END.

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ECCLESIASTICAL LEGISLATION  
CONSIDERED.

A CHARGE,

DELIVERED AT THE

TRIENNIAL VISITATION OF THE PROVINCES OF  
DUBLIN AND CASHEL.

*June, 1862.*

BY RICHARD WHATELY, D.D.  
*ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.*

“Qui nova remedia fugit, nova mala operitur.” — BACON.

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# A CHARGE,

ETC.

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§ 1. SEVERAL years ago, I took  
occasion, more than once, to *Petitions  
for Church-  
Government.*  
call attention to the subject of Church-  
government, and to point out how essential it is to  
the well-being of any Society—and not least of a  
christian Society,—that it should have some—not  
merely administrative, but legislative—government,  
fully established and acknowledged.

In this view I did not stand alone. I was  
called on to present to Parliament a petition from  
the Clergy of the Diocese of Kildare to that effect;  
—a petition not drawn up or suggested by me;  
and a similar one had shortly before been presented  
by the Bishop of London.\* And some years after,  
I was again employed to present a similar petition  
from many Clergymen, English, as well as Irish.

On this latter occasion, one of the Members of  
the House complained that the “Irish Church” (as  
he called it) had not distinctly specified what was

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\* See Appendix A.

to be the Constitution of the Government that was desired. He had forgotten, it seems, that no such Body exists as the "Irish Church;" that, and the English Church, having been, by the Act of Union, consolidated into one. And he hastily took for granted that that Petition came from *Ireland*, as if I could not possibly be concerned with anything English: though if he had taken the trouble to look at it, he would have seen that more than half of the Petitioners were *English* Clergymen.

In one of the debates on the subject which took place in the House of Lords, several of the bishops (of whom nearly all were present) expressed their acquiescence in my view of the necessity of having some sort of Legislative Government of the Church, instead of leaving it wholly under the control of a Parliament consisting of persons of various religious denominations. And this no one came forward to controvert.

As for the complaint that there was no specification of the details of any proposed Constitution, *that* is a well-known device often employed to defeat any proposed measure of which the principle cannot be controverted. An opponent will often, in such a case, call on the advocates of the measure to particularize fully all the details; and if they are so unwise as to comply with this requisition, he will find some plausible objection to some of these points of detail, and thus defeat the whole proposal. But if no Government of any kind had ever been

established in any community till some had been devised not only quite perfect in every particular, but also (which is much more) universally admitted to be such, it is evident that all mankind would have been in a state of anarchy down to this day.

The ingenuous and wise course is, to consider any proposed plan, first generally, and as a whole; and then, if it be found worthy of approval, to proceed next to examine and discuss the practical points of detail, one by one.

§ 2. Although, however, as I have said, I was, on the occasions alluded to, very far from standing alone, still there was a considerable majority of well-meaning persons who dreaded to take any step such as was suggested. Some deprecated altogether any such thing as a Government of the Church; and others considered the time then present as unsuitable for entertaining any such proposal. And it is remarkable that among those who were the most strongly opposed to anything of the kind, there were some who were accustomed to find fault with many portions of our Services, and of the regulations of the Church, while, with strange inconsistency, they deprecated the only mode in which it could be expected that those alleged defects could be remedied. Now surely, any evils or inconveniences which you not only think never *will* be remedied, but for which you resolve that (as far as lies in you) there never *shall* be any remedy, these you ought patiently to

*Objections  
to a Church-  
Government.*

submit to, as to an unfavourable season, or an incurable disease.

Others, however, there were, as I have said, who were convinced of the desirableness of having a Church-government, but thought that the then prevalence of party contests, and the agitated and excited state of the public mind, made it advisable to wait till calmer times for any such attempt.\* And when any period of comparative tranquillity does occur, we are sure to be met with the objection—probably from the very same persons—that it is best not to disturb that tranquillity; that it is a pity to unsettle men’s minds when they are not dissatisfied,—that we should adhere to the maxim of “*quieta ne movete,*” and “*let well alone.*” “*Not now*” is the plea, when matters are quiet; and “*Not now,*” when they are unquiet. When the stream is low and fordable, we are told that no bridge is needed; and when the river is swollen, that it is difficult and dangerous to begin building a bridge.

Difficulties and dangers we should indeed never seek to keep out of sight, or to extenuate; but the actually-existing difficulties and dangers, and the probability that they would continually increase if no steps were taken to obviate them, many were (at the time I have been referring to) accustomed to overlook. And those who are at any time so

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\* See Appendix B.

far ahead of their age as to foresee many wants and many evils of which most of their contemporaries have no suspicion, are likely to be derided as fanciful alarmists, or dreaded as dangerous innovators. Afterwards perhaps it may happen that some of the suggestions which had been at first rejected with censure or scorn, will come to obtain very general approbation.\*

§ 3. And something of this kind has taken place in the present instance. *Alterations in public opinion.* The views which we first set forth above a quarter of a century ago, have lately received a favourable attention in England as well as in Ireland, and are likely to be in some degree brought into practice. And this is my reason for having now recalled your attention to the transactions I have just now alluded to. This is the more needful, because a report has been industriously circulated that the Irish portion of the Church has been acting an obstructive part, and that we have been throwing obstacles in the way of any Church-government. This statement is (as you must be well aware) not only untrue, but the very opposite of the truth. We are bound in charity to believe that it is the result of ignorance, and not of wilful and deliberate falsehood; but the ignorance which in this instance has given rise to an "idle word" injurious to us, cannot but be

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\* See Appendix C.

accounted a most culpable ignorance, considering how easily correct knowledge could have been obtained.

About the middle of last year a Memorial was presented to the Crown from the Irish Bishops, praying for the royal sanction to some kind of collective Synod representing the whole of the United Church. What other steps were we legally competent to take? It should be remembered that even for the summoning of a Convocation, of either, or of both, of the Irish Provinces, a royal authority would have been necessary: but if each of the four Provinces of the Church should have a separate Convocation sitting, and each acting independently, and framing regulations for itself, without any provision made for co-operation, and for a combined action of the whole Church, this would amount to a splitting up of the Body into four Churches as distinct from each other as the American is from ours.\*

If any one should think this desirable, he ought at least to call such separation by its right name; since a division introduced into a Church still de-

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\* Since I delivered this Charge we have been given to understand that there is no immediate prospect of the prayer of our Memorial being complied with. The course of events may perhaps lead to a more favourable consideration of our case. But in the mean time, I cannot doubt that as the law now stands, a mode may be found, less convenient, indeed, but not less effectual than the one proposed, for securing a harmonious co-operation between the several branches of our Church, and avoiding the risk of disruption.

signated as *one*, would be clearly of the character of a Schism. I am happy to find however that the English Bishops appear now to understand fully our real situation, and are disposed cordially to cooperate with us as fellow-members of one United Church.

Whatever may be the course of procedure which it may be ultimately found practicable and advisable to adopt, *some* arrangement *must* be made for avoiding a disruption so much to be deprecated, by effecting some sort of concert and combined action of the several portions of our Church.

§ 4. As for the kind of procedure that may be expected in any Church Assembly, there is no reason whatever to anticipate any that would be subversive of the principles of our Church. Too true indeed it is, that there are to be found professed Members, and even Ministers of the Church, whose views tend towards such subversion. But these are, I trust, but a very small minority. And moreover, even were they twice as numerous as there is any reason to believe, they are utterly opposed to each other, and could not effect anything without such a *combination* as is, by the nature of the case, clearly impossible. In Mechanics, we all know that a body acted on by two equal forces, in opposite directions, remains motionless. And even so, those who would seek to mislead us in contrary ways, will counteract and neutralize each other's efforts.

*Dangers  
apprehended.*

Suppose, for instance, there was a considerable number of persons seeking to deprave our Prayer-Book, one party seeking to fashion it somewhat on the Model of the Presbyterian Directory put forth in the days of the Civil War, and another party seeking to make it more like the Romish Missal, it is evident that these two could never co-operate with each other, nor, consequently, produce any effect, except to defeat each other's objects.

Some few persons, again, may be seeking to *narrow* the basis of our Church, by excluding from it every one who does not adopt the views of their own particular party; and others endeavouring to *extend* its basis, by admitting to its ministry persons who (according to the received use of language) would hardly be reckoned as believers in Christianity.

These two parties also, so far from acting together, would evidently only neutralize each other's efforts. It would be a mistake (we should remember) to conclude that every wise and moderate decision that any assembly has ever arrived at, is necessarily due to an absolute preponderance of wise and moderate counsellors. It may often have happened that the views of these last may have been unconsciously aided by persons of less sound judgment, but who were leaning towards errors on opposite sides. Any intelligent observer of human affairs must have known many instances

where the result of such opposition has been some kind of compromise that was at least preferable to either of the extremes which had been originally aimed at.

§ 5. There is no doubt, however, that apprehensions do exist in many minds, of the introduction of ill advised and dangerous innovations. But as I observed, in a Charge, a good many years back, we may derive a consolatory hope of safety from the very existence of those apprehensions.

*Safety in  
due caution.*

I said that “at the first glance indeed it may be deemed paradoxical to infer from the very existence of such apprehensions, that there is no ground for alarm;”—to argue that we have the less to fear because much fear is felt by a great number, and by those whose opinions deservedly carry most weight; and that the greater in their estimation the danger is, the less it is in reality. But on a moment’s reflection any one will perceive that in the present case such an inference is perfectly just.

In the case indeed of any kind of evil which no human efforts can avert—such as an unfavourable season, an earthquake, or an inundation—the anticipations of *such* a calamity, by persons who are competent judges, afford just ground of alarm: and the greater the number of these persons, and the stronger their apprehensions, the greater we should conclude the danger to be. But it is

quite the reverse in a case where the very persons who *apprehend* the danger are those with whom it rests to *avert* it, by the vigilance and exertion which are called forth by those very apprehensions.

There is indeed hardly any christian teacher who is not in the habit of earnestly pressing this very topic on the congregation committed to his charge, in respect of their christian conduct as individuals. He tells them that the greatest spiritual danger is in careless and confident security;—that an habitual dread of sin is a necessary safeguard of christian virtue;—that he “who thinketh he standeth, should take heed lest he fall,” and should “work out his salvation with fear and trembling;” making his vigilant self-distrust the basis, not of desponding anticipations, but of joyful confidence. He teaches them, in short, that the more awake men are to the dangers which beset their christian course, the better is their prospect of escaping those dangers, and of steadily pursuing that course.

And the same reasoning will apply in the present case. For, all the evils that are apprehended must arise, if at all, through the faults and follies of the Church’s own members;—through the intemperance or indiscretion of those who, by their numbers or their character, have a predominating influence in that Church. If therefore a great majority,—including a majority of those who

are most influential,—are fully aware of the evils attendant on any rash steps, we have, in their apprehensions, the surest safeguard against such steps. The danger is the less, from their strong sense of the danger; because it will rest with them to guard against it. The evils apprehended being such as cannot arise but through their negligence, the more keenly alive they are to those evils, the less reason there is to anticipate them.

§ 6. We have no grounds then, I am convinced, for expecting that any ill-advised and dangerous measures will be adopted by any kind of Church Assembly that may be convened. On the contrary, it is more likely that the dread of innovation may be carried to an excess; and that some harmless and beneficial changes in points of detail may fail of being adopted through an over-dread of their leading to some that would be pernicious.

*Fears of  
hurtful inno-  
vation.*

Some desirable alterations in such points I noticed in some late Charges; expressing at the same time my belief that the most effectual obstacle to their adoption was raised up by those persons who, under the specious name of a “Revision of the Liturgy,” seek to introduce surreptitiously fundamental changes in the *doctrines* of the Church. And I pointed out that any one who considers these doctrines as erroneous, though he has a perfect right to hold and to proclaim his own conviction, is utterly unjustifiable in continuing to *hold*

*office* in a Church whose principles he is seeking to subvert.

It is not, however (we should remember), the necessary or proper business of a Legislative assembly to change existing institutions, or to frame new regulations; but rather, to consider and determine in each case whether any such step is, or is not, needed; and to act accordingly. No one would say that it is the business of Parliament to alter the British Constitution, but in each case either to maintain the Law as it stands or to change it, as may seem most expedient. And if in any case some measure is proposed which after careful deliberation is rejected, it would be a mistake to infer that there has been a mere waste of time and labour. For even those who do not approve of some decision that has been made will be the better satisfied to acquiesce in it when they know that a deliberate decision has been regularly made, and that they have been allowed a fair hearing. It makes a great difference whether anything remains unaltered merely because there is no authority competent to make any alteration, or because it has been deliberately decided that a change would be inexpedient. The advantage therefore of a regularly-established Church-government is not to be measured by the changes it may actually effect, but by the knowledge that a power does exist of effecting whatever may be thought requisite.

§ 7. As for the particulars of the Constitution of such a Church-government as it may be desirable and practicable to establish, these it would be prematurely to discuss; but it is worth while to notice one misapprehension which some time ago was very prevalent, and which has not entirely disappeared even now. Some persons take for granted, when any mention is made of a Church-government, that the active operation of *Convocations* as now by Law established, is what is meant, and that the alternative is between that and no Government at all. And then they point out (what is very true) that to this there are strong objections;—Convocation not being so constituted as to give an adequate representation of even the Clergy alone, and giving no representation at all of the Laity.

*Objections  
to Convoca-  
tion.*

But there seems no reason why it should be thought impracticable or unadvisable to introduce modifications into a Constitution established by our ancestors some centuries ago, and which, even if framed with consummate wisdom at that time, might need changes to meet the altered circumstances of the present day.

They themselves were very far from designing that their Institutions and regulations should be, like the Laws of the Medes and Persians, unalterable: and the framers of the Preface to our Prayer-Book, drawn up at the time of the establishment of our Church, sets forth that “it hath ever been

the wisdom of the Church of England, to keep the mean between the two extremes of too much stiffness in refusing, and too much easiness in admitting any variation." And it can hardly be doubted that the Rule thus laid down in relation to the Church-services, they would have judged equally applicable to Ecclesiastical Institutions.

Some modification, then, of the existing constitution of Convocation would be nothing anomalous, and does seem to be highly desirable. This is what has taken place in a sister Church, a very important one, and the more interesting to us as being an offshoot from our own, the Episcopalian Church of the United States of America. They have admitted,—and I cannot but think, wisely,—a representation of the Laity into their Ecclesiastical Conventions. This does not at all imply any confounding together of the Clergy and Laity. They do not permit the Laity to administer the Sacraments, or to conduct public worship; but they admit them to a share of what may be called ecclesiastical, as distinguished from spiritual concerns; and as far as I can learn, no ill consequences have resulted from this arrangement. On the contrary, an increased interest in the welfare of the Church, and increased attention to the great objects for which a Church is formed, seem to be produced by thus calling in the Laity to hold office in the Society.

And if a similar arrangement were introduced

in our Church, it would not be fairly called an Anomaly; considering, that in the existing state of things, the Supreme Government of our Church is almost *wholly* in the hands of the Laity—namely, of the Sovereign, in conjunction with the two Houses of Parliament—of which the one contains a small number of Clerical Members, and the other, none at all.

§ 8. Parliament, however, though it may have been thought an assembly ill-calculated for the office of Ecclesiastical legislation, did, at least, till of late years, consist exclusively of professed members of the Establishment; whereas, now, it admits an indefinite number of persons of different, and even hostile communions. This surely is an anomaly, and no unimportant one. The change, whether for the better or for the worse, does at least place the Church in a far different position from that which it formerly occupied. Yet this is entirely overlooked by some, who are accustomed to urge that matters have gone on very well for a long time *as they now are*, and that therefore there is no need of any alteration. It is strange, but true, that some of those who are the most carefully anxious to oppose and to deprecate every kind of change, are often found entirely failing to *perceive* important changes when they actually do occur.

To say that in any matter in which human agency is concerned, no changes *shall* take place, is

to talk idly. We might as well pretend to controul the course of the seasons. And to determine that no changes shall take place *except* such as are undesigned and unforeseen, is to encounter far greater risks than those we seek to avoid. For "He who shuns new remedies," says Bacon, "must expect new evils."

Still, the National Legislature must be allowed to retain a paramount controul, in all things whatsoever; and any Church-government of whatever kind, that may be established, must remain subordinate to that. Nothing must be thought of that can have even the appearance of an "imperium in imperio." This is a necessary consequence of ours being an Established Church. And herein lies one great difference between our case and that of the American Episcopalians. There being, in the United States, no established Church at all, the decisions of any Church Convention are, there, *final*, as regards the Members of that Church. But ours being a Community established by the Laws of the State, must of course be subject to the controul of the supreme power of the State. It does not, however, follow that we may not have, in due subordination to the Supreme Legislature, a Government expressly constituted for Ecclesiastical concerns, consisting, of course, exclusively of Members of the Church; and which would be somewhat analogous to our several Colonial Legislatures; which are allowed to act for themselves, though still subject

to the controul of the supreme central Legislature. And considering that whatever powers may be vested in any such Synod or Convention as I have been speaking of, must be powers expressly conferred upon it by an Act of the Civil Legislature itself, there can be no reason for any apprehension of encroachments by the Church upon the State.

§ 9. The need of some legislative *Measures* intervention in the concerns of the *recently pro-* Church—a need which has long ex-*posed.* isted—has of late been strongly impressed on men's minds by some recent occurrences which cannot but be known to you: I allude to what took place a short time since, in reference to the proposals made, of altering one of the Canons, and of adopting a Form of Prayer and Thanksgiving for Harvest. It is manifestly most desirable that there should exist somewhere a competent Authority, legally constituted and fully recognized, for introducing such Forms of Prayer as may be judged advisable, either for occasional or for ordinary use. But the Forms which have been from time to time put forth on the authority of Orders in Council, give rise, as is well known, to much doubt and perplexity. The use of these Forms does appear, at the first glance, altogether at variance with the "Act of Uniformity," of which our whole Prayer-Book is a part. Some persons, however, maintain, with ingenious arguments, somewhat too subtle for

ordinary minds, that this procedure is *not* contrary to that Act.\*

Others, and I believe a much greater number, admit that the use of these Forms is not strictly legal, but consider that a long-continued tacit acquiescence in a departure from the law, affords a sufficient sanction for such departure. But others again there are who feel scruples in this matter, and are at a loss how to reconcile the procedure with the solemn promise they have made, to “conform to the Liturgy as it is now by Law established.”

If once we sanction the practice, even in small matters, of interpreting plain language in a non-natural sense, and wresting words into a meaning quite different from the obvious one, we may expect (as is proved by the experience of some years past) that the precedent will be made use of by others,

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\* A good many years ago, I consulted, as to this point, the then Archbishop of Canterbury; who, in reply, sent me the opinion of a distinguished lawyer, based on reasons which seem to me utterly unsound. The argument was, that the royal prerogative extends to a complete controul over the whole of the Church Service. But this is contradicted by the very words of the Act, which contains a distinct proviso authorizing the change from time to time, under an Act of Council, of the names of the members of the Royal Family that are to be prayed for. This plainly implies (according to the maxim that “AN EXCEPTION PROVES A RULE”) that the supposed prerogative either never existed, or else was abandoned.

No one who claimed a general right of way along a certain road, would insert in a formal deed of agreement an express clause permitting his use of that road on such and such a particular occasion, and for this or that particular purpose.

who will plead our example to justify their explaining away important declarations of our Church, and of Holy Scripture.

Surely all *uncertainty* as to any law,—all connivance at a *departure* from law,—and everything that tends to raise scruples, and is likely to lay a snare for conscience,—are evils which should if possible be avoided. And this might be done at once, and very easily, as far as regards the point now immediately before us, by simply passing what is called a “declaratory Act,” setting forth what is the interpretation which the Legislature wills the Act of Uniformity to bear.

§ 10. A much more extensive measure, however, than this, is, as I have already said, what I cannot but consider as very highly desirable. And if there were a strong conviction of the need of a completely organized Church Government, in the mind of a large proportion both of the Clergy and of the Laity, and if this were earnestly, though calmly and modestly, pressed on the attention of the Legislature, I cannot think that the object would fail of being accomplished.

*Advantages  
of a Church-  
Government.*

It is not, however, by any slight and languid, or by any transient and brief action, that such an effect can be produced. It has seldom, if ever, happened that any important change—however manifestly beneficial—has been brought about with-

out very strenuous, and also very persevering, exertions.\* If those who are naturally supposed to have the most knowledge and also the most zeal, in all that concerns the Church's welfare, shall appear to be, in this matter, nearly indifferent, it is not to be expected that any steps will be taken by others. But earnest and persevering efforts will be likely, sooner or later, to be crowned with success.

The establishment, then, of a regular Church-government consisting exclusively of members of the Church, but comprising an admixture of Lay Members, is an event not beyond the bounds of probability, and for which we should seek to make some preparation. Such a measure would have the advantage, among others, of tending to guard against all jealousies and suspicions, whether well or ill-founded, of encroachments by either class upon the other;—suspicions of the Clergy, which might arise if they were the sole Ecclesiastical Governors, of seeking unduly to domineer over the Laity, and exalting themselves into “Lords over God's heritage,”—or suspicions of the Laity, of intruding themselves into what are properly clerical functions. The properly-regulated action of each class would be duly marked out.

There are two opposite extremes against which

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\* The abolition of slavery, for instance, cost half a century of untiring efforts. And long after the mischievous absurdity of the Usury Laws had been fully proved, the question was brought before Parliament for about thirty Sessions before the repeal was obtained.

it behoves us to be on our guard,—that of making too much, and that of making too little, of the distinction between the Clergy and the Laity. On the one hand, there are some who set up a kind of false analogy between the Clerical and other professions. As we do not, when consulting a Physician or a Lawyer, seek to learn Medicine or Law ourselves, but deem it sufficient to follow the directions given, without inquiring into the reasons of them; so there are some who seem to regard everything that relates to Religion as the proper concern of the Clergy exclusively. Missionary enterprise, — church building, — schools for educating the masses of the people, — associations for distributing Bibles, Prayer-Books, and religious Tracts, — all these they regard as objects to which the Clergy are bound to devote their time and labour, and, I may add, their pecuniary resources, but about which Laymen need not much trouble themselves. Nay, there are some who seem to think that a knowledge of their Religion, and even christian holiness of life, are things which may be nearly dispensed with, except for the Clergy. And some of these are very strict in their requisitions from the Clergy, of what they (improperly) call an *exemplary* life, though the example is one which they do not feel bound themselves to follow. But if they thus seek to serve and obey God, as it were, by proxy, making the Clergyman's christian practice a substitute for their own, they ought to

call his practice, not exemplary virtue, but *vicarious* virtue.

On the other hand, some who have strong personal religious feelings, but not under the guidance of sound discretion, are apt to fall into irregular and disorderly practices, such as often tend to "gender strifes;" to refuse all subordination to the Clergy, and all co-operation with them, and to cast off all loyal allegiance to the Church of which they are professed members, disregarding all conformity with its regulations, and often in the end falling into fanatical extravagances.

Each of these extremes would be, I conceive, in some degree checked, by regularly assigning a definite part to each class. A suitable channel being made for the stream, in which it can flow steadily and usefully, it may thus be prevented from breaking forth into a destructive torrent, or spreading out into an unwholesome marsh.

*Lay co-operation desirable.* § 11. It is then, in various ways, highly beneficial that the Laity should be called in to our aid, in all matters connected with religion, wherein, conformably to the now-existing laws, and to the Constitution of our Church, they can be employed. It is a good thing that the People of any Parish should be imbued with such a spirit of sober and well-regulated emulation as would make them unwilling to let their parish fall short of others, in the good management of its schools for the poor,—in Church-

psalmody—in the good state of repair of their Place of Worship, and its commodious and decorous, though not extravagant and ostentatious fitting up, and the decent condition of its Burial-ground. And the Laity should be encouraged to bestow a portion, not only of their money, but also of their time and attention, on religious Associations connected with the Church; such as our Missionary Societies, the English Christian Knowledge Society, and our Irish Association which has like objects. A connexion with Associations of this character, having a *definite* and clearly-understood object, has no tendency to foster, but rather to repress the Spirit of *Party*; that great bane of pure religion and sound morality. And to be actively employed in such modes as I have been alluding to, tends (as I observed just now) to increase men's interest in the great objects for which Churches exist. Exertions in any cause, and even sacrifices made for it, tend to endear to any one the cause itself. Actively befriending another heightens the feeling of attachment to him: services rendered to one's country heightens the spirit of patriotism: exertions in the cause of a Party aggravate party-spirit. And thus it is in all cases. Men always prize the more any objects towards which they have themselves *done* something.

Accordingly when, on first joining our Irish Association just now mentioned, I found that the Lay-members of it (who were not very numerous)

seldom if ever attended the Board-meetings, supposing, I believe, that this would have been reckoned an unbecoming intrusion, I used endeavours,—and those endeavours have been blessed with no inconsiderable degree of success,—not only to increase the numbers both of the Clerical and of the Lay-members of the Society, but also to induce those of both Classes to take a part in its business.

I pursued a similar course in reference to the venerable and most useful "*Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.*" It was formerly so little known in Ireland, that on my first proposing to establish an auxiliary Branch, there was actually an objection raised against it as a *new* Society, though it was then far advanced in the second century of its existence. Since, however, it has been better known, and better supported. And I hope that the special effort which is now being made in its behalf will meet with such success as its merits claim, and its pressing need calls for.

We must not however omit to warn men that all such things as those I have been speaking of are not *Religion*, but only the *cultivation* of Religion; not the end but the means. And the same may be said even of attendance on divine Worship, and the study of Holy Scripture. There is a danger—and no part of the christian course is exempt from dangers—of mistaking the *means* of grace for the Fruits of the Spirit. And against this and all

other dangers, it is our part to put our People on their guard. But after all, it is quite necessary that there *should* be a cultivation of Religion, and that the means of grace should be employed. And it is for us to teach men to *use* what is good, without abusing it.

§ 12. As I have been speaking of the advantage of employing Lay-  
*Parochial  
Visitors.*
agencies, I cannot but advert, in conclusion, to an Institution subsisting in my own Dioceses,—that of the *Parochial Visitors*,—to whose great utility I can bear testimony, from the experience of a good many years. I have mentioned it under the head of Lay-agency, because although the majority of the persons employed are students for the Ministry, this is not the case with all, nor is there any rule confining it to those. Such of the Visitors, however, as do ultimately take Holy Orders, have almost always borne testimony to the very great benefit they have derived, in reference to their professional course, from the training they have thus received.

In many country-parishes much valuable aid may be afforded to the parish Pastor by such assistants. But in large cities there are many parishes, in which it is quite impossible for the Clergy to do all that is desirable, without the aid of these Visitors. Their business is not to supersede the labours of the Parish Clergyman but to render them more effectual, by ascertaining, through the means

of visits, the condition of each family, in respect of their attendance or neglect of public worship, and the Holy Communion,—the state of religious Education of themselves and of their children,—and other such particulars, beyond what would be likely otherwise to come to the knowledge of the Rector. And they bring before him the doubts, difficulties, and scruples, which they will often find existing in the minds of those they visit. And although they are not expressly engaged for the purpose of religious controversy, they are sometimes the more likely, even from that very circumstance, to find opportunities of offering a word in season to those of other religious communions.

Moreover, when we are seen manifesting a sedulous and watchful care for the improvement of our own People, this furnishes an indication that we are not seeking to make men professing converts for political or party purposes, but are aiming to promote among all men the knowledge and the practice of what we believe to be true Religion. And it may be added that every family of really pious members of our Church, well acquainted with its doctrines, observers of its ordinances, and consistent in life, must be, by their example, performing the part of unobtrusive, but not inefficient Missionaries of that Church, among their neighbours of other communions.

The Institution I have been speaking of bears a modest and perhaps not very attractive title, and

is not of so showy and striking a character, as some others to which it is not at all inferior in point of practical utility. And I cannot but think that if it were better known, and if more attention were bestowed on the beneficial character of its operations, we should no longer have to lament the inadequate support it has hitherto received from the Lay-members of our Establishment.



## APPENDIX.

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### A.

THE following is a copy of the Petition, as presented in each House of Parliament in 1843. It does not differ materially from that of the Clergy of the Diocese of Kildare—I know not by whom suggested, or by whom drawn up—which was entrusted to me for presentation ten years before :—

*“To the Lords Spiritual and Temporal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled.*

“The humble Petition of the Members of the United Church of England and Ireland, whose names and addresses are hereunto subscribed,

“Sheweth :

“That your Petitioners—aware that all human arrangements, however originally excellent, are liable to be affected by change of circumstances, so as to require measures to be adopted for their adjustment—feel deeply that the United Church of England and Ireland has suffered disadvantage from a similar cause, operating upon her position as connected with the Civil Legislature of their country.

“That the Church of England and Ireland, viewed as

an important part of the Church of Christ, ought, as such, to enjoy the privilege permitted to other Churches and religious Bodies, of possessing *within herself*, such a power of regulation in her distinctly spiritual affairs, as may best promote the due discharge of the sacred duties required of her Ministers, and provide for the religious discipline of her own members.

“That, for the attainment of this, there is required the establishment of some deliberative Ecclesiastical Body, having authority to frame regulations, and to decide in questions of doubt and difficulty, respecting all such matters.

“That ‘THE CONVOCATION,’ supposing it adapted, not only to former times, but to all times, is fallen into desuetude; and that neither to revive that, nor to make any provision for supplying its place, is clearly at variance with the design of our Reformers.

“That the two Houses of Parliament were not originally designed, and were never considered as adapted to be the sole legislative authority for the Church, in *spiritual* matters; and that if they ever had been so adapted, the recent changes in the constitution of those Houses—admitting, without distinction, to seats in the Legislature, those who may, or may not, be members of this Church—have given rise to a peculiar unfitness, and indeed unwillingness on their part, to be called on to exercise this authority in behalf of this Church.

“That your Petitioners consider it highly important to the safety and prosperity of her Majesty’s dominions, that this Church should not continue unprovided with a government, inasmuch as the doctrines and precepts which she maintains, must, when duly inculcated, always exercise the most important influence over a large proportion of

her Majesty's subjects, teaching them on the highest grounds to discharge their social duties with diligence and fidelity.

“Your Petitioners are sincerely attached to the existing Constitution of the Church of which they are members, and are not making application for any specific changes, but for the establishment of an Ecclesiastical Government, which shall have authority to determine what is, and what is not, binding on the members of this Church, and to pronounce respecting any changes which individuals may have introduced, or may propose to have introduced.

“And your Petitioners have been the more encouraged to make this application to your Lordships, from the distinguished notice which petitions on the subject of it have obtained in your Lordships' House, in recent Sessions of Parliament.

“Your Petitioners, therefore, humbly pray that your Lordships will be pleased to consider what measures should be adopted for securing the efficiency of this Church, so as the better to enable her, in the existing circumstances of the country, to carry forward the great objects of her original institution.

“And your Petitioners will ever pray for the welfare and prosperity of your Lordships.”

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## B.

A good many years ago, in the reign of his late Majesty, it was understood that a design was entertained by some members of our Church, of seeking to have introduced some alterations (I know not what) in our Formularies. Thereupon a Memorial to the King, deprecating

everything of the kind, was drawn up and was signed by several of the Bishops and Clergy. Though I had nothing to do with the former movement, and had no reason to believe that the contemplated alterations would prove to be such as I could recommend, when the Memorial was put before me for signature I declined, on the ground that it was likely to be understood as maintaining principles which appeared to me objectionable. I was desired to draw up a statement of my reasons, which I accordingly did. The Memorial was eventually presented to the King; but some of those who had signed it, frankly acknowledged (as I was informed), after seeing my objections as stated, that they had signed with inconsiderate haste, and that they regretted having done so.

I have judged it advisable to reprint these documents, that the reader may be the better enabled to judge for himself of the changes, whether for the better or for the worse, which public opinion has undergone during the years that have since elapsed.

My own opinions on these points, I trust I should have been found ready to retract if any good reason for it had been shown; but, as it is, they remain unaltered.

The following is the Address referred to:—

“To the King’s Most Excellent Majesty.

“We the undersigned, Archbishops, Bishops, and Clergy, of the Irish Branch of the United Church of England and Ireland, dutifully crave permission to approach your Majesty with a Declaration of our deliberate, unshaken, and cordial attachment to the Polity, the Doctrine, and the Worship of the Church, as by law established.

“Admitted, as we have been, to the Ministry of that Church, on the faith of our avowed adherence to its prin-

ciples and institutions, such a declaration on our part might be deemed superfluous in ordinary seasons.

“ But the times in which our lot is cast are not of an ordinary character. We trust, therefore, that it will not be deemed unbecoming in us, if, actuated solely by a sense of duty, we openly make profession of our sentiments, hoping that we may thereby contribute, under the divine blessing, to check the prevailing fondness for innovation, to give mutual encouragement and support to each other, and to remove that disquietude and distrust, which have been produced by the apprehension of ill-advised changes, in the minds of those who are committed to our spiritual care.

“ We conscientiously believe that the polity of our Church is modelled, as closely as diversity of circumstances will permit, on the Ecclesiastical institutions founded by our Lord’s Apostles, and transmitted to us by their successors; that the system of our doctrine embodies ‘ the faith once delivered to the Saints;’ and that our Liturgy is framed after the pattern of the best remains of primitive Christianity, conveying at all times the fundamental truths of Holy Scripture, and not seldom, in its express words.

“ In a Church thus pure in doctrine, and Apostolical in formation, whose religious services are endeared by long usage to the devotional feelings of its members, and whose polity harmonizes with institutions of the State, to which it has ever proved itself a faithful and judicious ally, we deprecate the introduction of undefined changes and experiments; and we humbly trust that no alteration will be made in the discipline and services of our Church but by the sanction and recommendation of its Spiritual Guardians.

“ Should, however, abuses be found to exist in our Ecclesiastical Establishment, we profess our readiness to co-operate for their removal.

“But we humbly submit to your Majesty, in the language of the Preface to our Book of Common Prayer, that Experience showeth, that where a change hath been made of things advisedly established, no evident necessity so requiring, sundry inconveniences have thereupon ensued, and those more and greater, than the evils that were intended to be remedied by such change.’

“That, accordingly, it is wiser to submit to small and questionable inconvenience, than, by impatiently attempting its removal, to expose ourselves to the risk of great and undoubted evil.

“That if it be ‘reasonable,’ as in the language of the same Preface we admit it to be, ‘that upon weighty and important considerations, according to the various exigency of times and occasions, such changes and alterations should be made in our forms of divine Worship, and the rites and ceremonies appointed to be used therein, as to those that are in place of authority should from time to time seem either necessary or expedient;’ it is no less reasonable, that such alterations as are at any time made, should be shown to be either ‘necessary or expedient;’ and that we do not apprehend this to have been done in respect of the changes which various persons, widely differing among themselves, are understood to have in contemplation.

“That a general agreement as to the things requiring correction, the nature and extent of such correction, and the mode of applying it, may be reasonably demanded from the persons desirous of change, as an indispensable preliminary to the concurrence of others with their views.

“That an opening once made for innovation gives occasion to alterations, not limited to the particulars which were supposed to stand in need of redress, but indefinitely extended to others, which were previously esteemed to be free from all objection.

“ And that thus incalculable danger, arising from small beginnings, may accrue to our Apostolical form of polity, and to the purity of the Christian doctrine incorporated in our Public Services.

“ All which is dutifully submitted, &c.”

*Remarks on the foregoing Address.*

It should be premised, that in speaking of the notions *likely to be conveyed* by the proposed Address, it is not meant at once to assume, that such notions are necessarily those of the framers of it, and are what they designed to convey. On the contrary, one of the dangers to be specially guarded against is, that of being understood to mean something different from what the signers of the Address do mean.

General experience is sufficient to teach, that no form of expression can be secure from cavil and misrepresentation. But care should be taken, at least, to guard against such objections as may appear reasonable, and against being misunderstood by those who have no ill design.

(1.) The expression of “attachment to the polity of the Church as by law established,” may excite alarm in some, and afford a handle to others, as appearing to have a reference to the restoration of Convocation (undeniably a portion of the legally established polity of the Church), to the active exercise of its rights and functions; of Convocation, too, it should be remembered, not modified in its constitution to suit the circumstances of the times, by any new enactments (for *that* would not be the polity *now* by law established), but precisely as it was originally constituted, and as, in theory, it still exists, under laws which were never repealed. Now, this is a measure which many, perhaps most of the framers of the Address, are not pre-

pared to recommend, but which has been by some persons strongly and publicly urged.

The above interpretation might be strengthened by the allusion afterwards made to "the sanction and approbation of the spiritual guardians of the Church;" they having no power, except as assembled in Convocation, to sanction any such measures as are there alluded to.

(It is by no means implied in this observation, that any step should be taken in ecclesiastical matters, independently of the recommendation of the spiritual guardians of the Church; it is only meant to point out the reference which, in the document as it stands, that phrase would be supposed to have to Convocation.)

(2.) If again any should understand by "the polity of the Church as by law established," not the *original*, and still legally existing institution (such as is referred to in the Preface to the Book of Common Prayer), but *that at present sanctioned by actual usage*; this, evidently, leaves the Church under the legislative control, entirely, of the two Houses of Parliament, in conjunction with the King. Now, an expression of approbation of this comparatively *recent* state of things, may be deemed inconsistent with the allusions made to, and the credit claimed for, the *antiquity* of our institutions. It is not much above a century since the ecclesiastical powers of Convocation have been wholly transferred to Parliament; but still those powers continued, till a very few years ago, to be vested in persons professing themselves *Members of the Church*. The admissibility of Dissenters of all classes into Parliament, and perhaps still more, their eligibility as advisers of the Crown, is in fact a complete and very recent remodeling, in a most fundamental point, of the whole Church polity.

(3.) It is apprehended that many persons sincerely convinced of the excellence of the fundamental principles, and the doctrines, ordinances, &c. of the Established Church, may, even from that very conviction, object to its being defended on grounds which would serve *equally well* for the defence of the most enormous corruptions. It is well known, for instance, that the "disagreements among Protestants" were urged from the first, and still are urged, as the favourite defence of the Romish Church. The Reformers, the "persons desirous of change," were called upon, as the "indispensable preliminary," to come to "a general agreement as to the things requiring correction, the nature and extent of such correction, and the mode of applying it."\* The adoption, therefore, of a similar line of defence, would be likely, on the one hand, to afford a triumph to Roman Catholics; and, on the other hand, might be construed by some into an admission that it is not felt safe to place the defence of the doctrines and institutions of the Church on their own intrinsic merits, without having recourse to the discrepancies among those who profess themselves Reformers;—discrepancies which it is well known always have existed, and always will, among the objectors to real, no less than to imaginary abuses.

(4.) And this is so notoriously the case, that it may also perhaps be thought there is something disingenuous in the profession of readiness to introduce alterations, when all who propose any shall have come to an agreement. This, it will be said, is only a circuitous mode of saying, *ad Græcos Kalendas*, or never. "There is no reason," it may

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\* Thus a Jew, when invited to listen to christian arguments, will usually require "as a preliminary" a complete *agreement* of all Christians as to all points.

be urged, why the opinion may not be entertained and frankly avowed, not only that no alterations are in themselves necessary, but that none can even safely be admitted; and beyond this, that it is not even safe to institute any inquiry with a view to ascertain whether this be the case or not; but an indirect mode of expressing any opinion, indicates a secret consciousness that it will not stand the test of argument.

(5.) The declaration, again, of "readiness, in case abuses should be found to exist in the Establishment, to co-operate for their removal," has a vagueness which, perhaps, may be conceived to be intentional; and, at any rate, leaves an opening for much misconstruction. "Who," it may be asked, "is to point out the abuses? and to whom? And who is to decide whether they *are* abuses? and with whom, and how is there to be co-operation?" Is it meant that when the existence of an abuse shall have been (in pamphlets, or newspapers, or in whatever way) satisfactorily proved to *each of those who signed* the Address, they will then co-operate for its removal? But with whom, and in what way, can they co-operate in any collective capacity, since they are only so many *individuals*, possessing neither legislative power, nor authority to decide, nor any corporate existence? Or is it meant that when the existence of abuses shall have been proved to *the King and Parliament* (who alone, at present, have this power), the signers of the Address will acquiesce in their decision? To put forth a statement so understood, would probably induce all who wish for any alterations to hasten forward petitions to the King and Parliament for the remedy of alleged abuses. Or does it, lastly, mean to recommend the appointment of some Body of men for the express purpose of making the inquiries and decisions alluded to? But if

this be meant, it ought to have been distinctly stated, and suggestions offered as to the character and mode of such an appointment.

Such are likely to be the remarks made on the paragraph in question.

(6.) Lastly, it is probable that objections will be raised to the mode in which reference is made to the Preface to the Book of Common Prayer. It will be recollected that that Preface is a vindication of certain alterations which had just been introduced; and sets it forth as the principle of the Church of England, "to keep the mean between the two extremes of too much stiffness in refusing, and of too much easiness in admitting any variation from it." And it will be remarked, that the half sentence quoted in the Address, is followed by a defence of the practice of introducing "from time to time, according to the various exigency of occasions, such alterations as to those in authority may seem either necessary or expedient."

[In a subsequent paragraph, introduced into the Address since its first publication, additional citations are made from this Preface. It may be observed, in reference to this paragraph, that the *signers of the Address*, however numerous and respectable, are not *those in authority*, not being assembled in Convocation, or being in any way authorized to decide the question. If *they*, therefore, do not apprehend that this or that has been shown to be necessary or expedient, it may be answered that they are at present, only so many *individuals*, not empowered, as such, to pronounce on the question.]

And it will also be remarked, that the Preface is so far from considering, as a reason against any such measure, the prevalence at any particular time of a "fondness for innovation leading to proposals either of dangerous conse-

quence, or frivolous and vain," that it pointedly alludes to that very prevalence at that very time ; apparently giving that as a reason for distinguishing from each other suggestions of different descriptions, and for making concessions (when it could be done without mischief) even to some whose scruples it considered as excessive, for the sake of "cutting off occasion from them that seek occasion of cavil or quarrel," &c. &c.

"Now supposing," it may be urged, "that you consider the principles laid down in this Preface as objectionable, you should either establish your objections, or at least not make an appeal to it ; or if you think them sound, but not applicable to the present times, the reason for this distinction ought to be stated. As it stands, the Address is likely to be regarded as at variance with that very document of our Church to which it appeals."

It may be added that that Preface will be understood to imply an attachment to the Church as "deliberate, unshaken, and cordial," as can be evinced by the signers of the Address ; yet the Preface commends the compliance with the applications made to the King for inquiry, as denoting an inclination "to give satisfaction (as far as could reasonably be expected) to all his subjects of what persuasion soever."

And alterations are stated to have been actually introduced with this view, even under the full persuasion "that the Book, as it stood before, did not contain any thing contrary to sound doctrine, or which is not fairly defensible against opponents." Now, though infallibility is not claimed for Bishop Sanderson and those who sanctioned this Preface, it must be admitted to be a document of very high authority with those at least who expressly *refer* to it. And by so doing, they will be understood to bear their

testimony, not only to the general *soundness* of its principles, but also (unless they distinctly state the contrary) to the *applicability* of those principles to the present occasion.

Many of the above objections appear likely to be so strongly urged, that unless care be taken to obviate them, it will not only be exposed to much misconstruction, but may afford a plausible pretext for the framing of counter-petitions of a dangerous character, as leading to ill-advised changes, and to the other evils adverted to in the Address, and to be so deeply deprecated.

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C.

I have myself no doubt that the actually existing feeling on this subject very greatly exceeds the public manifestations of it that I have alluded to.

If any Bishop wishes to ascertain as truly as possible how far this is the case, his course should evidently be to confer *privately*, and *singly*, with his Clergy, and also with such respectable Lay-members of the Church as show the most interest in matters connected with religion; encouraging each person to speak his own unbiassed sentiments, by giving him full assurance that whatever views he may adopt and express on the subject shall not *operate to his prejudice* as far as the favour of his Diocesan is concerned.

But to take for granted that the Clergy, generally, are averse to a certain measure because they do not openly recommend it,—when perhaps each of them apprehends that by so doing he should produce no effect but that of raising a prejudice against himself,—and to profess readi-

ness to take the subject into consideration whenever a large number of the Clergy shall have met, and concerted some plan in relation to it,—which *they are expressly forbidden* (in the Canons) to do, on pain of excommunication,—this evidently cannot afford any assurance either to ourselves or to the Public, of the real state of men's sentiments.

THE END.

CONDITION OF A CHURCH MILITANT.

A CHARGE,

DELIVERED AT THE

ANNUAL VISITATION OF THE DIOCESE OF DUBLIN,

IN THE

CATHEDRAL OF CHRIST-CHURCH, DUBLIN,

*16th June, 1863.*

BY RICHARD WHATELY, D.D.

*ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.*

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# A C H A R G E,

ETC.

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§ 1. **O**NE may sometimes hear the remark made, that an Episcopal Charge usually refers to some new and peculiar difficulties and dangers, to which either our own Church in particular, or Christianity in general, is, at the time, especially exposed. And some are thence perhaps led to consider the Church's rulers as somewhat of the character of alarmists; exaggerating grievances, or apprehending imaginary dangers. But in truth, difficulties and dangers will always beset the Church Militant here on Earth, till it shall become the Church Triumphant in Heaven: and though these are not necessarily greater at each successive period than formerly, yet they call for special attention, as being, in general, somewhat different in form from those that have been before encountered. The Sea is in many places making encroachments on the land, not greater perhaps than

*Different  
forms of dan-  
gers to the  
Church.*

in past ages, but in fresh places, so as to require fresh embankments to resist devastation; the ancient sea-walls being no longer serviceable. And there is something analogous to this in the perils and difficulties which beset the Church. If not absolutely greater than formerly, they will perhaps have something of novelty in kind.

To take one example of this: In the last and in preceding generations, all, or nearly all, of those who denied the truth of our Scriptures, avowed themselves adverse to Christianity; but now, a very large proportion of them profess themselves Christians; though the Christianity which they profess is something far more remote from what is commonly understood by the word, than the religion of the Jews, or of the Mahometans.\*

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\* As a sample of the doctrine alluded to, I subjoin a passage from an author in some repute with a certain school:—

“The true Christianity—a faith like Christ’s in the infinitude of Man—is lost. None believeth in the soul of Man, but only in some man or person old and departed! In how many Churches, and by how many prophets, tell me, is Man made sensible that he is an infinite soul; that the earth and heavens are passing into his mind; and that he is drinking for ever the soul of God!

“The very word Miracle, as pronounced by christian Churches, gives a false impression; it is a monster; it is not one with the blowing clover and the falling rain. . . . Man’s life is a miracle, and all that Man doth. . . . A true conversion, a true Christ, is now, as always, to be made by the reception of beautiful sentiments. The gift of God to the soul is not a vaunting, overpowering, excluding sanctity, but a sweet, natural goodness like thine and mine, and that thus invites thine and mine to be, and to grow.”

Yet those who hold this doctrine would not scruple to make that declaration, “on the true faith of a Christian,” to which some have attached such vast importance.

§ 2. In taking measures for guarding against any dangers we may be exposed to, it is perhaps the wisest course to look out, in the first instance, for any errors that may have been committed by injudicious defenders. To point out, and to dwell upon such errors, may be less acceptable perhaps, but is more profitable than to advert exclusively to the faults of opponents. Errors on our own side are both the more likely to be overlooked by us, and also the more likely to damage our cause. Any error on this side, even though small in itself, may lead to important results;—sometimes *directly*, and sometimes *indirectly*: *directly*, when some false principle is applied more extensively than was expected by those who first laid it down; or again, when some doctrine which has a foundation in truth, is so mis-stated, exaggerated, or misapplied, as to become dangerously false. And, *indirectly*, any error, in principle or in practice, may lead to great and unforeseen results by creating a dangerous *re-action*. For, it is a true and trite remark, that the generality of Mankind are prone to rush from one extreme to its opposite, and to mistake reverse of wrong for right.

*Dangers  
from unwise  
friends.*

Not only, however, is this truth frequently in practice overlooked, but there are some who, though admitting, generally, that re-action may occasionally be apprehended, are accustomed to

deny it in each individual instance. And there are some who triumphantly urge the undeniable truth, that an entire series of evils cannot *all* have originated in re-action. And this indeed, is as obvious as that the initiatory motion of a pendulum must have been caused by some external impulse. But when once set in motion, it may long continue to oscillate. And in like manner, Mankind may often be found to vibrate, as it were, from one extreme to the opposite.

§ 3. We may take as an instance of the misapplication of a just principle, the injudicious advocacy which is now prevalent, of the doctrine of *Toleration*. It is a doctrine perfectly right in itself; i.e. No one ought to be liable to secular penalties for conscientious religious error: but this doctrine may be, and has been of late, so misapplied, as to justify the conduct of one who retains office in a Church, (be it a sound or an erroneous Church) to whose doctrines he is opposed. And with this conduct some are justly chargeable, even of those who the most loudly condemn it in others whose opinions differ from their own.

And I cannot but strongly suspect that the remarkable prevalence in the present day, of this misdirection of the principle of toleration, is to be traced, in some measure, to such a re-action as I have just now adverted to. The persecution, on two occasions, some years ago, raised against a

Divinity-professor, who was most unjustifiably assailed, and condemned unheard, on charges which were plainly proved to be a mere pretext,\* produced before long a strong and indignant sympathy, such as has been since extended to cases to which no such sympathy was due. For, the greater part of Mankind are apt to overlook distinctions, perhaps very important, between cases that have something in common. There cannot therefore, I think, be a doubt that we are now feeling some of the effects of what then took place. Besides the intrinsic and immediate evil of an unjust act, those who were clear-sighted foresaw with dread the lasting discredit, and consequent danger, which the Church itself would thence incur. The spectacle of a number of the Clergy of our Church, combining to hunt down most unfairly an individual obnoxious to them, created naturally, however unreasonably, a distrust of the Ecclesiastical Body generally, and a disposition to consider any one exposed to our censure, as the victim of persecuting bigotry.

§ 4. One of the instances of a dangerous reaction, produced by an error which some might consider, in itself, trifling, is that which has resulted from the theory of what is called “plenary inspiration;” meaning by this an inspiration extending to matters quite unconnected with Religion,—and

*Claim, for  
Scripture, of  
verbal inspi-  
ration.*

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\* See pamphlet on *The Church and the Universities.*

extending also to the very *words* employed, so as to imply that those whom we call the Sacred Writers, were literally no more than mere *Writers*, putting down the exact words that had been dictated to them; instead of being Men who recorded in their own language the information which had been supernaturally communicated to them,—and that only as far as *Religion* is concerned. And some, perhaps, who do not believe this, think it right to connive at, or encourage this belief among the mass of the people, for fear of what is called “unsettling their minds.” But persons of even no extraordinary acuteness, will be likely to reflect that if this verbal inspiration be needful as an adjunct of a Revelation, there must be need of an infallible guidance to ascertain precisely what the words *are* which were thus divinely dictated.\* Yet it must be well known that there are in many hundred instances, various readings of Scripture; and that the student is left, in each instance, to judge for himself which is to be preferred. Moreover, according to the above hypothesis, it would be needful that the words of each *Translation* also should be divinely inspired, so as to make it, in fact, an Original. And yet we know that all translations do not agree with each other. And I need

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\* And further still, what was the exact sense in which those words were understood when written: for, in process of time, words and modes of speech are apt to pass into new meanings and uses, different from their original intention.

hardly observe that it is through translations alone that the greater part of Mankind can be instructed in Scripture.

I have known an instance however of a person maintaining that the mass of the people ought to be left, or led, to believe, either that our Authorized Version was the original,\* or that it is inspired and infallible; though our Translators were so far from

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\* The following is an extract from the Report of Evidence given before a Parliamentary Committee on Irish National Education:—

“I should object in general to any Version different from our own, without inquiring into the question whether it was faithfully translated or not; because I conceive that when you give the Scriptures to a child, you present him with the Word of God; and you should tell him that you are presenting him with an infallible guide; and that anything that shakes his opinion in that guide, so far mars the purposes for which you have given the Book; and I cannot conceive anything to do that more effectually than a diversity of Translation of the Scriptures.”—[Lords, p. 582.]

[Mr. Wyse.] “Are you aware that the Version of the Psalms used in the Church-services is very different from that to be found in the Authorized Version? [Ans.] I am.—Do you not think the child who hears them recited in the Church, and afterwards reads them in the Authorized Version in school, will naturally notice this difference of version? [Ans.] I do not think there is one child in a thousand who knows of the existence of the difference, or ever has read the Authorized Version in the Bible; they read it in the Prayer-Book. I am ready to go further, and say, I am very sorry there *are* two versions; I am very sorry that one was not altered at the time the Gospels and the Epistles were; but I do not see why, because there is this difference, that you should extend it.—Should this difference be perceived by the child, do you think any injury would arise from it? [Ans.] I should think that a very troublesome question to answer to any child.—So that it is a matter of contingency only, depending upon the capacity of the child, his acuteness, and opportunities, whether his mind may not be injured by this difference of Version? [Ans.] I think it can be explained to the child; but the fewer points of that kind there are to be explained to the child, I think so much the better.” [Commons, 2248, 2251.]

making any such pretension, that they themselves have in many instances recorded their doubts, by giving one rendering in the Text, and another in the Margin.

*Denial of the divine authority of Scripture.* § 5. It is true that the various readings and various versions, do not at all affect the general drift of the christian instruction contained in our Scriptures; but they overthrow the hypothesis of verbal inspiration. And that overthrow has led, by a violent reaction, to a denial of all divine Authority to our Scriptures, and in fact to the total subversion of anything that can be called a Revelation. The rejection of the Old Testament is not, indeed, always accompanied by a denial, in express words, of the claims of the New Testament; but it virtually implies it. For, that any one should seriously believe that he knows more than Jesus of Nazareth did, of God's dealings with his people, and yet should be sincere in professing to believe that that same Jesus was a divine Messenger, seems utterly incredible, except under the supposition of insanity. True it is that the inconsiderate will often hastily admit something that at the first glance appears plausible, and will at once reject what seems intrinsically improbable, without pausing to reflect what consequences that admission or that rejection will necessarily lead to. But there is a limit to this kind of rashness, when it does not amount to complete insanity. No one, surely, in

his senses, could really think that the God of Truth would send an inspired Prophet into the World, who should confirm people in their belief of a foolish legend intimately connected with their Religion;—a Prophet who should use such words as—“Moses wrote of me; and if ye believe not his Writings, how shall ye believe my Words?”—when, in truth, the pretended Writings of Moses are entitled to no credit whatever.

And again, if any one professing to believe Scripture, maintains, as some have done, that there was no *Gift of Tongues* at the Day of Pentecost,—that *Greek* was the Mother-tongue of all Nations; and that the Words which the Disciples spoke, in a fit of enthusiastic excitement, were merely an unusual and high-flown style of Greek,—he cannot wonder if he is suspected of trying an experiment on the credulity of his readers. That Men speaking sundry different Dialects of Greek, should admire, as something very eloquent, discourses in a strange and florid style, of which, accordingly, they could understand little or nothing, is perhaps far from unnatural; but that they should, all and each, recognize it, as their *own* tongue wherein they were born, is something harder to be believed than anything recorded in Scripture. The marvel which we do find related as occurring on the Day of Pentecost is every way far less strange than that which has been invented for the purpose of explaining it away.

*Dangers  
from rash  
language.*

§ 6. The rejection of that miracle, and of many others, has doubtless been encouraged by the rash language of some enthusiasts who speak of such events as occur at the present day in terms appropriate to those that are miraculous; and thus put a weapon into the hands of Infidels, which these are not slow to employ. There are some, as is well known, who profess to speak as they are “moved by the Spirit;” which is precisely the description given of the Disciples on the Day of Pentecost. There are some who describe themselves as speaking “with demonstration of the Spirit and of power,”—an expression in which the Apostle Paul is evidently referring to his display of sensible miracles, as the signs of an Apostle. And in reference to the religious Revivals which have of late taken place, persons have openly proclaimed their conviction that we were really in the midst of the time prophesied by Joel, when “your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.”

When these and similar pretensions to what in fact amounts to miraculous agency, are put forth, we need not wonder that Rationalists should step forward, (as, accordingly they have) saying—“All this is just what was done by the first promulgators of Christianity. Any remarkable event, they called a Miracle; just as you do. Like you, they considered as a divine revelation, or direction from

above, any strong conviction or strong impulse. Their miracles are only poetically-coloured pictures of such things as are taking place around us. Their inspiration—their guiding inward light—was only those vivid impressions, and those grand designs, which are common to you with them. Both cases are alike miraculous or non-miraculous. And in both, the belief in the Miracle is not the *cause*, but the effect of the reception of the doctrine.

I may add, that the evil I have been adverting to, is very much fostered by the careless practice, of persons who have no wrong intention, of applying the terms “providential” and “miraculous” to any narrow escape from danger, or other remarkable occurrence: as if God’s providence did not extend to all the affairs of the World, but only to some exceptional events. Not that such is, usually, the real meaning of most of those who employ such language; but the unthinking are apt to forget that, since the very object of language is to distinguish one thing from another, the designation of some rare and remarkable events as providential, conveys the idea that ordinary occurrences are *not* providential,—that a safe voyage, for instance, which is not called providential, is less the gift of God’s providence, than a wonderful escape from shipwreck.

This kind of language, which is but too common, has therefore a manifest tendency to confound the miraculous with the non-miraculous, and ultimately to bring down the former to the level of the latter.

The result has been, as might have been anticipated, that the so-called Rationalists have undertaken to explain away all the Scripture Narratives of Miracles, as merely somewhat highly-coloured records of ordinary occurrences, or, in some cases, of rather curious accidents.

*Various cases of re-actions.* § 7. Numerous other instances might be given of the kind of danger which I have been adverting to. For in truth the history of re-actions would be in a great degree the history of human affairs. Thus, the claim to Authority on behalf of a Church, pushed to an unwise extreme, led to a revolt against all Church-Authority, and to the prevalence of various irregularities. This, again, brought about a movement in the opposite direction, terminating, in many instances, in secession to the Church of Rome; and in many more instances, introduced into our own Church, Romish principles and practices. This last movement, again, produced a re-action towards the prevalence of total Infidelity, or something nearly approaching to it; in those very localities, especially, in which that movement had originated.

This result, indeed, I took occasion distinctly to predict a good many years before it actually took place. I foresaw and foretold that the exaltation of supposed Church-traditions to a level with the Scripture,—the disparagement of the employment of Reason in matters connected with Religion,

—and above all, the system of what is called “Economy” or “double-doctrine,” must lead before long, (as in fact it *has* led) to a more or less open rejection of the Gospel.

On more than one recent occasion I endeavoured, as you will doubtless remember, to show the desirableness of introducing, in a regular way, and under competent Authority, some small alterations into our Church-services, and also into the Authorized Version of Scripture. The need of some Ecclesiastical Government invested with this competent Authority, and consisting exclusively of Members of our Church, is a point to which, as you will recollect, I endeavoured to call attention on several occasions a good many years ago, when there were very few who agreed with me; though now there is a general concurrence on this point.

And to introduce some such alterations as I have alluded to, would be fully in accordance with the principles laid down in the admirable Preface to our Book of Common Prayer. It is remarkable that the pertinacity with which this has been resisted, was complained of by the illustrious Bacon in his own time. He urges that this excessive and unwise dread of alteration, is as unreasonable as if any one should maintain that though houses and castles require repair from time to time, Churches and Chapels are buildings that can never need any. And in another place he remarks very justly, that a bigoted adherence to what is established, has no

less tendency to lead to disturbances, than rash innovation itself.

*Results of excessive dread of Change.*      § 8. This observation appears to have received confirmation in our own time. Proposals have been put forth for such a thorough re-modelling of our Formularies, as would amount, or at least would be generally considered to amount, to an entire subversion of some of the doctrines of our Church. And such proposals (as I remarked in a recent Charge) raise up the greatest obstacle to any moderate and well-considered change; by creating an alarm not altogether without reason, against the beginning of any, even the smallest, change; as being merely the prelude to a complete revolution. And thus these two opposite extremes act and react on each other. The pertinacious opposition to any, even well-considered, modification, has led to an impatient craving for violent and fundamental changes; and this, again, has, as I have just observed, increased the dread of any even moderate change.

*Attachment to the Authorized Version.*      § 9. Again the clamour which of late is not unfrequently heard, for a total rejection of the Authorized Version, and the substitution of a completely new one,—this has been fostered by, and in turn tends to foster, that over-zealous and almost idolatrous veneration for our present Version, which forbids the gradual introduction from time to time even

of the smallest and most obvious improvements and such as no one could deny to *be* improvements, called for either by the changes in our own language or by the establishment of preferable readings, or of more correct rendering.\*

The dread of dangerous innovations, though not in itself unreasonable, has in this case been carried to such a faulty extreme as is not unlikely to lead to those very innovations.

But evils even still more serious have resulted from an excessive and unwise attachment to our Authorized Version. There is, as you are well aware, a kind of rivalry between that and the Douay Version which is in the hands of the Roman Catholics; and though both versions contain all the essentials of Christianity (indeed I do not know of any Translation whatever that does not), some Protestants were so unwise as to denounce the Douay Version altogether, representing it as utterly unfaithful. This afforded an occasion to the Romish Priests to represent what they call the Protestant Bible as purposely falsified in order to support our doctrines. This injudicious proceeding, however, is much less common now than formerly. And it appears, I may add, to be more perceived now than formerly, that the general agreement among different translations made by distinct and sometimes rival Churches, furnishes a

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\* See Hall's *Companion to the New Testament*; and Booker's *Obsolete Words*.

decisive and satisfactory proof to the mass of Mankind, (who, of course, cannot study Scripture in the Original) that they cannot have been imposed upon by any conspiracy among the learned. The several translations are so many independent witnesses, mutually confirming each other's testimony.

In order to keep clear of the above-mentioned rivalry, the Irish Education Board, as you are doubtless well aware, published, for the use of the National Schools, a large portion, both of the Old and of the New Testaments, in a new translation, not strictly following either of the former versions. This obtained the unanimous sanction of all the Commissioners, both Protestant and Roman Catholic. And the Publication comprised (besides a large portion of the Old Testament) the entire Gospel of Luke, and the whole Book of the Acts. The sanction thus given to such a work to be employed for the purposes of united education, was an event which surpassed my most sanguine hopes. But unhappily an unwise over-reverence for our Authorized Version led a large proportion of Protestants to decry the work, and oppose the use of it. Most industriously did they exercise their ingenuity in finding objections against the version ;\*

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\* One of the objections which was repeatedly put forward at public meetings, was, that an important passage in Luke's Gospel had been wholly omitted, by way of compromising a dispute which had arisen among the Commissioners, whether "Repent," or "Do penance," should be the rendering adopted. And of the many hundreds who believed and circulated this report, few or none took the

objections certainly not more numerous or more plausible than those which have been often brought against our Authorized Version, or than the objections, long since refuted, which have been of late revived, against the original Scriptures themselves. It is always unwise, and most especially so in these days, to foster in men the habit of at once rejecting everything against which some specious objections may be urged.

Besides other objections, however, the work was even denounced as a mutilation of Scripture; as if the Bible were *one* book, instead of being a collection of several distinct books; and were a book which children at school had been accustomed to read all through.

§ 10. The ultimate result, however, of this opposition has been the virtual suppression of the work; a measure which could never have been carried but for that opposition.

*Check  
given to the  
diffusion of  
Scriptural  
knowledge.*

Thus was neglected and finally lost, an opportunity which no one could have calculated on beforehand as likely to offer, and which no one can

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trouble to look into the book itself, to see whether it had any foundation in truth; it being in reality an entire fabrication. And of the party who invented and who circulated this calumnious falsehood, no one, as far as I know, has expressed any regret or shame.

Another objection which I remember hearing brought forward, related to the omission of the division into chapters and verses. It was urged that these are believed by the mass of the people to be the work of the Sacred Writers themselves; and that to undeceive them might unsettle their minds.

expect ever to return;—a golden opportunity for diffusing among the great mass of the Irish people such an amount of scriptural knowledge as they had never had hitherto, nor are ever likely to have hereafter. If it be true, as is generally believed, that a large proportion of Romanists dread, as unfavourable to their system, the general diffusion of Scripture-knowledge, though they are very unwilling openly to admit this, with what alarm these persons must have seen the Books I have been speaking of, placed, with the sanction of rulers of their own Church, in the hands of hundreds of thousands of the youth of their communion; and with what wondering exultation must they have seen the scheme defeated through the agency of Protestants! Of all the wonders (and they are not few or small) which have appeared in the last half-century, this will probably be accounted by our posterity as the most marvellous. They will regard it as a thing above all others strange and unaccountable, that when an opening was afforded for imparting to Roman Catholics as well as to Protestants,—under the sanction of Roman Catholic Ministers, a large amount of Scriptural instruction,—an amount which probably would have led most of them, in after years, to the study of the entire Bible,—this work should have been strenuously and perseveringly opposed, and finally defeated by Protestants; and that a whole generation, and probably all future generations, should

have been thus consigned to unscriptural darkness, through the efforts of persons zealous (though unwisely zealous) in the cause of scriptural instruction. This, I say, will probably be regarded hereafter as the greatest of all the wonders of the present age.

It is the part of a wise man to view the scenes and the transactions around him, just as they *will* be viewed by ordinary men a century hence. Not that the men of each successive generation are necessarily wiser than their forefathers; but their prejudices and errors will be *different*; and they will take a clear and just view of mistakes no greater perhaps than some others into which they themselves may have fallen.

Even now, however, it is probable that there are many who regret the course that was pursued, even of those who at the time approved of it. But this regret is not likely to be by most of them openly proclaimed; partly from a natural reluctance to acknowledge an error; and partly, perhaps, from a conviction that the opportunity rejected has been lost for ever, and that regret comes too late to be of any practical benefit.

§ 11. It is not, however, too late, even now, to effect something in the *Duty of our Clergy.* cause of popular education, though far less than was apparently within our reach several years ago. We may yet be able, as it were, to obtain one Sibylline book at the price which *three*

would have cost some time back. And when we cannot do all that we could wish, we should yet strive to do all that is possible. The system, accordingly, pursued at Trinity College, Dublin, is, as is well known, to impart secular instruction to all its members, of whatever persuasion; and religious instruction to all who will accept it; but to force it on none. And it seems but fair to proceed on the same principle in our dealings with our poorer countrymen. To force people to receive true religious instruction, is what we have no power to accomplish, and no right to attempt; but it is something gained if the mass of the people are enabled to read a copy of the Bible when put into their hands; and where but very few have this power, the circulation of useful Books is of course of small avail. Something, again, is gained, if the children are taught to read from books at least not positively pernicious. And something more is also gained by the diffusion of useful secular instruction. It is indeed a truth often elaborately proved, and ostentatiously proclaimed, though it has never been disputed, that mere secular knowledge, and mere intellectual culture, do not constitute a complete and sufficient education; any more than the ploughing and manuring of a field are sufficient culture without sowing it with good seed; but these prepare the land for the reception of the seed. And even so it is with education; gross ignorance and want of exercise of the rational powers leave the

mind as it were untilled, unfitted for the reception of truth, and prepared to adopt the most absurd superstitions.

§ 12. We are bound, therefore, to do our utmost to obtain for the mass of the population, if not the best conceivable education, at least the best that they can be brought to accept.

*Disadvantage to which an established Church is exposed.*

And to this the Clergy are doubly bound, not only as being their fellow-creatures and fellow-subjects, but also as being Ministers of an Endowed Church under the sanction of the State; which may be considered as thus committing to their care the moral and spiritual welfare of their people, as far as this can be promoted without oppressive encroachments on liberty.

Judicious efforts, therefore, on our part in that direction, besides being, we may trust, in themselves acceptable to our divine Master, have a tendency to strengthen the position of the Established Church, as such. For we must never forget that an Established and Endowed Church such as ours, is regarded (and not altogether unfairly) as thence liable to a certain peculiar responsibility.

And I may add, that a Church so situated has, besides the benefits thence accruing, certain peculiar disadvantages also, which ought not to be overlooked.

One of these disadvantages I will, in conclusion, briefly notice.

An Established Church is likely always to number among its nominal members a large proportion of the lukewarm and indifferent. Those who think little or nothing about any religion at all, will usually be content to swim with the stream, and to profess whatever religion is established; partly as a matter of fashion, and partly because they are thus saved from pecuniary expenditure. And hence many well-disposed and pious persons, but who are inaccurate thinkers, are apt to conclude that there is some intrinsic inferiority in the Church itself which is dishonoured by such lukewarm members; and that there must be more pure Christianity in the system of some Sect, most of whose members exhibit greater zeal. Yet the fact may perhaps be, that if that Sect and the Established Church were to change places, their respective proportions of the zealous and of the lukewarm would be reversed. Yet all this is overlooked by many well-meaning and zealous, but inconsiderate persons: and they hastily join some Sect, Alliance, or Party, which under some specious title, holds out promises of a purity and perfection unattainable here below.

The disadvantage I have been adverting to is one which cannot, from the nature of the case, be completely removed, but the danger arising from it may, I think, be lessened, by clearly and fully setting it before your people, and taking occasion to remind them from time to time, that Christianity

itself has been exposed to most unfair objections from infidels, on account of the careless lives of many professed Christians:—and to exhort them to judge fairly of the doctrines and of the system of our Church by viewing these as they are in themselves, and in their own natural and proper tendency; and not from the conduct and character of those careless professors whose adherence to the Church is merely a matter of fashion and convenience.

THE END.









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