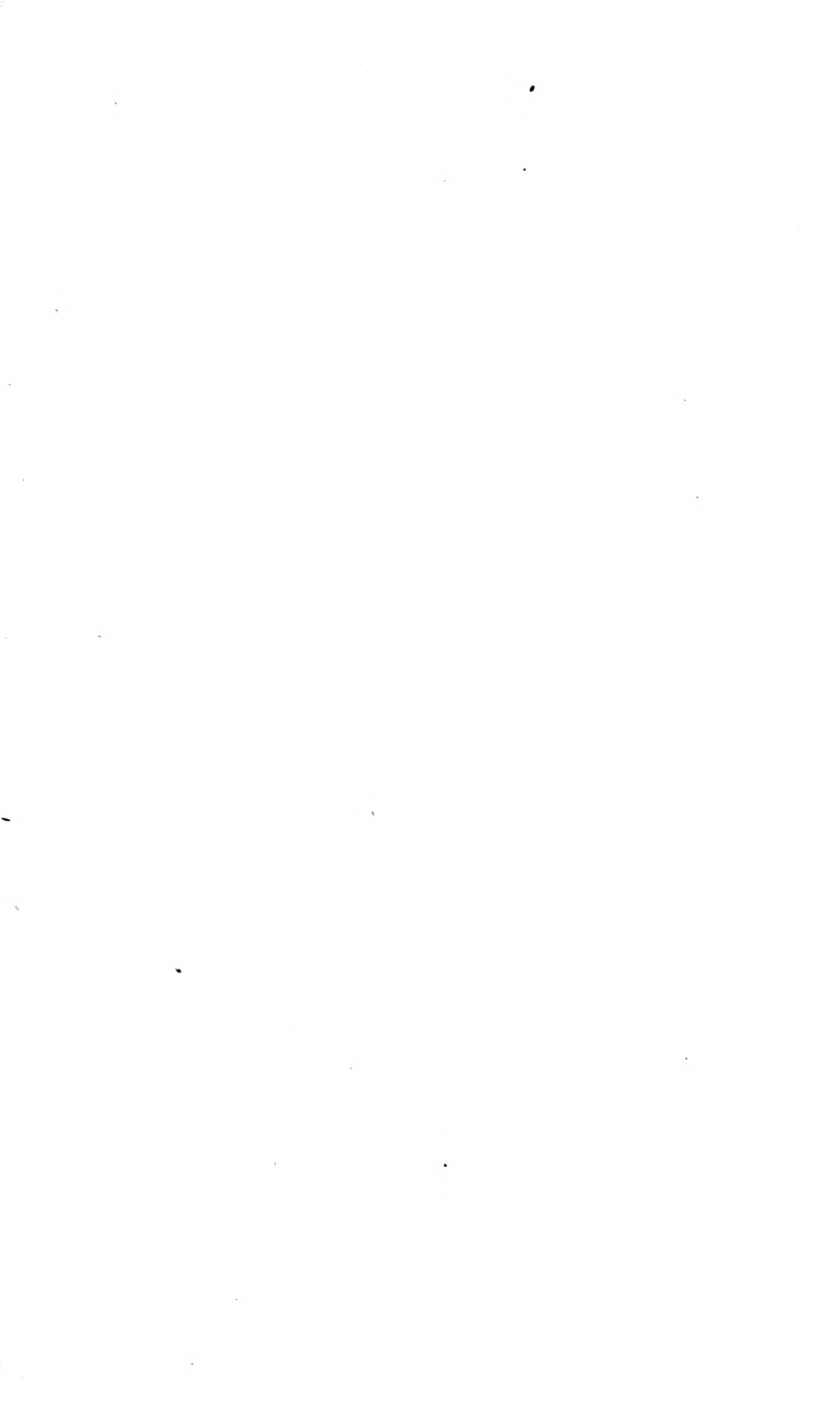


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THE

REAL DANGER OF THE CHURCH.



THE  
REAL DANGER  
OF THE  
CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

BY THE  
REV. W. GRESLEY, M.A.  
PREBENDARY OF LICHFIELD.

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REAL DANGER OF THE CHURCH.

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THE Church of England has just passed through a process of fermentation, a fever has raged in her veins, a storm has troubled her atmosphere; and now that these symptoms have subsided, a great change is found to have taken place within her. The Church is not what she was. Parties within her have shifted their ground. New combinations have taken place. Opinions and doctrines which had almost become extinct are again recognised and widely established.

Of those members who, in the process of fermentation, have been thrown off and separated from our communion, no one influenced by the ordinary feelings of Christian charity can think or speak otherwise than with feelings of the deepest sorrow; especially when we consider the offences thrown in their path, and how possible it is that we who remain may by our sins, and still more by our negligences, be, in no slight degree, answerable for their schism. For such as we are to exult in their departure—to rejoice that so many of our brethren, some of them so far superior to ourselves in the highest Christian graces, should have fallen,—would exhibit in ourselves a spirit very little akin to that of the Master whom we

serve. They have gone, and we yet remain: let us not be high-minded, but fear.

But now that the fever has subsided, the new aspect under which the Church presents itself demands our careful attention. The principal feature is, the growing up and establishment within her bosom of a new and energetic school, or rather the revival of a school, of theologians, which, though largely influential in various periods of our Church's former history, had more recently, till within the present generation, almost become unknown. The last ten or twelve years have seen the rapid progress and established influence of what are commonly called *Church Principles*. Hundreds, nay thousands, of our clergy, and these amongst the most zealous and learned, and, what is much to be considered, the *youngest*; a large proportion of our best-educated laymen; our aristocracy and gentry; our professional men, and men of business, and these undeniably amongst the most serious and religious,—have more or less embraced these principles. The rising generation at our Universities is deeply imbued with them. Nor are they confined to educated persons, though unquestionably most prevalent amongst them. On the contrary, wherever such principles have been fairly set forth, there will be found many families and individuals amongst the middle and the lower classes, in some instances whole parishes, enthusiastically attached to them, and embracing them with a warmth and energy not to be surpassed by those who have been enabled by their attainments more deeply to examine them. In truth,

Church principles have an equal efficacy to engage both the intellect and the feelings; and by their perfect adaptation to all degrees of intelligence and station, shew their close affinity with that sacred doctrine which is given for the salvation of all degrees of men.

Any attempt to mix up this school, which has become so widely spread in the English Church, with the Romanisers who have left us, would prove great ignorance of the real state of the question, or a deliberate intention of causing prejudice. True that, to a certain extent, and before the principles of each were fully understood, they have acted and sympathised together. Reverence for the Church was their bond of union. But now the difference is marked, and the separation defined for ever. They who, in their zeal for the Church, fixed their views on the Roman Pontiff, have withdrawn from us; those who remain look to the Church of England as their spiritual mother. Perhaps some Romanists in heart may yet be left behind; but to represent these as identified in principle with the Anglican body is an unfair and disingenuous manœuvre, unworthy of an honest controversialist. The characteristic feature of the Anglican party is, a devoted attachment *to their own Church*—not as being faultless, far from it; but as being the branch of the Church in which the providence of God has placed them,—their spiritual Mother—their Nurse, who has fed them from their youth with spiritual food. To persist in saying that men influenced by such principles are Romanists in heart, is

nothing less than a shameful calumny. Their fault, if fault it be, is being Ultra-Anglican. They acknowledge and firmly believe the Church of England to be the divinely-appointed instrument for administering the means of grace to the people of this land. They see no other instrument for Christianising or humanising the swarming millions of their countrymen. They have no hope but in her. If she fails them, all is over. Even now they are filled with alarm. They grieve for the inefficiency of her efforts. They wonder at the immorality, worldliness, and atheism, that abound. How is it, they ask, that a branch of God's true Church should have allowed such a state of things to exist? They believe the sole reason to be, that the Church has not been suffered to put forth her strength. Her influence has been impeded. She has been shorn of her due proportions. Her doctrines have been perverted or suppressed by false sons: her services curtailed and corrupted. Restore her to her true position, and she will yet accomplish her work. Thus the Anglican Churchman stands in a position analogous to that of the Reformers in the sixteenth century. The Church had then become corrupt and inefficient, and needed reformation; and so it does now. Only, whereas at that time positive corruption had crept into her doctrines and ritual, which needed to be expunged,—now, on the contrary, what is required is, to carry out her existing ordinances and teach her true doctrine to the people.

This is the position occupied by thousands both of the clergy and laity. Pledged servants of the

English Church,—seeing in her, and in her alone, not only health and salvation for themselves, but the power to regenerate the nation and save it from impending ruin; mourning over her suppressed doctrine, her neglected ordinances, her fasts and festivals despised, her churches closed, her ritual degraded, they watch for the time when they can work more effectively in the cause of the mother who hath borne them. To do her the best service they are able, is the fixed purpose of their hearts.

This, then, is a prominent feature in the present position of the Church. The existence of a body of men, considerable in numbers, and still more so in zeal and moral energy, who are firmly attached to the Church of their country, and desire to spread her influence through the land. As a school or party, they occupy a distinct position in the public eye, and still more as an element in the moral power of the country. Their influence is more quiet than obtrusive; it is rather an undercurrent than an agitation of the surface. A free press is at their command, and has afforded them a position in every kind of literature. Not only books of theology of the highest order, but periodicals, works of education, works of fiction, poetry, memoirs, travels, all departments in short, are more or less imbued with Church principles. Church principles appear continually where you would least look for them. Where you would expect a sneer at the Church, or such a notice as betokened an utter ignorance of her claims or nature, now not unfrequently you find a

respectful, if not a cordial, recognition. The latitudinarian or eclectic admits Church principles amongst the influential agents of moral progress, as the Roman emperor would have placed a statue of Jesus Christ amongst the gods of the Capitol. The liberal and worldly honour Church principles by their aversion ; the revolutionist and atheist by their threats of persecution. In short, the existence of this body, or school, or party, by whatever name we call it, its revival and rapid progress during the last twelve or fifteen years, its establishment as an integral portion of the moral condition of the age, is (to use a current phrase) *a great fact*, which cannot be denied. Church principles have gained a position in the mind of the nation, from which they are not likely to be soon dislodged ; nay, if we may judge from the circumstance of their taking hold principally on the seriously minded of the younger portion of the community, it is reasonable to expect that they will, in the next generation, make a great advance and acquire a firmer hold.

But there is another great fact to which we must now advert, and that is, *the reaction* which has sprung up against these principles. Church principles being, as we believe, essential parts of Christianity, could not remain inactive, any more than the leaven placed in the three measures of meal. They are essentially proselytising and aggressive. To spread a regenerating influence through society is their leading object ; to induce men to give up their worldly, self-indulgent habits, and exercise self-denial, wide-extended

charity, exalted purity,—this is their aim and tendency. Hence of necessity they have, like the first preaching of the Cross, excited a strong spirit of opposition; and *it is this reaction against them, which, as it is a prominent fact at the present moment, so it is the great danger to which the Church of England is exposed.*

From the first, the cause of Church restoration and the revival of Church principles has been prejudiced by the excesses and imprudence of some ardent spirits, who have confounded the true Catholic and the Romish doctrine. The line between Church doctrine and Romish doctrine, as well as practice, is, in reality, broadly and plainly marked; but eager partisans have not always perceived it, and quick-sighted opponents have skilfully availed themselves of the errors of a few to prejudice the ignorant, not only against what is really Romish, but what is most truly Catholic and most thoroughly English.

This is one advantage that the Puritan or Anti-Church party have gained. Another consists in their successful resistance to the restoration of the ritual of the English Church to its genuine form. Nothing is more easy, when events have happened and results are apparent, than to utter wise opinions on the course which ought to have been pursued; and you will hear many persons most sagely blaming the recent attempt at uniformity in public worship. And yet at one time there was a very general concurrence of opinion in its favour. It was felt by men of station and piety, that far too much laxity had crept in with

regard to the rules and ordinances of the Church ; that if rules there were, we ought to abide by them ; and that it was an evil example for the clergy to go on in the constant infringement of their deliberate engagements. Many even of those who, in the main, blamed the new doctrines, as they were termed, acknowledged that the Tract-writers had done good service in calling attention to the undoubted rules of the Church. Men of the most opposite principles, at one time, seemed to agree in this view ; scarcely a Bishop's or Archdeacon's charge was published in which some acknowledgment was not found of the impropriety of the general disregard of rubrical regulations. Who could have anticipated the general revulsion of public opinion ? Who could have expected that many even of the clergy, when the written laws and regulations of the Church, and their own engagements to abide by them, were pointed out, should refuse to acknowledge the duty ? Who would have expected that, in the case of those who were willing and anxious to conform, congregations and vestries should have combined to prevent them ? Who would have expected that a Bishop of the English Church should have been found to condemn the strict adherence to her rules, and blame the clergy for abiding by their engagements ? and that the Chancellor of a Diocese should have publicly recommended the churchwardens within his jurisdiction to resist the clergy who desired to adhere to the laws by which they were bound ; and that this functionary's charge should have been spread by post through



the most distant dioceses, and every where instigated congregations and churchwardens to organised resistance? Lastly, who would have supposed that the respectable money-getting people of England would have been so moved from their propriety on questions, to them at least, of so little moment, as whether the clergyman should turn to the east or west, or preach in a black gown or a surplice?

I do not think such a phenomenon could have been reasonably expected. Had but the railroad mania been at its height a few months earlier, or the corn-law question come sooner into importance, or any other absorbing subject of temporal interest occupied the public mind, this strange excitement would probably never have happened; and the Church would have been left to pursue her own internal reforms, without let or hindrance. However, as it has turned out, surely no blame can possibly attach to those whose only error was a too sanguine expectation that the English people would have been found willing to abide by the laws of the Church of which they are members.

I can never regret the attempt made to restore the offertory. Those who stood in the front of the battle, and endeavoured to revive this most Christian and scriptural usage, surely deserve gratitude rather than blame. Who can say what might not have been the present position and prospects of the Church, if only this one amongst her ordinances had been cheerfully complied with? Many eminent Churchmen calculated, and not without reason, that funds might have been raised to

build all the churches that were needed in the land, to increase our ministry, educate our people—in short, to place our whole Church on a footing adequate to the wants of our multitudinous population. The best men in the Church encouraged the hope, the more sanguine warmly espoused the scheme, even the prudent and moderate desired that at least it might be tried. I do not think that earnest Christians could or ought to have anticipated the strange spirit of opposition, arising from the Puritan party, by which this most wholesome and desirable measure was frustrated. It may, indeed, well be doubted whether that spirit was not over-rated; whether, if the Bishop of Exeter had been supported by his brother prelates, and the subject fairly represented to the people; the undoubted rules of their own Church laid before them, and the impossibility of maintaining uniformity of practice without recurrence to some fixed standard; if the Bishops had calmly and dispassionately laid these things before the members of the Church,—it may reasonably be doubted whether the good sense and right feeling of the country would not have supported them, in a matter of such obvious propriety as adherence to the written law of the Church, rather than the fluctuating practice of popular usage. It was not a mere dogged spirit of opposition by which the people were moved; but, together with this, was an honest, though mistaken, notion of the duty of resistance to what they believed to be an innovation upon the customs of their fathers. They were taught, and many of them believed, that in resisting the Church's ordinances they were standing

up for the integrity of the Church. Had the rulers of the Church calmly explained to them the error into which they had been so artfully led, I see no reason to doubt that those who from conscientious motives resisted the restoration of the Church-service might have been taught to perceive that in so doing they were but making themselves tools in the hands of a party whose spirit was very different from that of the Church of England.

However, the rulers of the Church deemed it prudent to evade, or rather to postpone, the crisis. The publication of the Archbishop's Letter, recommending that things should remain as they were in the different churches, has greatly changed the aspect of affairs. Of course, legally and strictly speaking, the Archbishop's Letter can have no cogency whatever. No clergyman is constrained to obey it. Convocation alone can alter the formularies of the English Church. Still, considering that the Archbishop, no doubt, was aided by the counsel of his brethren, and that no protest has been made by any of them against it, we may, perhaps, suppose it to speak the sense of the English Church,—such, at least, as a synod of the Bishops, had they been convoked, would have determined: and it seems not unreasonable to infer, that after such a declaration, an individual clergyman, however anxious to act up to the laws of the Church, may feel himself, *in foro conscientie*, absolved from blame, if he suspend a strict compliance with the rubric, until he can bring his congregation to receive as a privilege what they now reject as a burden. The

responsibility is thrown, in a great degree, from the individual clergyman on the Bishops.

Still this view of the case, and the attributing such virtual authority to the Archbishop's Letter, involves very serious difficulties. A license to depart from the prescribed ritual establishes the very principle of Nonconformity. We have no longer any fixed rule to go by: usage, or caprice, or the popular will, are our only guides. If doubt arise in any parish as to the propriety of any portion of the service, the vestry has now become virtually the referee, instead of the Bishop. The Bishop's authority, so far as the laity are concerned, is defunct. If he cannot rule the interpretation of a rubric or the dress of his clergy, without consent of the laity, what authority has he? I cannot but think that the injury done to the Church, by thus tampering with her fixed laws, is very serious indeed. Some perhaps may view it with less apprehension. They will argue that, practically speaking, the Church is better than she was. Attention has been called to usages and doctrines which had been little thought of; and the service is fully performed in many more places than it was formerly. All this is very true; still the temporary suspension, if it be no more, of our fixed laws, and the admission of the principle of Nonconformity into the Church, is a positive evil, the consequences of which it is difficult to foresee.

And this serious damage has resulted from the manœuvres of the Puritans. Skilfully availing themselves of the evil passions, as well as the honest pre-

judices, of the people, they have frustrated the attempt of the Church party to restore her ritual. With the pretext of maintaining the Church, they have, for a time at least, taught her children to break her laws and despise her authority. Under cover of an assault on Popery, they have inflicted a serious wound on the Church of England.

But it may be taken as an axiom, that whenever external ordinances are attacked, the real subject of dispute is some vital doctrine. No one who has any knowledge of human affairs believes that the real contest is about the colour of a vestment or the posture of the minister. The party which has thus succeeded in its attempt upon the ritual, will make use of its success to attack the vital principles of the English Church. Nonconformity in ritual is inseparably joined with heterodoxy in doctrine. Already has unsound or even heretical doctrine spread with rapid though stealthy steps; and if it be not checked, the present generation will not pass away without seeing the Church of England, not in externals only, but in vital doctrine, a very different Church from that which she is represented in her formularies.

It is this point to which I earnestly desire to draw public attention; especially that of our rulers, and of that large body of the clergy who may be called the conservative party, or *vis inertiae*; and who appear to me little aware of the essential changes which are gradually creeping over the doctrinal teaching of our Church. I would beg this party very seriously to consider the present state of things. It may possibly

be right, for the sake of peace, to give up some point of mere outward observance ; though, in truth, peace is seldom purchased by such concession. But when the question relates, as I am prepared to shew, to the vital and fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion, then it is not only pusillanimous but sinful to allow ourselves to be borne down by clamour, or outmanœuvred by skilful opposition.

Those who observe the progress of public opinion will be well aware how insidiously and strangely opinions, which at first are scouted as paradoxes, do by reiteration come to be entertained as allowable, or at least possible. Till lately, for instance, it would have been thought a thing incredible, that an English clergyman should gravely assert that he might hold Romish doctrine, such as the supremacy of the pope, purgatory, or transubstantiation, and yet consistently continue to officiate as a minister of the English Church. Yet we know that such an opinion has been broached and gravely defended. Reasoning *à priori*, one would have thought it just as incredible that any set of English clergymen should seriously deny the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and yet continue to officiate in the baptism of infants, instruct children in the catechism, and prepare them for the rite of confirmation. The utter incompatibility of the denial of baptismal regeneration with the profession and practice of an English clergyman, is, I say, as self-evident a fact as the maintenance of the supremacy of the pope, or any other Romish doctrine. This is a point not rightly understood: uninstructed persons

look upon the question of baptismal regeneration to be merely one involving an allowable difference of interpretation which opposing schools of theology adopt. But the Baptismal service in our Prayer-book does, in truth, set forth the doctrine of spiritual regeneration in baptism in words as positive as can possibly be used. Words have no meaning in them, if the formularies of our Church do not contain the doctrine in question, and repudiate the contrary.

For the sake of those amongst my readers, if any there be, who may not be familiar with the subject, I will set down a few short passages from the Baptismal service.

“Dearly beloved,” it begins, “forasmuch as all men are conceived and born in sin, and that our Saviour Christ saith, None can enter into the kingdom of God except he be *regenerate*, and born anew *of water and of the Holy Ghost*; I beseech you to call upon God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that, of His bounteous mercy, He will grant to this child that thing which by nature he cannot have; that he may be baptised with water *and the Holy Ghost*, and received into Christ’s holy Church, and be made a lively member of the same.”

The priest and people then pray on the child’s behalf, “Almighty and everlasting God, who . . . . didst sanctify water to the mystical washing away of sin; we beseech Thee, for Thine infinite mercies, that Thou wilt mercifully look upon this child, wash him, and sanctify him with *the Holy Ghost*.”

Again: “We call upon Thee for this infant, that

he, coming to Thy holy baptism, may receive remission of his sins by *spiritual regeneration*."

Again: the priest says, "Sanctify this water to the mystical washing away of sin; and grant that this child, now to be baptised therein, may *receive the fulness of Thy grace*."

The child is then baptised, and the priest addresses the congregation, "Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this child *is* regenerate, and grafted into the body of Christ's Church, let us give hearty thanks to Almighty God for these benefits."

[In the office for Private Baptism the words are even more precise: "Seeing that this child is *by baptism* regenerate."]

Then all kneeling say, "We yield Thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that *it hath pleased Thee to regenerate this child with Thy Holy Spirit*."

Often and often as these passages have been quoted in recent controversy, I transcribe them once more; and would appeal to any man of common understanding, from the most unlettered peasant to the ablest in the land; or to any jury of twelve honest men, be they Dissenters or be they Romanists; or the first twelve one might meet in the streets of London, and submit to their judgment, whether it is possible for a doctrine to be couched in plainer or more positive words—whether there can be the shadow of a doubt that the Church of England holds the doctrine of baptismal regeneration—whether the denial of baptismal regeneration be not as clearly contrary to the doctrine of the Church of England, as



the maintenance of transubstantiation, or the pope's supremacy—and whether it is not one of the most astounding facts in religious controversy, that ministers of the Church of England should, Sunday after Sunday, use this service, should baptise infants brought to them, and then call on the congregation to join with them in thanking God for that it hath pleased Him to regenerate each child, and yet hold the opinion either that the child has not been regenerated at all, or that his regeneration is “hypothetical!”

It is beside my argument to enter upon the scriptural proof of the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. What I maintain is, that it is the undoubted doctrine of the English Church. There can be no question, however, that it is proved by many more direct and convincing texts than any that can be brought forward against the Romish doctrines concerning purgatory, pardons, or transubstantiation. These are dangerous and erroneous opinions, which our Church declares to be fond things, “vainly invented, and grounded on no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the word of God.”<sup>1</sup> The denial of the right doctrine of baptism is the denial of a doctrine which St. Paul classes amongst the first “principles of the doctrine of Christ”<sup>2</sup> and foundations of our faith—one which the universal Church places amongst the articles of the creed,<sup>3</sup> and the acceptance or rejection of which practically changes the whole character of the Christian religion.

<sup>1</sup> See Article xxii.

<sup>2</sup> Hebrews vi. 1.

<sup>3</sup> “I believe in . . . . one baptism for the remission of sins.”—*Nicene Creed*.

The whole character, I say, of the Christian religion depends on this primary doctrine. The maintenance or denial of this doctrine gives practically a completely different turn to the treatment of a Christian soul. Is the child whom we have to train for heaven regenerate or unregenerate? is he a child of grace, or a child of wrath? is he in a state of salvation, or in a state of condemnation? If regenerate—a child of grace, an heir of salvation—then clearly the chief endeavour of parents, sponsors, and ministers, must be directed *to keep him what he is*; so that what he is on the day of his baptism, such he may be, as to his spiritual state, the next day, and the next. We must train him onward always in a state of grace; so that as the wakening energies dawn, the rising tendencies of evil shall be kept under subjection, and every motion of the Spirit promoted and encouraged. Thus our whole efforts and prayers must be devoted to keep the child, by the grace of God, in the “state of salvation” in which he was placed at baptism; so that he may perform those good works which God hath prepared for him to walk in, continuing free from the dominion of sin, and advancing ever in ripeness for the kingdom of heaven. On the other hand, if the child is unregenerate,—a child of wrath—in a state of condemnation,—our endeavours must be directed to rescue him from this perilous state.

What course does our own Church pursue? what does she tell the child of himself? Look only at the very first words she puts into his mouth—the first words of the Church Catechism—“What is your name?

N. or M.—Who gave you this name? My godfathers and godmothers in my baptism, wherein I was made a *member of Christ, a child of God*, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.”

For ministers of the Church to teach these things to children—to tell them they are members of Christ and children of God, when they believe them never to have been really made so—is to be paralleled only by the mockery of their thanking God that each child is regenerate, when they altogether disbelieve and deny it.

Again: the rite of confirmation is absolutely changed in character, if we deny the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. In the Church's view, it is the *strengthening and forwarding* the child in the path in which he is already walking—the *continuation or enlargement* of grace, whereby he may be enabled to persevere in godliness. “Almighty and everlasting God” (thus the Bishop prays), “who *hast vouchsafed to regenerate* these Thy servants, by water and the Holy Ghost, and hast given them forgiveness of all their sins, *strengthen them*, we beseech Thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost, the Comforter; *increase* in them Thy manifold gifts of grace,” &c.

The denier of baptismal regeneration, on the other hand, looks on confirmation in the light of conversion—a favourable time for the commencement of a religious life; which, with the true Churchman, *was* commenced at the time when, in the sacrament of baptism, the heavenly Spirit first lighted like a dove on the regenerated babe.

Thus, in early life, the whole character of the

treatment of our children is altogether changed, accordingly as we receive or deny the Church's doctrine of baptismal regeneration. Nay, even in addressing the sinner in middle life, or the dying penitent, the theory of, I might almost say the *two religions*, is quite different : the denier of baptismal regeneration treats him as an unconverted heathen, while the minister of the Church appeals to him as one who once had the grace of God, though he has put it from him, once was a member of Christ, though now a son of perdition, once a child of God, though now a prodigal. It may well be doubted whether the greater part of the nation's sin, the desperate wickedness of the mass of our population, and the general worldliness of all classes, may not be traced to this denial of baptismal regeneration. No care is taken to train them as members of Christ and children of God ; the grace given them at baptism is never cherished or called forth ; their sinful nature is suffered to rise up and become predominant ; thus the great vantage-ground of their Christian calling is abandoned, never, alas, to be regained. They grow up practically without God in the world ; and if some few here and there are brought to repentance and saved, the mass, it is feared, never return from their wallowing with the swine—they live and die ungodly. Thousands who once were made members of Christ and children of God are thus eternally lost, mainly in consequence of this great heresy, whereby our country, and even our Church, is overrun.

The denial of baptismal regeneration is the leading doctrine not only of Dissenters from the Church,

but of the Evangelical or Puritan party within it; and in this they have entirely departed from the doctrine of the reformers. The reformers, though not always consistent in their teaching,—as, indeed, it was impossible that men in a state of transition from one opinion to another should be—yet one and all held the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. Besides the obvious fact of their having drawn up or retained our present Baptismal service, which is entirely based on the doctrine, their writings contain such constant allusion to the same great truth, that it is quite clear they had no intention of denying the essential principle of the Universal Church.<sup>1</sup> From this doctrine of the reformers the modern Evangelicals have entirely departed. I have before me a large collection of tracts and pamphlets, many of them published and avowedly by persons holding preferment in the Church of England, in all of which the doctrine of baptismal regeneration is either denied, or corrupted, or explained away. Some of them call it a Popish doctrine. The Rev. Carus Wilson, rector of Whittington, says, “Sentiments have for some time been maintained and preached, which plainly lay the foundation of any popish superstition that men can wish to establish. *Baptismal regeneration is one.*”<sup>2</sup> The Rev. Henry Walter, rector of Haselbury Bevan, writes a pamphlet

<sup>1</sup> Thanks to the Parker Society, we have ample evidence that the Reformers of the English Church held very different doctrines on the Spiritual Grace of Baptism, and the Holy Eucharist, from what the modern Evangelicals would have us believe.

<sup>2</sup> Thoughts on the Times. By the Rev. W. Carus Wilson. P. 5.

in reply to a tract entitled "Baptismal Regeneration a Doctrine of the Church of England," in which he says at page 1,<sup>1</sup> "I continued, during a lamentably too great portion of my life, to hold and teach the doctrine which is briefly styled baptismal regeneration." But now his mind is changed, and he wishes that "whatever expressions in those portions of our service [*i. e.* the Catechism and Baptismal-service] have the appearance of upholding a doctrine which our Articles disavow, and our Homilies condemn, *were changed* for language clearly in unison with them, and with the word of God."<sup>2</sup> The wish to alter our Prayer-book is very general amongst this party. The Rev. James Sutcliffe, incumbent of Knockholt, in a tract called "A Real Tract for the Times," says at page 5, "It will be the object of the following pages to shew, 1st, that the doctrine of baptismal regeneration is absurd and unscriptural." At page 7, he quotes from the Rev. Melville Horne: "Fully convinced that baptism never was designed to convey regeneration, and has no such promise, I confidently conclude that no mortal ever was so regenerated." At page 11 he says, "His" [St. Paul's] language is utterly irreconcilable with the notion of baptismal regeneration." At page 15, "no valid or conclusive argument can ever be drawn from Scripture in favour of baptismal regeneration." Thus some deny the doctrine *in toto*. Others admit the

<sup>1</sup> A Letter in Defence of those Ministers of the Church of England who know that not all the baptised, but "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God."

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 40.

doctrine of baptismal regeneration in its full spiritual sense, but limit its efficacy to such children as are “elect;” *i. e.* those baptised infants whom God’s predestination marks out for salvation. And yet these persons thank God in the case of *every* infant, that He has been pleased in His great merey to regenerate him. Others admit that every child is regenerate, but assert that regeneration is not a spiritual gift, but merely an external change of position. They deny that any spiritual grace is given; and yet they pray to God that the child “may be born again [*i. e.* regenerated] of water *and the Holy Ghost;*” that He will wash him and sanctify him *with the Holy Ghost;* and that the infant, coming to holy baptism, may receive remission of his sins by *spiritual* regeneration, may receive the *fulness* of God’s grace,—and afterwards teach the child, in the catechism, that he is made in baptism a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. Some of these writers maintain that the child is only “hypothetically” regenerate; others that the “announcement of regeneration in the Baptismal service is an official or charitable conclusion!!” Alas for the shifts to which controversialists are put when they have resolved to set at nought a doctrine which they dislike, and depart from the simple word of truth. The most straightforward person I have met with is the Rev. Octavius Piers, vicar of Preston, Dorset. In a “Dialogue on Baptismal Regeneration,” the following conversation occurs:

“*Curate.* That there are differences of opinion on the subject is most true, John; but that our Church

inculcates the doctrine of regeneration in baptism appears to me so clear, that I cannot conceive how any person, who has attentively considered her services, can have a moment's doubt on the subject. . . .

*John.* But, sir, I think I have heard yourself say, that it is a dangerous and unscriptural doctrine, and calculated to lead men blindfold to ruin.

*Curate.* Possibly, John, you might have heard me say so; *for I do consider it a most dangerous and unscriptural doctrine!*"

I have given the above extracts as specimens only of the teaching of the Evangelical or Puritan party, as set forth in the tracts which are poured from the press, as well as in their official organs, such as the *Record*, and others of the same class. The same language is heard continually in the pulpit—the disparagement of the grace of the sacraments, and specially that of baptism, is a favourite topic. Some, who are more consistent than their brethren, have refused to use those portions of the Baptismal service in which regeneration is asserted or implied; and have taken upon themselves to baptise infants with a mutilated form not recognised in our Church.

Now I desire most solemnly to appeal, not only to the members of the Church of England in general, but more especially to our rulers, who have to act as well as to judge, whether such mutilation of our services and corruption of the Church's doctrine is to be tolerated; whether it is possible that the Church can go on much longer with such a mass of heresy within it? I know the common feeling is, that High-



Churchmen and Evangelicals are two schools or parties in the Church, between whom the peace is to be kept as long as possible. That such things as parties or schools must exist is obvious: no man or body of men, probably, is capable of grasping and teaching the whole truth in its exact proportions. Some will dwell more on one view of religion, and some on another. Some will most frequently preach justification by faith, and other doctrines which are called evangelical; and some will dwell on good works, sacramental grace, and what are commonly called Church-doctrines. All this is inevitable, and allowable. But such is not the point at issue: the question now is with regard to the *denial of a vital doctrine*—a doctrine of the Bible—a doctrine of the Church—of the Church of all ages, as well as of our own particular branch—a doctrine of our own reformers—a doctrine which forms the commencement and basis of the Christian life. It is not the mere suppression of the doctrine, or reserve in propounding it; but the flat denial, and persevering inculcation of the contrary. The denial and extinction of the doctrine has come to be the most prominent feature of Evangelical teaching. The sound Churchman is obliged per force to enter the lists in its defence. If the maintenance of baptismal regeneration be orthodox, the denier must be heretical, or at least the setter-forth of erroneous and strange doctrines. The question is come to a direct issue: the Church cannot contain both doctrines; the advocates of one or other must give way.

It may be thought by some unadvisable to put

forward in so broad a light the differences which exist in the Church of England—it may be called a stirring up of strife and agitation. What our Church most wants, as some maintain, is peace, the suppression of irritating topics, outward harmony at least, if not inward unanimity. And some whom the writer most respects may think, that if this pamphlet has any effect, it will only be to cause additional bitterness and animosity.

All this I have well considered; and most heartily do I wish that God would give us peace; most earnestly would I join in deprecating that party-bitterness which dwells on matters of trifling importance, and magnifies them into occasions of perpetual strife; most willingly would I sacrifice all mere personal predilections for the promotion of harmony. It is only from the deep conviction that it is a matter of the most urgent importance—that nothing less than a fatal heresy has sprung up amongst us, and is making such stealthy yet rapid advances, that the character of the Church is becoming seriously compromised, and that if the advances of the Puritan party be not speedily checked, it will ere long have established such an influence as to defy control—it is only from a deep impression that a very great and rapidly growing danger has come upon the Church in this land, that I venture thus to appeal to those who may have the power to check it. At present, as it appears to me, the evil is just manageable; but let it proceed much farther unchecked, and it will have become too firmly established to be rooted out.

Such an assertion requires to be supported by proof; and I proceed to offer such evidences of the encroachments and dangerous influence of modern Puritanism, as I trust may convince those who have the power to resist and control it, that the time for exertion has arrived.

The first instance of the activity and influence of the Puritans which I shall bring forward is one which has already been adverted to, namely, their successful resistance to the restoration of the genuine Service of the Church. There can be no doubt that uniformity is, in the abstract, preferable to nonconformity; that it would be much better for the clergy to perform the service in the manner in which they have solemnly promised to do, than to go on continually breaking the engagements of their ordination, even though in a manner forced to do so. As little can it be denied that the Puritan faction has been the primary cause of the continuation of this great scandal in the Church. When the Bishop of London published his Charge, in which he required the clergy in his diocese to conform to the rubrics, the first symptom of opposition was a sort of counter-charge published in the *Record* newspaper. Next appeared a remonstrance from the Islington clergy, on whom still rests the Evangelical spirit of their former rector, the present Bishop of Calcutta. Soon after, Mr. Chancellor Raikes, another Evangelical leader, put forth his address, already alluded to, which was dispersed over the country, instigating vestries and churchwardens to resist those clergy who acted up to the

requirements of the Church. But it is unnecessary to multiply proofs that the Evangelical party were the prime movers in this resistance to the laws of the Church; because they themselves, I suppose, will rather claim it as an honour and a triumph, than cast it from them as a reproach. Not that they would have gained their point without calling in to their help a most dangerous ally. It was the spirit of the world that enabled them to subdue the Church. They have to thank the *Times* and *Quarterly Review* for their successful opposition to their Bishops. It must be, one would think, with some misgivings that they find themselves supported by such allies. But unquestionably this union with the powers of the world gives them a formidable influence, and that is the point I wish to prove. They have acquired a sort of favour and popularity with the worldly and irreligious, which they did not before possess, as opponents of an encroaching priesthood, and defenders of the nation from ecclesiastical tyranny. Church views are now associated in the minds of the people with all sorts of inconvenient innovations, as begging-boxes, and five minutes' longer service; and Evangelicalism with freedom from these monstrous abuses. There can be no doubt that this alliance with the world, in proportion as it has impaired the religious character of Evangelicalism, has increased its political or rather social power. And in this respect it is becoming more and more identified with the Puritanism of two centuries back.

But there are other methods, not sufficiently ad-

verted to, in which the Evangelical party have greatly added to their weight and importance.

When Mr. Simeon first set on foot his project of buying up Church livings, and placing the patronage in the hands of trustees, with power of self-election, so as to perpetuate the preaching of his own peculiar views, the project was looked upon as insignificant. No one dreamed that the character of the Church of England could be so seriously affected by such an affair of pounds, shillings, and pence. The result, however, has fully proved the worldly wisdom of the projector. Many very important places have already fallen under the patronage and management of Mr. Simeon's trustees; and by the judicious appointment of able, zealous, and unscrupulous partisans, a sensible effect has been made on the general character of the Church. When the living of Bath fell into their hands, every curate in the dependant chapels, whose doctrines were not those of the Evangelical party, was at once removed, and Bath has since been a hotbed of Puritanism. Clifton is likely soon to suffer the same fate. The greater part of Bristol is similarly circumstanced. The case of Cheltenham is notorious. Derby, Beverley, and many other places might be named, which, unless Divine Providence open some means of escape, are likely to remain for generations under the same influence, and to be the centres, in their respective districts, of a system of doctrine which we have shewn to be essentially distinct from that of the English Church. No reliance, I am persuaded, can be placed on the expectations of those

who believe that the opinions of the trustees themselves are likely to change, or that their nominees may not always preach the same doctrine. Instances may now and then occur, as they have already. Several of Mr. Simeon's nominees have joined more or less in the recent revival of Church principles. But this is not again to be expected: the trustees will take better care in future whom they appoint; and the scheme is concocted with such worldly skill, that, humanly speaking, these important places must continue the harbour of Puritan doctrine, unless our rulers take some decided measures to check the evil.<sup>1</sup>

But the mischief is not confined to those places which are under the patronage of Mr. Simeon's trustees, or other similar bodies; for several others, though not so extensive, I believe, exist. It is creeping on with accelerated encroachment over every part of the land. Recent acts of parliament have given

<sup>1</sup> This pernicious system is spreading even to India. Bishop Wilson (of Calcutta) has put forth a plan by which it is arranged that, during his lifetime, he shall have the appointment of all the canons of the cathedral, but that after his death they shall themselves fill up the vacancies that occur in their body—thus depriving his successors of the patronage which he retains himself, and securing the perpetuation of his own opinions, which are strongly Evangelical. And this in an institution partly founded by the funds of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. It is much to be hoped that this arrangement may not be carried into effect. For though the Bishop himself is a liberal contributor, the Society may surely object with justice to such an appropriation of its funds. There are, indeed, cathedrals in England in which the canons fill up the vacant stalls, but then they are obliged to make their selection from the body of the prebendaries, who have been nominated by the Bishop.

facilities for building churches, the patronage of which shall be so vested, that, by a system of self-election, as in the case of Mr. Simcon's trustees, the same principles shall be perpetuated. Of this act the Evangelicals have not been slow to avail themselves,—if, indeed, it was not procured through their influence. A populous district is in want of a church,—a subscription is raised from benevolent persons to supply the want,—five trustees of Evangelical views are appointed as patrons, with power of filling up vacancies in their own body; and so the Gospel (according to Calvin) is established there for ever. Sometimes it is managed by taking a district out of an old parish; but where this is not practicable, then, as I have known in several cases, a church is built in an adjoining parish, within a few yards of that from which the congregation is to be drawn; and an orthodox clergyman has the mortification of finding a rival preacher drawing off his people, and teaching them doctrines on many points diametrically contradictory to his own.

Thus, in one way or another, Evangelicalism or Puritanism has established itself in a very large number of churches in every part of England; especially in great and important towns, as Liverpool, Manchester, and Birmingham, besides those places already mentioned as being actually in the hands of trustees for the permanent maintenance of unsound doctrine. Nor is the evil confined to the parishes over which Evangelical ministers are appointed. The adjoining parishes are sure to be tainted, more or less, with the same doctrine. Evangelical party-schemes,

such as the Pastoral-Aid and Bible Associations, soon begin to ramify and spread their roots, in opposition to the wishes of the more sound among the parochial clergy ; and so religious controversy, discontents, and heart-burnings are every where engendered.

And when we consider the great influence exercised by the large towns over the public mind, the facility which exists in them for “making demonstrations,” the popularity of Puritan doctrine with the ignorant and disaffected, the zeal and ability of many of its leading advocates, the unscrupulous perseverance with which they promulgate their views,—there is surely ground for very serious alarm, lest, if it continue to spread as it has done in the present generation, it may ere long establish such a power as may be too strong to resist, and, in fact, come to be again predominant, and have its own way in the Church of England.

Another mode in which the Evangelicals are rapidly extending their influence is, by the foundation of schools, especially training-schools for teachers, in places where they have a permanent influence. Cheltenham is, as we have seen, permanently in the hands of Mr. Simeon’s trustees. Here, so long as the trust exists, we shall see probably, as we do at present, an able and influential partisan of Evangelicalism. Here, therefore, was a fit place for the establishment of an Evangelical college. The same has been attempted, though with what success I know not, at Leamington. At Brighton, and at Casterton in Lancashire, there are schools for governesses under the



same influence. In some places parochial schools are placed under trustees, so as to perpetuate Evangelical teaching in a parish, even should an orthodox clergyman be appointed. No means, in short, are left unemployed whereby these peculiar opinions and modes of acting may be gradually established and perpetuated.

But why blame persons for their zeal in promoting what they believe to be the cause of truth? Nay, I admire their zeal and perseverance, and commend the wisdom which they shew in their generation. What I complain of is, that their zeal is exerted in the promulgation of a radically erroneous system,—a system which, if the doctrine of the Church of England is true, must be very little short of heresy: and that the rulers of our Church, who, with one or two exceptions, regard the Puritan doctrine with the same disapproval, do not take measures to check its fatal advance, but look upon it as a sort of established evil, against which it is not their business to contend. Surely, if the Church again falls, those who wilfully shut their eyes to the danger, while it may yet be controlled, will have much to answer for.

Perhaps the most formidable of all the instruments which the modern Puritans know so well, by constant practice, how to use, is the society-system; by which extensive funds are obtained from benevolent persons, and placed at the disposal of leaders of the Puritan party, who make use of them for their own party-purposes. Take, for instance, the Pastoral-Aid Society. A very general want is felt for the employ-

ment of a greater number of curates, especially in the more populous places. Benevolent persons are called on to subscribe for the purpose of supplying them; a considerable sum is quickly raised. Meanwhile a select committee is appointed, who, under the plea of securing the appointment of proper persons, inquire privately into the character of each applicant; and unless a guarantee is given that he is one who preaches Puritan doctrine, no grant is made. Thus it is managed that the appointments shall be all of a party character; but even this precaution does not suffice. The committee have constituted themselves perpetual patrons, with more than Episcopal powers. In other cases, when a patron has nominated an incumbent, and presented him to the Bishop, and the Bishop has inducted him to a parish, the patron's right and influence ceases; he can no longer interfere with the clergyman whom he has appointed. But this is too much liberty for the Evangelical committee to allow. A sharp eye is kept over their curates, and if they are caught tripping, *i. e.* teaching any thing but Puritan doctrine, their salary is liable to be stopped. So that we have in our Church an irresponsible committee of self-appointed persons, not only nominating curates, but virtually dictating the doctrine they are to preach. How extensively the influence of this one society operates may be shewn by the following extracts from their own report: "The society renders assistance to 253 incumbents, having under their pastoral charge nearly two millions of souls, being one-eighth part of the entire population of England and

Wales." Thus the sort of doctrine preached to two millions of souls is dictated by this self-constituted Puritan committee.

Perhaps it may be asked, Is there not another Society, set up by the High-Church party, called the Additional Curates' Society, which does just the same, only on the High-Church side? No, it is not so; and I beg particular attention to this point from those who are in the habit of thinking that these religious societies are but representatives or organs, some of one party, some of another. The Pastoral-Aid Society, indeed, is so in the strictest sense. It is a society for the appointment of Evangelical curates—and this avowedly, for it does not pretend to conceal the matter. But the Additional Curates' Fund is in no sense the organ of a party, but of the English Church. It is simply a fund for the payment, not for the appointment, of additional curates. All that is required from the applicant for aid is, a statement of the number of his parishioners, and proof that aid is really required, and the money is voted *without any reference to doctrine*. It is left entirely to the incumbent and the Bishop of the diocese (who, of course, are the proper persons) to choose a curate whose qualifications they judge to be competent. There cannot be a plainer proof than that drawn from the different practice of these two societies, that the Evangelicals are a schismatical body, distinct in feeling and practice from the Church.

The system of schismatical interference, instanced in the Pastoral-Aid Society, is practised also in the

Church Missionary Society. On the plea of collecting subscriptions, to spread the doctrine of the Church of England amongst the heathen, they not only require the missionaries whom they send out to satisfy a private committee as to the Evangelicalism of their doctrine, but also retain the power of removing them afterwards, and that in defiance of the wishes of the colonial Bishop in whose diocese they may be placed.

And now a Church-building Society is established on the same principles, in opposition to the remonstrances and in spite of the refusal of, I believe, every one of the Bishops of the Church to co-operate with them. But it is needless to enumerate more instances. The simple truth is, a power has grown up which utterly disregards, and in some instances coerces, the authority of our Bishops. It is in vain to seek to conciliate it by concession. It must be firmly met, and that soon, unless it is to be allowed to domineer over the whole Church: and every year that is suffered to elapse before it is put down, so much the more likely will it be to establish itself permanently and carry all before it.

But the danger of Puritanism is shewn, not only in its own advance and enlargement, but in its destructive tendency,—its power of overturning or undermining what opposes it. This power of mischief is evidenced in the successful attacks which it is continually making on our most time-honoured and valuable institutions. The venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts was

established, as needs scarcely be said, more than a century ago, and has been the means of supplying our numerous colonies with missionaries and parochial clergy, which the government of the country have neglected to afford. If any society is free from party bias, it is this. It is supported by all the Bishops on the English bench, and most of them take a warm interest in its welfare. The first aggression of the Evangelicals was the establishment of a rival society, called the Church Missionary Society, under the pretext of sending missionaries to the heathen (though it is well known that this is a branch of the undertaking of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel), but with the real intention of sending out persons imbued with Puritan principles, over whom the London committee may exercise control. Not content with this, however, they have in various ways raised so great a prejudice against the Propagation Society, that its exertions to increase its funds have been much counteracted, its capital is all expended, and there is reason to fear that the salaries of the colonial clergy must be withdrawn or much diminished. This is naturally a great grief and embarrassment to our Bishops, as it is to all good men; and in order to remedy the evil, they have unanimously published letters expressing their high approval of the society. Still the attacks of the Evangelical party go on: several letters and leading articles have lately appeared in the *Record*, recommending the withdrawal of subscriptions. In the *Record* of December 21, 1845, it is said: "We think it a grave question indeed, for

men who know the true gospel of the kingdom, to give up their substance to support that which is wholly antagonist to that gospel, and of the removal of which there is no prospect, nor even the desire of it manifested by the society." "What we object to is, that men who believe in their hearts that such proceedings as those in the dioceses of Calcutta and Toronto, though approved of by the society, 'fatally endanger men's souls,' should contribute to the support of the society." In the paper of January 8, they return to the charge. "Our only object," say they, "has been to prevent our readers from giving their money, as they thought, to the propagation of the gospel, while, to a considerable extent, it was not that which they consider the gospel that was propagated." Of course, no one can object to the reasonableness of this position in the abstract, that every person should contribute his funds to spread what he believes to be the true gospel. What I desire to prove is, that the Evangelical party are at issue with the rest of the Church, as to what the true gospel really is.

Here is one of the most ancient and venerable societies of the English Church, identified, in fact, with it, approved, supported, and cherished by every one of our Bishops, as the means of spreading the gospel in foreign parts ; yet so attacked and vilified by a party in the English Church, calling themselves Evangelicals, that its means of usefulness are seriously impeded, its increasing efforts checked, and the good work in which it has been so long employed

in danger of being suspended. Can there be a greater instance of unmitigated mischievousness?

The same mischievous influence is extensively intruding into another of our old Church societies, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. The constitution of this society is unfortunately peculiarly suitable to the tactics of the Evangelical party; as the monthly meetings, which are open to all subscribers of a guinea, furnish an arena for speechifying and discussion; so that, even when in a decided minority, persons of this school have found it conducive to their ends to make a constant agitation. Lately, however, owing to the temporising policy of the members of the committee, who consist chiefly of London clergy, and the reaction against Romanisers, the Evangelical influence has begun to preponderate, and bids fair to obtain the ascendant in the society, and convert what from its beginning has been one of the most orthodox institutions of the Church into an engine of Puritanism. One rule of the society is, that all books and tracts proposed for the society's catalogue shall be submitted to five Episcopal referees; amongst them is the Bishop of Chester, who, I suppose, far from being offended, will consider it rather an honour to be designated as one of the heads of the Evangelical party. Consistently with this position, his lordship pretty freely exercises his power of placing his veto on such tracts and books, or such portions of them, as, according to his judgment, do not harmonise with evangelical truth, or rather, the Calvinistic tenets which he espouses. Those Episcopal referees who

are of a different school have the power of excluding books of a Low-Church tendency. The obvious effect of this system is, to exclude from the society's catalogue all books of a positive doctrinal character, and admit only such as are vague and neutral. But as it is generally supposed that the Bishop of Chester is more strict in his revision than the other referees, the consequence is, that gradually a set of books and tracts more or less tinged with Calvinism has been added to the society's catalogue, and those of decided High-Church principles are denied admission. What is the remedy? Obviously, not to re-elect the Bishop of Chester on the committee. But this would be looked on by the chief managers of the society as highly uncourteous, and exhibiting party-spirit; so that his lordship remains, and probably will remain, until a crisis comes, a principal authority for reference in a society which was founded by Dean Stanhope, Nelson, and Melmoth, and has been the honoured instrument, for more than a century past, of the old orthodox portion of the English Church!

Another very remarkable fact has been lately brought to light as regards the operations of this society, no less than the corruption and mutilation of the old standard books, which have been from the beginning on the society's list. The country subscribers have been astounded by the publication of an appeal, from which it appears that the books of the society, which they had been circulating, in perfect confidence, as genuine works, have been materially tampered with and altered; and that some of the most



revered prelates and divines of the English Church have positively had language put into their mouths of a very different tone and tendency from that which they really spoke. They have, in fact, been made to bear unconscious testimony to the popular theology of the nineteenth century. Many of the alterations were, I believe, made carelessly and thoughtlessly by some official persons of the society, who were trusted by the committee to revise new editions, and imagined probably that our old divines used language without any definite meaning, which might with propriety be translated into more modern phraseology. Inadvertence, and inability to enter into the spirit of the writings of such men as Wilson and Ken, rather than a wilful intention of tampering with them, may in some cases have been the original cause of the mutilation. But what is so astounding is, that when these mutilations and corruptions were pointed out, a party should be found who had the effrontery to justify them. It is difficult to conceive a more striking proof of the unscrupulous encroachment of the Puritan party, and the extreme depravation of principle in men who could employ or defend such means of propagating their own peculiar views. One cannot enter into the minds of men professing strict Gospel principles, who can declaim against Jesuitism, and priestcraft, and pious fraud in the Church of Rome, and yet resort to the expedient of falsifying the writings of our old English divines, to make them speak Evangelical language. And much as I respect many of the members of the standing committee, I

cannot but regret that they should so far side with the Evangelicals as to stifle the inquiry; so that, from that time to the present, owing to their connivance, no restoration has been made of the mutilated books, with the exception of placing Bishop Ken's Manual in its genuine form by the side of the mutilated copy which had usurped its place; so that the members of the society may now choose between the two. The clergy of the old High-Church school may depend upon it that they are mistaking the true line of policy, as well as principle, if, in their dread of Tractarianism, they thus play into the hands of the Evangelicals. A crisis must come soon, and if the Anglican party should, in disgust and despair, withdraw in a body from this and other societies, the present managers of them will be left a helpless minority, in the hands of that most unscrupulous and exclusive of all parties, the modern Puritans. Meanwhile, nothing could be more injudicious than for Anglicans to secede one by one from these societies, however objectionable some of their proceedings may be. The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge is still essentially sound, its name is influential, its ramifications are universal; it is identified with the English Church. The tracts more recently published are not so bad; there are improving symptoms. There could not be a more severe blow to the Church than for the Anglicans, in a fit of disgust, to suffer this society to fall into the hands of the Puritan party—as it must do if they withdraw.

The destructive influence of the Puritan party

is farther exemplified in their recent attack upon another institution, which perhaps is doing more good in the Church at present than any other which can be named—I mean, the National Society for the Education of the Poor. This is an institution which, more than any other, is under the direct management of the Bishops. Its constitution does not admit of the same disorderly democratic assemblage as the last-mentioned society. It pursues its useful course quietly but effectually, in spreading through the rising generation the principles of the Church. This will account for the violent attacks lately made upon it by the organ of the Puritans. The *Record* has lately published “ten separate reports” respecting that society, and has subsequently reprinted them for circulation. “The National Society,” says the second of these reports, “has long been known as High-Church in its principles, and steadily opposed to every thing approaching to what is called Evangelical influence. Of late years, however, it seems to have advanced a step farther. Parties more or less favourable to Tractarian sentiments have obtained a footing in the Society; and while it has been to a certain extent relieved from the soporific influence of ‘the High and Dry,’ it seems to be, in the quarters to which we allude, menaced by invasion from men whose ambition it is to send into our villages and hamlets, as well as into our mining and manufacturing districts, schoolmasters initiated in all the ecclesiastical millinery and ceremonies of Puseyism.”—Pp. 10, 11. The principal objections urged

against the National Society are the Church-services at Christ-church, Westminster, and St. Mark's, Chelsea, which are attended by training pupils of the National Society, and are conducted in much the same way as at our cathedrals, and strictly according to the Book of Common Prayer. But in this, as in most other cases, though some external ordinance is made the object of attack, the real grievance is, that the doctrines of the Church are faithfully taught. In proof of this assertion, I extract another passage from page 67 of the same publication: "The following letters," says the editor, "are deserving of attention, as fully corroborating our statements, and conveying valuable information:—

*"To the Editor of the Record.*

"SIR,

"It has been quite a struggle with me, whether it would be any use to the cause of truth for me to bear my humble testimony to the important facts you are disclosing to the public, per the *Record*, respecting the unscriptural instruction given at St. Mark's, Chelsea, and at Westminster Training Institution.

"At length I felt constrained to write. . . . The principal cause of my trouble was the continual inculcation on masters and children of *the soul-deluding doctrine of baptismal regeneration*. . . . .

"I beg to remain, respectfully,

"Your obedient servant,

"Oct. 17, 1845.

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Now, it may be thought of very little importance what may be the views of this writer ; but, in truth, the real sentiments of the Evangelicals are best learned from subordinates of their school, and from their anonymous tracts and publications. Evangelicals of any station in the Church would not commit themselves to such a statement as that baptismal regeneration is a “soul-deluding doctrine”—at least, not without some reservation or loop-hole by which to creep out, if taxed with holding doctrine directly contrary to that of the Church of which they are ministers. But such a passage as that just quoted, printed with approval by the leading organ of the Evangelical party, and used as an instrument of attack upon an important Church society, is not without its value, as shewing not only the extreme bitterness, but also the undisguised heresy, of the party by which our most valued institutions are thus in danger of being destroyed. For let us be assured, that the same party which has already so much interfered with the expansion of the Society for Propagating the Gospel, has determined to exert all its influence against the National Society, which the Church has hitherto so effectually used for the education of the people. “We do not intend,” says the writer of the *Record*, “to quit the subject ; but meanwhile we shall ask, is it not the duty of Christians to consider whether *another institution* might not be formed, from which Puseyism as to rites and ceremonies, and Popery as to doctrine, might not be banished ; in which teachers might be trained in the true faith of the reformed Pro-

testant Church of England, without being taught that the sacraments are the true way of salvation, and that duties and obedience are to take the place of that righteousness which is received by the hand of faith, and under cover of which alone the believer shall be enabled to sit down at the marriage-supper of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”—(P. 36.)

Similar attacks have appeared in the *Record* upon the Incorporated Society for Building Churches; but these I need not take the trouble to reprint.

The Evangelicals may at once retort, “Why should not we oppose those societies in which we believe unsound doctrines to be taught, and support those which spread what we believe to be evangelical truth?” I reply—I have nothing to say against the conscientiousness of the Evangelicals, or the purity of their motives, in thus attacking the old Church Societies. I do not expect to make a single convert from their ranks; that is not the object of my writing. My arguments are addressed to the Church generally, and more especially to those who bear rule and authority in it. I wish to call attention to the fact, that there is within the pale of the Church a body of men professing to belong to it, who nevertheless hold doctrines diametrically opposed to the plain language of our formularies; and, in their zeal for the maintenance of their mistaken views, are, by means direct and indirect, labouring to their utmost to undermine and subvert those institutions to which you, the Bishops of the Church, all of you, or with one

or two exceptions, take a warm interest, and have been accustomed to make use of as the best instruments, under present circumstances, for the edification and extension of the Church. In the place of these old-established societies, they are forming others, in spite of your remonstrances, in which your authority is set at nought, and your functions usurped. Under cover of the national prejudice against Popery, which recent circumstances, not without reason, have re-awakened, this zealous but mistaken party are increasing their influence to an alarming extent, and by methods the most questionable. A popular cry is fostered against the positive ordinances of our Church—her undoubted doctrines are, in a most barefaced manner, denied—her old divines mutilated and corrupted—her ancient institutions undermined, or changed in character;—and this system is gaining ground, especially in our populous and important cities, in such a manner as to have become a formidable power in the Church. What I hope to do is, to draw the timely attention of those who have power and authority to the existing state of things, which appears, in many respects, very much the same as that which existed in this country previously to the breaking out of the Puritan rebellion. There was the same dislike of established ordinances, the same schismatical temper, the same running after popular preachers, the same slovenliness of Church service, disputes about vestments, disparagement of sacraments, the same calumnies cast abroad; and even in the mode of proceeding a remarkable similarity, as,

especially, in the buying up of Church preferment, for the purpose of establishing partisan preachers in populous and important places. This last device was mainly instrumental in corrupting the minds of the people of our towns in the 17th century, and is making rapid strides in the same direction now. At the same time, there are certain dissimilarities between the two periods, which considerably remove the difficulty of dealing with the evil. First of all, there is the safety-valve of Dissent, by which the schismatical body within the Church will depart if they find their proceedings checked; and next, there is this great advantage, that the two parties within the Church are not, as they were then, mixed up and blended with political parties in the State. Parliament does not now support the Puritan preachers; it has other work to think of. The Sovereign does not identify herself with the opposite party. The High-Church is not backed by the Star-Chamber, or Court of High Commission, and made the instrument of taking cognisance of offences partly religious, partly political. There are plenty of Prynnes, Bastwicks, and Burtons; but they cannot appeal to public commiseration against the severity of the law. So, on the other hand, there may be Montagues and Mainwarings; but parliament does not constitute itself judge of their doctrine, and punish a High-Church sermon with fine and imprisonment. Happily for the Church, she is not now, as formerly, mixed up with discussions in the state. Her dissensions and their remedy are mainly within her own bosom.



And what are the remedies which are applicable to the present evils of the Church? The principal evil is, the existence within the ministry of a body of active intriguing men, who are Dissenters at heart, and have no fellow-feeling with their brethren in the Church; who dislike and impede our services, deny our fundamental doctrines, assail and undermine our ancient institutions. Such persons ought not to have the power of mischief which they possess. "Oh, that our spiritual rulers could be brought to feel that it is their solemn and bounden duty to expel these tainted sheep, and this instantly, from the pale of our communion!" Such is the fervent wish of the *Record*, in speaking of the Tractarians. I would not adopt either the bitterness or exclusiveness of this appeal, but rather apply to the Dissenters within our Church the more sober and measured language which the Protestant Association has recently addressed to the Archbishops and Bishops, with reference to the Romanising party. "Most desirable it is, for the best interests of the Church, that the whole influence of your lordships' character and authority should be exercised to impress upon the minds of the clergy, and all who are preparing for the sacred office of the ministry, what common sense and honesty require in this matter. We feel called upon by the principles on which the Protestant Association was founded, humbly, yet openly, to submit to your lordships this expression of our earnest desire, that the Bishops and pastors of our Church should perseveringly exert themselves to maintain and diffuse *amongst every*

*portion* of the clergy, a high and holy standard of conscientiousness, integrity, and faithfulness, both in taking upon themselves and fulfilling their ordination-vows and engagements; and to hold up to general detestation all Jesuitical reservation and evasion in regard to an office so sacred, and pledges so solemn and important."

Yes: let this strict discipline be applied, as the association demands, to "every portion of the clergy," and to all candidates for ordination, and there would be no just reason either for alarm or complaint. But there is a prevailing impression, and not without apparent cause, that our rulers are unduly partial in this matter; there is a deep feeling of dissatisfaction in regard to the one-sided justice that is administered. Men who once or twice in their lives sign the articles in a non-natural sense are stigmatised as disingenuous, and pointed at as Jesuits; while those who, week after week, administer the sacrament of holy baptism and teach the catechism in a non-natural sense remain unblamed. If any preach the doctrine of purgatory or transubstantiation, they are quickly called to account; and no Anglican will deny that they ought to be so: what we complain of is, that others are allowed to deny the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and other undoubted doctrines of the English Church, with perfect impunity. This it is which appears to us so inconsistent and unjust. If a clergyman of the Church of England associates with Romish priests, or pays a visit to a Popish college, he is denounced as a Romaniser; but others join

themselves to an "Evangelical alliance," consisting of all denominations of Dissenting teachers, without let or hindrance. Bishops and their chaplains are careful to detect and exclude from the ministry candidates of Romanising views, but take little or no heed of such as hold Dissenting doctrines.

But even this is not a full statement of the partiality complained of. This discouragement of the rulers of the Church is not confined to Romanisers only, but is extended to those who most strictly hold the doctrines of the English Church; while, on the other hand, those who deny her doctrines and debase her services are comparatively countenanced, or certainly not interfered with. A strict Anglican, who has not the smallest wish to join the Church of Rome, meets with opposition, or at least finds no sympathy; while those who are plotting against their own Church, and spreading heterodox doctrine through the land, are suffered to pursue their schemes unmolested. By this apparent partiality, many excellent men are much disheartened. Some even are disposed to regard their Church rather as she is seen in practice than as she is in theory, and to doubt whether a communion in which truth is discouraged, and heresy tolerated and suffered to proceed unrebuked, can be guided by the Spirit of God. Some have been driven by their feelings to schismatical acts; and even the most stanch adherents of the English Church—men who feel it their duty to remain with her, and contend under her banner to the last—find their spirit damped,

and their energies weakened, when those to whom they looked for countenance and support join in the ignorant outcry, instead of allaying it by the authority of their office.

A reason for this partiality, especially as regards the ordination of men holding Dissenting views, is bluntly enough assigned by the *Record* in one of its recent attacks upon the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. "The Rev. Carus Wilson, of Casterton Hall," it seems, gave the highest testimonials for Christian character, and high qualifications for the ministry, to a young student of divinity, at the college of Toronto, who, however, with two others, was subsequently expelled. Mr. Wilson, in high indignation, denounces the Bishop of Toronto as a Tractarian. The Editor of the *Record* takes up the accusation. "What are the facts of the case? Did these men retire from Cobourg College in consequence of the fiat of the Bishop—yes or no? And were they expelled because they could not elevate their faith to the standard of the Bishop on questions of baptismal regeneration, the apostolic succession, and *other dogmas of Rome*? . . . They were so repulsed. . . . Where in England shall we find such proofs in relation to the strongest Tractarian, as that given by the act of the Bishop of Toronto, in refusing ordination to men of the highest Christian character and attainments, because they could not give him satisfaction in relation to the high Romish doctrines specified? . . . Even the act alleged in to-day's paper against the Bishop of Exeter, which, if true, will make him, in our

judgment, amenable to the laws of his country, does not prove Tractarianism against him so strongly as the act perpetrated by the Bishop of Toronto; *an act which no Bishop dare attempt at home in the present day.*"<sup>1</sup>

The italics are those of the Editor of the *Record*. The same paper which strongly urges that ordination should be refused to Romanisers, and suggests modes in which they may be detected, congratulates itself that no Bishop dare attempt to exclude from ordination those who deny baptismal regeneration.

But what authority is the *Record*? some will ask; Why quote the words of an anonymous writer in a party paper? Simply because it is the organ of the Evangelical party, and that by which a great part of the mischief which they do is effected. The Evangelicals, as a body, are responsible for what appears in the columns of that paper. It is the paper in which Mr. Bickersteth, Mr. Carus Wilson (one of Mr. Simeon's trustees), and other Evangelical leaders, publish their attacks or complaints. It is, in truth, the embodiment of Evangelical party-spirit. I should be far indeed from wishing to accuse all Evangelicals of the same extremely bitter and schismatical spirit. Still it fairly represents their general sentiments. Some while back, the *British Critic* used to be quoted as an evidence against the Anglicans. But when that periodical was found to put forth sentiments of a Romanising tendency, it was repudiated by them, and its publication ceased. Not so, however, with the *Record*. Twice a week that paper continues to

<sup>1</sup> *Record* for December 11, 1845.

publish its attacks upon the doctrine, discipline, and institutions of the Church, and may be seen lying on the table of most persons of Evangelical views. They therefore, as a party, are responsible for its contents; and I only wish that the Bishops, and other influential members of our Church, instead of treating it with contempt, would just go through a three-months' course of reading the *Record*, in order to make themselves acquainted with the sayings and doings of a party, of the proceedings and animus of which, I fear, they are at present but little informed.

But to return to our subject:—The Evangelical party, through their organ the *Record*, say plainly, that the Bishops of the English Church “dare not” refuse ordination to those candidates who deny baptismal regeneration. I do not believe that the rulers of our Church are restrained by so pusillanimous a feeling as fear. But they may be unconsciously influenced by feelings of a somewhat analogous character, and so deterred from taking that high line of duty which the present necessity of the Church requires. Our Bishops are men of the world, taken from amongst the most eminent ecclesiastics of the 19th century, and imbued with its character. The present age is as far as possible removed from the spirit of martyrdom or chivalry. Men in authority are little disposed to take the part of the weaker, or oppose themselves to the spirit of persecution, or run a tilt with public opinion. Public opinion is a formidable power, especially the public opinion of men of the world. It assumes to be the arbiter of right and wrong;

and those who would despise the attacks of the *Record* as insignificant, might mistrust their position if they found themselves opposed to the *Times* or the *Quarterly* or *Edinburgh Review*, or were looked on as enthusiasts by the men of the world with whom they associate. Public opinion—that is, the opinion of practical worldly men—sets its face against strong measures and religious agitation. Our Bishops are, to a certain extent, biased by the world; they are men of discretion rather than valour, of moderation rather than zeal, courtesy rather than consistency. They are men of refinement too. They dislike a stir. They do not wish to be forced to act or to decide. They persuade themselves that it is their duty to keep things quiet as long as is possible. More evil, they think, will come of causing strife, than good from maintaining principle. They forget that while it may be the duty of statesmen to yield to public opinion in mere matters of political expediency, it can never be consistent with the office of the rulers of the Church to sacrifice one iota of God's eternal truth. Again: public men, especially of liberal and latitudinarian views, are inclined to think little of positive truth. Their bias is towards the popular side, and they are anxious to conciliate rather than to instruct; to give way to the opinion of the many, rather than lead them in the right path; and this even though they sacrifice men unjustly assailed. Witness the recent Charges of the Bishops of Worcester and Llandaff. The Bishop of Chichester has generously taken the opposite side, and lent his protection to those against whom the tide of calumny had set.

Again: many of our rulers seem to have fallen into the popular notion, which surely is most untenable, that Churchmen and Evangelicals are two parties in the Church; fixtures which must remain for ever. They have not realised the fact, that the present Evangelicals, or at least many of them, have departed from the views of our reformers, and symbolise almost entirely with the Nonconformists and modern Dissenters, whose essential feature is hostility to the leading principles of the English Church. It is, I am persuaded, not from fear, but from a too great leaning to the public opinion of the age, that our Bishops have acted with such apparent partiality, exercising an undue harshness towards the most consistent members of the English Church, and extending their sanction, or at least toleration, towards a party whose principles they evidently dislike. Thus it is that, in one sense, as the *Record* asserts, they "dare not" exclude from ordination even those who distinctly deny the vital doctrine of baptismal regeneration.

And all this is mainly for the sake of peace. The Bishops are annoyed and distressed that there should be so much want of unity, so much controversy and disputation, in their respective dioceses. But have they never considered whether the very system which they adopt for the sake of peace be not, of all others, the most likely to cause and perpetuate strife; whether it be not, in truth, the root of all the mischief? What is the cause of the strife that rages in so many parishes? *Simply, the preaching of contradictory doctrines by those ordained and licensed by our Bishops.* Our Bishops



ordain men who, on vital points, hold different opinions. These men naturally deem it their duty to propagate their own views. The doctrines preached in adjoining parishes, and in the various churches in the same town, and the modes of acting recommended by the clergy, are diametrically opposed to each other. What is the necessary result? The greatest bewilderment arises in the minds of serious people. The High-Church clergyman preaches baptismal regeneration according to the letter and true meaning of our formularies; the Evangelical, bearing the same authority, and equally countenanced by the Bishop, often more so, declares that it is "a popish and soul-deluding doctrine." Able, eloquent, and earnest men, under the sanction of authority, thus publicly denounce this fundamental doctrine. So that, on the authority of the Church itself, congregations are taught to deny the Church's doctrine. Believing themselves to be sound members of the Church of England, and really desiring to be so, they are led by the very ministers of the Church into essential heresy. Multitudes of well-meaning persons, especially females, in the middle classes, and others of imperfect education, are vehement partisans of the Evangelical clergy, and under their teaching become bitter opponents and denouncers of this vital and primary doctrine of the English Church, supposing all the while that they are excellent Church-people.

It is impossible to know the sort of confusion that prevails in parishes from this single source, but by the citation of particular cases. Two well-meaning

ladies go into the parish school of A——, and find the mistress teaching the children that they had been regenerated by baptism. Filled with alarm at a doctrine which they have been taught to view as the foundation of popery, they take immediate measures to establish another school in opposition to that under the management of their minister, and use all their influence to draw away the children from the parochial school, where, as they believe, such soul-deluding doctrine is taught. Thus the parish is divided with religious controversy, and the children of the poor are snatched from their authorised teachers. Take another instance:—A parishioner complains to the non-resident rector of B——, respecting the curate whom he has appointed. The curate, hearing of the complaint, remonstrates with the parishioner, and inquires what cause he has given for such a step. “What I object to, sir, is, your turning to the east at the creed, and bowing at the name of Jesus.” “Surely you cannot be offended by such insignificant matters.” “To speak the truth, the real objection is, that you preach baptismal regeneration.” “Baptismal regeneration! why, that is the doctrine of our own Prayer-book. Look at the Baptismal service! Look at the Catechism.” “Oh, I know all that; but such popish doctrines ought to be expunged from our services: they ought never to have been there at all. Mr. ——, in the next parish, preaches quite the contrary.” The dispute ends in the withdrawal of the curate. I have known an influential lady, a member of the Church, positively recommend the poor to go to a Dissenting

meeting-house, rather than to a church where baptismal regeneration was preached! And all these people firmly believe that they are most excellent members of the Church! How is it that they are thus deluded? Just because the Bishops have ordained ministers, and licensed them to cures, who in the name and with the authority of the Church are carrying Dissenting principles into every part of the land. How can peace ever be restored while this system prevails? How can the Bishops wonder at the strife that abounds? How can they feel themselves exempt from the charge that the mischief lies really at their own door? Let but our Bishops declare plainly in their Charges, or in any other way they think proper, what the true doctrine of the Church really is; and let them “dare” to refuse ordination and license to those candidates whom, upon examination, they find to be manifestly unsound, and to hold Dissenting doctrines, as they do now to those who hold Romish doctrines; then, and not till then, will one of the principal causes of strife be removed from the bosom of the Church, and well-meaning Church-people will not be beguiled by their own ministers into being advocates of Dissent.

But peace can never be thoroughly restored until some decided measures be taken with regard to those societies which are at present the principal organs of the Puritan party, and usurp or control the authority of the Bishops; examining, appointing, and withdrawing ministers almost at their own discretion. These societies ought to be put under the efficient

control of our ecclesiastical rulers ; and those energies which are now directed to increase the influence of a party, should be employed for the welfare of the Church at large. We could not have a better example for the management of these matters than the mode of proceeding in the American Church. Their missionary societies, whether at home or abroad, their funds for the increase of their own ministry, and other contributions for religious purposes, are placed under the management of the Church itself ; the governing body of the Church is the administrator of the funds collected for Church purposes. Consequently there is no wrangling and rivalry — no partisanship and canvassing for one society in opposition to another. The contributions of the pious and charitable are collected simply for the furtherance of the cause of Christ, and not for the detestable and unchristian object of extending the influence of a party. God's blessing, we may be assured, will never be given to such deeds of charity as these. Why should not our Church Missionary Society and Society for Propagation of the Gospel be formed into one board, and our Pastoral-Aid Society and Additional Curates' Fund into another, and both be committed to the care and management of our legitimate rulers ? Never, until something of this sort be done shall we rid our Church of that petty strife and rivalry which now infests almost every parish in the land.

These are matters which must sooner or later be taken in hand, and placed on a better foundation than they are at present,—at least, if our Church is to be

preserved entire. The only danger is lest remedial measures be so long delayed, that the evil shall have become too great to be controlled. If active steps were at once taken to purify the Church from heresy, and check these party strifes, it might lead to the secession of some thirty or forty leading Evangelicals to the ranks of Dissent; as the same number, on the other side, have recently gone over to Rome. But if the evil be permitted to advance, as it is now advancing, without an attempt to control it, I see not what is to prevent Puritanism again getting the upper hand, and overspreading and remodelling the Church; so that the old Church of England men, who keep to the Prayer-book as it is, shall be driven from the pale of the establishment, and become a second body of Nonjurors.

It is with the firm conviction that such an event is not only within the compass of possibility, but much more probable than many will allow themselves to believe, that I have ventured, in such plain language, to endeavour to draw the attention of those who hold authority in the Church to the real state of affairs, and the actual progress of Puritanism, of the stealthy encroachments of which I fear they are little aware.

But it is not only to the heads of the Church that I would appeal, but to all good English Churchmen. It is true that we have suffered loss from various causes. The extreme and Romanising views which have been put forth, and associated by the designing or uninstructed with our own principles, the actual secession of some with whom we once took counsel,

the failure of our honest attempt to restore the customs of our own Church, and, lastly, the adroitness with which the Puritans have availed themselves of these circumstances, to prejudice the worldly and uninformed against us, — all these are heavy blows and great discouragements. Still our cause is good, and we have no right to despond. Our object is to uphold and restore the doctrine and discipline of our own Church, and to spread its influence through the moral wildernesses which abound. Whatever discouragements attend the task, still we are bound to persevere. Let us take good heart, and gird ourselves to renewed exertion. Think only of the state of the Church of England fifteen years ago, as compared with its present state. Church principles were then scarcely known; now they pervade the breasts of thousands—thousands of the best and warmest-hearted men in the land. Never let us despair of the restoration of our Church, when God has already given such abundant earnest of success. Let us, however, learn wisdom by experience. Let us avail ourselves of the experience of partial failure to correct our modes of proceeding. If suspicion has been cast on our efforts by association with men of extreme views, men who have disappointed our hopes by wandering into paths beyond the limits of our own communion, let us eschew such companionship, and seek only the co-operation of those who love the Church of their fathers, and are willing to join with us in directing their energies to her service. If we have given occasion to the opposition of the uninformed, by too abrupt interference

with prevailing prejudices, let us in future be very cautious not to render ourselves obnoxious to the imputation of being innovators. The Church is not in a condition to be restored all at once ; her services have been so long defaced and mutilated, that the decent performance of them appears a novelty, and offends the prejudices even of well-meaning men. This we have learned by experience. Let us not, then, attempt any abrupt or general change ; but let us trust that, one by one, as He shall call them, our congregations will return to the true worship of Almighty God, according to the forms and service of their mother Church. For, after all, it is the restoration of the pure and holy worship of Almighty God that is the true object of our endeavours. Such is the aim of all reformation. In the sixteenth century the worship of God had been overladen with unmeaning ceremonies and superstitions : idols were set up in every church. The true aim of the pious reformer, amidst the strife of parties, and the contention of worldly men, was the restoration of the worship of God to its genuineness and purity ; and such is the true object now. Our worship has been debased and degraded into a dull formality. The rage for preaching has thrown our beautiful service into the shade. There are few churches, indeed, and those only where Church principles have recently found their way, in which the worship of Almighty God can be thought to be performed in such a manner as at all to awaken or elevate the sympathy of the congregation. The monotonous reading of the service—the exhortation, con-

fession, absolution, psalms, lessons, creeds, prayers and thanksgivings, all addressed most preposterously *to* the congregation, and generally in the same dull tone; the responses made by a single voice, the irreverence that prevails, the want of unity and sympathy, the utter absence of propriety, or even a desire that the service should be worthy of Him to whom it is offered,—fast and festival, Sunday and week-day service, all kept (if kept at all) with the same monotonous uniformity,—how is it possible that this state of things, which still exists in the majority of parish churches, should not have a most pernicious and deadening effect on both young and old? It is to no purpose that the young are brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord: they may be instructed in God's word—nay, their young hearts may be filled with love for their Maker and Redeemer; but all religious warmth is soon extinguished, if, when they are taken to worship in God's house, they find such a service as too generally prevails, and see nothing but irreverence, indifference, and formality around them. And it is to be feared that multitudes of elder people continue to attend Sunday after Sunday without the slightest benefit to their souls. The truth is, we want a thorough reformation of the spirit of our Church services. Let our Church service be in practice what it is in theory, and then we might justly talk of its “masculine simplicity,” which is now, alas! an empty boast.

I would venture to suggest a mode in which I think the true sons of the Church, those especially



who are able and willing to devote a portion of their wealth to her wants, may greatly advance the cause of true religion at the present time : that is, the building and endowing churches in populous places, where the service of the Church of England may be carried out in its true and genuine form. That such a service is highly acceptable to Church-people, if their minds are not prejudiced against it, has already been shewn at Leeds and other places.<sup>1</sup> It is most desirable that the example which has succeeded so well at Leeds should be generally followed in our great towns, in order that the members of the Church of England may know what their Church service really is. In many of our principal towns, containing tens of thousands of souls, there is no church open from the beginning of the week to the end ; the holydays of the Church are altogether unknown ; and on the Sundays the service is performed in so slovenly a manner, or, if slovenliness be not the right word, in so

<sup>1</sup> I cannot sufficiently express my abhorrence of the wicked attempts made by the Evangelical party to prejudice the inhabitants of Bethnal Green against the churches which the indefatigable and zealous Bishop of London has procured to be built amongst them. Week after week has the *Record* been pouring forth its calumnies, and it is to be feared not without effect. Placards and handbills, accusing the clergy of Puseyism, are posted on the walls, and distributed amongst the worshippers ; and all this because the service of our English Church is strictly performed, and her doctrines honestly preached. And then the organ of the Evangelicals exults in the diminished congregations. It makes one's indignation boil to see this noble effort, which might have been the means of bringing tens of thousands of perishing souls within the pale of God's mercy, thus in danger of being frustrated by the malignant efforts of party-spirit.

unmeaning and tasteless a manner, that the people of the place have no notion of the worship of God but as a tedious mass of unmeaning repetitions. And this is the true secret of the numerous secessions to Romanism and Dissent. People find, or expect to find, a sympathy in other communions which their own Church, though so well able, neglects to afford them. This, then, I think, would at the present juncture be an excellent way for good Churchmen to employ their wealth and energies; namely, the building and endowment of churches in populous places, where the genuine service of the Church of England should be performed. The condition of the endowment should be the performance of daily prayers and weekly communion, together with the exact English service in its most beautiful style. Can no one be found to undertake such a work? If it be too great for one, why should not two, three, or more unite together? Persons undertaking such a work would receive sympathy and assistance towards its completion from quarters where they had not expected. Let the structure, especially the interior, be as handsome as the funds will admit; let the arrangement be carefully attended to; let there be no exclusive pews, no difference made between rich and poor, no theatre-like galleries; let kneeling-room be carefully afforded; let there be a sufficient number of ministers, a choir carefully trained, to which it is found by experience that many members of the congregation will willingly offer themselves; let the Church resound daily with the sounds of prayer and praise; let a careful distinc-

tion be made between fast and festival and ordinary days, according to prescribed order ; let the preaching be plain and earnest (this is a point to which some very good Churchmen have not sufficiently attended: in their jealousy of the paramount importance given to preaching, they have fallen into the contrary extreme, and robbed it of its due position—let this error be corrected), let God's word be preached with earnestness and simplicity, and the other parts of the service performed with reverence and devotion,—then we should indeed see the English service in its “masculine simplicity ;” or rather I should say, its “chaste magnificence ;” and we cannot doubt that many souls which are now beguiled to other communions, or continue to attend on our mutilated and debased service with godless vacuity, would be charmed and enlivened with the refreshing dew of God's grace—they would learn to worship God with a true and hearty spirit, and for ever bless the day when they first joined in the genuine service of the English Church.

Let me here most solemnly protest against the slander and falsehood of those, if any such there be, who shall dare to aver that the restoration of the genuine service of the English Church is an approximation to Popery. The folly and falsehood of the accusation would be its own refutation, if it were not for the incredible prejudice that abounds. No doubt it is right to make due allowance for honest prejudice. But when thousands of souls are perishing around us for lack of Christian sympathy, when many are leaving our ranks for Dissent, and some beguiled

to Romanism; when too many of our old hereditary worshippers in the Church of their fathers are, it is to be feared, dragging out their lives in a listless indifference, making no progress in warmth or vital godliness, and this mainly in consequence of the absurd negligence and want of propriety which prevails in our Church service,—it is surely no time to listen to the prejudices, or regard the calumnies, of those who maintain the monstrous paradox, that the restoration of the genuine service of our own Church is a recurrence to Popery. Honest prejudice deserves to be respected, but such mischievous absurdity must be confronted and exposed. But it is not only the public service of the Church that needs to be thus revived. The whole personal intercourse between the clergy and the people requires to be placed on a better footing; and this as regards all classes, but especially the young. How almost universally does the parochial pastor lose all influence over the youth of his flock as soon as they leave the Sunday school! How commonly do they fall into sin or indifference, and never, alas, return to the fold! Much, very much is wanting to give the parochial pastor that religious influence over his parishioners which shall enable him to be their guide through the thorny paths of life, and train them for heaven and happiness.

Various other suggestions might be made to increase the efficiency of our Church. Most of them have been already so often urged as to cease to be attended to. Nevertheless, our only hope of obtaining what the Church so urgently requires is by importu-

nate reiteration. Every one admits the crying evil of the want of a sufficient number of Bishops to govern the Church properly, and “set in order” the many things that are wanting; and yet year after year goes on, and nothing is done. The means of accomplishing this most necessary work are in reality very simple. There is an act still in force, passed in the reign of Henry VIII., by which power is given to the Bishops to appoint suffragans in certain places, who shall aid them in their labours. Let but a clause be added to this act, extending the power to other places, where, in consequence of the change of the times, Bishops are now most wanted: and let Bishops choose from among their clergy such as have already sufficient endowments,—as, for instance, the Deans and Archdeacons,—and this most desirable object might be accomplished without even entering upon the question of funds for endowment, or of votes in the House of Lords.

Another point which I would just advert to—for it cannot be brought forward too often—is the absolute necessity of getting rid as soon as possible from our schools of the Madras or monitorial system, by which children are set to teach each other, to the utter destruction of that reverence which is due from scholars to their masters, and the deterioration of the character both of the teachers and the taught. Some persons are struck by one deficiency, and some by another; but it certainly appears to me that the present system of most of our national schools is one of the most unmitigated evils with which we have to contend.

But I must leave this and many other important subjects for the present, and hasten to a conclusion. My sole object, in all that has been said, is a hearty desire to aid, if God grant me the power, in increasing the efficiency and restoring the beauty and dignity of our beloved Church, and carrying out her genuine system of doctrine and discipline. I appeal confidently both to our rulers and to those of my brethren who shall read these pages, whether in any the slightest respect I have deviated either from the letter or spirit of the Church, of which we are common members. If I may seem to have spoken harshly of some who profess to be members of the same communion, it is because they appear to me to be the main obstacles to those practical improvements which are so urgently required. Far indeed be it from me to accuse all Evangelicals of being actuated by such a design, or even contributing to such a result. I know, from personal acquaintance, that there are amongst that party many sincere and earnest-minded men, who are pursuing the quiet tenour of their way, and doing as much good as pious exertion under an essentially defective and erroneous system can accomplish; and even of those who actively impugn the system of the Church of which they are members, the majority do so, I firmly believe, in utter misconception and ignorance that they are striving against God's truth. Others there are, I fear, who are actuated by a culpable spirit of vanity and pride, and urged on by ungodly partisanship. Whatever be their motive, the evil which they are accomplishing is very great in-

deed : they are enemies within the very walls of the sanctuary ; and, under the garb of Churchmen, are corrupting her doctrine, impairing her discipline, impeding her improvement, and spreading disunion and strife in every corner of the land. It was the same principle, and almost the same mode of proceeding, by which, two centuries ago, the Church was brought to temporary ruin. And it is under the strong apprehension of similar danger from the same quarter—whether in the shape, as formerly, of violent aggression, or, what would be more fatal still, of gradual and silent transformation of the English Church into a mere Protestant sect,—that I venture to raise this note of warning, in the hope that it may fall on the ear of those who have the power to save the Church of England from this most miserable fate, and restore her to her real form and efficiency.

THE END.

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