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REASONS FOR FEELING SECURE

IN THE

CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

A LETTER TO A FRIEND,

IN ANSWER TO

DOUBTS EXPRESSED IN REFERENCE TO THE CLAIMS

OF THE

CHURCH OF ROME.



BY THE REV. EDWARD MONRO, M.A.

INCUMBENT OF HARROW WEALD, MIDDLESEX.



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## REASONS FOR FEELING SECURE

IN

## THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

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MY DEAR SIR,

You ask me what I conceive to be the ground of those men among us who are determined to assert a definite position for the English Church, and feel satisfied that that position is tenable, and are decidedly opposed to any movement or tendency in the direction of Rome. In answer to this question, I will make a few remarks on what I conceive to be the condition and features of parties amongst and around us.

To me it appears that the day is now come when a clear line must be drawn with regard to the claims of the Roman Communion upon us. We can no longer go on playing with Romanism, or live on the borders of her encampments, while we are members of the Communion of the Church of England. Whatever character the latter has, however deficient and below the mark of antiquity in her practical life, there is a character belonging

to the English Churchman which distinguishes him from Rome as well as from the lowest form of so-called Evangelicalism. We must at last explode the idea that a man simply approximates to Catholicism in the degree in which he approximates to Rome. Rome has stood off the direct high road to Catholicism, though nearer to us than we to Catholicism. We have therefore had her of necessity constantly in sight, hitherto in advance of us, and have fixed our attention on her too much, to the loss of the main object. We may not make a circuit. The straight road lies before us. Our great trial seems to be at the point we have reached. We are at this moment in the course of our journey immediately under the influence of her attraction. It is to be feared that many will endeavour to escape the onward journey which may yet be our trial of patience for years to come; and instead of provoking her to emulation in the effort to attain with us the object for which we started, will turn aside to rest in her Communion, as if it were the perfect ideal for which men's hearts are longing. We have a more direct guide for return to pure Catholicity—Scripture and the undivided Church. And we must deny the claims of Rome, on the ground that she has deserted the rule of faith which she herself professed, and which we hold. We have retained it; and, however imperfectly we have worked upon it, we esteem ourselves to be,



by possession of it, on the way to the more perfect form of Catholicity. And if this be the case, it must be highly culpable to continue in communion with England, while we are, by word and act, condemning and weakening her position by living Roman lives and teaching distinctly Roman doctrine. It is either lack of moral courage or something worse; and he who dies in this mind is in the dilemma either that he dies rebellious to the Church to which he belongs, or out of communion with the Church which he esteems to be the true one. We dare not go on with this line of things. We must at once recognise our position. If it be a false one, let us change it; if a true one, support and strengthen it, and not, in an effeminate and affected manner, go on imitating the teaching, dress, mannerisms, and dictions of a Church in whose communion we are not, and which would despise the weakness of the man who, while he imitates, will not join her. Men should remember that mere imitation of truth will in no way benefit their spiritual condition; and simply they will have their peril aggravated, if, while they hold Rome as altogether true, they have hesitated for any motive on earth to throw themselves into her bosom. If Rome be alone true, join her; if not, let us do our best to strengthen the stakes, and give the tone and teaching of the English Church a hold on the hearts of the people.

Many men have not held their position honestly

and fairly. On the one side, some belong to the Church, hold office in her, are tied by and recognise the canons and councils of early centuries and the phraseologies of antiquity, and yet seem to be staggered by being reminded that a general council is a real thing, that heresy is not simply a name belonging to the persecutions of Gardiner, and the terms Priest and Sacrament do mean something more than Layman and Memorial,—in fact, that the laws, terms, ways, and limits of the Church they belong to have some real meaning; that they are not simply matter of ecclesiastical history, to be read by the antiquarian in the pages of Eusebius or St. Augustine. A large school, in short, among us have enacted Puritanism in spite of their Church-membership; and when, in a day of crisis, they are driven to see their intellectual position, they are so startled, as either to be willing to renounce Catholicity altogether, or to declare it obsolete save in name. On the other hand, men have inclined towards the more consistent position Rome occupied, forgetting that what they saw around them was no fair picture of what might be, and that it was possible to throw life into a faded system; and by the constant use, though in secret, of Roman offices, the half-asserted statement of Roman doctrines, half fearing and half daring to hold and assert them, have gone as nearly as possible to the borders of that Communion, and led as unreal lives as those to whom I have above referred.

For these two classes, distinct Puritanism and Rome are the legitimate homes; and out of these, on their own hypothesis, they are in peril of their souls where they are. If Rome is right, neither father, mother, wife, home, lands, nor parishioners should keep us from her Communion. If a visible Church be synonymous with Antichrist, no Evangelical is safe another hour in retaining his position as an English priest.

But the point for us is, to discover whether there be no ground which we should occupy, equally clear and equally definite with each of these, and at the same time satisfactory to our standard of truth; and whether there be such *à priori* claims from Rome on our allegiance as to invalidate that ground. I fully grant that such a dreamy state of opinion as I have described, would, in a day of great religious transition, be allowable for a length of time; and we could have expected no other result than that we should have been thus indefinite through a long period. But a limit must come to it. And have we not reached that limit now? is it not a time to see our ground? It is quite true that the controversy did assume another shape once, and that in the last century Rome and Puritanism were the only definite principles which divided good men, to a great degree, between them; and the theory of a visible Church, with its teaching, was mixed up in the Puritan mind with Rome; but it need be so no longer. While England *as*

*a Church* was silent, and Rome chose to ignore the Greek Church, she might say to the Puritan : All that belongs to a Church belongs to us ; the term Church is synonymous with the Papal See. But it is not so in truth.

The first point to examine seems to be the ground of our rule of faith. The Puritan theory here is in direct issue with that of the Church Catholic ; it recognises Scripture alone, aided by individual inspiration ; nothing more. It rejects alike tradition and dogmatic teaching ; it renounces human authority in any guise. This is a clear line. We can understand it and debate on it : and by its test many an Evangelical clergyman must feel that his honesty is at stake in retaining his position in the Church ; the very terms he uses daily are at variance with his inward rule of faith. No ground of expediency is enough to excuse this position ; no regard for caste or position in society.

The English Church recognises as her rule of faith Holy Scripture and the interpretation and teaching of the undivided Church. This, too, is a clear line, expressed by the canon of Vincentius, with the modifications that he himself offers ; here, too, we understand where we are. For the test of a rule of faith we have nothing to guide us except our moral sense and our reason. This ground Rome did profess to occupy : she does so practically no longer. She persists in a third theory ; for

the theory of development fully carried out is a third theory militating against the other two, and in its consequences striking and important. Rome has renounced, in fact, her allegiance to the rule above laid down, for her own developments, the developments of what we do and must call but a portion of the Church Catholic; and this can never be taken for the same as the continued interpretation of the united Church. She asserts that her theory of development is simply a further application of the principle involved in the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds; but we cannot agree to the assertion. The undivided Church had a power to develop, which a single branch of a divided Church has not; and the dogmatic teaching of that undivided Church we still retain. If she plead the authority of the Church for superseding and altering the ancient rule of faith, we may fairly say she at once begs the whole question.

Roman writers who have boldly asserted the theory of Vincentius have not spoken of Infallibility; and those who have pleaded the latter have been compelled to renounce the former. Consequently, either Rome is not what she was, or, if so, has admitted a practical state of things at variance with her professed theology. If she stands theoretically on her old ground, we at once condemn her existing system of development as untrue to her theory; if she has renounced that theory, we may fairly join issue on that point, and object

to her claim to pure Catholicity from her having renounced the rule of faith of the early Church.

But however, as to the doctrine of Infallibility, after all, Rome herself is divided in opinion. Archbishop Bramhall tells us that Rome has six opinions as to the seat of the Infallibility; some declaring it to be lodged in the Pope *ex cathedra*, some in the Pope in General Council, some in General Council itself, and so forth. Now, on this theory of Infallibility hinges the whole theory of development; wherever any teaching appears to violate the rule of faith just given, Romanists fall back on the Infallibility; and where that appears to deduce doctrines militating against the rule, they suggest that it is Infallibility enabling the Church to develop.

Why Infallibility has been invented is a different matter: it stands as a broad fact, and has materially altered their whole final appeal. If it be pleaded that the result is of no importance, that the theory does not bring out any mode of opinion which need cause uneasiness or has the appearance of novelty, we must assert that it does; for the present actual teaching of Rome, with regard to the Blessed Virgin, worship of saints, and purgatory, is most alarming to a mind which has been led to lean on the rule laid down above, and very different to the mode in which Rome herself held those very doctrines some time since. So that it appears that, accepting the Infallibility, we must

be prepared any day to deny the most palpable statements of Scripture and antiquity. If the Romanist says, No, for the Church cannot err,—it is simply arguing in a circle: Rome is right, because she has infallibility; and infallibility is right, because Rome asserts it.

Let us, then, see the motives which may have led to the invention of the theory of development. There is a constant inclination to act on arguments founded on the *à priori* expectation of what a Church should be; and these are made the ground-work of logical conclusions. It is wrong to cast a halo around dreams and surmises, and to visit condemnation and contempt, as a matter of course, on those who will not receive them. The simple truth is, that such arguments are founded on false ideals of what a Church should be: one of them being, the possession of clear and definite teaching on all points; another, visible unity; another, the voice of authority guiding the conscience infallibly; another, the assertion of the power to excommunicate all who are not in visible communion with her. But may we not question the safety of testing the truth and falsehood of a Church by mere ideals, when it involves the surrender of our present doctrine and teaching, the rule of St. Vincentius, and the still recognised canons of the Church of the whole world, for a doctrine in which Rome herself is divided in opinion?

And, after all, the truth and necessity of

each one of these ideals is disputable. I do not see that we are to expect *à priori* clearness and exactness of teaching and direction in a Church continuously, on every conceivable point. Her lamp, like that of the individual, may give at times a dim and uncertain light. The picture of the Church Catholic in the Apocalypse, under the name of the Seven Churches, does not favour this view. Holy Scripture does not lead us to expect it, nor the analogy of nature and the proceedings of God in other parts of His creation. They generally lead us to the notion of a certain indefiniteness of view on many points, which will gradually clear away before a holy life and purpose. "If any man do My will, he shall know of the doctrine." Many points are not of necessity clear at once, nor without effort; and wherever great distinctness in minutiae has been arrived at in statement, there has ever been a tendency to heresy and error resulting from it. Many of the errors of Rome seem of this very kind.

Or consider for a moment the supposed need of external visible unity. Is it so needful as to justify us in passing by so much to gain it? On what do men found their assumption as to its necessity? The only analogy we have of a Church in Scripture does not support this view, for the Jewish Church was divided. And I do not know where Scripture states its necessity in such manner as the Romanist intends it. And, as a matter



of fact, it cannot be shewn satisfactorily to exist any where ; for supposing a man leaves the Communion of the English Church to gain it, he will not find such unity outside her, since it is impossible to ignore the existence and life of the Greek Church—a branch possessing far more life than the Romanist is willing to grant. And these are two ideals on which the force of the Roman argument is much built in this day. We desire unity among Christians ; but let us take care lest in our too great haste and impatience we grasp a shadow.

Some men, again, would make much of the position of Rome as being the Church of the immense majority, and use against us the argument of St. Augustine against the Donatists ; but when we look fairly into the matter, she can never be said to occupy the position which the Catholic Church did at that day, inasmuch as again the Greek Church does and must divide with her and us the population of Christendom.

Another argument which has weight with many is the profession in the Roman Communion of poverty, the recognition of asceticism, and of the need of energetic movements among the poor. All these are striking features of a Church, and no Church can be in a truly healthy state without them ; but have we no tokens of their existence among ourselves, and are we to give up the most essential points to gain them ? And when men have joined the Roman Communion, what

do they find to be the state of many of those very practices among her members? Has not the appearance of poverty, in many instances, dwindled off into a mere affectation of singularity of dress, which in truth gives as much scope for elaborate care, expense, and attention as the common occasions of such things in the world? And is she not largely open to a charge of theatrical display, which destroys impressions of reality, to say nothing more? And, in the place of the austerity and really rude dress and habit of life of other days, which were healthy in their tendency because they drew down contempt upon the wearer, has there not crept in a soft and effeminate copy of it to suit the spirit of the age? To be attracted by this, so as to be induced to give up our present position, would be indeed perilous. Who can say but that it wants but the self-devotion and energy of a few to give an impetus among ourselves towards formal austere life and missions among the poor? What is there to prevent the English Church bursting out with unparalleled energy in evangelisation, education, parochial ministration, and every other branch of holy calling, when once the present incubus is removed, and she is relieved of lukewarm, faint-hearted sons, who suspect and despise her? Only give her the chance of a faithful and energetic ministry, and she will do as much, and more a hundredfold, than she ever did yet.

We may easily see our faults. We have too much depreciated goodness which had not high intellect to adorn it, and have forgotten, in choice of leaders, that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but spiritual, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit. Therefore many are out of hope, when such men, as now, are leaving us. But we may believe that God would teach us to trust the more in Him and His gifts of grace than in any natural gifts. There are modest, humble men beneath the present surface of the English Church, who are likely to do, in God's own good time, greater works than we have yet imagined. They appear but little. They are neither writers nor public speakers, and are generally overlooked. They decline partisanship, and shrink from notice; but these are the true instruments for great spiritual works.

Another feature many are struck with, is the apparent agreement of opinion among members of the Roman Communion as contrasted with ourselves. It is true Rome has had the wisdom to embrace a larger latitude of schools by external rule than we have done, and it has been our error that we have lost so many who might have been pouring life through the Church instead of assailing her bulwarks; but as to actual agreement of opinion, I much doubt whether we should find that there was so much more in their Communion than our own.

These are some of the reasons urged upon me by many among us for deserting our Communion, and changing their rule of faith for that which Rome offers. For, after all, it is on this that we must make our stand: the point on which men now with us differ at this moment from Rome is on the nature of that rule.

It is very easy to cast a mist over the whole question, and without fairly viewing what we are about to do, to plunge at once into a new state of things, which offer many external and apparent attractions. But this we cannot safely do. It is wrong to put forward objections to bringing the teaching of a Church to an existing standard, whether of our own moral sense or Scripture. Practically, as we see on all hands, this kind of thing cannot be prevented. The state of Christendom compels it. It is a widely different thing to accept without any exercise of the principle of private judgment the teaching of the Church in which we have been baptised, and to do this in the case of a Church to which we are meditating desertion. We must test the rule and teaching of any such communion by a most rigid process; and if they are found wanting, we dare not take the step. There is a wide difference between the voice which merely speaks with authority and the voice which actually has authoritative claim over us.

We must lay stress upon the fact, which men refuse to see clearly, that Rome of this day has a

very clear definite teaching of her own, opposed to her own teaching of other days. Men must not shut their eyes to this. Oratorianism is a distinct teaching and creed of very momentous import, and one which is very different from the tone of writers of the Church of Rome of other days, or her formal teaching as a Church hitherto. And whatever Oratorianism is, each man will have to accept it who joins the Communion of Rome. I would especially refer to the position that St. Joseph is made to occupy, and the modes of statement with regard to our blessed Lord, which we find in their hymns lately published, surely alike unscriptural, uncatholic, and unprimitive. I speak thus strongly because there is an energy about this school which bids fair to stamp the English Roman communion.

Rome as she is now, and especially Oratorianism, is something distinct in kind from English doctrine: it is not simply the excess of it; it is wholly separate from it. A man may go to nearly any length of Catholicity of doctrine and practice with safety from a clue in our own Church, while he holds in his hand one end of a chain which will connect him with primitive ages. But when no such link is visible, he appears to be occupying a dishonest and false position. There are, of course, many points where the indications are clear enough in the teaching of the Church in England, however poorly worked out or generally recognised, in the light of which we reach the

highest and truest Catholicity, deep views of Holy Baptism, the Real Presence, Communion with the departed, Absolution, and the need of Confession. But it appears that there are points which men are aiming at now in our Communion which are in no way deducible from word or indication in the Church in England, or in the early ages. A man cannot honestly retain position in the English Church while he holds and teaches these; they have no root or branch in our system: however meagrely other parts of the Catholic theory may be worked out among us, and have remained too long but a dead letter, they have at least their recognition in our formularies. I am very far from meaning to assert any kind of attachment for the spirit of Anglicanism, or any idea that it contains any finality,—it is but the chain which binds us, in a troubled and difficult day, to the Church of a more united and purer time;—yet there is such a thing as position within its limits; it has limits of its own, and it has a definite teaching, which we cannot ignore, and which is not synonymous with Rome, still less with Oratorianism.

Again, there are many points which go to make up our whole ideal of Christian truth, and Christian worship as one distinct and important portion of the whole. We gain an idea of Christian worship from Holy Scripture; and that idea is in many points more answered by our own objects of worship than that of the Church of Rome.

If Holy Scripture is to be our ground and type for proceeding with regard to God, we shall gain a certain impression from it as to the mode of approaching the Divine Being, which certain prevalent fashions are as far removed from as can well be.

It seems to me that the whole *primâ facie* view is against a move to Rome as she is ; and the very ground of attack used by Mr. Newman in his first lecture might well be occupied against themselves, when he complains of the Church of England being one which has no stability of teaching, but simply elastic to the will and fancy of the English people. With still greater force we might say, that the spirit of Rome as exhibited in Oratorianism bears the stamp of being simply determined by the advancing popular opinion, by no one settled rule of truth or teaching.

I quite see the force of certain claims a Church in the position of Rome may appear to make on many wavering minds : I quite understand the anxiety on finding that many a feature esteemed by some essential to Catholicity is apparently possessed by her and absent from our own Church. But it is surely a grave question, and one which transcends words, whether a man, to gain advantages, many of which we by patience might possess ourselves, can safely forego his present position. It seems that to gain certain features of Catholic life and practice, which after all may be of doubtful neces-

sity, men are willing to cut themselves off from Holy Scripture as a ground of faith, from the voice of antiquity and the opinions they have held since baptism, to treat with contempt the canon of Vincentius, and violate the rules and opinions of many even within the pale of Rome : and this is the position of our own recent converts ; for a very considerable portion of the members of the Roman Communion are in no small alarm at the growth and defence of practices and opinions among converts which they had looked upon as accidents and abuses. There is something alarming in joining such a state of things ; it is almost like entering on another religion. It surely by none can be lightly undertaken. That we are in a position of deep difficulty and anxiety there can be no doubt ; but the question seems to be, are we not given to expect that this very state of things would exist near the end ? was there not to be a “ falling away,” and difficulties enough to perplex and startle the very elect ? and do not the present movements partake of the very character which we were led to expect would mark these final convulsions ? I see nothing staggering in the fact of every branch of the Church being in a position of perplexity and trouble, but rather the fulfilment of expectations. What is before us, who can say ?

In short, I find myself occupying a position in which I was born, baptised, and have received



continually the means of grace,—in a body which has always professed itself to be an integral part of Christ's holy Catholic Church,—asserting, and satisfactorily proving, its union with the Church of other days, through Apostolic succession, sacraments, and creeds,—a body which other branches of the Church have not unitedly condemned, and when condemned, have done so under a misunderstanding and upon unsound principles, and whom even eminent individuals in Rome are not agreed in denouncing,—one which appears in worship and rule of faith to be nearer to the spirit and tone of Scripture and the early ages than her rivals, and which has not denied, but still preserves the statement of the highest Catholic truths, and, in not requiring over-definiteness of statement, appears more in unison with the spirit of antiquity than the Church of Rome. I find myself in that body at this moment, with many failings and shortcomings; but still I see every other branch with equal difficulties when tested by the standard of truth; and I find every reason to expect, from the analogy of the Jewish Church, from the analogy of God's dealings with man, from the analogy of the individual Christian, which always leads us to expect that God's Presence will be often obscured, and to be discovered only by the eye of anxious and obedient faith, and on this I would lay great weight, and from prophecy, that some such form of high moral difficulty and ecclesiastical

crisis would mark the approach of the latter days. I find that the very rules and canons we assert, Rome has not denied, and still formally holds; I find that the branch of the Church I am in communion with has had a continued life ever since its severance from the Roman See; has produced very many holy men in each generation; has withstood safely many storms and shocks; has employed great energies abroad, and is now at work in converting the world; and I find no failure in her teaching and energy which cannot be accounted for by the chastening fatherly hand of God for her sins; and the fact of general divisions, which seem equally to paralyse every other branch of the Church. I find the absence of continued dogmatic teaching, in the sense in which objectors use the term; but I see it nowhere else satisfactorily given; nor do I see any *à priori* reasons for accounting it essential. We possess the dogmatic teaching of the united Church, and are not ambitious to add to it in our present condition, which would be to assume the functions of the whole undivided Church. For these reasons, I conceive, unless some satisfactory historical flaw be found in our position, which never has been, that we are bound to remain in our place, and to do all in our power to strengthen the Church's position in the hearts of the people and against oppression from without.

The claims of the Roman Communion are

high-sounding; but when I examine them, I find them built on no satisfactory historical ground or proof; she does not prove, but rather asserts that she was the branch which at the great schism continued the stream of pure Catholicity; her members test her position by an ideal of their own, as to the necessity of continued dogmatic teaching and visible unity of opinion. When I ask for proof of that necessity, they refuse to offer any thing but their own ideal; for they refuse to allow Scripture or antiquity to be stable and unalterable appeals; they cast away the only stable ground we ever had, and bid us float with the stream of continued development, without satisfying us as to the weight and authority of the body which developes. I find that many members of her own Communion are exceedingly afraid of this view, and she herself is considerably divided upon it. I find that to accept her teaching I must give up all that feeling about Holy Scripture which I have been ever bound to hold, which is with me synonymous with religion, and to yield which seems the first bold step to infidelity. Nay, more; I find Holy Scripture recognised as little more than a revelation to Primitive Christianity, for which infallibility is now an equivalent substitute. And that theory may lead to the denial of higher doctrines than have yet been impugned; and if they be, I am told I have no appeal to any final authority beyond that supposed infallible voice, for whose authorised existence I

have not one single proof offered me. By doing this, the vessel of the soul leaves all sure anchorage, and is let adrift on the wide waters of uncertainty and mere opinion. I find in Rome objects of worship and a mode of teaching distinctly different from the *primá facie* mode of worship and teaching in Scripture and the early Church; and in some cases not even a clue which connects it with a form to be found there; and when I object all this, I am told that continued dogmatic teaching is essential to a Church,—that, to gain that, I must succumb to her authority, as she alone professes to give it, and yield all else; but she offers me no satisfactory proof that she has a fair claim to speak with that authority, nor that such dogmatic teaching is essential to the truth of a Church. She professes to offer an unbroken face, and to give clear, tangible answers to all difficulties; but I do not see that the analogy of God's dealings would lead me to think that such would be the position of His Church on earth. Besides which, I cannot but be staggered by the apparent violation of the plain and common voice of conscience,—the apparent prevarications and departures from truth and honesty in many of her members. I must feel alarmed at hearing of fictitious miracles, and the old charge of pious frauds made good against her. The voice of conscience comes, with the weight of God's primary teaching, to the individual heart; and we

should rather test an existing Church by it than allow its light to pale before the doubtful teaching of a branch — of the Church Catholic. In short, if I dethrone conscience, and annul the force of Scripture as a primary appeal, with the interpretation of the undivided Church, I do not know what standing ground I have left, or what is to save my drifting away into shoreless infidelity. Those two I have ever looked to as the anchor of my soul; and if you remove them, what have I to save me from infidelity? And the authority of conscience is dethroned, if I am told that fictitious miracles may be recognised, and the common rules of truth violated.

Of course, principles may be carried to excess, and Rationalism may be the result of a cessation of continued dogmatic teaching; but, in the same way, Rome may result in something very much resembling this spirit, if she is not shewing it now; and all this would teach us that the only safe course in questions of morals is to adopt a mean, and not to deem it necessary to drive every principle to its possible result: no principle on earth will stand it. Of course, you understand me, that while I thus state the firm footing I feel in the English Church, and the clear case I see against the claims of Rome, I feel that we are to strive, by every conceivable means, against the position in which the English Church is now placed, and never to rest, night or day, till we have

gained for her perfect freedom of teaching and action.

In spite, then, of many difficulties, I feel secure in my present position. We are on the verge of a crisis: God knows it may be the precursor of the end. I should fear placing myself out of the position which I feel to be providentially ordered. We have enough to do: self-subjugation is no easy work; and there might be a chance of allowing that to merge in the contemplation of possible theoretic difficulties. There may be a need for some, in this day, of the sacred check: "What is that to thee? follow thou Me." Some may prefer dwelling on speculative difficulties. May it not be possible that some who have left us have no right to the amount of attention and weight given to them, from the fact that their religious position has ever been rather intellectual than earnest and spiritual? What may come before the end, who can say? It may be, by some mighty inward guiding, that the riven Church may become again in all things one. It may be that difficulties will pass away like morning mists before the advancing sun, and the clouds which now seem to hang so heavily over the Church will be absorbed into the glory of his rising, and open to our gaze scenes of such perfect harmony and beauty prepared beneath the veil, as to wake our eternal praise;—in a moment, the wildest apparent confusion may appear to

have an unbroken order, and seeming contradictions become the very harmony of truth. And when, at length, the everlasting morning breaks, it will burst on a scene where, in calm and majestic silence, the vast army of the Visible Church will be revealed to her astonished foes, presenting a front without a division,—a garment without a seam; gathered together for the last great conquest of the Lamb, where every portion will have been led to its position by the voice of the invisible Head, unconscious of the wondrous scheme it was aiding to accomplish, and ignorant that it stood side by side with the very portions of the Church from which it had thought itself severed; little knowing that, beneath the shadows of the night of time, the mighty array was marshalling in perfect, though unconscious unity, and that that unity centred in Him who is the Captain of her salvation, “in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.”

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

EDWARD MONRO.

HARROW WEALD,  
*Ember Week, Sept. 1850.*





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