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From Mrs. Douglas

WORDS OF COUNSEL.

“FOR MYSELF I WILL SAY OPENLY THAT I COULD NOT
HAVE ENDURED TO HAVE BEEN THE BISHOP OF
A PARTY, WHEN GOD’S PROVIDENCE HAD CALLED
ME TO BE THE BISHOP OF A DIOCESE.”

Charge, 1869.

Oblogy 150

WORDS OF COUNSEL

ON SOME OF THE
CHIEF DIFFICULTIES OF THE DAY,

BEQUEATHED TO THE CHURCH IN
THE WRITINGS OF
SAMUEL WILBERFORCE,
LATE LORD BISHOP OF WINCHESTER;

COLLECTED AND ARRANGED BY
THOMAS VINCENT FOSBERY, M.A.

HON. CHAPLAIN TO THE BISHOP; SOMETIME
VICAR OF ST. GILES', READING.

Oxford and London:
JAMES PARKER AND CO.

1875.

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PREFACE.

THE title-page explains, perhaps with sufficient clearness, the limits within which I have striven to confine this Collection.

It is put forward in the hope that the words of one so loved and honoured, who has passed from amongst us, may help to calm the waters now so troubled and hinder some of the divisions which now threaten us.

Of the vast regions of thought traversed by that master mind, far the largest tracts are here unnoted. Nor are any of those subjects admitted, of temporary or merely local interest, with which necessarily the Bishop had to deal in his charges and addresses. No trace, therefore, appears here of that marvellous organization, due to him, by the aid of which he ruled this diocese for nearly a quarter of a century; nor of that, in another and still larger diocese,

which in later years had learned to yield itself gladly to his rule, before he was taken away from us all. Neither are those matters introduced which have already burnt themselves out, so to speak, and now lie in ashes. Thank God it is no longer needful to tell of churches, all over the country, fallen or falling into decay and dilapidation^a; nor would it profit to re-open questions which have been long since, for good or for evil, decided.

It is, then, on those important topics to which our attention is so forcibly drawn at the present time, and on those exclusively, that I have sought to give the Bishop's mind, as revealed in his published works; but this is so done that wherever he found it needful, as time went on, to limit and qualify, or, on the other hand, to strengthen

^a Yet I cannot forbear placing in an Appendix, one or two of those graphic descriptions which aroused the country to a sense of this scandal; in order that our children may know what it was that their fathers actually beheld with their own eyes, and may gratefully recognise the marvellous changes which have been since brought about. See page 430.

and expand his judgments on any matter, his former and his later opinions are both given. How little they varied through the long course of his ministerial life this book will shew.

The learned and elaborate arguments by which some of his conclusions were supported, as, for example, in the instance of "Obedience to Ordinary," are, for want of space, necessarily curtailed or omitted; but the conclusions themselves, however arrived at, will always be found here.

The matters thus treated of are so various as almost to defy classification. It has seemed to me best, therefore, to let them follow one another in chronological order, except where it was necessary to place two or more under one and the same heading. Indeed, this arrangement best gives the history of the mind from which they proceeded.

Certain subjects are here very prominent, because the Bishop judged it right and needful to give them this prominence. Other subjects, also of great interest, are

passed over by him more lightly, and therefore occupy here a smaller space. On these proportions, as indeed on the subjects themselves, I offer no opinion.

That which I proposed to do, I have done, however imperfectly, to the best of my ability. I have made no abstracts nor attempted any abbreviations, but have given the very words which have come to us from him whom we have lost, and I can only further humbly pray God to accompany them with His blessing.

T. V. FOSBERY.

HILLSIDE, BRACKNELL, BERKS.,

Epiphany, 1875.

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NOTE.—To preserve the chronological order, No. XXVIII. should have preceded XXVII., and the two divisions of No. XXVII. should have changed places; but the error was not discovered till too late for correction.



I.

ON THE DUE RECEPTION OF THE CHRISTIAN MYSTERIES.

IT will be strictly in the spirit of this day's services^a to inquire with some little particularity into the temper of mind in which the consideration of such high truths should be approached, as well as the most natural means of acquiring and preserving it.

On the very threshold of such an inquiry, we are met by the caution which checked the curiosity of Moses. The vision of the Angel of the Lord in the bush burning but unconsumed, stirred up within his heart the desire of searching further into the wonder which had startled him: "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burned," (Exod. v. 3). So ever speaks with its first impulse the curiosity of man; which would subject the wonders of the nature and the presence of his God to that scrutiny of the intellectual powers by which he is accustomed to examine the creation round him. But this purpose is at once interrupted, and the announcement of God's presence is followed by the caution, "Draw

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^a Preached on Trinity Sunday.

not nigh hither : put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground," (v. 5) ; teaching him, that reverence and adoration, rather than the sharpness of observing scrutiny, were the attributes with which it became the creature to enter his Creator's presence.

Here, then, is an intimation, that clearness of intellect is not that upon which mainly depends the right perception of God's revelation of Himself.

And this same truth we shall find repeatedly recurring in the sacred pages. To pass at once to the Christian revelation and the teaching of our Lord, how manifestly is the same lesson to be found in His declaration, that "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of heaven as a little child, he shall not enter therein!" (Luke xviii. 17). With all those faculties for comprehension which depend upon the perfection of the intellectual powers, a little child is evidently unsupplied. What, therefore, can prove more clearly than such a declaration, that moral fitness, rather than subtilty of intellect, is needed for receiving rightly this revelation of Himself.

This, indeed, is but what we might reasonably expect ; for as the Christian revelation, by its own profession, is not a mere intellectual abstraction, but in its nature and foundations is essentially moral, the evidence on which it rests cannot, as in abstract science, be addressed purely to the intel-

lect. To receive it rightly, the will must assent to it no less than the understanding. By no other solution can we account for the wholly opposite conclusions, even upon fundamental points, at which we see men of the highest reasoning powers arrive. For as, in all matters of necessary truth, right reasoning from the same premises must lead to the same conclusions; and as we see men, whose powers of reasoning are above all question, come here to opposite conclusions; we must suppose, either that something more than intellectual power is needful to lead them right, or that there is in this subject-matter no such thing as abstract truth, but that to every separate mind that which seems so to itself is true. But as this supposition is destructive of the very notion of revelation, which requires that the doctrines it teaches should be received as facts, true in themselves, independently of all opinions, it only remains, that men's various conclusions must be the result of some moral causes separate from their mere intellectual powers.

And if from this general view of the discrepancies of belief, we turn to the examination of a single instance, we shall find new light thrown upon the subject.

No one, perhaps, has thought at all steadily of any of these mysteries of revelation, without being, in some measure, troubled by the manifest difficul-

ties with which they are beset. Sometimes it is directly in the very article of belief; and "How can it be?" is the spontaneous language of the mind; that is, the difficulty of the subject suggests to us a temptation to deem it impossible. At another time the temptation takes another shape. The words we have been taught to use, and to which our lips and ears have long grown familiar, sound new and strange to us: we doubt whether we have not used them always hitherto idly, and without attaching any meaning to them; that is, we are tempted to deem of religious truth as an unreality: we can scarcely persuade ourselves that it has ever been to us more than a sound of words; and then the air of unreality soon creeps over the whole. Or, again, perhaps the temptation has arisen from what seem to us to be the necessary consequences of that which we are called on to believe: some train of thought leads us on, before we are aware, to something which follows from it, and which is in itself evidently absurd, or irreverent, or, in some way, unbecoming the dignity of heavenly truth; that is, we are here tempted to speculate and rationalise on that which belongs to the province of faith, rather than the reasoning faculty. Now, to one who has cultivated with any care an habitual reverence for holy things, the very glancing of such thoughts over the mind gives deep and instant

pain : an overpowering sense of its own weakness accompanies their entrance ; a doubtfulness about all its conclusions ; an almost instinctive dread of whither it may be led on ; a sense of the letting go of the only anchor of the mind, and of a floating off upon the restless ocean of uncertainty and doubt : the feelings and the reason seem at war, and the mind is very much in the condition of an ingenuous child, who has been puzzled and distressed by the results of some reasoning to which it knows of no reply, and yet against which its filial reverence instinctively rebels. And if, at this moment, this pain, which is indeed an intimation of the will of God, be duly attended to, the immediate impulse of the heart is to cry out to Him for help ; to cast itself upon its habitual persuasion of the love and power of God, as on realities of which, without reasoning, it is convinced by the very necessity of its own nature ; and in the darkness of its confused searchings after truth, to say, "that I know not, teach Thou me : " and then the next step is to practise what it does know, acting on the promise, "If any man will do My will, he shall know of the doctrine." And then the effect of this conduct must evidently be to form a habit of shrinking from doubt and speculation ; and in the same degree to nourish and increase a reverent and affectionate belief in what is revealed : and this not from the power

or subtilty of the intellect, but from the moral qualifications of the soul for receiving God's revelation of Himself.

But now take the opposite case; that of one who had not been so carefully shielded from irreverence of thought; who had been accustomed to think and to speak of holy things with levity, or even to suppose them to be fit subjects for the exercise of great intellectual subtilty, and for our natural powers of argument and discovery. The entrance of sceptical or irreverent thoughts could clearly give no instant pain to one who belonged to the first of these two classes; because his mind has become accustomed to the sight of holy things mixed up with low and unworthy thoughts, and there is nothing, therefore, to shock him in such an association: moral evil, that is to say, has robbed him of the first safeguard of his faith, and made him less fit for receiving the discovery of heavenly mysteries. And so too in the second case: when doubts or difficulties cross this man's mind, instead of crying out to God for light, in the darkness which is beginning to overshadow his soul, he at once sets his own intellect to work: no humbling sense of its miserable weakness drives him instinctively to seek a better strength: in vain is there a Father's hand stretched out to succour him: self-confidence knows not that its steps are stumbling.

“Ye will not come unto me that ye may have life.” He begins, therefore, to reason; and in so doing, he unawares encourages his danger: his temptation, in truth, is to speculate, where he ought to believe; and, in his ignorance, he sets himself to speculation, in order that he may believe more rightly: he becomes, therefore, of course, bolder and bolder in speculation; the motes multiply before his eyes, and cloud over more and more the obscured vision of God’s truth. While he thinks, perhaps, that he is loving truth above all things, and seeking for it most eagerly, he is, in fact, loving his own delusions; a passion for speculation and argument is leading him captive where it will: he thinks that he is sacrificing all for the faith; he is, indeed, sacrificing all for his own besetting sin: and so the hardened heretic, cast out of the communion of the Church, and giving up, it may be, worldly advancement, because he will adhere to his own speculations, though he appears a much more interesting object, because he seems in one light to be suffering for his love of truth, is, indeed, making the very same sacrifice, on the very same ground, as he who, for the grosser baits of animal indulgence, brings upon himself the same sufferings: he is, in truth, sacrificing all at the shrine of his besetting sin; a sin too, which, though decked out with the seeming glory of a spurious

martyrdom, is, when we look more closely, an exact copy of that which we may reasonably class as the greatest of offences, "the very snare of Satan;" for it is an instance of a reasonable creature falling from his God, not by fleshly temptation, but by intellectual and spiritual revolt. . . .

The presence of doubts is not, indeed, always in itself a proof of any irreverence of soul: sometimes they are permitted to harass the faithful man as a trial of his faith; and when they come thus, and not as the fruits of irreverence or negligence, it is often against the most valuable minds that they are aimed. The armory of Satan is rifled to furnish weapons of offence wherewith to injure those who are proof against his commoner assaults. From this danger no one is absolutely safe. There seems clearly to be an intimation in the Gospel, that our blessed Lord Himself, when He bore our feeble humanity, was tempted by the suggestion of doubts from the enemy without, though no possible taint of evil, either from the imagination, understanding, or will, ever visited His soul; for to Him it was whispered from without, "IF Thou be the Son of God," to insinuate, if it were possible, into that most true-loyal soul some mistrusting doubtfulness of His Almighty Father. The suggestion, therefore, of doubts to the mind, does not necessarily suppose the presence of sin; it does unquestionably sup-

pose the presence of danger, and therefore is a call for greater watchfulness, for a more diligent guard over the first tendencies of thought towards irreverent speculation ; that the fiery brands may be quenched or thrown back before they have kindled so much as a spark within. Whilst irreverence and doubt are the objects of your greatest fear ; whilst you would gladly retain a child-like and unquestioning reverence, by abasing, if need were, your understanding, rather than gain any knowledge at the hazard of your reverence ; you are doubtless in God's hand, and therefore safe. Yet, as He works by means, and as this danger evidently threatens you, guard against it with a vigilant providence ; fly from doubts, rather than enter into conflict with them, remembering that "he who will fight the devil at his own weapon must not wonder if he find him an overmatch^b." Fly, therefore, rather than contend ; fly to known truths ; shelter yourselves, above all, under the shadow of His love and power, who is, in compassion, Father of your spirit, and yet is the Lord God Almighty : begin to act upon the truth you do know, and your darkness shall be turned into light. "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light ?

^b South.

let him trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." (Isa. l. 10.)

To these means must be added further, as perhaps the greatest instrument of all for preserving the unsullied clearness of a reverent faith, that we be deep and constant students of God's holy word. We know, indeed, and feel the blessing and advantage of symbols, formularies, and articles; of the whole amount of uninspired transmitted teaching, with which God's providence has enriched His Church. We doubt not, that in the consent of Christendom we can read the working of God's Spirit on the souls of His children; even as we can trace the passage of the wind of heaven by the ruffling of the waters underneath its breath: and for these great helps towards the due comprehension of revealed truth we heartily thank God, using them carefully, and with reverence of spirit; not thanklessly and rudely throwing aside any help (least of all so great an one), where we are so weak, and where we so greatly need great strength. But still, with another spirit, and with far higher reverence, we turn to Holy Scripture: here are no weary searchings of the soul, amidst the waywardness of individual fancy, for that track of consent, which, when close to us, shews often so faintly as to be almost lost, although on the whole the eye can run along its course; but all is sure. It is not grains and

dust that we collect, golden indeed, and precious enough to repay the toil of washing, and sifting, and testing, and collecting, though still but grains and dust ; it is rich and solid veins of ore, which grow under our hands. Now, the bearing of this difference on the formation of a reverential habit of receiving truth, is most direct. This unquestioning submission to a heavenly guide is the very temper which we need ; and to no other teaching but that of inspiration can we thus absolutely yield up ourselves. Nowhere but where we know that every word is necessarily true, can we wholly abandon the spirit of questioning what we are taught, and with all our souls ask only what we are to learn. Nor need it be concealed, that this caution becomes only the more requisite at any time when the spirit of theological research has been happily aroused, and men have been sent from the slight and unsatisfying prettiness of the moderns, to the more solid and severe thoughts of earlier times. The energy and wholesome zeal for learning, which then succeeds to the listlessness of a superficial season, leads men into new danger. Holy Scripture they seem to know, because they are familiar with its words ; and it appears, therefore, as if other studies yielded more return to the inquirer. There is more to satisfy a restless curiosity ; there are more apparent, superficial gains ; and so there is great

danger, lest, unawares, and whilst their language changes not, men's secret estimate of things should change ; lest, practically speaking, Holy Scripture be less valued, in point of fact, its pages be less searched ; and man's authority and secondary fountains be mainly employed to quench that thirst of the spirit which should be slaked only at the living waters of God's word.

This is no slight danger ; great is the injury which may accrue from it to our belief. First, as you have seen, in its necessary effect upon our power of simply apprehending truth, without the presence of a questioning spirit ; but not this only,—it affects too our system of belief, as well as our powers of believing. We do not, indeed, as the Romanist declares, set men down unaided to draw out from Holy Scriptures for themselves a system of belief, although we may not doubt but that from them alone, if no more were given, men might learn aptly, by the secret teaching of the blessed Spirit, all truth needful for salvation : but more has been given ; and what God has given, we dare not to slight. Our creeds, and all the transmitted judgments of the Church, are most precious aids ; and, with the previous teaching of these stored in their minds, we send men to the Scriptures, not to discover, by a curious scrutiny or new inspiration, truths hitherto unknown, but that they may learn indeed, and with

a spiritual knowledge, truths old to the Church, but, in this sort, new to them. We would impress upon you, that the teaching of articles and schemes of faith is, by the necessity of the case, dogmatical and cold—addressed to the understanding more than to the heart; and that the belief which you will gain from learning Christianity from them is, therefore, wholly another thing from that which will possess their souls who patiently and earnestly explore the Word of God. No truth is written in broader characters in every page of past Church history. Many are the heresies which have sprung from a learned pride; from ignorance alone scarcely perhaps a single one,—none, certainly, from ignorant humility. The only theological knowledge which has saved men from heresy has been this knowledge of God's word. So, indeed, it must be; the sands of a faith adopted thus mainly by the intellect must be ever shifting; they want the compacting principle of moral obligation. It is when the objective truths which creeds and articles record in naked propositions become subjective in our minds, by being mixed up and united with the daily upgrowth of our moral being, that our souls are truly established in the Christian verities. . . .

We call on men, indeed, to mortify their thirst for knowledge; to abase their pride of reasoning; to become as little children: we meet the young

man glorying in his untamed powers of imagination, and we meet the wise man glorying in his patient strength and subtilty of reason; and we tell them, that they must be content to part with those most valued attributes, and receive Christ's teaching as a little child. And these are great requirements. But our rewards are not less than our demands. We can promise, in Christ's Name, to those who will venture on His word, the secure possession of that which reason promises in vain. They who at His call are willing to choose the path of a humble ignorance, shall find it turn into the way of surest knowledge. Though they sacrifice some apparent boldness or subtilty of intellect, though they sparkle less with the outward dazzle of an assumed philosophy, yet even their natural capacities will be increased and perfected. The patience and docility which such self-discipline engenders; the quiet brightness of mind which follows the clearing off of the mists of disfiguring passions—these are great aids even to the natural faculties. The mind which has been most deeply steeped in the morning dews of devotional exercises, will ever bear, with the most maintained freshness, the parching heats of deep and various study.

And if this be true as to objects of mere intellectual apprehension; if, with regard to them, the boldness of self-confidence, and the promises

of an unpurged reason, are uncertain and deceitful, how abundantly more true is it, if we take into our reckoning the best and greatest objects which can occupy the human mind, and the widest and most lasting period for its active exercise! for these are closed for ever against all, save those who will enter on the search through the narrow portal of such a teachable submission.

Even here on earth, what are all the speculations of the reason, or the secrets of science, to that knowledge of the Creator of all things, which the humble and the contrite gain? Wise, indeed, even for this life, was the resolution—“Credo, ut intelligam.” Faith demands the submission, but it insures the perfection of the reason; it has a peculiar insight granted it into the highest and the deepest things: “Sæpe amor intrat, ubi cognitio foris stat^c.” And if, from this world, where the mischance of a moment, the burning of a fever or the wasting of an ague, may rob us, unwarned, of all our most valued stores; if, from this short and uncertain condition, we carry on our reckoning into the eternal world, all comparison is at an end. “Blessed,” then, indeed, “are the pure in heart; for they shall see God,” (Matt. v. 8): words for which our poor conceptions here can furnish no fit interpretation; but which suggest to us, certainly, the highest satisfaction of

^c Gerson.

our intellectual as of our moral faculties; the full fruition of those longings which God has planted in our nature, and which here below can never be completely met;—words which plainly teach us, that the meek docility and child-like purity which Christ requires in His disciples, will be, beyond all measure, overpaid, when, before the throne of light, “we shall see no more through a glass darkly, but face to face;” when “we shall no more know in part, but even as we are known,” (1 Cor. xiii. 12).

1838.

II.

THE TRUE REMEDY FOR DIVISION.

I N union must be our strength ; and between men engaged in action, there cannot long be union without concert. Perhaps one of the main causes of want of strength within the Church of England, at this time, is the want of concert, combination, and therefore of strict union between her clergy. We act separately in our parishes—we grow to act as units on society : the man, therefore, and not the system, is brought to bear upon the various hindrances we meet with. Meanwhile, the necessary love of our own plans—peculiar modes of viewing truth—the apparently paramount importance of that part of the truth which we are most apt to contemplate ; all this tends to develop a selfish standard, to lower our estimate of unity, and to sever us from our brethren. Then come suspicious thoughts of all who do but express the same truth in different modes of speech ; then shyness of combined action, which is soon observed, imitated, and exaggerated by our flocks ; and so the compact phalanx of the Church, which in her union would be “terrible as an army with banners,” is broken up into a mixed and disor-

dered multitude, and is in danger of becoming the helpless prey of the first vigorous and combined assault of her beleaguering enemies. . . .

Besides the matters brought before us by recent or by pending legislation, there are other and more general interests which at this time it especially behoves the clergy of this land to have considered carefully; for we cannot hide from ourselves the fact, that the peace of society around us is threatened by especial perils—perils which it is peculiarly our province to allay. To maintain, indeed, the peace and order of society is not our highest aim. It is not because we are the safest and the cheapest instruments for supporting civil government, and thereby the peace and happiness of social life, that we claim the attention of mankind; we act under a far higher authority; and we aim at far nobler objects than such views can contemplate; and in this day we have especial need to enforce this truth upon the worshippers of mere expediency around us. Yet are we bound to “seek the peace of the city where we dwell;” to act in the spirit of that prayer in which we ask “that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by God’s good providence, that His Church may joyfully serve Him in all godly quietness.” Nor is it of little moment that we know and claim our true possession of that only power which can still these rising tempests; for the bring-

ing out of this truth is, in great part, the very discipline which these times need. Always, indeed, as now, selfishness and ungoverned passion have been at the root of national as well as individual suffering ; but these evils, instead of lurking in the dark as heretofore, have of late formed themselves into avowed systems, wherein they have dared to walk openly abroad, and promise new life and enjoyment to their miserable victims.

With this truth, therefore, we must meet them. We must shew men that all the social peace and order around them are themselves but one fruit of Christianity ; that the prevalent trust in the power of civilisation is but an empty delusion—a mere trusting in a word ; for that civilisation is but the calm which results from the living energy of Christianity. So much, indeed, the very leaders of disorder might have taught men, for they know that their only hope of overthrowing, or, as they vainly term it, remodelling, the social system, is by first removing Christianity. Yet still, the long-continued prosperity of this land, its mechanical powers and its intellectual activity, and, in one view and in some measure, the general prevalence of a certain respect for religion in the abstract, as separate from what are thought the dogmas of peculiar creeds,—all of these make it of the utmost moment that this truth be again and again brought forward. And to prove it is not difficult ;

the proof is written large on every page of history, where, in the long-run, the welfare or the sufferings of any people are seen to be nothing else than the true transcript of their moral and religious state. This is not the place for the details of such an argument ; for shewing that the Christian Church has been everywhere the true parent of national existence ; that she it was who, when the old Roman empire broke up, more even through internal corruption than external violence, gathered into unity and national life the various savage hordes whom the great tempest of the world had driven within the reach of her calm and ennobling influence. All this might easily be shewn, as it has been most ably shewn by one^a whom national character and leading pursuits could not have predisposed to such opinions. But it is of great moment that we bring this truth continually forward ; that we possess, as far as may be, the minds of men with the conviction of its certainty ; that we lead them to see, that there where God's ark is most reverently enshrined will be the largest measures of prosperity and peace.

It is of great moment for ourselves also, my reverend brethren, that we realise this conviction ; that we look on the holy things in which we minister as being in very deed our nation's safeguard. Such a persuasion will lead us to take not only

^a Mons. Guizot.

a faithful, but a thoughtful and reasonable view of all the troubled and changing scene around us. Without this, while, through God's blessing on our labours, we may do good to individuals, we shall never call out the dormant powers with which the whole system of the Church is really instinct for the healing of our age. It is of no use to rail against the spirit of the times in which God has cast our lot: our business is to mould and sanctify it; and this we may do, if we bring the influence of the Church to bear upon it. For, even in its worst forms, we may commonly find that what is called the spirit of the age rests upon some real want of man and society—upon some want which the Church can and ought to satisfy, and which is turned to evil through the absence of this its lawful satisfaction.

Thus, for instance, at this moment two causes mainly lie at the root of all those convulsions by which the peace and order of society are threatened—the unequal distribution of property, and the want of a common bond of unity. Now both of these undoubtedly are the result of a highly unnatural and, in many respects, diseased state of society; and the craving for their redress is not in itself evil. It becomes evil only when it seeks the mocking, selfish world as its redressor; instead of seeking, as it ought to, the power of Christ's Church.

For, take for a moment the second of these causes: is it not true that there is a great and widening separation in this land between the various classes of society, and even between man and man? Thus the bonds which of old held the high and low of English society together are melting away. Where, for instance, amongst our vast manufacturing population, are the old bonds of mutual affection and respect—of natural care on the one side, and generous trust upon the other—by which the peasantry and gentry were united? And this poison cannot be anywhere present in the circulation of the body politic, without reaching, more or less, to every part—it creeps on to the trading classes, to the shopkeeping classes, and thence even to rural districts. This change is passing upon the very conditions of social life in England; and at the same moment, and from the action of the same causes, the straiter bonds of family life and subjection are wearing out; children are becoming more independent, and brethren therefore more disunited. And yet men are so constituted as to crave after union and cooperation: in the bitterness of spirit, therefore, which waits on this increasing separation, they look around for some new bonds which may replace the old. It seems to them that religion has been hitherto one of their dividers; for they have known her only in the multitude of sects;

and so they turn from her, and vainly hope to find in common interests, and the jugglery of sensual promises, a cement strong enough to hold together their pretended social system. Now, how are such men to be met? Not by railing against their desire of combination, for this rests on a true longing of man's heart—it is the cry of their souls against the misery around them; but by shewing them that the Church is this healer of division; that in her unity, and in it alone, the selfish, jarring hearts of men may be indeed charmed to concord. My reverend brethren, there is at this moment a special call upon us to believe and act upon this truth; to proclaim it fearlessly, that division is not of Christ; to teach in all our parishes, and carry out the truth in all our plans, that in the Church is the secret of unity for which men's hearts are thirsting. What were it not to do for England, to bring these healing powers to bear upon our torn and disaffected multitudes; to bring our great cities, with all their busy swarming life, to bow down in the fellowship of a true faith before the altar of a common Redeemer.

And so of the other great cause of separation. No reasonable man can doubt that the idolatry of property is, at this time, one of our prime national sins. And has not God so ordered things, that rich and mighty nations, when they do be-

come entangled in this idol-worship, shall become also His avengers on themselves ; that the careless, selfish rich shall become the prey of the untrained, violent needy ; that the feebleness of all human institutions, when they rest not upon God's word, shall, sooner or more late, be thoroughly proclaimed by all the horrors and agonies which wait on civil strife ?

And what is the only redressor of this evil ? Not the somewhat unpalatable truths of political economy, nor the iron sinews of a proclaimed necessity, which must always sound as a taunt in the sufferer's ear. When did these ever allay such tumults ? No, my reverend brethren, Christ's Church, and it alone, can heal these evils. She who can stand between these two classes ; who can bind both in a common unity ; who can teach the rich man that all he has are talents ; that man must hang on man ; that the sin, ay, and the robbery, begins with him, if he uses for himself what was but lent to him to use for others ; who can tell the poor man that he is God's pensioner, and the rich that he is God's almoner ; who can shew to the one the fearful danger of wealth, and to the other the dignity and blessedness of Christian poverty ; who can teach both that it is " God who hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked, that there should be no

schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another ^b.”

This work, my reverend brethren, we must do, or our land is lost. I will not scruple to say, that I believe we have not done it hitherto enough. We have not enough enforced upon the rich the conditions upon which they hold their riches. We have allowed small alms to multiply; we have not claimed, and therefore not received, those full offerings with which the Church ought to equalise the inequalities of poverty and wealth. Hence have sprung many of our troubles; we have ourselves, in the minds of the ignorant, become identified with the idol-worshippers of property, because we have not openly rebuked them. Yet here, too, our nation's hope is in our efforts. Even as a mere political institution, the English clergy, standing as they do between all ranks, binding together in the equality of the common priesthood the sons of the highest noble and of the meanest peasant, have an equalising power which no other body can have. But this is far from all. When we stand up in the truth and reality of Christ's Gospel, we wield “the powers of the world to come.” We can, in our Master's name, rebuke Satan, and cast him out. Only let us go in faith and in humility about our task, and we must prosper. Opportunities are everywhere

^b 1 Cor. xii. 24, 25.

around us. We may lay the foundation with the young ; by educating children not in the frothy showiness of superficial attainments, nor in the fickle fervour of excited religious sympathies, but in the deep and ennobling truths of God's word ; in the certain training of His Church ; by working principles into their hearts, and habits into their lives :—we may go on to their elders ; we may charm to rest their angry passions with the blessed message of the everlasting Gospel ; and teach them to turn their eyes aside from an irritating gaze upon the sufferings of this life, by teaching them indeed to know and prize their place within the Church amongst the saints of God.

A great work doubtless, my reverend brethren, is before us. Let us, therefore, be men of labour ; seen and known in a perpetual ministry as the messengers of peace. We need for its fulfilment an earnest faith and great and constant self-denial. Let us, then, for the sake of others, as well as of ourselves, be men of holiness. Let us seek for the rich indwelling of the Spirit of all grace. For without this all our labours are in vain ; our costliest efforts are an empty stage-show—there is no life in them, and in performance they must fail, as lacking reality and truth. Above all, let us be men of prayer—of prayer for ourselves, as those who, beyond all others, need wisdom, strength, and mercy ; wisdom to thread harmlessly our

often doubtful way ; strength to bear a burden always too heavy for us ; mercy, for, more than others, and in greater things, we oftener fail ; of prayer for others, for we are appointed to be intercessors, and where we can do no more, we can always pray, and prayer cannot be in vain. In one word, "seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, let us faint not^c."

1840.

It can only be by earnest self-denial that, in God's strength, and through the Gospel of His Son, we can hope to prosper in our work. A listless, ordinary, decent service will not do what we are earnestly called upon to do. We must be "the salt" of our land, if we would see it kept in these last days from the foulest corruption. We must set ourselves by example, more even than by preaching, against the peculiar dangers of our age. What the great character of those dangers is, it is not difficult to read. The vast growth and accumulation of our riches, the abundant means of sensual and lower gratification hereby provided for us, the discoveries of man's power over the resources of nature, all these have tended, and still tend, to make us a luxurious, a selfish, and so a low-minded people. Hence it is that the

^c 2 Cor. x. 1.

bonds which bind our several classes into one are already loosened and yet more dissolving. Hence it is that bands of children, who might grow up to be our Church's and our country's strength, are daily sacrificed, both soul and body, in the vast idol temple of our manufacturing greatness; hence are all the plague-spots on the surface of society, which mark too surely the deadly plague which rages in her veins.

No other power than that in the strength of which we minister can save our land. So much even they confess who the least think of making any such confession. The new plans, now current, for regenerating society are, in their veriest empty graspings after the shadows of combination and a spiritual link between man and man, a confession of the want of some religious element, and an attempt to supply it. They are a testimony against the heartless, sensual matter-worship of the day. They are the inarticulate cravings of speechless organs after that which the Church, and the Church only, in the true strength and presence of Christ, in the fulness of the Spirit, and so in the perfectness of mutual communion and of a chastened self-denial, can give to them. And this, my reverend brethren, it is ours to minister to this great people; to convey this truth and life in our several spheres to all the remotest veins and pulses of our social body. What man-

ner of men ought we to be! How deeply should we have drunk of these truths; how should our very spirits have imbibed their power and freshness; how should our lives testify against the low-minded self-indulgence of a sensual age!

We have the more need to remind ourselves of this, because the peculiar character of our position predisposes us, if but for a moment we lose sight of our high spiritual vocation, to sink into the decent lovers of a life of ease. Sheltered from the rudest blasts of public life; compelled by the proprieties of our position to curb the extravagance of the more violent passions; endued more or less with some literary tastes, and softened by the balmy air of domestic happiness, we are more than other men in danger of becoming worshippers of ease and comfort.

None of these things, indeed, need betray us: only let us, in God's strength, keep steadfast guard against them. The time has been, ere now, when the men of our order bore without flinching the bitterest blasts of open trial. The Marian persecution fell upon a married clergy; and it was often noted that they whose houses were stored the most richly with domestic blessings walked with the steadiest footsteps to the scaffold or the stake. Let us shew ourselves their sons in more than name and natural succession. Let us practise ourselves in the Church's discipline,

in her fastings, her prayers, her continual service ; in her deadness to the world ; in her true spiritual life to Christ. Let us lay a firm hold upon things unseen, that we may be ready to endure "as seeing things that are invisible." Let us ever bow our neck to the yoke of our Lord ; let us rest all on Him and on our personal union with Him ; claiming by faith for ourselves our true place in Christ's redeemed body ; claiming it for our flocks, and teaching them to claim it for themselves ; casting off the sloth and softness of a merely natural life ; being, if need be, "men of contention to the whole earth ;" that so of God's mercy we may, if it be given us, heal our people's sore ; or at the least save alive amongst us the holy seed for whose sake God may yet spare our land. Every other mark, my reverend brethren, of Christ's true Church we have upon us : a true succession, which of God's goodness was never broken ; order which none can dispute, mission which none can question, His word in its integrity, His sacraments in their purity ;— add to these the outward gifts of learning, and station, and influence, and competence, at least, if not of wealth ; only let there be seen upon us more abundantly the deep broad stamp of a self-denying holiness ; that countersign of God's true choice, that impress of the cross of Jesus ; and of His great mercy, through the presence of His Holy Spirit, our labours shall bring forth their fruit

a thousand fold. The word we speak shall be as a sharp sword, reaching even to the souls of men, and our intercessions shall open the windows of the heavens, and bring down a gracious rain upon the parched and waiting heritage.

1841.

III.

SEASONS OF TURBULENCE, OF UNBELIEF AND MISBELIEF.

NEVER, surely, was there a time when the hearty, earnest efforts of all who fear God and love their country were more loudly called for. The recent disturbances in one part of our land [1842]; the threatening aspect of society even now in others; the want of employment, the stagnation of trade; and yet more by far, as indicating a deeper root of evil, the widely-spread endeavours, for the vilest purposes of gain, to poison the minds of the great mass of our working population; the want of coherence, and affection, and trust, between the various classes of society; our dissent, our distrust, our internal variance in the deepest things which stir the souls of men:—these are most alarming symptoms of our social as well as moral state. Surely they do declare that God has a controversy with us; that He is stirring us as a nation with these warnings of adversity, that we may repent and turn to Him before it be too late.

It is, then, a time in which all who fear Him should be watching and labouring earnestly; but

chiefly, my reverend brethren, should we who keep God's watch upon the battlements of our land, chiefly should we, at such a time, be earnestly awake. All things round us call us to be ready : great powers, for good or evil, are struggling around us, as in a confused uncertain birth, and upon our faithfulness the issue in great measure must depend. It is no escape from this truth to allege, that so it has ever seemed to each succeeding generation in its turn ; that seen near at hand the features of each present danger have always worn the most appalling aspect ; that the NOW has always seemed uncertain, always been fading into the coming, always threatening the endurance of all things ; that dangers have ever been around Christ's Church ; that always it has seemed she must be swept away by the great earth-flood, and that with her all social peace and order would be utterly obliterated. No doubt this is true, for such is the law of our being : "The judge standeth behind the door." Ever since He left this earth who ascended from the hill at Bethany, He has been returning—some glow has ever rested on the eastern skies. But it is no less true, that as the time of His sure coming draweth nigh, these signs of His approach wax clearer and more definite. The gleaming streaks of a coming morning mount up the skies ; the voices which usher in its presence are multiplying round us ; the hum, and

the crowd, and the tread of an awakening world rise in full tide upon the watcher's ears ; all things that are, are shaken, holding themselves in an eager readiness for the new order of the coming day. It is ours to prepare all things for this issue : whether He come speedily, or yet delay His coming, to do as our forefathers in the faith have done before us ; to heal society round us ; to prepare it for the unknown path on which it must enter ; for the changes through which it must pass.

For such changes are inevitable. All national life is ever drifting on in a mighty current, which the strongest hand cannot for an instant stay. Each succeeding generation sees round it a new scene of circumstance and being. We sweep past the roots of mighty mountains, of which the distant tops were but just visible to long-sighted men amongst our fathers. New interests spring up ; new combinations arrange themselves, and gather into solid strength. The whole face of society becomes altered round men unawares : they endeavour to act upon their old rules, and find, with surprise, from the unexpected issue, how mighty a transformation had passed upon all around them whilst they dreamed not of it. And it is one inevitable condition of all such changes, that they stamp more and more deeply upon every usage of society the brand and impress of selfishness, unless Christianity is ever present and ever active

to redress the evil. And by redressing this, she becomes the great preserver of Christian nations, saving them from that destruction to which the mere natural upgrowth of institutions amongst fallen men inevitably tends. For that selfishness, which is always intertwining its poisonous presence with all human institutions, is a stifling, a corrupting, and a disjoining thing; it debases all national character in a thousand ways, and dissolves the very inner spirit which pervaded and held together the outer framework of society; and it is the very attribute of Christianity to strive from the first against this selfishness. And hence is there ever in the Church of Christ the truest power of prophecy, whereby she still interprets to men the ambiguous letters of present things, which the "fingers of a hand" still trace upon their walls, and which, when read out, are the surest presage of the coming future. Thus it is that by an heavenly instinct, proportioned exactly to her faith and purity, she has ever met, and ever prevented, throughout Christendom, the emergent wants of society, which, if they are not thus met, are sure to break forth in those fearful convulsions which suddenly upheave and desolate the whole surface of political and social life.

And this inner power it is ours, my reverend brethren, to call into action. Not by becoming politicians—God forbid that we should so quit

our proper calling!—but by cleaving closely to that calling; by walking more with Him “whom the world seeth not;” by being men of a deeper piety, of more earnest prayer, of a keener insight into God’s living word, and so into the hidden law of all things; by searching our own hearts, and thus knowing the hearts of our brethren; by being so dead to the world, that her sorceries cannot pass on us; and, therefore, that, seeing through her empty juggleries, we may proclaim to men where they may indeed find the great truths for which their thirsty spirits are vainly seeking amongst her delusions.

Thus whilst we labour each one with our own charge, we may be really the healers of our land, and its great protectors from social disorganisation. For all wide-spread popular troubles and general discontents do indeed point at some great social want or evil. It is therefore a short-sighted policy which would merely stifle this voice of complaint; rather should its accents, broken often and inarticulate as they needs must be, guide us to the redressing of the evil which they indicate. And for this we must trace it to its first principle. And here we need a higher wisdom than mere earthly policy can furnish. The moral faults of this age become, by the living inwrought principle of retribution, the social and political plagues of the next. These, therefore, Christianity discovers and

heals at the fountain-head. The merely worldly politician finds the sullen storm brooding over him in its blackness, and, with his best expedients, knows not how to turn aside its violence; break it must: but the Church, if she exist in her purity and her vigour, will have drawn off upon the mountain's brow, in fertilising showers, the mists and vapours which would otherwise have gathered into the depth of the thunder-cloud.

Thus it is, no doubt, with us at this time. The evils which threaten us now are most plainly the outgrown sins of the coldness of heart of the preceding century. What is Chartism, in all its variety of forms, but the headstrong violence of men intrusted for the first time with some measure of political power, and who, whilst groaning under the sufferings which are more or less necessarily connected with the unequal distribution of wealth, have been taught to believe it possible by merely earthly machinery to redress this manifold evil? Whence, then, does this spring but from the sin which suffered whole classes of our countrymen to grow up without the influence of Christian truth, ignorant of their true redressor, and therefore easily befooled by the emptiest promise of deliverance from any quarter? Instead, therefore, of indulging angry feelings against these our brethren, our souls should yearn over them as men we have neglected hitherto; whose errors are our own re-

proach ; to whom we owe a vast debt of Christian sympathy and love ; who are only dangerous, because their deepest plagues have been left by us unhealed. . . .

And, in like manner, what are those other forms of evil which we have seen gathered into the common head of Socialism, but the outgrown religious dissent of the preceding generation? What are they, but the moral history of those who have run through all sects, until, in the vexation of their weary spirits, they believe that all religion is sectarian ; and who, therefore, having given up with Christianity the first principles which hold together family and social life, are now groping blindly after an impossible unity amidst the pollutions of a low and selfish sensuality? What then, again, is this, but the fruit of that practical unbelief, which did, in the last generation, drive whole masses of our countrymen to seek amongst dissenters from our national communion, that reality and earnestness of personal piety, of which, alas, so little trace was visible in the Church, which alone can be their true and lasting home. Here again the sins of that age are become the scourges of this.

And what may be before us God knows ; but thus much is certain : with us, of His goodness, are still those healing powers, and that forecasting instinct, which alone can save this people from

civil and social misery. Let it be our part, my reverend brethren, faithfully and earnestly, in our own spheres, to bring them to bear upon society around us. Let us believe in the true life of that heavenly system of which we are the ordained ministers ; let us act as those to whom is indeed committed a "dispensation of the grace of God ;" not going back to dead forms of bygone times, as if they were the life which, it may be, did once act through them ; nor striving to force all things into channels through which in their season they have flowed, and which they now have left ; but believing in the reality of the spiritual powers with which we are armed ; believing in the true presence of Christ with us, and therefore bending all our strength, not to revive old customs, but to quicken spiritual life within our Church and nation. If we do this faithfully, we need not look back wistfully to older and it may be worn-out forms, and weep as if with them all life was departed from us. The same power which did then penetrate and quicken the earthly element around it, will enable us too, in our day, to fill with heavenly life every form of outer things by which we are surrounded on all sides. The Church has, through God's help, been giving clear proofs of its true being amongst us ; yea, by every blessed mark of inner life, He in whom is all her strength has graciously declared His presence with us. By

the quickening of holiness within her borders ; by the spreading of her arms abroad ; by the restored affection of her children ; by her increased colonial episcopate ; by all of these and by many more encouragements, our Lord is bidding us arise in His might and do the work which He has set before us. . . .

Still, whilst I thankfully acknowledge our increased union, there is much left for us to do, if we would really be at one. There must be amongst us much cultivation of personal intercourse, much readiness to bear, for the sake of the common bond, with the varieties which must spring from the necessary variations of individual character. Above all, there must of course be a hearty adoption of the doctrines and a steady observance of the practices of our Church. Personal impressions must not lead us to tamper with this truth, or to humour that article. We must not venture at our own will to omit this sentence from the service, or accommodate that feature of our apostolical communion to the inclination of sectarians around us. We must neither ape the formalities of Rome, nor diminish one jot of our firm belief in the true grace of Christ's holy sacraments. We must be honest Church-of-England men in our belief and in our practice.

Suffer me, my reverend brethren, to add, that if united action be indeed a thing of moment, it

becomes us especially to guard against the introduction of new causes of disunion, which may add fearful bitterness to those which, alas, before existed, and widen breaches which we fondly hoped were closing up. Of these, there must be always danger proportioned to the vigorous acting of religious feeling. For, unless the individual will, so quickened, is at the same time softened and restrained by a deep humility, it will ever be breaking forth into some peculiarity of tenet or some eccentricity of conduct; and these will soon become, even in the best men, new causes of ruinous disunion in the Church. That such dangers now beset us, I am sadly and unwillingly convinced. Surely it must be so, if there has been amongst us a tendency to introduce into our sacred offices peculiar customs, uncommanded in our rubrics, unsanctioned by our fathers, unpractised by our brethren in the Church. Such conduct must, of necessity, put unity in peril. For if they be points of moment, then, with no commission to warrant our so doing, we gravely censure others: if they be trifles, then, for the sake of trifles, we wantonly disturb the Church's peace, and provoke a mischievous reaction. And if, at the same moment, there is seen an inclination to depreciate all that is peculiarly Anglican; to exalt what, to say the least, borders upon those impurities of faith and practice, which, through God's grace, and in the

strength of their manly Saxon hearts, our forefathers cast off,—then is our danger greater still. But it is greatest, my reverend brethren, if there be growing up on any side a hankering after those corruptions of the faith which issued of old in the papacy itself ; a longing for a visible personal centre of union as the condition of the unity of Christendom ; a shrinking from the simple boldness of statement, which marks the declaration of the Gospel of God's grace throughout the inspired epistles ; a tendency to confound that faith, which alone justifies, with the crowning grace of charity, in the burning brightness of which faith should issue ; if there be a studious inculcation of that which, in this most mistaken sense, some unhappily have learned to speak of as “the great doctrine of justification by works ;” if there be, lastly, a disproportioned care for the outer parts of our religion, combined with any inclination to depreciate its individual spiritual life in every heart in which it dwells ;—surely, if there be but a suspicion of these things,—there is ground for watchful caution upon our parts : a caution which should act, not in leading us to reject what we suppose are the peculiar views of others ; (for all mere negative religion is a poor thing at the best ;) still less in making us willing to suspect, with party readiness, those who differ from us, or to impute to them lightly, with party bitterness, such fearful errors ;

but in leading us to embrace for ourselves, with a more earnest hold, and to exhibit to others, in a sharper outline, that positive and substantial form and body of Christian truth which will be our safeguard from errors on each side, and which, of God's mercy, is so well set forth in our own articles and liturgy.

Marked, indeed, was the training by which the holy men who have left to us this precious legacy were fitted for their work ; bitter was the struggle through which they for themselves discovered their deliverance from "the body of this death;" scorching were the fires of personal suffering through which they were brought out into the large room which we, of God's goodness, have so peacefully inherited ; and thus was there a broad impress of reality stamped upon their views of doctrine ; whilst, by God's special mercy, they were kept clear from material error, on the one side, by their acquaintance with Puritan excesses, as, on the other, by their knowledge of the deep corruptions of the Papacy. With them, my reverend brethren, let us hold fast, with thankful hearts, the clear, simple, well-marked character of old Church-of-England piety. Yes, my reverend brethren, may this, through God's grace, be wrought deeply into each one of us ; may we ourselves be indeed dwelt in by His grace ; may we be men of earnest prayer, men of a large and unsuspected charity to all ; may

the cross of Christ be every thing to us ourselves ; may we bear stamped upon our lives the marks of a holy, courageous, humble, self-denying faith ; that, having borne meekly His blessed yoke for our hour of service, we too, being washed in His precious blood, may enter into His rest, and be found indeed amongst His saints at His coming.

1842.

IV.

“THE FORM AND BODY OF CHRISTIAN
TRUTH OUR SAFEGUARD FROM
ERRORS ON EACH SIDE.”

IT must, I think, be plain to every thinking man that we are not given over; nay, that God has a great work in the midst of us. The revival of truer and more spiritual views as to the character of Christ's kingdom upon earth, the increased value for the sacraments as means of grace and of communion with Him, the commonness of larger and more self-denying gifts, are manifest symptoms of good. Never, in spite of all our dangers and divisions, had the Church a more evident vitality within our land than now. Never had it a stronger hold on the affections of the great mass of well-disposed men in this nation; never before has it spread itself throughout our colonies abroad with so just and well-ordered an increase; never was it so largely gathering in to God the abundance of the heathen; and why should we doubt that, as its life becomes more vigorous, it will still develop fresh resources wherewith to meet the fearful and aggravated wants of our social state? The details of such

measures time and experience will suggest. They will form, as do all the works of God, slowly, yet with a sure progress, like the ever-growing grottoes in the depth of ocean; they must be put forth from our improved habits, not be suddenly created by the ingenuity of speculation, in the hope that our habits will grow up to them. We need not perplex ourselves concerning them. If only we are following peace with all men, if only we are earnestly and humbly forming in ourselves and in those round us the true lines of Christian character, we are, however unconsciously, helping on these blessed developments. And how great a load of guilt will rest on us, if, on the other hand, we do any thing to check this growth of life; if, by indolence and worldliness, or a low standard, or unreality, we oppress and benumb the Church around us; if, by holding or spreading erroneous doctrine, we defile its purity!

And that such dangers are around us, which of us can doubt? To me, my reverend brethren, I confess they seem so evident, as, by that law which makes all men watchers when the common weal is put in peril, to call even from such as I am for an earnest word of caution. I speak not merely of that trifling spirit which here and there seems to delight in assuming (as far as it can venture) the worn-out garb of departed superstition; for, bad as this is, there are, I fear,

amongst us signs of yet deeper evil. Thoughts and words, strange hitherto to our ears, and seemingly disloyal to the Church wherein we were baptized, to her martyrs and confessors, and to her most explicit declarations on the most momentous subjects,—these have found of late some utterance and currency amongst us; such sounds have been heard from the lips of those whom at this time we can ill spare, when self-devotion, and courage, and all high gifts, are so greatly needed by us for our common work. It were unjust to them to suppose that such things could be spoken by such men without some real meaning. It can hardly be, for example, but that the complaints we hear of the coldness of our eucharistic services must spring from some secret craving after those notions of a change in the elements, or an expiatory sacrifice, which are so carefully excluded from our liturgy. Again, the distaste for all which bears the name of Protestant, and the yearning after all things Romish, must surely be the fruit of having, in some measure, learned with Rome to account the Church the substitute for an absent Lord, and not the body, in whose ordinances He Himself is present with every believer in His Name.

From which first error many others follow. For, first, the Church separated from her Head is practically substituted for Him; and then suc-

ceed longings for an earthly head and visible centre of her unity; a confounding of her living powers with the forms they once created; overvaluation of bare external uniformity; depreciation of all national communions, our own amongst the number; material, and therefore low, notions of both the sacraments; darkness as to the great truth that man is righteous before God only in virtue of union with his righteous Lord; a belief that the Church, instead of growing day by day in knowledge of the revelation given to her once for all, may develope for herself new doctrine, and so put aside the plain letter of God's Word. And thus the purity of the faith is lost. Let us see to it, my reverend brethren, as in God's sight, that we hold fast ourselves, and hand on unimpaired those great truths of "justification only through the merits of our Saviour Christ by faith in Him^a," of free pardon through His blood, of the new life of each believing soul in Him, in defence of which our fathers in this English Church were well content to die.

It is, I believe, quite true that to some such dangers all times of religious zeal and fervency have been exposed. When the sap is strong, and the inner life abundant, direct growth is oftentimes attended by something of irregularity and excrescence. But though these wait upon luxu-

^a Article on Justification.

riant life, they must not be mistaken for it. They are not its true development. Rather do they waste its powers ; and if they proceed to an unchecked height, threaten its existence. We dare not therefore suffer them amongst us, as though they were parts of that fuller religious life of which they are at once the accompaniment and the hindrance. But what then, my reverend brethren, shall we do ?

Trifle with error we may not—nay, we dare not, in such extremity, be silent. We dare not put in peril our own faith, nor the faith of our brethren ; dare not be untrue to that sure dispensation of the Spirit which the Lord has committed to us in this Church. We may not endanger that rich inheritance which God has given us in the true affection of so many manly hearts.

Yet God forbid that we should widen this breach which we lament, or drive from us, by harsh words and uncharitable judgments, those whom we long to keep as brethren. Rather let us strive to win them back to a hearty fellowship in Christ's Gospel, by every act and argument of truth and love. It may be that some coldness of ours, some formality, some dogmatism, some want of sympathy, has first driven them astray. Let us seek, then, to undo our evil. Let us have a firmer faith in the truth of our own position. Let us call out of it, for our-

selves, all its hidden strength. Let us cleave closely to Christ our Lord in the communion, and according to the plain teaching of the Church of England; endeavouring, through God's grace, to exhibit her true temper in ourselves. Such a spirit of dutiful affection will best fit us to develop all her latent powers; to aid in perfecting her system, and removing from it all blemishes and imperfections. And in this spirit is the great secret of success in dealing with all our separated brethren; not with those only who thus lean to Rome, but with those also who are joined to any of the sects. We must win them back to that full inheritance of blessing from which, as we believe, they now exclude themselves, not by dry, cold, dogmatic arguments; not by confuting them with mere essays upon the threefold ministry, and high claims of authority for ourselves,—but by living amongst them in the spirit and power of Christ's true Apostles. Zeal, earnestness, self-denial, deadness to the world, active charity, hearty devotions, patient endurance, unshaken courage, love to God, and brotherly kindness towards men,—these are the best arguments with which we can unlock the closed or closing hearts of our brethren. And we have a sure standing-ground for these exertions. Most true it is that we are placed midway between the Roman communion and the multitude

of the sects. But we are not therefore a faint and ill-defined middle, a mere compound of negations on this side and on that. Far from it. Ours is, in the truest sense, a positive position. We maintain, on the one hand, the ever-renewed mystery of the individual spiritual life in every faithful child of God. Armed with the word of truth, we deal with the conscience of each one as if he were alone in the world ; teaching him the marvel of his own consciousness and responsibility, the wonder of his own redemption and renewal ; passing over to none else, neither priest, nor form, nor system, the charge of that hidden life which he must lead by faith in Christ, his true Head, for the healing of his conscience and the sanctifying of his soul. And yet with this, on the other hand, we maintain the existence of a true spiritual kingdom in the Church of Christ ; a kingdom into which baptism is the appointed entrance ; a kingdom not of signs and shadows, but of reality and grace ; a kingdom which is full of Him, in which He rules, not, as some absent prince, by power deputed to viceregents, but as ever truly present with it—as governing through its rulers, as teaching and blessing through us its ordained ministers — as indeed giving to the faithful His quickening and saving Spirit, through the holy sacraments and means of grace.

This twofold witness we must bear, my reverend brethren, in our several parishes; yet not so much by strength of words as by might of deed. Men will learn from our lives lessons which we shall in vain strive to teach them by our exhortations; they will catch the tone of our daily conversation with quicker ears than those with which they listen to our sermons. We must be FELT by them to be men of God, felt to have an Apostolic commission. This in our rural districts, this in our crowded centres of population, is to be our hold on those around us. We must be felt to be men of another stamp from those of this world; to have more self-government, greater habits of devotion, purer aims than other men. Our words must not be repetitions of the thoughts of others, uttered by us as conventional proprieties, or unmeaning charms: they must be the fruit of struggles in the closet, and conflicts with the enemy. We must not be content with waging a seeming war against bygone evils: we must be felt to be striving against the present and the dominant forms of unrighteousness. We must be the poor man's friend and advocate, the rich man's adviser and reprover. We must rebuke the chilling, cramping, debasing trade-spirit of the present day by the visible nobleness of a willing self-sacrifice. We must be felt to be true men, really serving God and our neighbours.

And for this, brethren, we must be dwelt in by the Spirit ; we must bear the cross of our Master stamped on our hearts ; we must be men of much secret prayer, of many private communings with God. And if this be our character, in some way or other He will, in us ourselves, and by us in this nation, make His kingdom strong and glorious.

Marvellously, and contrary to all expectation, has that kingdom heretofore shaped itself by the power of His indwelling Spirit. They who were God's chiefest instruments in spreading and maintaining it, they too, even from the beginning, often knew not how it would grow under their hands. They aimed at one result, and another followed ; they meant to secure one issue, and another stood complete before them. So it was even from the very first. How obscurely did the sons of Zebedee dream of that kingdom the chief places whereof they coveted ! And ever since, their favoured expectations, plans, and desires, have clouded the future even from the saints. This has been the law. But no less has it been always true, that they who wrought in faith and patience, have entered on their labours. They have always done something. A mightier hand than theirs has carried on the work ; a wiser counsel has shaped for them the unlooked-for issue. And so it shall be for us. We cannot see

whither the mighty stream is bearing us ; we cannot see the plan upon which we are labouring ; we cannot understand how this kingdom is to put forth its hidden strength and gather all things into itself. Yet let us believe and work. Let us have a true faith in His presence, who is its life. Let us work as those who know that in this presence is their strength. We have light enough for this, and why should we want more? We have evils to resist, blessings to impart ; and in Him we have strength with which to resist and to impart them. Only let us keep faithfully to our appointed work, and He will bless our labours here, and, of His undeserved mercy, acknowledge us as His in the blessed day of His appearing.

1843.

V.

“WHITHER OUR UNHAPPY DIVISIONS ARE LEADING MEN.”

THERE is Christian zeal enough in England to supply the funds we need for the education of our people, for building and endowing churches, for carrying out the Gospel to our colonies ;—we might be blessed at home, and honoured abroad in this great work, far above other people, if our separation and disunion did not so often mar our zeal. This is not the time or place for tracing out in detail the history, or allotting the blame of these divisions. Their original, I think, might easily be traced to the rising up of true hearts against the spiritual tyranny of Papal Rome, and the guilt of their after growth and increase might, alas ! be shared amongst us all. But on this detail I do not enter here. I speak of them now only as a fact ; and through us, as a weakening and dishonouring fact to Christendom, and especially to Protestant Christendom at large.—They are moreover full of peril, both for our Church and nation. Of the greatness of that peril, history records for our instruction more than one undoubted instance. The Eastern Roman Empire fell not

until internal division gave to external violence a strength which could not be resisted: and its inner weakness of division was the fruit of that which is our own plague—of religious separation. Whilst the enemy thundered at his gates, the Greek, forgetful of his common country, gave all his mind and strength to the gaining of internal triumphs in the conflicts and questions of his sectional divisions. All social, civil, nay, even commercial life had been pervaded by this captious separating spirit; until its fretting tooth had eaten out amongst them all national unity and life. How far, and in some respects how increasingly, this evil has spread, and spreads amongst us, which of us, my reverend brethren, knows not?

From this we must strive for deliverance, if we would indeed be the channel for conveying to our people the full stream of God's gracious purposes of mercy: a divided people cannot long continue great; and here it seems to me, that we, my reverend brethren, have a special duty. We, above all men, must seek to preserve and spread around us this great gift of unity. Much depends upon us. If we maintain the truth itself, in a narrow, uncharitable, party spirit, how greatly must the guilt of other men's separation rest on us! There is such a thing as defending Christ's Church, and Christ's truth, as if it was our party. And grievously will this injure ourselves and

others. Such a temper is fearfully inconsistent, in ourselves, with true humility, and faith, and love; and it is eminently repulsive to others. Many are the separations which have been caused by the exclusive bigotry with which men have endeavoured to maintain what seemed to them the welfare of the Church. If we would win men back to her, we must first be large in charity, full in forbearance, ready to welcome all; to receive them that are weak in the faith, and not to doubtful disputations. We must feel that true unity is one of Christ's best gifts, to those who wait on Him; that no merely human agency, and no external machinery, can possibly secure it; that it must be the work of that one Spirit which only can "make men to be indeed, of one mind in an house;" we must truly feel that division is our sin, and our shame; we must weep for it in private, watch against it in our own hearts, and then bear meekly, but firmly, our testimony against it to others. We must not make war on those who differ from us, like angry strivers of the world, but endeavour, only with gentleness and peace, to shew forth our own truth, acting wherever it is possible together, and praying always that God may knit again the rents which men have made, and give in His good time one heart to our divided people.

And if this must be our conduct and life to

those without, amongst ourselves, above all, we should cultivate a loving unity. We should make for each other the largest allowances, and be severe only to ourselves. Whilst we maintain, as in God's sight, our own view of His truth, simply and earnestly, we should ever be ready to give others credit for a like sincerity of purpose, and seek for union with them by being brought together into clearer and simpler views of the one truth revealed to us by God, through Jesus Christ,—yea, by drawing each one nearer to Him our Lord. How can we gather in our brethren of the separation, if we be not ourselves united? "How can a divided house but fall?"

And yet, my reverend brethren, in this crisis of our nation, and trial of our Church, the sounds of disunion, hitherto unheard, of which I last year had to speak, have even gathered strength. The new evil of secession from our own ranks to those of the Papacy, has shewn itself in more than one instance. And who can over-estimate the evil consequences to us, as a Church, which are involved in the rising of such a spirit? Plain indications have distinctly marked, almost from the beginning of this century, the new flow of opinion on all questions which concern religious truth. Little less distinct has been the direction which its more recent course has taken. From the first, there has spread widely amongst

us a powerful reaction against the unfaithful apathy of the preceding century. The last few years have been distinguished by a strong desire to restore and carry out what, for brevity, we may describe as Church principles and institutions. Of this last movement it has been usual to speak as if it had been the work of certain ascertained hands ; but for its true cause we must, I believe, look far beyond any such narrow view. They with whose names, for reproach or honour, many have identified the change we all perceive, have, I believe, but modified and marred its action, whilst, like the rest, they were themselves unconsciously borne on by a far wider and more general movement, which may be traced through all the Protestant states of continental Europe, and even through the various branches of the Papal communion. The causes of this tide lie deep in the nature of man and of society, which is at all times in a ceaseless ebb and flow, passing from the vindication of some great principle to its extravagant perversion from truth ; that is, to its congenial error.

For so it was with us ; out of the deadness of the eighteenth century, our fathers were allowed to rouse the slumbering spiritual life of England ; and faithfully amidst obloquy and scorn they did their work. The great doctrines of God's grace—the very sound of which had almost passed

away — were heard again on every side. The work of God in the soul of the believer was again declared and vindicated. The access of every faithful soul to Christ, as its true life, was simply and earnestly declared. To us it was given, in our day, to enter into and to perfect their labours ; to bear our especial witness for the common, as they had borne theirs for the individual, life of Christian souls ; to gather into the full unity of the Church the living energy which they had been permitted to arouse ; to heal divisions ; to join together bone to bone, and sinew to sinew, by prophesying to them in the word of God.

Hence the rise of a new reaction ; and that such a work has been going on amongst us to a great extent, that it has of late, by certain hands, been wasted and disfigured, which of us can doubt ? I need not stay here to trace its better progress ; it more concerns us to observe, with care and sorrow, how it has been turned to evil. It has, then, led some to the denial of our old truths, not to adding to them their perfection and completion ; to casting thanklessly away God's gifts, not to enshrining them in fresher gains ; to going back to old superstitions, not to opening for us freer and wider realms of truth. It is taking a few back openly to Rome and its corruptions ; it is darkening and debasing the faith of others. And yet further, for the mass

it is, we fear, preparing the beginning of another and most dangerous reaction. He must surely have dull or inattentive eyes who sees not many symptoms of the turning of that tide which has lately set so strongly with our Church, and for those great truths of doctrine and order of which, through God's good providence, she has long been the appointed keeper. There is rising amongst our laity an angry, irritable temper, as to holy offices and institutions, than which none can be more fraught with danger to the truth of God amongst us, and to our common Church. Let us beware, my reverend brethren, how we stir it up. Evil as it is in itself, and springing, in some instances at least, from ignorance or yet more unworthy causes, it is, we cannot doubt, in others based upon a righteous resolution of resisting the return of ancient errors, the loss of precious spiritual blessings, the darkening of the light of Christ to set up in its stead the earthly fires of priestcraft and superstition. And if this be its source, it is plain that it can be met successfully, not by violence and angry blame, not by an obstinate adherence to things in themselves utterly immaterial, but which are now most unhappily identified with real evils; but only by love and gentleness; by the union of undoubted faithfulness to Christ's pure word and doctrine, with a yielding gentleness towards opposers in all lesser matters.

For these, my reverend brethren, I firmly believe it is not yet too late. They may, under God's blessing, stay the rising of those waters which otherwise would, in their headlong violence, devastate our land: they may preserve unshaken—they may, where there unhappily is need, yet give us back—the confiding, trusting love of a religious laity; they may, of God's mercy, even knit again in one our broken and divided people.

And of those whose errors and love of extremes have so manifestly caused, or endangered, this perilous reaction, and who now profess openly their sympathy with Rome, and not with England, how, my reverend brethren, shall we speak? Surely they are to be spoken of amongst us even weeping! For how few soever out of our whole body may be tempted to join that corrupted Church, (and I believe they will be found very few,) surely in them it implies a fearful working of the spirit of falsehood. The causes which at first severed our Church from Rome remain unremoved. Those dangerous corruptions of the highest truths which forced our reformers to come out from her as for their lives, continue still within her, and disfigure her communion; and however, therefore, we may deem in the judgment of a large charity of those to whom the faith of Christ has never otherwise been known; who from the first have learned its glorious truths amidst these clinging mists of the earth, what can we think

of those who, being placed by God's good providence within this branch of His holy Church, and having come within it to a full maturity of years and judgment, now go over from their earlier light to the blindness and darkness of these self-chosen errors? Surely whatever may be their attainments or their zeal, we must think and speak of them as of men given over to a great delusion.

Nor is it difficult to trace the course of such a temptation,—or the fall of such unhappy persons. At first, probably, they had a clear view of the evil of these pernicious errors, but certain other features of the Roman system possessed attractions for them. And if on these their minds were let to dwell, what was this in truth but dallying with temptation; what but tempting God to leave them to the darkness of their own spirits. And what must be the course of those who thus run into temptation? Day by day they feel less repugnance to these perversions of God's truths; by a general law of His righteous moral government, the mind will soon begin to love the errors which it wilfully endures; for one after another glosses are discovered, and palliations urged,—the worship of the Virgin, we are told, is, after all, but reverence for the mother of the incarnate Son of God; the dogma of transubstantiation is but a declaration that "the body

and the blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper ;" the delusive mystification of justification by works, is but the necessity of sanctification ; and so the conscience is lulled to sleep, and the moral sense perverted, until all power of perceiving truth is lost, and error is deliberately chosen. Surely the rule of self-suspicion and watchfulness should dictate to any one whose mind was even moved upon these points, the bounden duty of keeping at the greatest distance possible from the opportunity of such delusion ; of remembering honestly the deep pollutions of faith and practice of which Rome has plainly been convicted. From the first, let such an one remember that he who chooses her system must choose it altogether. She well knows how to lure on her victims ; and promises them therefore as their bait, glosses and relaxations, doctrines modified, and practices reformed ; but once let them join themselves to her, and they will find that in all essential points she is what she ever was ; and that they too, like the rest, must be bound by all the decrees of the Council of Trent, and believe all the Creed of Pius IV. ^a

^a It may be useful to reprint here from the Creed of Pope Pius IV. (promulgated in the year 1564, the year after the close of the Council of Trent, as "containing the principal points of Catholic belief") those passages which especially concern the points of difference between Rome and England. After detailing the funda-

As bearing upon this subject, I would say one word on a custom growing up in some quarters, of adopting without suspicion, for private use, the standard works, original or adapted, of Roman

mental points of the one faith, and the Roman doctrine of the seven sacraments "necessary for salvation," it continues, "I embrace and receive all and every one of the things which have been defined and declared in the Holy Council of Trent concerning original sin and justification.

"I profess, likewise, that in the mass there is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead; and that in the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist there is truly, really, and substantially the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c. . . .

"I constantly believe that there is a Purgatory; and that the souls therein detained are helped by the suffrages of the faithful.

"Likewise that the saints reigning together with Christ are to be honoured and invoked, and that they offer prayers to God for us, and that their relics are to be had in veneration.

"I most firmly assert, that the images of Christ, of the Mother of God ever Virgin, and also of other saints, ought to be had and retained, and that due honour and veneration is to be given them.

"I also affirm that the Power of Indulgences was left by Christ in the Church, and that the use of them is most wholesome to Christian people.

"I acknowledge the Holy Catholic Apostolic Roman Church for the Mother and Mistress of all Churches; and I promise true obedience to the Bishop of Rome, successor to St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, and vicar of Jesus Christ.

"I likewise undoubtedly receive and profess all other things delivered, opened, and declared by the sacred canons and general councils, and particularly by the Holy Council of Trent. And I condemn, reject, and anathematize all things contrary thereto, &c.

"I, N. N., do at this present freely profess and sincerely hold this true Catholic faith, without which no one can be saved: and I promise most constantly to retain and confess the same, entire and unviolated, with God's assistance, to the end of my life."

Catholic devotion. To many minds, such a custom cannot fail of proving a great snare. Unacquainted as they are with the details of our protest against Rome, they place themselves in certain peril when they thus unawares expose their spirits, in the unguarded attitude of worship and devotion, to the alluring errors of what is in truth a most cunningly-devised and well-compacted system. And even if their faith be not directly shaken, it by no means follows that they have received no injury. To say nothing now of worse injuries—of a drawing back to notions of the worthiness of our good works, almsgivings, and penance; of the co-operation of our tears with the once-offered blood of the One only Sacrifice; of the sacramental merit of our sufferings, and such other fearful substitutions of man's righteousness, for that of Christ our Lord;—to say nothing of these deep Pelagian errors^b, which have always infected Rome, and which, by consequence at least, deny the one foundation^c, there is a tone of morbid feeling which pervades these writers, which to many minds is most ensnaring, whilst it would prove a poor substitute for the

^b For painful and abundant proofs of the degree to which the worst of these delusions may be found in recent publications professing to come forth from the midst of our Reformed Communion, see an Article on the Lives of English Saints, in the "British Magazine" for November 1843.

^c *Vide* Hooker's Sermon on Justification, § 32.

tone of real and manly devotion which to so high a degree marks the character of what has been well named (by the late Bishop Jebb^d) our "home-spun divinity." To keep afar from such delusions is our only safety. For the tempted, now as always, a life of labour and a life of prayer, are the appointed safeguards ; in a humble use of the devotions of our own Church, and in a diligent partaking in her works of love, we need not doubt that God will meet with us and bless us, as He met of old our fathers in the faith, and brought them to the safe end of all their labours and temptations.

^d Charge of 1823.

VI.

RESTLESS DISQUIETUDE THE TEMPER OF THE DAY.

*“ Hold thee still in the Lord, and abide patiently
upon Him.”*

THE words themselves suggest the true meaning of holding ourselves still in God. For the word ‘still’ is not the adverb ‘still,’ meaning no more than “hold thee YET in God—in spite of appearances and trials go on holding to God ;” it is the adjective ‘still,’ and means, “hold thee in stillness upon God ;” and it implies, therefore, that we are to possess that quality of mind which is the opposite of restlessness ; and that this rest is to be based upon confidence in God. Now our two-fold nature makes this needful for us as to two different subjects ; as to things temporal and things spiritual. As to both of these we are to be still in God ; as to both we are to be free from restlessness. And this restlessness has a two-fold root of bitterness, which trust in God must extirpate. It springs from dissatisfaction with the present, or from anxiety about the future. There is a deep melancholy in the heart of every man, bound up in the very bundle of his life, which, like the breath of myrrh, is ever ready to spread

itself, by a secret influence, over all his being ; and in spirits of the deepest tone there is the most of this, for this is the greatness of the soul reaching after its true portion : and this may at any time make all the life of any man restless and sad, unless he learns indeed to lean his soul upon God ; to believe that He is near us, that He is Truth, is Love, and is ours through Christ Jesus. And as we dwell always on the brink of these dark and mighty waters, so any great grief may at any time break up their bitter fountains, till they overwhelm us, unless we are built upon this sure rock, of confidence in God. Hence we see many men always dissatisfied, always restless, always craving, always miserable. And in mere life there is enough to breed this temper in all men. But this is the believer's talisman ; this is the Christian man's safeguard : " Hold thee still in the Lord ;" still this restlessness by the power of His Name.

In common life this must be our rest ; and in great sorrow too. Then also must we be still in Him ; not, indeed, by striving unnaturally not to feel sorrow ; but by our taking the sorrow from Him. We are not to let its flood, at the highest of its swelling, sweep us from this sure anchorage. We are to submit ourselves, not to the sorrow, but to Him ; to seek, not for the frozen numbness of the stoic,—for this is most unlike the temper of the Christian man, who is kept tender in heart

and lively in affection by his faith itself, and who therefore will, in one way, suffer more acutely than he can whose heart has been made callous by selfishness,—but for the faithful submission of the child to the trusted discipline of a loving Wisdom, which cannot wound us but for our truer healing.

Here is the cure for that restlessness which springs from dissatisfaction with the present ; and here also is the cure for that which arises from anxiety about the future. For, in this case also, the Christian's trust is not in the future, but in God. It is not that he has persuaded himself that all will always go with him just as he chooses ; that he shall succeed in all things ; that life will be to him all sunshine ; that all things will come to him as he would have them, and stay with him as he would keep them : this is trusting in the future, not in God ; this is being sanguine, not being trustful ; this leads to men being full of schemes, and wishes, and earthly hopes, and ambitious desires, and then of restless fears and sour disappointments ; not to their being still. The root of stillness is trust in God ; it consists in looking-on as little as may be into that future, in looking always to God ; and so quieting, with the blessed thought of Him, the anxious spirit within us, which otherwise must tremble at the edge of that misty to-come, wherein are floating

obscurely, for the eye of every man who peers into it, forms of loss and sorrow insupportable.

Such, then, is this grace as to things temporal : it is true submission to God in the present, true trust in Him for the future.

And in things spiritual it is very much the same. Here, too, it is freedom from restlessness. It is the committing the care of our more anxious spiritual being to Him. It is the very opposite of self-trust—of the busy, bustling, restless religion of self-righteous men ; which, whether it builds upon acts or upon impulses, does truly build on ourselves, and not on God. From which, their common root of self-confidence, it follows that there is a close alliance between those two false schemes of the spiritual life which, at first sight, seem the most widely opposite,—the life of the mere formalist, and the life of him who is engrossed in a heart-eating searching into his own passing frames and feelings. For each builds his spiritual life on himself : neither is still in God. The whole soul of one is stayed upon his outward acts of religion, their decency, their regularity, their number ; and of the other, on his inward emotions, their vehemence, their volume, and their multitude. The opposite of both is the true trust of the child of God, by which he commits to the promised faithfulness of God all this mighty work of his salvation : waiting on Him in prayer, in

sacraments, and in self-denial, because through these things He works, in Whom is His creatures' trust.

Such in things spiritual is true stillness in God. And acquaintance with this may lead us on to still higher truths. It may teach us how closely connected with true religion is a certain silence of spirit; how blessed are meditation, and stillness, and waiting upon God, and a hushed and bowed temper of soul; how much is to be learned in sorrow, and in separation, and in secret musings, and in being alone with God; how great a gift is a weaned, self-restrained heart. For here we in some degree master that great truth, that the work of our sanctification is indeed God's work in us; and that without His working all our acts are vain and fruitless. It is not in our mere doing this or that, but in being visited, being stamped, wherein lies, after all, the mystery and the power of the new life. It is the having a hand laid on us whose impress shall remain; the bearing a burden; the "being wrought" unto a certain temper; which is indeed being "a new man in Christ Jesus," and bearing here that character which shall shine hereafter as the sun in the kingdom of God.

And this is, perhaps, that feature of religion which, for many reasons, is the most seldom to be met with at the present day. From many

causes, from the temper of the day, and from the temper of our nation, the being busy is most natural to us ; and so, even in our religion, we bring out the part connected with ourselves and our own actions, until we make it one-sided, and forget that, after all, to be silent before God, to realize our personal reconciliation with Him through the blood of atonement, to walk in His Spirit, to spend our lives as His obedient, trusting children, —this is, to each one of us, the essence of Christianity.

And if this is what is meant by this precept, we may easily see next the blessedness of truly obeying it.

First, as it relates to things temporal ; surely in obeying it is the only peace for any one of us. Whether it be for the present or for the future, where else is peace ? In the most prosperous present, what peace can there be without this confidence in God ? Is there, indeed, any thing upon which the spirit can rest in the harassing and noisy clatter of the greatest success ; in its engrossing, dizzying dream ; in its difficult and doubtful hold of things which we feel are every day more uncertain, and yet more essential to our happiness ? And if this is true as to the fairest present prosperity, much more is it as to disappointments and sorrows. And who knows not these ? Where do they not intrude and darken the bright sunshine

over us? Or if they have not yet come to us, have not the shadows of their approaching presence often fallen on our spirits, and chilled suddenly their summer gladness? Where, then, for the present or for the future, is peace, but in the portion of submission? There can be none without it. So long as to any one of us, be he rich or poor, life is still a game of chance; so long as he is staking his being for any hazard, be it, in the eyes of men, for great stakes or for small, there can be no peace: there will be excitement; there may be a turbulent joy now and then; and there is sure to be enough of disappointment; there may perhaps be madness in the end, but there cannot be rest. It is indeed a sight to make a thinking man weep at any time, to look round him anywhere, and see how Satan and the world are befooling souls for which Christ died, and which might find rest in Him. There is no true peace but in being still in God; in always committing all to Him. And they drink the deepest of those refreshing waters who have so far mastered this truth, that He is all to them; that to live is to serve Him. There is a true finding of the life in thus losing it. There is an unspeakable peace in looking for nothing but our daily task, and our portion of His cross between this day and the appointed time, when we shall fall asleep in Him.

And as this is the secret of peace for this world,

so is it for that deeper life of the spirit which we are leading. There is an unspeakable blessedness in knowing that we are in His hands ; that He who created us, that He who redeemed us, that He who sanctifieth us, is indeed ours in the covenant of His everlasting love. There is a true rest in resigning ourselves to be taught ; in yielding ourselves to the leading of His Spirit ; in coming to prayer, and to worship, and to holy communion, and to the daily duties of our station, not as if, through these things, we were to work ourselves up to great attainments, but as that course in which He for Christ's sake will meet us, and work upon us, and lift us up, even to Himself.

And in such a faithful quietness there is this further blessing, that in it we do become transformed, and bear God's impress. The still waters are those which reflect in an unbroken image the clear face of the heaven over them : if you do but trouble those waters, the image is broken ; if you stir them greatly, it is gone : and to bear His image we too must be still. And hence it follows, that in this stillness is the secret of spiritual growth — of a true progress in the things of God. All self-development is the opposite of true growth ; all restlessness of mind must check and interrupt it. Yea, and all growth is silent. It is not in the lordly storm, or in the over-mastering hurricane that Nature puts forth her powers of growth and increase. It is amidst the drenching dews, in the

still dawning of the springtime, that the leaf unfolds itself, and the tender shoot steals upwards. And these works of nature are all symbols of the inner growth. In times of quietness the heart unfolds itself before God. If you would grow in grace, enter into thy closet and shut-to thy door upon the world ; upon that world which gets the closest to thee, and haunts thee so familiarly ; shut it most of all upon thy busy unresting self, and then God shall speak to thee. It may be He will commune with thee as He has never done before, and reveal unto thee the secret of His presence. How silent, surely, is an angel's heart when God is nigh ; how is self hushed there ; how, as some earthly vapour by the sun, is every power of his mighty being drawn up into adoration !

And this truly is to know Him ; not as an abstraction, but as One who careth for us, who is nigh to us, to whom we may draw nigh ; and, as such, to pour out our hearts before Him ; to be silent in His presence ; to be still ; to adore ; to be drawn out of self ; out of the earthliness, and the noise, and the dimness of self-worship, and to be with God ; yea, indeed, to "hold ourselves still in Him."

And do we ask, brethren, how we are to grow in this great grace ; how this spirit of quietness is to be breathed over these restless hearts ; how we are to be still in God ? Let me, in conclusion, suggest one or two practical thoughts for you to carry out at leisure and into practice.

And, first, need I say, that such growth must be the work of His grace. That it is not natural to us ; that nothing is, indeed, less natural ; that to do, or rather, to try to do, and first to fail, and then to fret, that this is natural to us. To be still in Him is not natural to fallen man ; no, it is Christ forming in us. It is the Spirit brooding over our hearts ; renewing them, calming, cooling, purifying them. It is this only which can still them. He who spake to the mounting waves of the sea, and lo, there was a great calm ! He must speak if we are to be at peace. He must reveal unto us, Himself and the Father, if we would be still in God. But as this is most true, so does it follow, that we must use the means He has appointed, if we would gain from Him so great a blessing. "Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you." This must be our rule. Draw nigh to Him in His Word, in its promises, and in its examples : study these : let their hidden life come out in your life : there is a secret power in them. Insensibly we shall find that those words of promise still our spirits. With troubles, and vexations, and anxieties will rise upon our souls like an angel's breath, some word of heavenly strength ; some testimony of His care, of His love, of His faithfulness. The harmonies of the world of truth will answer to every touch of natural sorrow. Draw nigh to Him in prayer and in praise ; these are acts of faith ; acts of quietness ; they have even

a direct effect upon our minds ; and He hears, and receives, and answers them. Draw nigh to Him in holy communion, for then He conveys Himself to us in ways we know not. With all His we are drawn into the mysterious fellowship of His body ; and the secrets of His presence are revealed to us. In such a course we shall find stillness : we know not the work which is passing on us ; but we are being transformed : we, with all His saints, in our day of trial, are under the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

Once more, in all these acts, whether of prayer, or praise, or communion, or self-renunciation—Seek after God. “ Hold thee still IN GOD ; ” this is the rule : this must give its tone to our religion. It is not mere self-renunciation that we need. It is not after any mere independent quietness which we are to strive ; it is after God, and quietness in Him. Fix your heart on Him, and it will be at rest. Draw near to Him, in the covenant of His Son’s blood : to Him as The Loving, The True, The Great : as Love, as Truth, as Holiness, as Power, gathered into one adorable Person ; one real Being ; and that Being your portion, your friend, your rest ; for “ this is life eternal, to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.”

VII.

USE AND MISUSE OF SYMBOLS.

THAT which, for the most part, has disturbed the Church of late, has been the attempt to revive the use of certain forms practised (nay, it may be even enjoined) of old, but grown amongst ourselves into common if not universal desuetude: and it may not, therefore, be in vain to endeavour to obtain some general principles as to the value and employment of such outward symbols.

Antecedently then to all experience it might even be surmised, that the development of outward forms and symbols through which the Church's inner life should act, would be confined to certain, and those comparatively early periods of her history. For such a law we may clearly trace in all the natural development of that visible world around us, which is but a set of types of the higher spiritual creation. In the lowest class of inorganic matter, it is but at one period of its being, that the new and thenceforth permanent forms of crystallization and arrangement are assumed. In vegetable life it is at its early period that the tree or plant casts forth its being into

certain shapes and substance ; a process which it never afterwards repeats. The same rule clearly marks the upgrowth and development of every tribe of animals ; and to ascend one step higher, the history of mind bears ample traces of the same law. It is, for example, only up to a certain period in a nation's being, that it freely forms the language which is the outward vehicle and symbol of its thoughts. So, therefore, even before experience, we might reasonably gather, would it be with the Church. She, too, would early form her greatest and most lasting external framework ; she would, for a period only of her being, cast forth, with an easy and spontaneous growth, the outward symbols of her inward life. To endeavour, therefore, when a long quiescence has marked the cessation of such powers, to stimulate afresh and reproduce their conscious action, would manifest as little wisdom as to desire to witness in the full-grown oak the plastic powers which had once developed from an acorn all its giant limbs.

And if we turn from speculation to history, such a view certainly finds great support in it. It will furnish us with some other facts which strongly confirm our past conclusion.

We find, then, the Early Church developing naturally its invisible vitality in certain outward forms and symbols. These when examined closely

prove to be singularly simple and full of life ; to be fit for all times and countries ; to point all attention from themselves to the truths of which they are the shadow. They seem of themselves to proclaim, even aloud, that they were the offspring of a vigorous, healthy, loving, believing age, when,—not without the direct guiding of the One Spirit,—true faith and hearty love, breathed out their own power into such holy forms. But as the Church lives on, the growth of outward symbols still continues ; and as they multiply, a general change comes over them ; still for a season they proceed from loving hearts, and from imaginative spirits, stirred to their lowest depths by the breath of mighty truths ; but they are less simple ; less meet for universal adaptation ; fitting rather certain persons, certain modes of life, or certain nations, than man in his simplicity. Yet another change may in a while be felt : error has in many matters mingled with the truth ; and soon the outward symbol bears the stamp of this mingled parentage—nay, in very many symbols, the shadows of the error mark the fixed external portrait more deeply than the lines of truth. This age is to be known by the abundance and the splendour of its outward symbols ; by their tendency to set forth themselves rather than the truths for which they ought to witness ; to draw to themselves admiring eyes, even from

the very truths of which they still profess to speak. They become indeed idols, (*ειδωλα*) instead of media for revealing God. Full of peril is such a time; when holy aspirations are so wedded to the earth; fuller still is that which follows; for error, ever productive after its kind, here by the doubtful symbol propagates itself, and men are drawn away from Christ by that which professes to declare Him.

But to this period succeeds another which contents itself with maintaining and employing these creations of preceding ages. And this it may do until all is lost; until the Divine Gift of the living Spirit is overlaid by these cumbrous embodiments of mingled truth and error; until formality and utter death settle over all things. Or it may be, that at such a time, God's great mercy raises up some champions of His truth who shall boldly break in upon the charmed circle, dissolve at once the foul enchantment, and restore all the misshaped and monstrous images around them to the simplicity of their primeval forms.

And what, after such a time, is the attempt to re-create the outward forms of earlier, and it may be, darker days? What is it in any case but ignorantly to go against the universal law of being; and if it be, to bring back forms which have been at once the consequence and cause of former wanderings, what can it imply but even,

beyond ignorance itself, either a faithless spirit or a love of error? Love of error plainly will account for such a course. For they to whom are dear the falsehoods which have mingled with the truth to breed this progeny of outward symbols, will long even instinctively for the form in which they trace with fond remembrance the working of the error. They may even desire its re-establishment with the conscious purpose of giving currency anew to what we deem idle and detected superstition. But besides the love of error, mere faithlessness may lead men to the same end. Its bewildered instincts may conclude, that not in the inner life of Christianity, but in this its outward and not unsullied garb was that which purified the hearts and nerved the arm of true and godly men of old. But a true faith and right reason will alike resist such vanity, and boldly put it down. And such, my reverend brethren, should, I believe, at this day be especially our course. At the reformation of religion our forefathers threw off a multitude of such outward forms, some the produce of error almost unmingled with the truth; some the symbols doubtless, at their first production, of love and faith, but which, having since become the withered leaves of a dead formality, they freely shed amongst the searching winds of truth which waited on their healthier season. These, the

lovers of error might wish, instinctively or with the secret purpose of securing it, to see restored. In their restoration, faithless hearts may believe would lie the secret of restored love and zeal. But let us resist both these delusions. We cannot without far greater guilt than theirs endeavour to revive errors which grew up as parasites with their better life, but from which we have of God's mercy been delivered. We cannot without far greater peril return to the old forms in which these errors lie enshrined; for it may be that the earnest and vigorous piety of those whom we admire endured, even unharmed, those outward rites which to our feebler or less healthy souls would be absolutely fatal. We are not so faithless as to think that in them lay the power and life of Christ's eternal Gospel; that in them was the working of the ever-blessed Spirit. To endeavour to obtain the intense devotion, the large and self-denying charity of an earlier age, by the revival of its perished and exhausted forms, is to seek for its essential properties in that which is its most external concurrent accident; it is to hope to win again the simplicity of natural infancy by adopting its tottering steps or imitating its lisping tongue.

And here, as always, true faith and right reason do really go together; for such a course is just as unwise as it is unfaithful. Our lot is cast in

a day eminently practical, energetically busy : in such a day it must happen, as in ours undoubtedly it has happened, that the mere antiquity of rites and customs constitutes their weakness rather than their strength. In such a time, the merely old is rather suspected than revered : the antique grows into the antic ; it has probably out-lived its use and meaning ; is a dead thing, which it would be better to clear away rather than continue. This is the first thought which its hoary years excite in many minds ; and, in such a day, what can be more impolitic than even to seem to cling to old forms, merely because they are old ? What more fatal than to endeavour to exhume them from the dust of their oblivion, as if we believed that the true life was in them ? Surely, all will point at such, as vain seekers of the living amongst the dead. If, indeed, our Church have life ; if the Holy One be with us ; if our commission be from Him ; if not of man's devising, nor of man's imparting, but from Christ Himself descends to us this office of the ministry ; if the Lord be amongst us, in Him be our confidence, and by living deeds, such as befit men of God, let us make manifest His presence. If it be not so with us ; if our Church be but an aggregation of the worn-out forms of a dead piety, let our hands be the first to sweep it away.

And if these things be so, my reverend bre-

thren, we shall have plain, for ourselves, both the rule by which to act, and the spirit in which to administer our rule. Our rule must be, the faithful observance of that which is ordered for us by competent authority ; not by obsolete injunction, wherewith, as with "bread dry and mouldy, and shoes and garments clouted and old," a dissembling novelty would often hide its character ; but by the living administered prescription of those who, for this very purpose, are set over us in the Lord : and that, thank God, for us, in this English Church, is the ancient rule, of rites and ceremonies, few, simple, and expressive ; such as speak little of themselves, and, with a clearness scarcely to be mistaken, of Him by whose inspiration they were taught, and of whose presence with us they bear no ambiguous witness. This, too, will be the spirit in which we administer our rule : a spirit which discerns Him through these outer things ; which ever fears to lose sight of Him in them. For even of the best and holiest,—of those which He has Himself directly appointed for us,—of the two sacraments of His Church,—even of them we shall feel, that there may, through the weakness of our faith, be this abuse, that we should rest in them, and not, through them, seek after Him who is our soul's only portion ; and so that even they should to us become poison instead of food ; bars to keep

us from Him, and not instruments to bring us to Him.

In this cautious, watchful, but most truly faithful spirit, all our ministry, my reverend brethren, must be conducted. For thus shall we best maintain our own faith, and thus best uphold His Holy Church committed to our care. We must believe that our unseen Lord is with us; that our office is of Him; that in us, too, are the gifts of the Holy Ghost; that we are His Apostles: we must see that this is our mission—by His own strength, in His own words, with His own signs, to make Him known to men; to gather all into His blessed fold. This will lead us, not to waste our time in fruitless frivolities, but, as dying men amongst the dying, to watch for souls; to prefer the things that are excellent; the inner to the outer; the substance to the shell: this will even give its true value to the outer form, and enable us, with manly simplicity and firm determination, to maintain it too, in its proper place, if it be licentiously assailed; this will give us strength, in true faith, to gather in the world's wandering multitudes: this will guide us in the paths of wisdom, as to our brethren of the separation; they will feel that we have, indeed, a life of God within us; that we do desire their salvation, not merely their addition to our ranks; that we want to bless their souls with the full power of Christ,

not to confute their teaching with the cunning jangling of the schools: this will lead us, before all things, to preach to our people Christ, our Lord and theirs, dying and risen, as their only hope: this will make us shew them the necessity of their individual conversion by the power of the Holy Ghost;—the means, measures, and end of His work in their sanctification; and the true provision made for this in the Church of the Redeemed: this will keep our own Christian life strong and vigorous: it will, of God's mercy, enable us to breathe it into those around us: it will make us, my reverend brethren, true blessings to the Church here, and living pillars in the temple of our God hereafter: whither may He, in His good time, bring us all, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Lord and Saviour.

1845.

VIII.

CONDITION OF A PEOPLE "HIGHLY TAUGHT, BUT RELIGIOUSLY UNEDUCATED."

A GREAT temptation is now before us as a nation; we are offered the enlightenment of our multitudes, the quickening of the minds of all this swarming people, the diffusion of knowledge and intelligence; and with it, as the boast is, the increase of national resources and of national power. But upon what condition? On none but this—that as the diversity of sects makes it impossible nationally to teach religion, we should leave this to the care of others, and nationally educate without attempting to teach it. But, brethren, if children are indeed beings under a moral Governor—if there be a God, to serve whom through Christ is their life's business—if there be a Holy Ghost, who can and will train and fit them for His service—if in holy baptism we may surely commit them to His training, and in the bosom of the Church secure for them His continual presence—what else is this passing by of Him, but yielding to a new form of that old fraud, "All this will I give thee, if thou wilt worship me?" So, doubtless, it is, brethren, and such it must prove. If as a people

we yet have faith to put aside the bait, He will be with us, without whom none can prosper. If we yield, the stern reproof of God's moral government must withstand us upon our wilful way. Many nations have trodden that path before us, and their example may instruct us. One by one have they fallen, and their carcasses lie in dishonour upon the earth which once bowed down before them. For that moral retribution, which here cannot always be traced in the minuteness of individual cases, is plain and evident in the broad strokes, wherein the treatment of a nation is depicted. All the history of the world is but a comment upon that one declaration—"Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people." We can easily trace its course, brethren.

An absolutely untaught people are a people of savages—a horde, a tribe, but never a nation; for there is among them none of the coherence which binds a nation into unity. But an instructed people may be worse. Merely to stimulate their intellects, to give them a smattering of knowledge and of science (and you cannot give the mass more than a smattering), without giving them any deeper and more real training, is to spoil every one of them for their proper worldly duties; it is to make them vain, idle, discontented, cunning, and low-hearted; and the spread of this distemper will just as soon make itself felt in the body politic, as the spread of evil humours will in the body physical.

Idleness and dissatisfaction amongst the multitude, low trickery and cunning amongst the higher classes, and a mean cowardice alternating with a waspish incivility amongst all classes—these are the inevitable features of a people highly taught, but religiously uneducated ; and these are the causes as well as the tokens of a nation's fall ; these are the instruments, just as much as they are the signs of vengeance. Far other is the Church's training. She sets each one in his place as to this world—gives each the principle, the rule, and the habit of active and obedient service in that place, because she enables him to serve God in that place ; she makes the servant active and faithful, and the master gentle and forbearing, because each serves a Master in heaven. She only, therefore, can truly raise the tone of society ; and that, I repeat, not because her system is better than other human systems, but because it is God's system, and God works with it—because the Holy Spirit deigns thus to work upon the hearts of men, giving high principles, forming holy habits in its various members, and so making a people truly great, and in the end truly prosperous upon the earth ; and that for this single reason, that the kingdoms of this world are NOT committed to Satan, but that God is yet the ruler of His own earth.

IX.

DIVISION THE FRUIT OF SELF-WILL.

THE essential quality of all sin is self-will and self-worship ; and self-will separates every reasonable soul in which it reigns from the holy brotherhood, who love, as their first law of being, to do the Will of the All-Holy One. My brethren, let us learn to-day something, at least, of this great truth ; let us see it in the Church around us. There also all self-will is THE cause of division ; there union with Christ is THE law of internal union. For the Church is His Body, and it is as we claim for ourselves in act and deed, and thought and feeling, union with Him, that we are held close to its unity. Let us endeavour to see this practically ; not to think of the Church as an abstraction, but as His Body, and evermore to see Him in it ; to see His presence and sure working in the sacraments of His grace ; His glory in worship ; a drawing together in Him in united services ; His indwelling in the Communion of His saints ; to see that division is indeed a rending of His Body, that it is the fruit of self-will ; to see that we may be drawn on to the most fearful divisions, under the very pretence of yielding to

conscience and following His leading, if once we allow self-will to mingle with our religion. For manifold and most ensnaring are its delusions. We seem, it may be, to be giving up all for Christ, when we are indeed giving up much, in order to keep that which is dearest of all to fallen man, our own self-will; and so we are being led far from Him, and becoming an offence to His people, whilst we dream of following most closely after Him. Above all, let each one seek more earnestly for the reality of personal union with Him; let us pray Him to work His work within us; let us see that in nothing we interrupt His working. Let us seek to be stamped with His Image, to be anointed with His Spirit, to be transformed to His will, that so we may more and more be drawn into unity with His Body mystical, and find our place prepared for us in that "general assembly and Church of the first-born, whose names are written in Heaven."

X.

PERIL OF WORLDLINESS IN THE CLERGY.

A VAST amount of influence, for good or for evil, is continually acting on our people in the character which we exhibit to them. Without referring to the highest cause, to that abundant gift of God's Holy Spirit, which is poured upon a faithful Ministry, there is even a natural tendency to the reproduction of the pastor's character amongst his flock. In church, in our families, in the field, in our recreations, their eyes are on us ; and if devotion, and kindly purity, and self-restraint, and high aims, and humility, and a mortified spirit, are, under the working of God's grace, caught, though it be slowly, by one and another, from the living pattern of their pastor's conduct, the opposites of all these are most readily and surely copied out in those, whose natural corruption makes any excuse for a low standard in the religious life, far too certainly welcome. This principle applies, my reverend brethren, to a multitude of details, to which I here would only passingly allude ; speaking as to wise men, who will judge what I say.

For this, in my judgment, will restrain our re-

creations far within the utmost limit of a possible lawfulness. I see not, I confess, how the frequenting the sports of the field, or the public amusements of the world, are in us to be reconciled with its requirements. An evident addiction to these must lead our flocks to believe, that, after all, we are but more decent men of this world. The separated character of Christ's ambassador must be perilled, if not lost, in their frequenter: the ministry of the word must be proportionably injured in its character: and we shall have incurred the guilt of putting a stumbling-block in the way of souls, for whose salvation we were set by Christ to watch. Whether or no the effect of such allowances can be distinctly traced in every separate parish, it may be most plainly read in the lowered spiritual tone which overspreads those districts, in which an addiction to such amusements pervades the body of the Clergy. And surely it is even natural that so it should be. The stricken patient would not willingly send, in his extremity, for the physician of the body, who was best known to him as the keenest sportsman; because an instinctive feeling would suggest to him the apprehension, that that man's heart was not thoroughly in his profession. How can we doubt, but that in the far more delicate processes of spiritual sickness, the anxious conscience or the burdened spirit would shrink away from one

whose tastes led him rather to those amusements of which I have spoken, than to the house of public intercession, or the privacy of secret communing with God? Even for the lower order of the ministry it was the rule, laid down by St. Paul, speaking, let us remember, under the direct inspiration of God the Holy Ghost, "Likewise also must the deacons be grave." How shall the intricacies of the wounded heart be bared to him who has never known his own heart's plague? How shall he direct the penitence, or guide the return of another, who has never wept beneath the cross, or cast there his own burden, or been himself guided by the Spirit into the paths of a contrite peace?

Nor, my reverend brethren, can I be content to leave this subject wholly upon this its lowest ground. It is not merely on account of the estimate which will be formed of us by our people, that in conformity with the injunctions of the Canons of the Church I would urge upon you such abstinence; but for our own sakes also. No one can over-estimate the aid which may be administered to our own weakness by the constant observance of a prescribed external law of self-restraint. This is why the Church in all times of her purity, and why our own Church by direct command, has constantly enforced upon us the wearing a peculiar dress; not of course because

there is any sanctity in one dress rather than another, but that by this observance we should be subjected to an external rule, which should always remind us of our separated character. And of how much greater moment is it, my reverend brethren, that our minds and spirits should be always subjected to an unseen but present rule, of which that outer garb is but the forecast shadow. With the existence of such an inward rule of self-collectedness and self-restraint, it can hardly be but that the amusements to which I refer must interfere. They tend to break down a man's own estimate of his separated character: their bustle, their action, the company to which they lead, the trains of thought which they suggest, all tend to interfere with that composed, musing, meditative, self-conversing temper, which, through God's grace, is drawn up most easily into the higher exercises of devotion. And if this be so, the narrowest charge will be, in its measure, incompatible with the amusements I would have you renounce. For he whose charge is small, has only the more time for prayer and meditation; for seeking to have ripened in him all the graces of a saintly character; for the work of intercession, for winning for the Church the great blessings which flow, on all around him, from every one whom God has indeed stamped deeply with the image of His dear Son, and anointed largely with the unction of the

Holy One : and thus, in the unity of the Church, he who is called to less engrossing labour amongst souls, is enabled by giving up more time and strength to prayer and praise, to contribute just as truly his appointed part towards that common life, wherewith the whole body of the faithful live before God.

And if this be true of the pastor of the few sheep, it is a truth even more important still for him upon whom presses the heavy burden of many souls. For how can he hope to discharge aright his trust, except by having its requirements much and often on his mind? How, without much prayer, and an inner spring of devoted earnestness, can he bear up under his burden? How surely, without these, will he turn to self-cheating expedients to relieve himself of its weight; looking off from his failures and difficulties,—shutting his eyes to the evils of his parish,—and soon putting unreal hopes, or dreamy expectations, in the room of a course of vigorous, hearty, unsparing labour! How, indeed,—whether his charge be less or greater,—unless he sees often before his eyes, in secret meditation, the pattern of his Master's sufferings, His cross and Passion, His agony and bloody sweat, His mockings and revilings,—how shall any man be nerved to bear, unmoved, the opposition, and gainsaying, and hardness, and impenitence of those who will not be won; the

shame of a despised testimony, the reproach of Christ's cross? How, unless he retires often from the sights and sounds of this world, and sets himself in thought before the great white throne, shall he escape the delusions of the pleasures, ease, and honours of this present time? How, unless his own soul be quickened, raised, and softened by the full love of a penitent, shall he testify to others at once of the terrors of the Lord, and of the love of Christ?

In a multitude of ways will such a character as this stamp itself upon a ministry. Such a pastor will know, by often musing on them, the deficiencies of himself and of his parish. He will know who do not, as well as who do, come to church; and when there, join in the prayers and praises of God's house, and kneel meekly down for the food of the Holy Communion. His list of communicants (which I cannot too earnestly urge each one of you to keep) will bring before him, after every celebration, the absence of one and another of his charge. This will lead to the pastoral visit of inquiry, of instruction, of warning, or of consolation; and these will soon acquaint him accurately with the state and difficulties of the individual members of his flock. This acquaintance, again, will give a point and particularity to his sermons; this will enable him simply to bring out in them, as he has himself learned it,

the power of Christ's cross and of Christ's resurrection, in connexion with his people's wants, sins, and temptations ; as though he were indeed speaking in earnest to others of what he knows of their living efficacy. This will make his sermons utterly unlike the moral essays under which a congregation slumber soundly, or hungrily disperse, to seek in other pastures what their own shepherd cannot furnish ; and so the efficiency of the ministry will, under the blessing of God, be to a great degree the coming out of the character of the pastor.

And this, after all, is the great truth we need to remember. We want for the ministry of our parishes earnest spiritual men, men of prayer, men of faith, men of God ; men who can "speak that they do know, and testify that they have seen ;" men who can witness to others of the salvation they have found themselves ; who can speak of Christ as having known Christ ; who can declare the Spirit's power, because He has wrought upon themselves ; to whom the Church of the redeemed is not a name or an abstraction, but the living company of Christ's saints, amongst whom He lives and walks, who is their soul's desire and happiness ; men to whom the doctrine of the sacraments is not a ground for wrangling, or a cold hard formulary of orthodoxy, but a discipline and fount of life. And for this, above all other needs,

a holy, devout, faithful life is needful in ourselves ; that in all our treatment of others we may be real ; that we may be clear of the awful guilt of using the Name of Christ, and the mysteries of His Gospel, as mere matters of professional routine ; or by a still more subtle delusion of the enemy, as instruments for obtaining for ourselves power over the minds of other men ; but that we may indeed desire and advance their salvation. And without the reality of personal religion in ourselves, how can we hope to do anything effectual for them ? A bad man cannot be a good minister of Christ to others. They soon see through any unreality in us ; they feel it in the pithless sermons, the dull moralities, or the mere sapless statements of doctrine without the life of personal experience, in which it vents itself ; they feel it in the substitution of a chilling pity for a lively sympathy in our treatment of them ; they feel the effect of our losing our perception of the mystery of each regenerate life which is committed to our tending ; of our forgetting that in each one is all the mystery of God's warfare with evil ; of a will to be healed ; a soul to be saved. They feel, in one word, that we are becoming the vendors of a charm, instead of being prophets with a message.

XI.

RETROGRADE RELIGION.

IN our parish churches there are (speaking generally) far the most abundant remains of old times which our land possesses : and in many instances they bear, wrought into their very fabrics, (like the flood-marks of by-gone inundations,) the traces of two great and separate currents of thought and action which have swept past them. They speak of a long papal supremacy and of a short puritan dominion. Comparing together many of our churches, and gathering into one view the information to be gleaned from a multitude of individual instances, we may re-construct from them the history of each of these periods.

We may trace first, by no doubtful signs, that gradual upgrowth of superstition which had before our Reformation almost obscured amongst us the light of Christ's truth.

Our earliest churches are, manifestly, buildings separated in idea and use from all profane and common purposes. Whatever skill of design or execution was possessed by those who built them, it was freely spent in the process of their erection. But they had little ornament besides the simple

comeliness which was the result of good design, enduring materials, and careful execution. They bespeak their own intention. They were meant to be the common homes of the religious acts and sympathies of the members of Christ's body who lived under their shadow: they were gathering places for united worship, for Christian instruction, for receiving the young into the Christian community, for the due performance of the holy rites whereby the life of adults was sanctified and blessed, for laying the earthly remains of the saints to rest with words of peace and prayer until the resurrection morning. These purposes are stamped upon our earliest churches. But far different from this simplicity of object is the record which they bear in after time. The long receding chancels, separated from the withdrawn nave and transepts by screens of curious work, speak of the growing separation from the laity of the ordained witnesses of the resurrection, as they passed from being the appointed ministers of Christ amongst their brethren, into a sacerdotal class, who undertook for them the performance of a vicarious religion. The remains of many a rood-loft speak of the coming in of image worship to mar the spiritual worshipper's approach to God; and remind us of the crowd of intercessors who from the blessed Virgin down to every chosen saint were fondly and too often blasphemously interposed between

the sinful soul and its one only Advocate with the everlasting Father. The high altar with its train of subsidiary shrines, each with its own piscina and its abundant decorations, speak of the perversion of the blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist into a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of the quick and the dead, with the blasphemous conceit of transubstantiation by which it was upheld, the denial of the cup of blessing to the laity by which it was accompanied, and the pernicious doctrines of masses, purgatory, and indulgences, to which more or less directly it gave birth. The hagioscope is a plain witness against a system, which substituted the gazing on the religious acts of separated priests for a living individual faith with its simple approach for itself through the blood of sprinkling, and a feeding for itself upon that bread which came down from heaven. The confessional (if indeed there are remains of it within our churches) reminds us of that fearful system of enforced auricular confession under which the enfeebling and too often polluting practice of absolute spiritual direction superseded the quickening, purifying rule of a conscience purged from dead works to serve the living God : while the grotesque representations which are still sometimes disclosed upon the ancient walls, are records of a day of darkness when idle legends had been made to supersede in the instruction of the people the

inculcation of those blessed pages of God's word which give light and understanding unto the simple. Yet these evils grew not up in a night ; their progress to maturity reaches over a period which must be measured against many successive generations ; here, then, is an instance of the special teaching which may be furnished by a true study of antiquity. For here we may see to what the first unsuspected inventions of a superstitious temper may at last conduct us ; and as we trace with curious diligence in our own churches the remains of this age of superstition, and learn to understand the various uses of that upon which we have looked hitherto with the mere mute gaze of unintelligent carelessness, we should be led at once to direct and conscious thankfulness to God for our deliverance from such a night of error, and to a careful vigilance against the first beginnings of a temper which has shewn itself already to be so fertile in producing evil.

Not less explicit are the warnings left upon our fabrics by the cold, rude, irreverend hand of Puritan desecration. They are indeed far fewer to enumerate because they are marked by privations, not additions ; by the breaking down of carved work with axes and hammers, with an indiscriminating violence which equally assailed the instruments of mischievous superstition and the seemly aids of a devout piety. Puritanism was the natural

revulsion of the mind which the Reformation had set free, and which (as was too natural to fallen humanity) swung on the rebound from popish superstition into that dogmatizing irreverence which is the first stage of unbelief. The wanton defacing of the pious works of other times, and all the internal transformation of many of our churches from houses for united worship into something little different from capacious lecture-rooms, bears a painful witness of the early flight of devout reverence for God, and of a faithful recognition of His presence amongst men, and so in its truest and highest sense of the spiritual character of the Church. Here then, too, our warnings are plain. We see that for man's composite nature of spirit, soul, and body, rites and a worship are required, in which all of these shall be engaged. Such a worship we find established in primitive Christianity holding fast to order, discipline, and creeds. Instead of it we find the Puritan establishing a merely intellectual worship, or as he would term it, one purely intelligent and spiritual, and free from the mysticism of sacramental influences. But when we come to trace the course of this system, we find that it soon ran into the boldest irreligion and the wildest scepticism. And so our double lesson is complete. Rome debased the truth of Christianity by sensual admixture, Puritanism destroyed its vital power by subliming it into a mere

abstraction of the human intellect. The issue of both delusions is before us ; against the first beginnings of the one and of the other the study of antiquity should place us on our guard.

But the study of ancient times, if it is thus to profit us, must be careful and exact. It is only by reproducing the old life before our eyes in its minuteness and detail that we can learn these lessons from it. To see what were indeed the workings of the spirit of evil, and so to be on our guard against its delusions, we must not have general abstractions before our eyes, but the living, feeling, thinking, acting men, whom it betrayed of old, with all the multiplied details of their daily individual life. And to this it is which Archæology as distinct from history specially applies itself. Therefore does it pore patiently over inscriptions, and laboriously decipher legends, and scrupulously gather up the traditionary lore of various neighbourhoods, in order that it may reproduce the life of those old days ; giving us not mere catalogues of names or records of great acts, but the complete picture of the earlier day with its filling in of light and shadow, and its play of human motive, action, and character ; that we may see how men triumphed and were vanquished then, by seeing how they lived, and felt, and were tempted ; and acted, yielded or resisted ; and so may place ourselves with our circumstances

amongst the workings of the powers who aided or misled them, and see to what we may trust and what we must resist, and how we may confront their opposition.

Here then are the uses of that which, if it be not followed for such a purpose, is at best but a harmless recreation, and may soon degenerate into busy and engrossing trifling. But on the other hand, it is not to be denied that to such a study of antiquity certain dangers are attached, and of them the Archæologist should be conscious, that against them he may be upon his guard. Now the master danger from which all others spring is this; lest the lover of antiquity should be tempted rather to seek to go back into that old time, than to let its curious lights cast their beams upon the present; lest he should forget that the life only of that old time was what gave it worth, and that his object should be to strengthen the life of this present time; lest whilst gazing affectionately upon the outward trapping of circumstance, (which is of moment only as it witnesses of life within,) he should grow to value for themselves those outward things, and seek to reproduce them upon this living world.

For even if those early accidents were altogether harmless, the attempt to reproduce them would be not a little mischievous. It would turn practical men into busy triflers; it would make them

poor mimes of the departed ; dressed-up antics in an unreal show. In artistical, in literary, in scientific, in political, in social, in religious life, it must be so. The very reptile does not seek to re-occupy its sloughed and cast-off skin. And man cannot return to the dressings and outer habits of another stage and era of his being. His life will not flow backward. That which was its natural outward circumstance and manifestation of old amongst our fathers, is not so now amongst us their children : to strive to reproduce that instead of striving to perfect our own life, would be to seek to dress up young May in the russet hues and decaying leaves of the departed autumn, or to make the old man young by dressing him in the clothes of his boyhood. It would be to deny to life that first great quality of continual progression, so well pointed out by our great English philosopher when he says, "Antiquity deserveth that reverence that men should make a stand thereupon, and discover what is the best way ; but when the discovery is well taken, then to make progression^a." The painter who, instead of seeking in his own day to be filled with the spirit which made the masters of his art great, contents himself with reproducing their manifestation of life, degenerates into the servile copier. The architect who, instead of forming his own taste by a wide and careful study of the best models,

^a Advancement of Learning, book i.

and then trusting himself to the inventions of his own attempered genius, does but put together remembered shreds of ancient work, will give us instead of a living whole, a patchwork collection of dead bones. In politics, he who in his fondness for every feature of the past would reverse the onward progress of all times, becomes a mere obstruction over which the wheels of business roll with crushing weight and somewhat disturbed motion; in religion, he who goes back with fantastic fondness to the accidental garb in which of old she robed herself, can hardly fail of being lost in frivolity or formalism. In truth the attempt to go back is a virtual denial of the continuance and reality of life; it is a surmise that it was not in life that the old strength lay, but in the outward form, and that if we would now set up again out of the dust in which it has been decently interred that antique form, we too should have from it that strength which we never can have whilst we seek for it in anything short of the energy of life.

But if the attempt to reproduce the merely harmless past is thus mischievous, far greater are the evils which from another cause too often wait on such a reproduction. For that which is by such a process ushered into a re-birth, is quite as often the fault and error as the harmless outward form of the departed time.

And this is a fatal treason against truth and

life in all their multiform and exuberant blessedness. To go back to earlier faults is for a man to add consciously to the natural evil of maturity the follies and the vice which he outgrew in youth. It is to read backward all the writings of God's providence. For to speak again in the words of Lord Bacon, "*Antiquitas seculi juvenus mundi*. These times are the ancient times when the world is ancient, and not those which we account ancient *ordine retrogrado*, by a computation backward from ourselves ^b."

Such conduct has moreover this aggravation, that whereas those before us fell into errors, not seeing plainly that the path by which they went astray was indeed another than the true path, or what was its appointed end, we must err in spite of the warning of their fall, and with a careless walk ripened into perverse wilfulness.

This is the very fault which has been deemed to bring the guilt of heresy on those who, in defining matters of the faith, have adopted, after experience had shewn its danger, language which, before its erroneous tendency was known, had been innocently used. Yet that such a danger does beset such pursuits as ours, not speculation only, but experience proves. Men may, for example, become so enamoured of the antiquity they study, that they may desire to restore the very words

^b Advancement of Learning, book i.

and customs, out of which, as we know by sad experience, the evils of the papal system were formerly developed.

Against such a danger, then, let us be on our guard; let all our studies of antiquity be so conducted that they may never lead us to tamper for an instant with that which drew on heretofore such fatal darkness; let us look at these records of past superstition, not with the craving interest with which Israel was forbidden to enquire into the heathen worship round her, but as men lately bewildered in a forest or lost in some oppressive fog, look back upon the frowning outline or the curtained veil from which they have passed so recently to light and freedom, thanking God for their deliverance, and humbled that they do not better use their blessed freedom.

XII.

INSUFFICIENCY OF BARE INTELLECTUAL ENLIGHTENMENT.

WHEN Christ stands to listen to our prayer, and says to us, as He said to the blind man of old, at whose crying He had stayed His steps, "What wouldst thou have Me to do?" we must answer, "Lord, that my eyes might be opened." But then, further, that which we thus seek for ourselves we must apply to others. We must seek to enlighten their souls by bringing them to Him, that He may teach them; and then by setting them in the light of His presence. How infinitely foolish is any other course! How surely will mere intellectual instruction only raise unreal phantoms, which will mock and delude the dimness of man's eyesight! How surely all experience, down to that of yesterday, establishes this truth!

What has mere intellectual training ever done for raising humanity, or that aggregate of individual humanity which we impersonate in a nation? What did it do for Athens of old? What has it done, even within this last year, for our continental neighbours? Surely in this thought there is a deep lesson of political wisdom, which it well

becomes those to gather whose duty it is to administer a nation's resources. But, to leave this untouched, how great a lesson is this for the Church of Christ! She, too, is continually tempted by the spirit of the world to substitute SOMETHING else for the work of bringing souls to Christ for healing, or setting His truth before them for their light. Of old she was specially tempted to set externals, forms, images, representations, before the common eye of the multitude; the opportunity of obtaining earthly power, before the ambitious; and the curious speculations of a subtle casuistry, before the intellectual. This was the deceit to which the Church yielded when she became the slave of Papal superstition; and even as she yielded to this temptation, how thick did the darkness grow again! how again did it cloud from men's eyes, first the knowledge of God, then of himself, and then of nature! Now this woe is past. But it is only to give way to another, and to what may be a still fiercer, woe. For now plainly the temptation to the Church is to substitute for her message the message of a bare, intellectual enlightenment. Now she is under the most specious pretences invited to believe that she is not to do her work, by bringing souls to Christ, that He may touch their eyes, and raise before them His light,—being certain that, in doing this faithfully, she will most surely fit them to bear all other light, and lay all

other light before them ; but that she may do a great deal without this, as a preparation for it, and then as a substitute in its stead. This is, and must be, a special temptation incident to such an age as ours. The wide spread of superficial knowledge, the vast impulse and peculiar character given to those mixed pursuits of science and material convenience, for which our times are so pre-eminently remarkable, must engender a spirit which is peculiarly exposed to such temptations. Against them, therefore, as our own danger, we should be specially on our guard. We know what will be the course of such a delusion. We have been enabled through God's aid, in times past, to effect through the Church of this land a mighty enlightenment of its people. Surely all who will with any fairness weigh the facts of the case must be forced to allow, that, amidst much darkness and much ignorance on many subjects on which we wish to see them well-informed, it has been by spreading more or less, through the more than ten thousand parishes of our land, some knowledge and revelation of Christ, that the character they bear has been hitherto impressed upon our people. And so far as this has been done, it has been effected by simply acting on our own special mission ;—by ministering God's truth, God's word, the sacraments of God's grace, God's ordinances to our people, and so meeting man's twofold sins by Christ's twofold remedy. It has been by no

mere teaching even of truth itself, as if it was a science or a philosophy to be received into the understanding, but by bringing them before a personal Saviour, that He might heal them. And if we act thus, there is no degree of after enlightenment which may not be a blessing to them. Mere knowledge, indeed, puffeth up. It is power; but it may be an evil power,—evil for its possessor, evil for society. It is those only who sit at the feet of Christ, and hear His word, to whom knowledge is an unmixed good. To such an one all science is a duteous handmaid, not a seducing spirit. The knowledge, for instance, of what we call natural history, is not for him the graving of idol shapes upon the wall, but the gathering of God's creation around him, as they stood round Adam when, in the fulness of created knowledge, he gave their fitting names to every kind.

He who knows God will know enough of his own ignorance not to be elated, enough of the emptiness of all outer things not to be drawn down to them. He will begin to comprehend his own place in God's world, and meekly and earnestly to set about his own task, even as unto the Lord, and not to men. But if we substitute for this our high vocation of bringing souls to Christ, any other course of action, it can only lead to the light that is in us being darkness; and then how thick will be that darkness! Surely all around us at this moment should impress this lesson on us. How out

of the very heart and centre of merely earthly, sensuous, intellectual civilisation, in the great nation which is our nearest neighbour, have there arisen, within our own hearing voices, of confusion and bitterness which seem to threaten an absolute return to uncivilised barbarism itself. What fierce, senseless, convulsive strivings have been agitating that highly taught, but signally unchristian, population! And so, surely, it must be if the Church of Christ forget her own vocation amongst us. It is Christianity which has softened, moulded, restrained, and elevated our naturally active, vigorous, and enterprising race. Upon Christian truth are laid all the foundations of our social state. It is by the up-growth amongst us of multitudes whom God's truth has never reached, that our social security is threatened. Man without God's restraining grace, and the light of Christ's truth, is, and soon will shew himself to be, fiercer, craftier, and more selfish than the beasts of the wilderness. Amongst such, how is society possible? Our hope as a nation is in our Christianity, for an earnest, definite faith in the word, work, grace, cross, and Person of Christ. Let His Church, according to her mission, set these plainly forth before the eyes of our people; and amidst the shaking of the nations, we all, undeserving as we are, may yet of God's mercy be preserved.

XIII.

“THE NEED OF DOGMATIC TEACHING.”

WHAT is dogma? Plainly the great facts of the spiritual world, which are made known to us in the Christian revelation, embodied in words which express them accurately. What the highest mathematical and scientific formulæ are to their separate sciences,—the records in a brief summary of the long conclusions of a multitude of experiments or problems,—these are the dogma of our faith in the realm of revelation. They are points gained; points of light, illuminating and enlarging all knowledge; gifts to the intellect, like the gift of the sun and moon and stars in the heavens; not restriction upon its action, but the gathering of it up into new and ever-welling fountains of fresh life and vigour; restrictions only as a truth gained is a restriction upon error and an opener of the way to all other truth, which but from its vantage ground could never have been reached.

These facts are pre-eminently the declarations of God; of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; first, as those blessed Persons exist

in the unity of the divine blessedness irrespective of any derived creation ; and next, in the relation of that ineffable existence to man, as his Creator, his Redeemer, and his Sanctifier. Cast your eye for a moment on the Doxology, the shortest of all our creeds, or on the Apostles' or Nicene, each a brief compendium of all Christian dogma, and what else is it than such a declaration of God ; a true and simple theology ? “ I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.” Here is the Father in Himself, the *Fons et Origo Deitatis*. The eternal, immutable, necessary Will from whose Love streamed forth a derived reasonable creation ; for Whom, and to Whom, and from Whom, and by Whom are all things, whether they be in heaven, or on earth, or under the earth.

And so it continues, “ and in Jesus Christ His Son our Lord ; ” and then, after this, His eternal relation to the Father, and His Lordship over all creation follows ; then His Incarnation, His Life, His Death, His Atonement, His Ascension, His Mediatorial Throne. And then we declare the eternal Godhead and true personality of the third divine Person. His relation from eternity to the Father and to the Son ; His relation to us with whom He condescends to dwell ; and therefore the existence of a holy, undivided Church ; of true means of grace ; of living sacraments ;

and so, as the gracious end of all to us, of "a life everlasting."

Here are the creeds, the sure records of facts in the mighty spirit-world, from which we may proceed with sobriety and modesty to other discoveries concerning God and ourselves. This is dogmatic teaching, not a set of speculations, like the tentative reachings forth of a bold and ambitious philosophy; not a number of refinements, like the subtle mind-play of the metaphysician or the casuist; not even in themselves appeals to feeling, though the root of all true and deep feeling; but a declaring of God. From which declaring of God all else may follow; intellectual advancement, moral obligation, the renewing of the affections, when their truest object is set before them. And yet these are but the inevitable consequences, they are not the essence of dogma; that rises into an atmosphere high above all these. For dogma are the peaks of the everlasting hills from which the streams descend which water the earth; they are the facts of eternity; they are the record of the revelation of God.

If this is dogma it need not take many words to set forth the necessity there is for Christian preaching being its distinct announcement. For what else does man indeed want, save God? Who else, what else, but his Creator, who created him in His own image, can ever satisfy the needs

of one originally made so great as to be able to commune with God? To declare God to such a being, to make him know his God as God has revealed Himself to him, to bring that revelation home to his spirit—this is the highest of all necessities. The fulfilment of this need is what we mean when we say that our preaching must declare dogma. How otherwise are the people to know the full revelation of God? For it is not only that they are naturally ignorant, and so need original instruction, but also that through the evil effects of the fall they are naturally prone to error in their conceptions of God, and heresies are the proper outbreak of this hereditary taint; and though circumstances may determine the particular time at which particular errors have arisen, (just as the state of the natural atmosphere predisposes men to one form of complaint rather than to another,) yet the root of the error is in fallen man and not in circumstance. Hence those erroneous conceptions concerning God, which from time to time have broken forth into distinct heresies, are always in some shape or other haunting the souls of our people, and are ready, like long-buried seeds when the primæval forest is cut down, to spring up again with a new growth after the sleep of centuries. Now dogma are the embodied contradictions of such errors. The different clauses of the creeds have taken their par-

ticular shape and wording, as being the most emphatic denials which could be framed of such heretical glosses. Every statement of an ancient creed is a battle-ground whereon was fought by our fathers one of the master fights which secured to their children their inheritance of liberty and truth.

Therefore our teaching must embody all dogma, if every heresy, held consciously or implicitly, is to be kept out. All teaching short of this is poverty-stricken, and insufficient for its end. Partial statements, the perpetual dwelling on one set of views, the dire repetition of the Shibboleths of a party, all labour under this deep condemnation. Even the very greatest and most blessed of all separate truths may be thus exclusively dwelt upon until it obscures the light of heaven. The very master doctrine of all for us sinners, the blessed Atonement, may thus be mis-employed. The light of heaven is the pure, clear, all illuminating white light which is the result of mingling in their due proportions all the different pencils of the prismatic colours; any one ray taken by itself, even the violet ray of beauty, will disfigure instead of declaring the landscape which the hand of God has fashioned in its glory.

This, then, (I.) being the declaring dogma, and this (II.) the necessity of doing so, one thing yet remains for us most briefly, for so it must be,

to glance at, and that is (III.) how we are to do it. The first of all rules for which is doubtless this, that we have our own souls full of them. There is, in this matter, the greatest of all differences between accurate rote-learning and deep soul-possessing. If we would be full, and so powerful teachers, we must not hold these truths as formularies, but the formularies as truths. We must live them before we formulize them; our own spiritual life must be the holding of the truth which the formulary embodies. This was the history of the ancient champions of the faith. St. Athanase fought not for the dogma of the *ὁμοούσια*, but for that living faith in the true Godhead of his Lord which the utterance of the formulary fixed and made secure. And there is in our souls, under the breath of the Holy Ghost, a like power of receiving into themselves all the dogma of the faith, so that they shall live again in us. This first, and then,

II. Our teaching must impart them not as forms to be learned but as a life to be received by living souls. This will keep us from cramped statements, from being narrowed up into the rigidity of a form; it will greatly guard us against the besetting peril of self-assertion. It is the expression of the difference in the teacher of being a dogmatizer or an imparter of dogma. And so all may be summed in a few propositions of most

strictly practical advice. If you would preach dogma not dogmatically, but fully, lovingly, convincingly,—

1. PRAY THEM. Turn them, that is, perpetually in your own use into supplications, giving of thanks, and acts of adoration. This is in accordance with the great wisdom of the Church in weaving dogma into doxology, and then breaking away from the saying of Psalms and the offering of petitions, ever and anon, as by some sudden aspiration, into her grand ascriptions of glory to the Triune God. This is a step even above constant prayer for light and teaching, which should evermore be uttered by every heart which longs to dwell in the light of God's presence. "Lord, shew me Thy glory, and it sufficeth me."

2. If you would indeed preach dogma effectively, LIVE them. Offer up your daily acts, especially the acts of your ministry, by the Spirit, through the Son, to the Father. Let these mighty mysteries thus interpenetrate and impregnate your ordinary life.

3. STUDY them deeply. First by diligence, and, as far as may be, reading. Go over the old battle-field, till the marshalling of the squadrons, and the posts of the combat, are familiar to you; till you see why and how each point was contested; and how far the great result embodied that for which saints contended, and by which

the truth was preserved. And then, when study and diligence have mastered all this, let meditation make the truths your own. Go apart into the mountain, even in this busy age, and rest awhile. . . . It is really fatal to suppose that without all this care you can enter into these profound mysteries. Easily enough you may learn the catch-words, but you will lose the mysteries. . . . A formulary rested in as a formuláry, is indeed the letter which killeth. But a formulary devoutly dwelt upon as the expression of a living truth will, in God's hands, impregnate you with life and truth.

4. Apply these dogma diligently to living men. Go down again, after your study and your meditation, from the silent mountain height with its still cloud-canopy to the busy plain below ; there, in the throng you will meet with the sick, the tempted, the strivers, the demoniac. Go, and in the Name of Christ rebuke the still haunting devils ; go, and calm the aching heart ; go, and heal the sick in their tossing agony ; go, with the words of power and the presence of majesty ; go, as a real man to the real struggle, and your God shall go with you, and the might of His arm shall give you the victory.

XIV.

“THE STRIFE WITH ROMANISM.”

WE have, I think, manifestly before us at this time a strife of even more than ordinary severity, with Romanism on the one hand, and with Infidelity on the other. And how are we to resist them? I may say briefly by adhering faithfully and heartily, with all love and gentleness, but still without compromise or concession, in spirit, word, and act, to the doctrinal statements and formularies, and to that whole system which our own Church has prescribed to, and provided for us, as drawn from and consistent with God's holy word, as it was received and interpreted by the Primitive Church, before those corruptions had overspread her, from which it pleased God to deliver our fathers at the Reformation of religion in this land.

But to make this consideration of our dangers really practical, suffer me to enter into a few details with regard to each of them. And, first, as to the assaults of Romanism. I entertain no apprehension of any large defection of our people to that corrupt Church. The prevailing temper of the present day appears to me hostile to its

pretensions, and proof against its efforts. I believe that the power of the Roman Church over her own adherents is shaken to the centre, and rapidly decaying in countries in which she is still nominally dominant. And I have no expectation of seeing the people of this land, who have been always singularly impatient of such claims, bow again beneath her ancient and rejected yoke. The Romanist emissaries may do something amongst those teeming multitudes of our great towns, amongst which, with her usual subtlety, Rome is making her main effort, amongst which the other sects so languidly subsist, and which the Church can scarcely reach ; but I cannot believe that she has the slightest chance of ever winning back the great mass of our people to superstitions they detest, impostures which their fathers detected, and corruptions in no degree allied to their present temptations. But though I cannot apprehend any danger of this kind, yet there is a strife at this time, sharp as well as inevitable, between us and Rome. Though she can do nothing against the masses of our army, she has seduced several of their leaders ; and amongst them some, who have left behind them no superiors in powers of intellect, or in devotion of soul to the cause of God. This, then, is the warfare we have here to wage ; and you will, I trust, suffer me, without attempting the difficult, and so often uncharitable, work,

of endeavouring to unravel the perplexities of individual temptation, or accounting for individual falls, to mark what seem to me to have been some of the chief means by which, in these instances, Roman artifice has triumphed, and how we may best guard against it for the future.

First, then, I may say generally, that I believe that, in the greater number of these cases, the earliest approaches of the enemy have been through the feelings, and not through the understanding. Argument has come to the support of feelings already perverted; not the feelings followed the slow convictions of the intellect. Now, if this be so, it follows of course that what is needed for safety is not so much new argument ^a, as a conscientious guard over the feelings. This danger is not only most insidious, but it is also multiform in its approach; and yet there is one almost universal law by which it acts. It begins by undervaluing the palpable corruptions of the Papacy. Every one of these, in ritual, in morals, and in doctrine, is of course a perversion of a truth; and an ingenious mind may follow up the corruption till it joins the truth, and so until its evil can be explained away.

^a Though, if new argument be required, it seems to me to be supplied in the calm, concise, and complete refutation of that master error of Rome, the claim of Papal Supremacy which has been recently published amongst ourselves by Professor Hussey, entitled "The Rise of the Papal Power."

There is, I believe, no more safety for him who has reached this point. He may be kept with us for a time by the hesitating conviction that ours is a true branch of the Church, and that it is not lawful for him to quit it ; but he will at once begin to unsettle others, and with an ordinarily constituted mind, he will sooner or later fall himself. Rome has too many attractions to allow of safety to her opponents in so neutral a position. One will be overcome by a longing for visible unity, and her vaunt, and appearance of possessing it. Another, whose whole soul is occupied with the trembling desire to be certainly safe for eternity, will be forced over the border by the very liberality of our judgment as to the possible salvation of members of a community less pure than our own, contrasted with Rome's bold denunciation of eternal death to all not in communion with herself. The fatal, but undoubted ease, administered to irritable consciences by the strong opiates of her system of Auricular Confession and Absolution, will betray a third. A fourth may fall before the deceitful halo of holiness which invests her religious vows, orders, and mortifications of the body ; whilst lighter minds may be led astray by that which is not more substantial than the incense of her altars and the decorations of her priests. And then, when the triumph has been otherwise accomplished, it is easy to adduce argu-

ments to justify a change. Against these seductions, the natural and most effectual guard is to be found in keeping, from the first, clearly and distinctly before the eyes, those great corruptions of Rome, which, sooner or later, all who join her must adopt, against which our Church originally protested, and against which her Formularies and Articles continually warn us. And he that would conscientiously resist this danger, must beware of tampering with the temptation in any form. I cannot doubt that many of those who have been recently perverted have fallen by a want of watchfulness on this point, not only in themselves, but also, I am bound to add, in their spiritual guides.

Thus, for example, there has been of late, in my judgment, in some of our leading writers on these subjects, an unwillingness to condemn Roman errors in distinct language; an inclination to speak of these erroneous statements as concerning subjects so mysterious in their nature, that it was safer and more reverential to say nothing concerning them;—modes of treating them utterly unlike the tone of our Articles, and of our great divines, and very dangerous to the flock.

Thus, again, forms and modes of expression which, however originally orthodox, have in the course of time become absolutely identified with leading Roman corruptions, have been freely used, without any strong accompanying protest against

the popish perversion to which they had been subjected ; whilst their use has been justified against the objections of others, by the quotation from the fathers of the very passages which are commonly used by Romish writers to justify their errors, and which, when taken out of their context, seem to the reader who knows no more, directly to favour that corrupted form of faith.

Again, I believe that the use of Roman Catholic books of devotion exposes men grievously to this danger. The errors of that faith are here presented to our people in the most alluring form, and in their own most unguarded moments. Their souls are melted in devout contemplation, or warmed in the earnestness of praise and prayer, and they receive readily, and at unawares, what, as their minds cool down, becomes an abiding impress. Nor are the mass of what are called adapted devotions, in my judgment, free from this danger. Even if all direct statements of Roman error were rigorously excluded from them, there is a tone about those which have of late been introduced amongst us, alien from that of the English Church ; alien, therefore, as we believe, from that of Holy Scripture, and which does by degrees wean the mind from the earnest sobriety of our own Prayer-book, and lead it to long for something more stimulating and sensuous, and so prepare it to yield to the voice of the

tempter. But this is far from all. I am bound to say, that, so far as I am able to judge, in those adapted works, which have, from the high character of their editor, had far the largest circulation, not only has language been preserved alien from that of the sober teaching of the Church of England, and in harmony only with the half-amatory devotions in which Rome so largely abounds^b, but, even the direct corruptions of the papacy have not always been successfully excluded; rather, both by what has been preserved in the text, and what has been suggested (though intended doubtless as an antidote) in the notes, many of its errors seem to me to be excused, and presented in the most favourable colours to minds rendered unsuspecting of the danger by the professed adaptation of these works to the tone of their own Church^c. It is accordingly my full conviction, that the circulation and use of these works, many of which were originally composed and circulated purposely to counteract the Reformation, has had, and still has, a most dangerous influence in this direction. Against the use of these, then, I would guard all whom my voice can reach, as a dangerous tampering with Romish error, and a slighting of our own Church, which in her Prayer-book, and through her great divines, has provided us with so large a body of devo-

^b See Appendix I.

^c See Appendix II.

tions, scriptural in their doctrine, primitive in their form, and in their tone maintaining that earnest sobriety and reverence to which the untainted minds of English Churchmen have been hitherto accustomed.

Again, the same great evil has, I think, been promoted sometimes by allowing, sometimes by encouraging, novel approximations of our customs, observances, and language to those of Rome. I will here name three only, by way of example. Nothing then, I think, can be plainer, than that adoration is practically paid by many who worship in the Roman communion to the consecrated elements in the Holy Eucharist, and that, specially to guard against this danger, all approach to such adoration is pointedly condemned by our own Church. * Now I cannot but think that such expressions as "the adoring Christ under the form of bread and wine," "the adorable Sacrament," and the like, tend to encourage such superstitious veneration. Such expressions, I believe, are not to be found amongst any of our great divines. Compare with them, to mark the difference, the guarded words of Bishop Andrewes, in a passage where, if anywhere, from the nature of his argument, such expressions would be found. For in it he is maintaining against Cardinal Bellarmine the great truth, that, though we do not adore the Sacrament itself, we do, in that Holy Sacrament, adore Christ. Having then

shewn before, that, by the elevation of the Host in the service of the Mass, the common people, at least, were led practically to adore the sacramental elements, he thus declares and vindicates our belief and practice^d. "In his words *the adoration of the Sacrament*, the Cardinal stumbles shamefully at the very threshold. *The adoration*, says he, *of the Sacrament, that is, of Christ the Lord* in the Sacrament, present in a wonderful but true manner.—But stay. Who hath granted him that *that is*—of the Sacrament *that is* of Christ in the Sacrament? Yea, Christ Himself, the reality (res) of the Sacrament, is in, and with, beyond, and without the Sacrament, everywhere, always to be adored. It is prescribed to us, that Christ, truly present in the Eucharist, is truly to be adored as the reality of the Sacrament; yet not the Sacrament, the earthly part as Irenæus, the visible as Augustin, terms it. But we, too, adore the flesh of Christ in the mysteries, yet not *that which*, but *Him who*, is worshipped on the altar. Nor do we eat the flesh before we adore with St. Augustin; and yet we by no means adore the Sacrament." Here the eye of faith is led from the Sacrament to the unseen Lord, with whom it is the instrument of our communion. But in the words, "the adorable Sacrament," adoration, instead of

^d Ad Cardinalis Bellarmini Apologiam Responsio, cap. viii. § 195.

being lifted up to Him, is drawn down to it. Accordingly, none, I think, can of late have escaped, in their administration of the Holy Communion, having their attention drawn, amongst those who have been the subjects of such teaching, to instances of an unusual prostration in posture which bears an alarming resemblance to this forbidden adoration. No one, I think, can doubt, that such customs do act back again upon those who practise them, and by degrees prepare them for that Communion in which such actions are encouraged. For those who practise them amongst ourselves must feel that they are really alien to the whole teaching and system of the Church of which they are members ; and thus in some is formed a habit of unreality, which greatly threatens to destroy all honesty and straightforwardness of character ; whilst in more vigorous minds it leads first to discontent with their present position, and then to their seeking for another where they can do, and speak, with openness, and unreserve, what with us they can practise only under a reserved and sometimes clandestine constraint.

The second point which I will name to illustrate my meaning, is the introduction of the rosary, as an aid to devotion into some adapted books of prayer. For though, as it is alleged, its use is generally discountenanced, yet that any provision for its employment should be made, seems

to me no slight evil. For it is most closely connected with two leading errors of Rome: with the one, indeed, accidentally, namely, the worship of the Virgin Mary; but inseparably with the other. For the mechanical facility which it affords for numbering the prayers which have been repeated, would be wholly useless, unless the blessed effects of prayer were supposed to depend, not upon its believing earnestness, but in some degree, at least, upon the mere frequency of its mechanical repetition^e.

The last point I will name is one of greater importance, and to which I would earnestly request your attention. It is the attempt made, as it seems to me, in some quarters, to favour the introduction into our pastoral ministry of that system of auricular confession and private absolution which, by disavowing the supremacy, and in practice destroying the healthy action, of the conscience has, perhaps more than any other single feature of their system, lowered the moral and religious tone of the Roman Communion^f. It

^e See Appendix III.

^f I cannot forbear calling the attention of those who will take the trouble to read them, to some remarks of one of the most devout and esteemed of living German Romanists upon the evils of that system as it actually exists amongst them. Such a view from within their own body is most valuable evidence, and may, under God's blessing, tend to reconcile some who have desired to use such an instrument of ministerial service to its absence in our Church. See Appendix IV.

is well that we should have a distinct idea of the difference upon this point between ourselves and Rome. And to see this clearly, we must notice first, the wide difference of intention which regulates the employment of acts common to us both.

The Church of Rome, then, desires that every soul should be under the direction of some priest. She considers implicit obedience to this direction the safest spiritual condition; and hence, the government of the soul by the individual conscience, is, with her, practically superseded by the direction of a spiritual guide. Confession is, with her, an instrument for establishing and maintaining this relation; and, accordingly, she encourages and, as far as she can, enforces upon all her members, habitual private confession to a priest. She treats this as the normal state of all Christians; and to effect her purpose she requires the practice of confession before receiving the Holy Communion. Whether the individual desire it or no, it is prescribed for him. He must from time to time open his soul in confession to some priest, and receive absolution. To perfect this system, these acts are exalted into a sacrament; and one great part of the training of the Roman priest, is that whole course of instruction which is to equip him for the confessional, by fitting him to put questions calculated to draw from reluctant souls the confession of their most

secret sins of act, desire, or thought. This is briefly the Roman system ; and its practical evils, its violation of the sanctity and supremacy of conscience, the hypocrisy it engenders, and the priestcraft it supports, were well known to the Fathers of the Reformation. Against this, as neither scriptural in doctrine, primitive in practice, nor tending to spiritual edification, they plainly protested.

Between this system and that of the Church of England the difference is clear. She would have the instructed conscience of each one, under the ordinary ministry of the Word, direct his own spiritual life. She knows that no soul can hand over to another its own fearful gift of individual responsibility. She uses, therefore, every part of the ministry not to supersede, but to awaken, quicken, restore, strengthen and direct that internal supremacy of the individual conscience which she believes to be the voice of God in man. To bring men to a state in which the healthy conscience shall thus bear rule, and to keep them in it, she sets before her pastors as the object for which they, under the guidance and aid of God the Holy Ghost, are diligently to labour. She therefore, of course, would desire that her ministers should, with this aim, and not to become their spiritual directors, search and try the consciences of those committed to their over-

sight. A cold, languid ministry, which deals in generalities, and never enters into the particulars of men's spiritual state ; which reaches no secret sins, removes no secret doubts, heals no secret sores ; which does not apply the love of Christ, and the powers of the world to come, closely to the separate souls committed to it, this far too common, because easy, but this most unfruitful, ministry is altogether alien from her whole mind. Her Ordination Service contemplates the most close and searching intercourse between the pastor and the souls committed to his oversight, of whom, at the last day, he must give account, and for which our Lord shed His blood. The difference, therefore, between England and Rome does not lie in this—that the Church of Rome would have her pastors deal closely, and the Church of England would have them deal slightly, with their people's souls. God forbid ! The difference between them lies in the object and purpose of this branch of their ministry. Neither is it that she denies the grace of confession and absolution (for how could she deny this undoubted use of the power of the Keys) ? It is, that she uses them with another purpose. Viewing them as remedies provided for a peculiar state of actual disease, she goes so far as to prescribe certain times and circumstances for their administration. When any conscience is burdened with a sense of sin, and longs,

before Holy Communion, to disburden itself; or when any secret sin presses on the soul of the sick man, then his confession may be received or even solicited by the priest, and his absolution pronounced §. The Church of England does not indeed absolutely limit the practice to these times for which she has prescribed it. No really living ministry could be so limited. Burdened souls must be permitted this relief, even when not immediately preparing for communion or harassed by the trials which so often wait upon a bed of sickness. No absolute rule, therefore, is rigidly propounded by her for such cases. But knowing how probable it is that the practice of confession may lead on to the up-growth of a system of spiritual direction; and knowing, therefore, its dangerous tendency to supersede the law of conscience; and, having seen plainly its gross abuses in the Roman Communion, she discourages such confession as an habitual custom, and gives no authority to her ministers to treat it as the common diet of the soul under the ordinary circumstances of the spiritual life; still less to press, with all the force of spiritual authority, it and its repetition as a duty and means of grace, so that tender consciences are constrained, and feel well-

§ "Here shall the sick person be moved to make a special confession of his sins if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter; after which the Priest shall absolve him," &c.—*Order of the Visitation of the Sick.*

nigh forced to employ it as almost essential to their safety. Believing, then, that there is upon this point this wide difference, first of intention, and then of practice, between ourselves and Rome, I cannot but fear that any who, in their ministry, inculcate strongly the blessedness of the custom, as one of common observance, and receive freely those who come to them habitually to practise it, are really paving the way for such perversions as have of late made our hearts ache, and our hands hang down.

In all these cases then, as I believe, simple fidelity to the tone and teaching of our Church will, under God, be our best mode of resisting this danger.

But it is not by faithfulness to her teaching in these particulars alone, in which she protests especially against Rome, that we shall be safe. Rome, of course, has great truths in her system, or it could not attract and hold men as it does. For every erroneous system holds men not through its errors, but in spite of them. Rome holds out to men the promise of living in a spiritual community in which the voice of authority shall quiet their doubts, a visible unity confirm their faith, and covenanted gifts of grace received in the use of appointed means, renew and save their souls. Now our strength against her must lie in shewing that we have in our own Church in their

truest form, and with a purity she knows not, these very gifts, through promising them which, she would allure our children from us. And this was the position taken by our Reformers. They maintained that this our National Church was a true branch of the Church Catholic, tracing up her descent of orders and doctrine to the Apostles, and claiming, therefore, a commission to be a keeper and witness of God's Word, and to speak as such with authority to those committed to her charge. Their first step was to vindicate this position by asserting that, according to God's Word, and the laws of the Primitive Church, neither the Pope nor any other foreign Bishop possessed any superiority or jurisdiction here. They opposed, that is to say, to the corruptions and pretensions of Rome, not a school of reformed opinion, but a Reformed Church. They asserted that her Sacraments were true channels of grace; that her priests did receive the true grace of ordination, Mission and Orders, from Christ Himself, through those whom Christ had sent. This was their position; and this, if we would resist Rome successfully, must be ours. The experience of every day may teach us that any wavering, any uncertainty, any indecision here, gives Rome an immediate advantage. We may see this in her readiness to seize upon and exaggerate an unwary expression recently drawn forth by the

most shameless duplicity, which seemed to throw doubt on our Church's faith in her Apostolic orders, though her formularies are perfectly explicit on this point. For they assert, first, the descent of this gift from those twelve upon whom Christ breathed, declaring it to be, not probable, or the like, but “EVIDENT unto all men diligently reading the Holy Scriptures and ancient authors, that FROM THE APOSTLES' TIME there have been these orders of ministers in Christ's Church,—Bishops, Priests, and Deacons ;” which orders further, in prescribing the subject of the ordination sermon, they declare to be “necessary in the Church of Christ ;” and then, beyond this, they advance her claim to have herself received these orders by unbroken succession from the Apostles, by making a provision that they may be “continued” amongst us. For that cannot be continued which has been already broken. For what reason, then, in the face of these authoritative declarations of our Church, was Rome so anxious to seize upon a presumed relinquishment of this our claim by one in high authority amongst us? It was because she at least well knows that any weakness of ours here is her best strength. Accordingly she has shewn herself eagerly ready to turn to her own ends any decision which seems, however untruly, to imply that we are indifferent to any truth of Christ's Church, or that the

State settles for us our doctrines, or appoints, without our being able to raise the question of their canonical unfitness, whom it would to be our Bishops. We cannot yield her this advantage. We must resist her as alone she can be resisted, —not as though we were a mere collection of individual believers, but as a Church;—with all the spiritual gifts, and powers, and order, and authority which are the Church's heritage and strength.

It is no true answer to what I would thus press upon you, to allege that those who have been perverted to Rome have previously held some such views as these; nor is it true, in any sense of reproach, that such views of the Church, and of our own position as a Church, tend to lead men to Rome. Whilst, indeed, we deny the imputation that the Church of England alone has been furnishing converts to Rome, and point in proof of our denial to the Lutheran body on the Continent^h, we are ready at once to admit that it is for those only who do faithfully believe in the existence and spiritual gifts of the Church that Rome can possess attractions, just as those who dwell exclusively on subjective and individual religion are alone tempted by one or

^h Some of these have been men of no small note; e.g. Frederic Hurter, the Antistes of Schaffhausen, Professor Philipps of Munich, Overbeck, &c.

other of the sects. But this does not shew either that Sectarianism is the true conclusion to which a high value for individual religion leads, or that Popery is the legitimate conclusion of the teaching of the Church of England. The fact is, that Popery in the one case, and Sectarianism in the other, is the counterfeit falsehood which, as it ever happens, lies beside the truth. Popery is not a step on from the teaching of the Church, but a *step aside*. They who have learned the truth know that salvation through Christ and the gifts of the Holy Ghost are, under the Christian dispensation, bestowed, not on separate and individual men, in virtue of their belonging to a certain school of opinions, but to men living in a certain organised body, and then each one for himself, by individual faithfulness, holding in that body, as the very life of his own soul, those great objective truths. Take from such men their hitherto undoubting confidence that our Reformed Communion is, and knows itself to be, that living spiritual body, with its gifts and its authority, and you fearfully expose them to the temptations of Rome. Faltering accents as to what they know to be the truth, lead them, in seeking to hold fast that truth, to begin to endure what once seemed to them intolerable errors. That some of our late grievous falls may be traced to this cause I know too well. Let us see, then, this

danger. It is not always that which is farthest from Rome which is necessarily true. With us she holds the doctrine of the ever-blessed Trinity, of the Incarnation, of the work of the Holy Ghost, of the inspiration of God's Word, and every other leading Christian verity. He, therefore, who would guard the truth by merely taking that which is most opposite to Rome, would, if he acted with strict logical consistency, become—first a sceptic, because she holds fast the truth of Revelation; then a Socinian, because she receives the Divinity of the co-eternal Son; and finally an Atheist, because she maintains the being of a God. That she held all truth, and well-nigh all corrupted by her additions, was the charge brought against her by our great Reformers: and this is the only safe ground for us to occupy; neither shrinking from any truth because she holds it, nor, because we acknowledge her as a rightly-constituted Church, shutting our eyes to her deep corruptions and intolerable errors; but claiming for ourselves, of God's mercy, more than an equality of Apostolical order, with a restoration of primitive purity of doctrine.

Against this Catholic character of our Church the busy Romish proselyter and the Presbyterians of the North¹ equally inveigh: the last, be-

¹ See *Edinburgh Review*, No. CXCII. Art. VIII. On the Anglo-Catholic Theory.

cause our possession of Apostolic order silently reproaches them for lacking it; the first, because he well knows that if he could indeed refute our claim, he would have removed out of the way the most formidable opponent to his full triumph. The two parties agree in aggravating every irregularity which can be discovered or surmised in the history of our Reformation, and then seeking to draw from them consequences hostile to our claim far greater than can be justified by any law or principle of the Universal Church. Both agree in mis-stating what was done at our Reformation; asserting that we then separated ourselves from the Catholic Church; whilst the Presbyterian goes on to assert that our Church principles imply the necessity of such a perfect visible unity of the whole Church that, to secure it for ourselves, we ought either to seek immediate reunion with Rome, or else to abandon them, and take our humble place amongst the confused multitude of the Sects; and further he asserts that our Church principles contradict those great foundations of the Reformation—the supremacy of God’s Word over tradition, and that absolute rule of conscience which they themselves express by the inaccurate term, the right, but which we should term the duty, of private judgment. These imputations, though levelled against us, assail far more directly our great Reformers. For if the

charge could be established, it would prove that they, in reforming our system, had not really acted on their own principles. But we utterly deny the charge, and oppose to it the open professions of our Church, to which we trust we faithfully adhere. She declares that, being a branch of the one Holy Catholic Church, she never, in thought or act, severed herself from it; but, abiding in it, cast off certain corruptions of faith and practice which were contrary to God's Word and primitive use; that in doing this she asserted the duty of referring to God's Word as the sole ultimate authority for Christian men; and, at the same time, of using all the means given by God for understanding that Word aright. The first and greatest of those means she finds in the sense put upon it by undivided Christendom, and she has, therefore, always acted on that early enactment of the reign of Elizabeth^k which expressed the mind of our Reformers, and which was declared by no one more plainly than by the blessed martyr, John Philpot, in the course of his examination^l,—That "nothing shall be adjudged to be

^k 1 Eliz. cap. i.

^l See the 4th examination of Philpot :—

"*Gloucester.* By whom will you be judged in matters of controversy which happen daily?

"*Philpot.* By the Word of God. For Christ saith in St. John, 'The word that he spake shall be judge in the latter day.'

"*Gloucester.* What if you take the Word one way and I another? who shall be judge then?

heresy but only such as heretofore has been ordered, adjudged, or declared to be so by the authority of the Canonical Scriptures, or by the first four General Councils, or any of them, or by any other General Council, wherein the same was declared heresy by the express and plain words of the Canonical Scriptures.” This duty of “approving all things, and holding fast what is good,” which she affirmed for herself as a body, she vindicates for her members as individual Christians. The great appeal she herself made against the errors prevalent around her to God’s Word, rightly understood, she allows, under the same limitations, to them against her own teaching; declaring that there have been and may be errors in particular churches^m, one of which she claims to be, with an authority to teach, to be set aside only by that higher appeal, proving her to teach what is contrary to God’s Word rightly understood. She never claimed for herself the absolute right of private judgment in the sense of an unfettered licence to draw what inference she pleased from Holy Scripture. She does not teach it to others. She bids them, indeed, appeal always to Scripture as the one unalterable authority which must at last bind the conscience of every man as

“*Philpot.* The Primitive Church.”

And again, in answer to another question, he replies: “I do not think the Catholic Church can err in doctrine.”—*Fox’s Martyrs.*

^m Article XIX.

a reasonable and responsible being, though it led him to oppose every other teacher : but she bids them remember the awfulness of such an appeal ; the weight to be given to all authority ; her own claim to an immediate and visible authority over them ; her agreement with the consent of primitive and united Christendom ; and the fearful risks of waywardness, prejudice, and so eternal condemnation, under which, in prosecuting such an appeal, that awful duty of private judgment must be exercised. There is, therefore, no opposition in her system to the great principles of the Reformation rightly understood. So far from this, the English Reformers did carry fully out their own principles, and were not guilty of the halting inconsistency which this imputation seeks to cast upon them.

Nor is the argument drawn from the alleged necessity of the Church's visible unity a whit more valid. The declaration of the Church of England, remember, is, that she reformed herself from intolerable corruptions, and that for this lawful and blessed work she was cast by Rome out of actual communion with herself and the churches over which that haughty mistress had established her unrighteous power. That whatever schism, therefore, was hereby occasioned, rests as a guilt on Rome, and not upon herself. But whilst she laments the interruption of that full and open communion of the various branches of

the Church amongst themselves which was the blessing of earlier times, and which was lost doubtless by the Church's sin, she has always acted as though that communion, interrupted as it is, were even now not so wholly broken that one or other of these parted branches of the common stock must have ceased to be a part of the one Church. On this principle she acts in that admission of Roman Orders to which I have before referred. And hereby she affirms that whilst there can be between us and them no direct intercourse in sacred offices, so long as their fearful corruptions continue, there is still between herself and them such a real, though interrupted communion as is needful to the essential unity of the Church; and she condemns, as a Popish error, that stern requirement of perfect visible communion with a common earthly centre for the maintenance of essential unity which the Presbyterian imputation seeks to fix upon her principles. Here then, again, no real disagreement can be established between the system of our Reformed Church and the principles of our Reformers. For they could teach, at one and the same time, that unity was a mark of the Visible Church, and that such unity might still exist where it was not perfect.

The Dogma of the Immaculate Conception.

... The dogma is that the Blessed Virgin Mary was herself, by a miraculous interposition of God's providence, conceived without the stain of original sin.

... We object, not only to the introduction of a new dogma, but in particular to this, as, to say the least, having direct tendencies to heresy... For first, if in the course of the divine process for working out our salvation, our fallen nature was pure from spot of sin in any one, before that in the person of Jesus Christ our Lord it was, through the operation of the Holy Ghost, sanctified wholly by the union of His Godhead with it, then is that one, and not He, the first fountain of new life to our corrupted race. This teaching, therefore, points us not to Christ, but to Mary, as the well-head of our restored humanity; and thus does it directly shake the great doctrine of the incarnation, which teaches us that the union of Deity with our nature in His person made that nature uncorrupt, and that He deriveth into us from His person that incorruption which we need. Nor does the Roman communion shrink from this false conclusion; for, in strict accordance with it, she instructs her people to address the Virgin as the

“*principium salutis mundi*,” the beginning and fountain of all benediction°. And then, further, if that nature which He thus took in the womb of His Virgin mother was not that which she, like others, inherited from Adam, but one made by God’s creative power to exist under new conditions of original purity, how can we say that He indeed took from her our very nature? Then was that quarry whence was dug that flesh which He united to His Godhead, not of our fallen, but of a new and different, nature; and then is His perfect brotherhood with us destroyed. To Mary then, again, and not to Him, must we look as having, like ourselves, a mother of the fallen race, and as being THE true link between incorruption and impurity. And yet once more: this last conclusion leads us to another reason why, in God’s Name, we protest against this dogma. For it is not merely accidentally, and by some deduced inference, that it thus endangers our faith in the true incarnation of our Lord, and points our eyes from Him to His mother as the medium between God and us; but this dangerous delusion is a part, and the crowning part, of a whole system which does thus place on the Mediator’s throne the Vir-

ⁿ Novena Conceptionis, fifth day.

^o An Italian *Stellario* for the conception lately authorised at Rome. Both of these are quoted by Dr. Wordsworth in the notes to “Occasional Sermons,” No. 43.

gin mother instead of the incarnate Son. For this is the grand characteristic of the whole Roman system of Mariolatrous imposture. It does confer upon the Virgin Mary the Mediator's office. It does not intentionally raise her to deity, although many of the words it sanctions do express even this amount of blasphemy, and though, in impiously imploring her to command her Son, it in some sort sets her even above deity^p. Still, however the Roman Church may incidentally favour this awful blasphemy, she undoubtedly disclaims it in intention. But she cannot disavow her substitution of the Virgin for her Son, upon the intercessor's seat. The whole system of Rome does make the Virgin mother the special mediator between God and man. It teaches sinners to look to her as more tender, more merciful, more full of pity, more able to sympathise with their infirmities, than is that true High-priest, who is such as "became us," because He is fitted by the perfect holiness, and yet true brotherhood with us, of the nature He assumed, "to have compassion upon the ignorant, and upon them that are out of the way." Amongst all its defacement of the truth of Christ, this is perhaps the plainest and one of the most hideous features of Roman superstition. In this, as in an outward sign, may its corruption

^p "Jure matris impera tuo dilectissimo Filio." Bonaventuræ, canonized in 1482, Opera, tom. vi. p. 466. Moguntia, 1609.

everywhere be traced, from the tawdry shrines of Spain and Italy to the “Mary-temples” of southern India.

Nor is any sign of evil in that communion more remarkable than the festering growth with which, as with some germinating principle of corruption, this false doctrine is instinct. Generation seems to vie with generation in heightening to the very verge of direct blasphemy, the ascriptions of the Saviour’s honour to His merely human mother. Litany succeeds litany in still grosser and more glowing language, until the Church’s noble hymn of praise to the Almighty Father is travestied to exalt her glory, and the *Te Deum Laudamus* becomes a song of praise to Mary. Wherever, moreover, there has seemed of late to be a revival of warmth and earnestness of religious feelings within that communion, this special form of error, like some close-clinging parasite, has enlarged and multiplied its evil growth.

To this new and false dogma then we object, as being the culminating point of this deadly system; and as sure to act back again, with fresh agencies of evil, upon the unhappy body by which it has been promulgated. Already, indeed, we have proof of this new growth of evil, since the decree which establishes the dogma contains words which but a little while ago would in our mouths have been condemned as the grossest calumnies;

for it draws from its promulgator this practical conclusion: "Let all the children of the Catholic Church, most dear to us, hear these our words; and with a more ardent zeal of piety, religion, and love, proceed to worship, invoke, and pray to the most Blessed Virgin Mary, mother of God, conceived without original sin; and let them fly with entire confidence to this most sweet mother of mercy and grace, in all dangers, difficulties, doubts, and fears [¶]."

Lastly, brethren, suffer me to lay before you some of the duties which, as it seems to me, are enforced upon us by this sad spectacle of deep corruption within the Roman Church.

1. The first is that which, however inadequately, I have felt bound to attempt this day to discharge. It is to protest anew against this monstrous effort to corrupt, by man's additions, the revealed truth of God. We may not lawfully accept such new dogmas. On us in our day, as having inherited the pure deposit; on us as witnesses and guardians of the ancient faith; on us as solemnly set to interpret God's Word, as from old it has been interpreted,—the duty is imperative to declare that

[¶] The words in the Latin are—"Audiant hæc nostra verba omnes nobis carissimi Catholicæ Ecclesiæ filii et ardentiori usque pietatis religionis et amoris studio, pergant, colere invocare exorare beatissimam Dei genetricem Virginem Mariam," &c. The translation in the text is here, as elsewhere in this sermon, copied from the Roman Catholic ("Tablet") paper.

this is not what God's Word reveals ; that it is not what apostles taught ; that it is not what the Church has learned ; that it is another Gospel ; and so this day, from the bosom of this ancient University, as the bishop of this Church, set in trust with this guardianship, in God's Name, and with you all as witnesses, I solemnly denounce it.

2. Next, surely it is our duty, with all sadness of soul, to make on behalf of those who have so deeply fallen, our humble intercessions with our long-suffering Lord. For what sight can be sadder? Time was when the ancient Church of Rome was the especial guardian of the common faith. But she was lifted up, and she fell. Her very greatness proved her downfall. The honour, wealth, and greatness of the earth flowed with a strong tide into her, as the Church [of the whole world's metropolis, and she grew proud and earthly, fierce and arrogant in her temper ; priestcraft and superstition ruled her, and the purity of the faith fled far away: and now she has fallen even unto this. Who can read the official announcement,—“The Pope, officiating at St. Peter's, has declared the expected decree. The immaculate conception of the Virgin is declared to be the faith of the Church, and whoever denies it to be a heretic.—Rome is drunken with joy,”—who, I say, remembering how many souls this vast perversion of the truth has slain, by turning them from seeking in their only

Lord the grace, mercy, and peace of which He, and not His mother, is the only fountain for the lost,—who can read the words, "Rome is drunken with joy," and compare them with the awful vision, 'And I saw the woman, whose name was Mystery, drunken with the blood of saints[†],' and not gaze with grief and fear at this sad spectacle of what was once the faithful city, now become an harlot? who would not weep even tears of blood at such a sight? who will not pray that now, even now, it may be granted unto her "to remember how she has received and heard, and to hold fast, and repent, lest the Judge should come upon her as a thief, and she know not the hour when He will come[‡]?"

3. Again, the sight of this evil surely enforces upon us another duty. For the sake of truth and for the love of souls, we, whose rule of faith is God's Word, and whose interpreter of Scripture is true catholic consent, are bound to hold faster than ever to these our real principles. Taught by the example of others, we should guard specially against *our own* dangers. No dread of evil imputations, no infection of the spirit of the day, no undue fears, even of the errors against which we protest, should lead us to shrink in any thing from adhering to our own principles, and so endangering on our side too the precious deposit

[†] Rev. xvii. 6.

[‡] Rev. iii. 3.

of God's ancient truth. Who can say, if only we are kept faithful, what may not be yet in store for us as a nation and Church; or of what inestimable blessing we may be made the channel to the rest of Christendom? Many within the Roman communion are outraged by this new invasion of the truth. Already the warning has been addressed by one of his own sons to the Roman Pontiff:—"If you should command the reception of such a dogma, . . . it will be a new argument . . . that the Bishop of Rome is, like other men, a weak man, prone to sin, obnoxious to error; and that it may happen that he may become a prevaricator in his holy office, and be deceived, and endeavour to deceive^t." In how many hearts may not this same spirit be stirring? May we not hope that God, whose province it is to bring good out of evil, may through the very intenseness of this evil deliver some hitherto captive souls from the chains of error? And may it not be the special mission of our own communion to afford to such the haven which they need? To offer them Evangelical purity with Apostolical order; God's pure Word within Christ's holy Church; and so to be the blessed means at once of drawing them from the errors of superstition, and saving them from the shipwreck of

^t Letters from the Abbé Laborde, of Lectouse, to Pope Pius IX., reprinted in "The Ecclesiastic," No. 23.

unbelief? But for this end it is essential that we maintain, without flinching from reproach or yielding to the whispers of a specious liberality, our own catholic standing-place firmly and unmoved.

4. But we have yet another duty, as we contemplate this fearful spectacle; we have to separate ourselves from its evil. To us sounds forth the voice of warning, "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues"^u ; on us, as of old on the lingering patriarch, the long-suffering angel of wrath lays graciously his hands, hastening us in mercy from the doomed city. For to us there is here indeed, on this side also, a startling warning,—a warning which, when we look along our ranks and see places empty which were once—how nobly!—filled, who dare say that we do not greatly need; lest, tempted by its sweetness or allured by its sparkling promise, we taste one drop of the cup of her enchantments? For undoubtedly there are minds amongst us to which her promises are most alluring. Amidst the strife of opinions wherewith the soul is often torn well-nigh asunder, her voice of assumed authority is heard promising the peace of certainty; amidst the divisions which perplex and weaken us, she claims, and to a superficial glance appears to be,

^u Rev. xviii. 4.

the one only embodiment of Catholic unity. These are her spells; and mighty hearts—oh that the Spirit of the Lord might set them free!—have sunk entranced beneath them. Let no man undervalue their potency or trifle with their might. It is the very character of the cup of the sorceress, that its lightest taste so besots the subtlest intellect and subdues the strongest will, that her victim follows her bidding, lead him whithersoever it may. The only safeguard, therefore, is in the earliest and most instant refusal to drink of the wine of her fornication.

And this which we have seen happen before us should surely enforce this caution upon us. What though the cup of the sorcerer sparkle brightly, and he promise high, yet, if we see crowding in a shameful herd around him the transmuted forms of those whom he has robbed of the reason and the gifts of man, who will taste of his enchantments? And is not a sight all too like to this opened here before our eyes? Have we not seen those who, amongst ourselves, had the sensitive consciences, the manly hearts, the pure love of truth, and the keen insight into its depths, which of God's great mercy our apostolic Church breeds in her true sons; but who have yielded to temptation and harboured discontent with what they had, and who thus have, step by step, been led on to submit themselves to Rome, when once in

her toils, become the most implicit receivers of her uttermost corruptions? And why, if we suffer ourselves to follow them, why should we escape? Surely "in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird;" and is not this spread openly before our eyes: is not the latest end exposed to our gaze in this last act of the Roman Pontiff? Rome may promise us a certainty of belief, and an infallible guide, a rest for our aching spirits amidst weary distractions, and the unity of an unbroken body amidst countless divisions; but here we may see what is the real worth of these high-sounding offers; for first we see her vaunted infallibility and unity broken up and discredited by the manifest presence in her body of discord and contradiction; and next we see, from the beginning, what must be the end. They who cast in their lot with her must take her whole or take her not at all; and here we see her making false doctrine, condemned by God's Word, contradicted by catholic antiquity^x, rejected by all the saints, and resting

^x Hear the judgment on this point of one of their bishops, by no means the least learned of their canonists:—"That the Blessed Virgin," says Melchior Canus, "was entirely free from original sin, is nowhere held in Holy Scriptures, taken in its literal sense; but on the other hand, in them is delivered the general law which includes all the sons of Adam, without any exception. Nor can it be said that this teaching descended to the Church through the tradition of the apostles, since such traditions have come down to us only through those ancient and holy writers who succeeded the apostles. But it is evident that those ancient writers had not

mainly for its credit upon the grossest inventions and most lying legends^y, articles of her creed.

received it from those before them . . . All the Saints who have mentioned this matter have with one mouth asserted that the Virgin Mary was conceived in original sin. This St. Ambrose lays down, this St. Augustine repeatedly ; this St. Chrysostom, this Eusebius Emissenus, this Remigius and Maximus, this Bede and Anselm, affirm ; this St. Bernard and Erhardus, bishop and martyr, with a multitude besides ; this doctrine none of the saints have contravened."—Melchior Canus, *De Sanctorum Auctoritate*, lib. sep., cap. iii. § 4, and cap. i. § 3.

^y The reception of a miraculous writing on the subject was the first justification of their new feast, alleged by the canons of Lyons, and discredited by St. Bernard. The following is another example of this species of authority :—"A French Priest, who was in the custom of singing the hours of the Blessed Virgin Mary, returning from a house where he had committed adultery with another man's wife, entered a boat alone to cross the river Seine,—‘Pelagus Sequanæ ;’ and as he sailed he began to sing the hours ; and when he came to the invocation, ‘Ave Maria,’ and was got into the middle of the water, a great crowd of devils overthrew him, together with his boat, and carried his soul to hell. On the third day, the mother of Jesus came, with a vast company of angels, to the place of his torment, and said to the devils, ‘Why do you torment the soul of my servant thus unjustly?’ They replied, ‘We ought to have him, and rightly, as he was taken in our works. To which she replied, ‘If he is his whose works he was doing, he ought in truth to be mine, as he was saying my matins when you seized him ; so that you are more to blame than he is, in having acted thus unfairly to me.’ On these words the devils dispersed, and fled hither and thither ; and the Blessed Virgin Mary restored his soul to the body, and seizing him by the arm, whom she had saved ‘ab utroque funere,’ she commanded the waters to stand as a wall on the right hand and on the left, and brought him from the depth of the sea to a safe port. He in joy then fell down at her feet and said, ‘O dearest Lady and most beautiful Virgin, thrice grateful to Christ, what shall I give you for the benefits which you have done to me? You have delivered me from the mouth of the

And, from the beginning, we know that to this they must assent at last, who assent to her at all. For the most part, the growth of error is so slow and gradual, it comes forth from truth with such minute degrees of exaggeration, with such severally small measures of deviation, that it is most difficult to fasten upon any one teacher, or even any one school or age, the crime of its evil parentage. But God has suffered us to see the work done openly before our eyes, that we may fly, as from His judgments, from the evil worker.

Let us take the caution. We have faults, evils, deficiencies, God knows, amongst ourselves; we feel them, perhaps groan under them, and would fain cast them out or impatiently fly far from them; and she, veiling from us the grossness of her own evils, invites us with honeyed words of seeming sympathy to fly from them to her. But see in this one instance what is indeed the truth in all. See from the first where you must end,

lions, and my soul from the most grievous torments of hell.' To whom the mother of Jesus replied, 'I entreat you not for the future to fall into your former sin, lest a worse fate overtake you; and I beg you, besides, to celebrate yearly the festival of my conception on the 6th of the Ides of December, and teach it everywhere.' When she had said this, she ascended into heaven in his sight; and he, leading an eremitical life, related what had happened to all who wished to hear it. And afterwards, as long as he lived, he celebrated the feast of the conception solemnly and devoutly, and taught its celebration to all."—*Christian Remembrancer*, No. 76, p. 402.

and remember that no preference for certain things in her communion can ever justify your accepting, in any one the least particular, what you know to be falsehood, as the truth of God. And yet this they must do who take her as their guide. They must come to bear with her trifling with the truth; with her undervaluing of God's Word; with her portentous system of priestcraft, whereby, first, the sacred and inalienable responsibility of conscience is invaded, and then its purity corrupted, and in many instances its very life extinguished; they must endure her substitution of another Mediator for the co-étérnal Son, the Virgin-born; they must receive her new-coined dogmas, and her spurious articles of faith. See, then, all this from the beginning, and when she comes to you with her fairest promises, with all her grossness veiled from you, and she herself transformed into an angel of light, to work your downfall, then, to disenchant your beguiled senses, read and weigh the warning graven by the finger of God upon her forehead, and upon that of every other carnal perverter of the Church's purity: “MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH².”

² Rev. xvii. 5.

APPENDIX.

I.

“ALIEN from that of the sober teaching of the Church of England,” &c.—Such appear to me (1.) the special devotions to our Lord’s wounds, introduced into the works to which I refer. (2.) Language largely allowed in them, describing, under the terms of earthly and sensuous affections, the communion of the soul with God. I will give here some instances of each of these to illustrate my meaning, only saying, first, that this subject is one on which, from its deep awfulness, it is most painful for me to speak in any tone which savours of controversy. For, indeed, it is impossible for us to love too well those marks of Our Lord’s bitter passion, which were stamped upon that Body in which He paid the price of our Redemption. But whether we ought to be so affected is not the matter at issue. It is no question whether, when praying to Our Blessed Lord, we ought not, with the deepest and most reverent affection of our souls, to remember His pierced hands and feet, and riven side, but whether, in the judgment of the English Church, it is, strictly speaking, lawful,—and, even if lawful, whether it is expedient,—to address prayers, not to our Blessed Lord, who is a person and can hear prayer, but to separate parts of His body, which are not persons, as if they were capable of hearing our prayers, and consciously co-operating in the work of our Redemption. Of these latter prayers I know no instance in the formularies of the English Church, and they are most rare, if they are to be found at all, in the writings of any of our great

Divines. They are, that is to say, alien from the temper of the Church of England; whilst, on the other hand, they form a large part of the more ardent devotions of the Church of Rome. Whoever, therefore, seeks systematically to introduce such devotions amongst our own people, must do so from believing: Either (1.) that these devotions are really deeper and more spiritual than those to which we have been accustomed in the Church of England; or, (2.) That it is good, *per se*, to accustom our people to an un-English class of devotions, not more spiritual than our own, merely because they are Roman.

But to proceed to the passages themselves. They are such as these:—"On the second day thou wilt offer homage to the Heart of Jesus lying as an infant in the stable; on the third, to His mouth; on the fourth, to His eyes; on the fifth, to His hands; on the sixth, to His feet; on the seventh, to His flesh^a." And these directions are carried out into such prayers as these:—"O, adorable heart of my Jesus, the only object of all my desires, in which so many mysteries of love have already passed since the Holy Spirit formed Thee of the pure blood of Mary I offer Thee all the most respectful and most loving homage of my heart. Thou art close locked within the bosom of a Babe^b," &c. Again, "Divine and Infant mouth of my Divine Saviour I adore Thee in the womb of Thy Holy Mother, where Thou keepest unbroken silence. O, adorable Mouth, consecrate mine^c," &c. "O infant hands, O sacred hands I adore you, but grant me all the help I need in

^a "Guide to Advent," p. 138.

^b *Ibid.*, p. 153.

^c *Ibid.*, p. 161.

order to assure my Salvation^d." Again, "O precious tears of my Jesus, flow on; . . . reach even to the Heart of the Father of Heaven, that ye may extinguish the fire of His wrath^e." Again, "Hail! wound of the right hand of my crucified Lord^f." "Hail! blessed wound of the left hand^g," &c. "Hail! gracious blood-besprinkled wound of the right foot of my Lord^h." "Hail! venerable wounds all wet with purple blood of the left foot of my Lordⁱ." Hail! most health-bringing wound of the side and heart of my Lord; . . . Wound my heart, I beseech Thee, with the shaft of Thy Love^k."

The second class of expressions to which I allude are such as "our being inebriated by the Blood of the Lord." Such expressions and their repetition, cannot, in my judgment, be justified by a marginal variation in the translation of the Canticles (Cant. vi.); they are, I believe, shocking to the ears of most English Churchmen; because they are not English, but Italian; for whatever examples of the use of such expressions may be found in the early Fathers, they have never been naturalised amongst ourselves. They are not to be found in the pages of our Divines who were the greatest masters of patristic learning; they belong to a character of devotion foreign to that of the English Church, for which hers would be ill-exchanged, even if the change led to no further consequences,—but which is further sure to draw those who have acquired a taste for it, from her to Rome.

And these extend through the fiftieth week, especially of "The Year of the Affections." They appear to me

^d "Guide to Advent," p. 168. ^e Ibid., p. 176. ^f Parad., p. 102.
^g Ibid., p. 103. ^h Ibid. ⁱ Ibid. ^k Ibid., p. 104.

so sensuous, so irreverent, so utterly unlike anything to which I have been taught by the Church of England to aspire in devotion,—so unlike the prayers of Ken, or Kettlewell, or Andrewes, or Taylor,—that it is really painful to me to transcribe them. I will merely mark down a few out of very many, from various parts of this work, in order to make more plain what that is to which I object.

“An excess of wine causes a shameful inebriation So the pious excess of divine love causes to the soul a wise inebriation. . . . The soul, dazzled by a brilliant and insupportable light, now tastes an exquisite sweetness which delights it ; . . . it is, as it were, overwhelmed by an excessive abundance of affections, joys, and caresses ; . . . these deprive it of sense : it knows no more what it says and does ; in a word, it is inebriated¹.” “Bring me, Lord, into this Divine cellar ; inebriate me with the precious wine of Thy love^m.” “Wilt thou have the strong wine of constant . . . love? thou wilt find it abundant in this cellar. . . . Dost thou desire fervent . . . love? thou wilt find this fiery liquor in the cellar of thy Spouseⁿ ;” and so on, page after page, of which I will extract but one more specimen : “To lose the mind, the memory, and the senses,—to say and do extravagant things,—are the monstrous consequences of the inebriation of wine ; but they are also the effects of the inebriation of Divine love ; and when we go forth from the Holy Table of the Spouse, if it is not so with us, *we have failed in our duty, because we have not loved sufficiently*^o.” Surely this is most unlike the tone of truth and soberness which,

¹ “Year of the Affections,” p. 318.

^m Ibid., p. 319.

ⁿ Ibid., p. 320.

^o Ibid., p. 323.

amidst all their bursting exultation of gratitude and love, pervades the Epistles of St. Paul. Nor in my judgment is this objection removed, though the passage proceeds in a different strain. "Yes, Lord, I desire to love Thee, even to the loss of my mind; I mean this human mind, this worldly mind, which is not in accordance with Thine, that I may think and reason only according to the rules of Thy love; I desire to lose, by my inclination, all sense of pleasure, insults, and amusements, that I may feel henceforth only the ardours of Thy charity; I desire to speak only the language of Divine love, and I consent to stammer in all beside: I desire also to undertake, with holy boldness, all that Thy love shall command me, even if I pass for a madman in the eyes of men: happy and wise madness, for it will proceed only from the inclination of Thy love, which is Sovereign Wisdom."

The expressions above quoted may suffice as samples of one kind; but these adapted books contain others, equally, in my judgment, substituting irreverent and sensuous thoughts and words for those of sober earnestness. I allude to such passages as these: "It is at the Holy Table that I perceive in Thee, heavenly Bridegroom, all the tenderness and the sympathy of an affectionate Brother Desire, then, ardently, O my soul, to draw near to this Divine Brother, this adorable Bridegroom; to give Him the chaste kiss of a sister and a spouse, and to stain thy lips with His blood; there, caress tenderly this infant Brother, who abridges His immensity, that He may be contained in the elements^p." "A perfect charity affectionately constrains this Supreme Greatness to descend from the Throne of His Majesty,

^p "Year of the Affections," p. 274.

in order to become familiar with a bride," &c. . . .
 "What Divine caresses, what *reciprocal complacencies*^a,"
 &c. It is my deliberate conviction, that the introduction of such prayers prepares those who use them for secession from our body ; for their use soon generates, where it does not find it, a morbid taste in prayer, which, for the reasons I have stated above, grows to prefer the sensuous mysticism of Rome to the sober tones of our English Church, and so infallibly inclines them to prefer that Unreformed Communion to our own.

II.

"Tone of their own church."—I allude to such passages e. g. as the following translation inserted in the "Paradise of the Christian Soul," § v. p. 123 :—

"Prostrate I adore Thee, Deity, unseen,
 Who Thy glory hidest 'neath these shadows mean ;
 Lo ! to Thee surrendered my whole heart is bowed,
 Tranc'd as it beholds Thee shrined within the cloud :
Sight, and touch, and taste, are all in Thee deceived,
'Tis the hearing only safely is believed."—Parad., § v. p. 123.

I can conceive of no real interpretation of these remarkable lines, except that which involves the Roman fiction of Transubstantiation, which represents the senses of touch, taste, and sight, which deal with the qualities of the transubstantiated bread, as being all deceived, whilst the hearing, excepting the "Hoc est" as above the senses, alone perceives Christ.

I could point to other passages, which appear to me to have the same tendency ; as, for instance, those which speak of Christ as "abridging His immensity that He

^a "Year of the Affections," p. 79.

may be contained in the elements," and the like; but these two may sufficiently illustrate my meaning.

Again, I would point to expressions which speak of the reality and *expiatory* nature of the sacrifice in the Holy Sacrament which are as strange to English formularies as they are familiar to Roman. I will mention only one or two, as types of a class. "Instead of the mysterious cloud—we have the ADORABLE Sacrament^r." How different from this is the language of Bishop Andrewes, who ends the remarkable passage from his controversy with Bellarmine^s, with the distinct assertion, "Et Sacramentum tamen nulli adoramus." Again, "During the august Sacrifice of the Holy Eucharist, in which the *Blood of Christ is shed*—and wherein this same sacrifice wherein the victim is a Saviour and a God *is offered for the remission of our sins* to an all-powerful God;" words which can scarcely convey any idea below that of direct meritorious propitiation.

And now I turn to another set of passages which seem to me to be open to the same objection. There is no error more distinctively characteristic of Rome than the worship, or quasi-worship, of the Virgin Mary. There is none against which the pious editor of these adaptations (as in the preface to the "Paradise of the Christian Soul") has spoken more strongly. Yet I grieve to say that I find in them not a little which seems to me distinctly to encourage the early growth of that error against which, in its full development, he himself so strongly protests. Let me refer, in proof of my words, to the whole of the adaptation of the Medi-

^r "Guide to passing Lent Holily," p. 218.

^s Quoted in pp. 77, 80, of Dr. Pusey's Letter to the Bishop of London.

tation from "Avrillon's Guide to Advent," called "The Day of Purity." "Jesus Christ is the Sun, but His Mother may be called the day breaking[†]." "Think on that ineffable purity." "Verily, how much more than Angelic purity must have been conferred on that body, from which will one day be taken that of Jesus." "The flesh of Mary is to become that of Jesus . . . and the blood which shall be taken from her will be that of Christ . . . What degree then of purity must not have been bestowed on that flesh and blood." "She will be the ark." . . . "From the pure and chaste, and undefiled, and holy Virgin Mary cometh forth Jesus Christ our Lord . . . What purity then must not that flesh have." "Mary is that pure dove. . . . She brings with her that original purity which our first parents had lost." "That He might redeem man with His most precious blood which He hath taken from Mary." "It was fitting that with purity, than which no greater can be conceived short of God Himself, should that Virgin be arrayed." "Entreat of God a portion of that same grace which He bestowed upon the blessed Mary^u." "The Holy Spirit gave *her soul a new capacity for containing larger grace, than all Men and Angels together*^x," &c. "Thou didst redeem her by this same blood, which, before it flowed in Thy veins, did flow in hers^y." "She had *no sins to weep over*^z." "It was her privilege to caress Thee, while *we sinners* consider ourselves too much honoured if Thou suffer us to remain humbly prostrate at Thy infant feet^a." "The adorable flesh of Christ . . . is the work of the Holy Spirit and the chaste production

† "Guide to Advent," p. 50.

^u Ibid., p. 122.

^x Ibid., p. 125.

^y Ibid., p. 224.

^z Ibid.

^a Ibid., p. 225.

of a *Virgin more pure than Angels*^b," &c. "Mary was not as yet the mother of God; she was not so until a little while after these words, *for the Holy Ghost vouchsafed to await her consent ere working within her chaste womb*^c," &c. Considering the way in which this idea is worked out in the "Month of Mary" and "The Glories of Mary," teaching that the salvation of mankind hung upon the will of Mary, this passage seems to me peculiarly objectionable. Such quotations might easily be multiplied. Such expressions, I am bound to say, seem to me wholly unwarranted by God's word; wholly alien from any formulary of the Church of England; certain to prepare the mind, which becomes accustomed to such devotions, for any further exaltation of the Virgin; and by implication involving all the Roman fables of the Immaculate Conception itself in their treating the blood and flesh given by the Lord as having been before so actually and entirely the blood and flesh of the Virgin, as to have been necessarily absolutely holy and perfectly free from all stain of sin in her.

Again, I must notice another class of passages which seem to me directly to contradict the teaching of the English Church as she has rightly drawn it from God's word and primitive antiquity. And these concern not merely one master form of Roman error, like the worship of the Virgin Mary, deeply important as that of course is, but reach to the very root of all things in our justification and acceptance with God.

I will simply quote one or two of these out of many. "Deliver me from the pains which are the due of my

^b "Guide to Lent," p. 360. ^c "Guide to Advent," p 124.
The italics throughout are mine.

sins, whilst I impose voluntary pains upon myself to save Thee the sorrow of punishing me in this world and the next^d." Again, a little lower down: "My sufferings and the penitential exercises which I am about to undertake during this Lent in order to obey Thy laws, to redeem my sins, to appease Thy justice . . . for my salvation^e." "Rejoice then with the saints at being, by these humiliations, a voluntary victim in time to thy sins and to the justice of God, so wilt thou assuredly escape being one day their involuntary victim in eternity." And again: "Good works and acts of penitence [are] the precious coin which enables us to gain acquittance of our debts to God's justice, to satisfy for our sins, to obtain His grace and His love, to redeem from hell, and to purchase heaven^f." "It is absolutely needful that thou make some [atonement—compensation] either in this world or the next^g." . . . "Accept our fasts . . . that they may serve to make amends for our sins, to propitiate Thy justice^h," &c. "We consent . . . to impose on ourselves, moreover, voluntary sufferings to appease Thy justiceⁱ." "That so these fasts . . . needful to us that we may redeem the sins of which we have been guilty . . . may make us pleasing both in body and soul to the eyes of Thy adorable Majesty^k," &c. "It is Thou alone who canst give to our labours and fasts the acceptableness which they need in order to appease Thy wrath, to efface our sins, to draw down upon us Thy mercy, and to obtain eternal life . . .^l" &c. . . . And again: "That we, expiating the sins of which we are guilty by the sharp and voluntary penitence wherewith Thou dost inspire

^d "Guide to Lent," p. 7.

^e Ibid., p. 8.

^f Ibid., p. 13.

^g Ibid., p. 69.

^h Ibid., p. 150.

ⁱ Ibid., p. 214.

^k Ibid., p. 222.

^l Ibid., p. 279.

us, and which Thou in Thy goodness wilt accept as an amends which is due to Thee ^m," &c.

These expressions, I confess, seem to me wholly unwarranted by any authorised language, either of the Church of England or of primitive antiquity, and only really accordant with that branch of the Roman system which deals in "satisfaction," "the celestial treasures of merit" at the Church's disposal, purgatory, and indulgences. For I see no other meaning which can be attached to them, than that whilst our salvation depends on the merit of Christ's death, there remain sufferings which must be borne by us either in this world or the world to come, unless the Church opens for us her treasure-house of supererogatory works; and thus these statements tend, in my judgment, to lead those who fully enter into them to adopt the whole Roman system, whilst they lead more ignorant readers to trust to their own sufferings as expiations for sin; and as that to which, being joined to the sufferings of Christ, they may look for their salvation. And what error can be more fatal than this? What can more certainly endanger the salvation of those who are seduced by it; for what can tend more to draw men from a simple living and saving faith in Christ? I am indeed aware that it is alleged in justification of such expressions that Scriptural warrant may be produced for them, since the expression "break off thy sins by righteousness," (Dan. iv. 27), would be more literally rendered by "*redeem* thy sins by righteousness." But I cannot admit the validity of this plea. For even if the suggested translation be the most literal, I cannot think that the first address of the Jewish Prophet to the heathen king, who must of

^m "Guide to Lent," p. 310.

course have been wholly ignorant of the righteousness of faith, can at all justify such expressions in the mouth of a Christian teacher to those to whom the way of salvation has been clearly revealed.

Again : I cannot but think that expressions are inserted in these works which favour another most important branch of Roman errors ; I mean that which tends, in practice at least, to draw the prayers of Christians away from the one God through the one Mediator between God and man, to Angels and Saints. In this matter the distinction between what is Roman and what is Catholic seems to be, that whilst primitive antiquity, in strict accordance with Holy Scripture, holds that the Church Militant here on earth receives help and succour from God's holy Angels, and, being one Church, that the living are associated in holy fellowship with the Saints departed, and *MAY*, therefore, receive help from their intercession with God ; yet that all worship is so strictly God's prerogative, that neither Saints nor Angels may be addressed as hearing prayer, but that whatever aid is sought from them must be sought in prayer to God. As an exact model of what I mean, I may refer to the Collect of the Church for the Festival of St. Michael and All Angels.

In the Roman Communion, on the other hand, though she retains this collect, addresses to Saints and Angels are common, and have led to that whole system of which the Litanies and prayers to the Virgin Mary are the culminating point of practical error. Now, to take on this head but one passage, the following address to the holy Angels seems to me to be entirely Roman in its tone :—

“ O ye powers of Heaven, ye Cherubim shining with

light, ye Seraphim burning with the most fervent and the purest love, *impart to me both your light and your zeal*, that I may know, that I may love, that I may adoreⁿ," &c.

III.

The Use of the Rosary. It is easy to shew that it is from confounding together those most diverse things—earnest supplications to God poured forth by man's spirit and prescribed repetitions of certain words or phrases, that Rome finds the Rosary of use. One passage from Thomas Aquinas will illustrate this. He says °, "The effect of prayer is threefold. The first indeed common to all actions wrought with charity, which is—to merit. And for this effect it is not necessarily required that attention should be given to the prayer through the whole time [of praying]; but the force of the first intention with which any one draws nigh to prayer renders the whole prayer meritorious, as is the case with other meritorious actions. The second effect of prayer is proper to it, which is—to obtain somewhat: and for this effect also the first intention suffices, to which God principally looks," &c. Now here is the Roman system in its perfection: a man intends to do a meritorious action; with this view he resolves to repeat the Lord's Prayer, or the like, a certain number of times; no matter whether his mind wanders throughout the actual repetition; it is to "the first intention God principally looks." These vain repetitions are "meritorious," and "imperative," in virtue of that first

ⁿ "Guide to Advent," p. 211.

° Summa Theolog. Secunda secundæ, Quæst. 83. Art. xiii. Conclus.

intention. And this view of prayer exactly harmonises with the false system of the Church of Rome as to merit, satisfaction, indulgences, purgatory, &c. It explains the meritorious nature of certain repetitions of *Paters* and *Aves*, when an indulgence has been proclaimed ; and, as the result is attained by the repetition of a certain number of these prayers, it requires some mode of reckoning them up ; and, to supply a convenient machinery for this, it has brought in the rosary. It is easy to see how, in this way, the rosary may be used for this purpose ; but it is difficult to conceive any other in which it can be supposed to assist devotion : the help the rosary really gives, is not the fixing the mind on the object or subjects of prayer, but the enabling it, without any such fixedness, nay, with many wandering thoughts, still to know with accuracy when the due number of mechanical repetitions have been fulfilled.

I will only add to these quotations that the recent writings of the Editor of these adaptations, especially his last published sermon before the University of Oxford, seem to me to intimate so quickened a sense of our present danger from Roman doctrines, that I trust I may, in closing these extracts, express my earnest hope that he will no longer circulate devotions which in my judgment tend so powerfully to favour errors he would oppose, and to prepare the way for secessions which he so deeply mourns ; but that by an open disavowal of such errors he would remove the suspicions which must otherwise attach to his ministry.

IV.

“One of the great evils of the Catholic Church,” says a Roman Catholic, “seems to me to be the erroneous opinion formed by the multitude of the Sacrament of Penitence. As I have elsewhere dwelt on the importance and innumerable benefits of this institution, I have no fear of being misunderstood if I allow myself to point out wherein I think its application at present imperfect. People, in general, consider the declaration of their sins, or confession, as the true and only mode which conducts them to forgiveness; and whatever be the arguments you may use to convince them that a change of life is the first condition of pardon, you cannot uproot the notion they have formed for themselves. Faithful to the orders of his Catechism a man examines his conscience, stirs himself up to contrition and sorrow, and receives absolution. Nothing is wanting, and one hour, or even less, suffices for getting rid of his burden. As to making any resolution for the future, that is the last thing with which he troubles himself. Why should he sin no more? Has he not the intention and the duty of returning to confession? So he does: and a fresh absolution has speedily set all to rights. It is true that each time this is given with increased difficulty, until, at last, some great habitual sin makes it impossible. But what then? There are still many ways to obtain it, even though it be not that last hour at which none refuse it. Thus confessions follow which, far from doing good, cause nothing but destruction. What then is the act of repentance which is accomplished in less than an hour? Does it not pre-suppose a profound ignorance of the nature of the Sacrament? What miserable mate-

rialism ! What is it but to make the obtaining justification or not to depend, not on the state of the soul and its renewal, but solely on the absolution of the priest ! It is to place reconciliation with God on an outward act : it is heathenism.

“ Thus men confess ; life passes ; sin not repressed becomes a fearful power ; and the soul, despite of the sacraments it has received, falls continually lower and lower. These sad realities deserve the Church’s utmost care. Everything which religious teaching has hitherto attempted for its remedy has been found unavailing, and we may believe that an erroneous conception is not altogether its cause. It seems to me that the customary frequency of confession is injurious to the seriousness and reality of the act. So if it was limited to those states of soul for which it is expressly ordered as a duty, then perhaps it would better be seen to be, what it truly is, an entire renewal ; and the sinner would not come to confession merely because custom or his own habits required it, but when a crisis in his spiritual state forced him to it. When we see at certain fixed times saints and sinners regularly throng pell mell to the confessional, we are tempted to believe that the Sacrament of penance is an institution at which men attend periodically to accuse and acquit themselves, and not an act of conversion deciding the whole life. Another circumstance which leads to the view we combat, is the extreme importance attached by some confessors, and especially by the younger clergy, to the minute specification of faults which have been committed. They question with anxiety and a superabundance of details, and what follows from that troublesome mania, but that the people, losing sight of the great end of conversion,

think of nothing but an examination and avowal which seems to them the proper and essential condition of pardon. Is it then so useful, and was it the intention of the Church to make the sacrament of penance an instrument of inquisition, and imprint upon it this odious character? Let him reply whom false theories do not blind, and who can see at work the indiscreet curiosity, the imprudence, the minuteness, and blunders of our modern inquisitors. Let him reply, for he knows their deplorable results."—*L'Etat actuel de l'Eglise; par J. B. Hirscher, Chanoine de la Cathedrale de Freybourg en Brisgau.*

XV.

“THE STRIFE WITH INFIDELITY.”

OUR danger, my reverend brethren, from the spirit of infidelity, threatens the great mass on every side of us. Its strength, indeed, is to be found in the inquiring, busy, self-asserting, self-worshipping, material spirit of the present day. The form, accordingly, which it takes differs widely from that of other times. It is quite unlike the atheistical spirit which haunted the close of the last century, or the deistical scepticism of the school of Hobbes and Chubb. It has little or no direct hostility to a certain form of Christianity. It is willing to receive Christianity as an æsthetic system, having in it many elements of truth; as an elevated form of religious belief and feeling, useful for most minds in a certain stage of their development. The one thing which it resists is authority: it would place every single soul in direct and independent communion with the Creative Spirit, of whose nature he partakes, and to whom alone he is responsible. So far as Christianity promotes this, it is to be encouraged; but it is not, they urge, to be borne that any dogma should be enforced on such seekers after truth

by any external authority as essential to salvation, or in itself necessarily true ; or any medium interposed between their spirits and the Universal Father. In their first stage, therefore, these principles begin commonly by resisting the authority of the Church, as that which meets them most immediately ; they proceed to raise questions as to the inspiration of some parts of Holy Scripture ; they end by denying altogether its authority, and leaving their victim with an entire unbelief as to the objective truth of any spiritual agency beyond those of the one Great Spirit of the universe, and his own soul as an emanation from Him seeking reunion with Him. This progress has been traced out with remarkable power and clearness, in the history of his own religious course, by one of the most sincere and able of his class, in a work which he has denominated "The Phases of Faith," but which might more properly be termed the Phases of Unbelief ; in which he has marked down with the utmost accuracy the logical sequence of every one of his steps, from an ardent love of evangelical truth combined with a denial of all spiritual authority save in the letter of the written Word, down to its close, in a mystical but universal scepticism.

Now it is with this spirit, in unnumbered degrees, forms, and combinations, that we have to struggle ; and I would pray you, therefore, to

notice why this set of errors, like the last, can be successfully resisted amongst ourselves only by a full and faithful maintenance of the teaching and authority of our Church. For this form of unbelief does not attack the doctrine of the being of a God; it does not attack a shadowy undogmatic statement of an atonement, or spiritual influences. It treats these doctrines, not as true in themselves, but as useful for those who, from the weakness of their minds, still need such aids to communion with God. It exalts, and really values, moral principles and spiritual affections. It is not, therefore, directly opposed by a mode of teaching which contents itself with merely enforcing these subjective truths, which belong to the individual spiritual life. What it does deny is precisely that truth which the Church of Christ is embodied to maintain. For this, briefly stated, is, that God having given to man a revelation of Himself, has appointed the Church a living body, constituted by Himself as “the pillar and ground of the truth,” to be its keeper and witness; that the wilful rejection of that revelation by any soul to which it is duly presented, is the rejection of Himself: farther, that with that revelation of Himself, God has been pleased to institute, through His Son, a new mode of access to, and communion with, Himself, for redeemed man; that the first step towards this access is

through the union of each soul with the Church, which is "His body," to be obtained by acts prescribed by God, and done as He has appointed; that in that living body each soul, in virtue of its union with Christ, has new modes of approach to Him, and may have new gifts of His grace through appointed channels; so that if it be true to itself, if it do not resist or quench grace given to it, if under the power and guidance of that grace it believe for itself, and for itself claim union in the Church with its Head, that then, having been regenerate, it will day by day be renewed by spiritual influences given to it in the use of appointed means, until it is ripened for immortality and glory.

This, which is the system of the Church of Christ, is the truth which is denied by the speculative Latitudinarians of the day. For they deny the need or use of all this external machinery for man's salvation; they will go straight to God; they will have no rites or sacraments interposed between their souls and Him. But, in denying all these, what else do they, but, whilst they promise men an unlimited liberty of access to God, rob them of all the special means of approach to Him, and all the peculiar gifts of grace from Him, which are the blessing of the Christian covenant; and thus, under the appearance of securing for them a simpler and more spiritual religion, bring

Christians back from membership with Christ to a state which really possesses far fewer covenanted blessings than that which seems to have belonged to the dispensation of the earliest patriarchs before the calling of Abraham? For they appear to have possessed some appointed means of communion with God, some adumbrations of a mediatorial kingdom, some hints of the coming Mediator; whereas these teachers would have their enlightened followers commune directly, however uncertainly, with the Infinite—each one, in the singleness of his own spiritual being, without the reception of any external dogma, without the need of a mediator, and consequently without the intervention of any appointed media. And what is this but virtually to deny the existence of those peculiar operations of the Holy Spirit on the souls of men, which are the result of the coming of the Comforter, and of His indwelling in the body of Christ, the Church? what is it but to introduce men into a spiritual twilight, which is a miserable exchange for that full sunshine of the Christian Church, in which the glory of the Sun of Righteousness is given back from every act, sign, institution, and sacrament which He has appointed, not to serve instead of Him, or to draw men's eyes from Him, but to lead the eager gaze of all up to Him as the present abiding light of the faithful amongst whom He dwells?

For here, too, the constitution of the Church, when rightly understood, does, in truth, secure for men, by Christ, and through the Holy Spirit, that certain and direct access to God, the vain promise of which, through their own enlightened intellects, is held out by her Latitudinarian opponents as their chiefest gift to those who follow them.

I would speak of this, my reverend brethren, the more plainly, because there are, in my judgment, at the present day, those who (themselves believing, I cannot doubt, indeed in Christ, and loving Him, I trust, truly) are yet, whilst they think themselves to be resisting formality, bigotry, priestcraft, and Popery, unawares helping on the spread of this fatal system, which really denies the gifts of Pentecost, and the indwelling of God's Spirit in the Church, and threatens gradually to gather itself up into the last great form of open and persecuting unbelief.

Such then is, I cannot doubt, the effect of a teaching which declares—and here I quote the words of one who, from his piety, ability, and zeal, has done more than most to leaven with his own principles an ardent band of devoted followers—"the Scripture notion of the Church" to be merely—"that religious society should help a man to become himself better and holier by the aid and example of our fellow Christians, just as civil

society helps us in civilisation^a ;” thus entirely excluding from “the Scripture notion” of the Church all idea of its being dwelt in by the Spirit of God, and so becoming an instrument whereby, through appointed channels, the gifts of the Spirit are ministered to men, for we are “not to derive our salvation through the Church^b,” and which contrasts with this “Scripture notion” as “the Popish view^c ;” “that the Church is a sort of chartered corporation ; and that, by belonging to this corporation, any given individuals acquire such and such privileges ;” and which again, consistently with this view, resolves the Holy Eucharist simply into the fact, that in it “each man pledges himself to Christ and to his brethren upon the symbols of his redemption and sanctification^d,” hereby wholly forgetting that it is a means of grace in the use of which “our souls are strengthened and refreshed by the body and blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the bread and wine^e ;” or that there is given in it any increase of God’s grace or of spiritual union with Christ ;

^a I quote these passages in the words of the late Dr. Arnold (*Dr. Arnold’s Life*, vol. ii. p. 65,) rather than in the exaggerated expressions of some of his living copyists, because I think that the teaching I condemn is seen to the greatest advantage in one who was so able, so free from all low motives, and who manifestly clave for himself with such love and trust to the person of our Lord.

^b *Ibid.*, p. 66.

^c *Ibid.*, p. 66.

^d *Ibid.*, p. 76.

^e Church Catechism.

and again, which, speaking of the Sacraments, denies as a very dangerous error, "that an outward bodily act can have a tendency to remove moral evil^f." For all this is exactly that which they would labour to establish, who, beginning with denying all spiritual life and authority to the Church, and with questioning altogether the inspiration of the Scriptures; and whilst they grope blindly, through the acting of their own intellects, for the spiritual presence of God, deny His promised working through His own appointed instruments. With this system, advocated as it has been, and is, by some, who seem to consider themselves as her only faithful sons, I have ventured to contrast a simple adherence to the teaching of our own Church. For if this be at all her meaning, not I only, but all her greatest and most judicious divines, have altogether missed her sense. Certainly, to make the English Prayer-book speak this language to an ordinary understanding, it must be re-written. For, if this system be the truth of the jealous God, how can she declare the Sacraments of the Church to be "means of grace generally necessary to salvation?" how can she pronounce a belief in the dogma of the creeds needful for every one who willeth to be saved? How can she say in her Ordination Service, "receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of

^f Dr. Arnold's Life, p. 115.

a priest in the Church of God,” if there be with her no indwelling of the Spirit ; if there be therefore no gifts of that Spirit for her to minister ; or if there be, indeed, in the Church of God, no such office for them to receive, or work for them to execute? How can she say, “take thou authority to minister the Sacraments,” if there be no such authority for her to give, or for them to exercise? how commit to them the power of absolving sin, and prescribe the times and terms of its administration, if there be no ministry of absolution endowed with special gifts of God’s power and grace?

Surely every dispassionate mind must see that one and all of these and such like acts and sentences of our Church do presuppose, as a certain truth, that we are under an appointed spiritual economy, in which human instruments and outward acts are made the channels of divine grace : that we are in a spiritual kingdom, which has its appointed officers, through whom God works, doing Himself, for those who seek Him for themselves, by the unseen but certain operations of His blessed Spirit, what His ministers do in His Name according to His will. In short, for I know not how to express the truth more clearly than by inverting the quotations I have already given you—“that the Church is a sort of chartered corporation, and that, by belonging to it, indi-

viduals do acquire spiritual privileges;" "and that outward bodily acts," powerless as they are in themselves, "have" yet, for those who believe in Him, when done by Christ's appointment, and with true faith in Him, a certain because covenanted "tendency," not through any virtue of their own, but through His promised working, "to remove moral evil."

Or, in the words of one of the great lights and most judicious writers of our Church; in the words wherein, almost three centuries ago, Richard Hooker seems to have provided for our present needs, "that saving grace which Christ originally is, or hath, for the general good of His whole Church, by sacraments he severally deriveth into every member thereof. [For] sacraments serve as the instruments of God to that end and purpose; moral instruments, the use whereof is in our hands, the effect in His; for the use, we have His express commandment; for the effect, His conditional promise; so that, without our obedience to the one, there is of the other no apparent assurance; as contrariwise, where the signs and sacraments of His grace are not, either through contempt unreceived, or received with contempt, we are not to doubt but that they really give what they promise, and are what they signify⁸."

With one caution only let me guard my words

⁸ Hooker, Eccl. Polity, lib. v. § 57.

on this subject. It has been often urged that they who use this language set the Church before their flocks instead of Christ, and place an earthly ministry in the room of His one true priesthood. Now, whilst it is untrue to state that this is the necessary consequence of giving in our ministry the fullest prominence to the spiritual character of the Church; yet it is undoubtedly easy, to speak as if there could be another true priesthood besides His, and so to dwell upon the Church and to be silent as to Him, as practically to place her, instead of her Head, before the eyes of men. Against this deadly error then, my reverend brethren, let us ever be on our guard. Let us beware of ever so thinking or speaking of our office, as if we were anything but the mere ministers of His grace; the mere instruments earthly and miserable in ourselves, through whom He is pleased to work. Let us watch diligently, lest any of our people place their possession of Church privileges in the room of that change of heart and renewal of soul in their own individual spiritual being, to effect which these privileges are given, and without which they will at last but lead to their more fatal condemnation. Let us evermore be holding up the cross of Christ, His passion, His death, His person, His righteousness, His indwelling in each separate soul, as the only and sufficient hope of any sinner. Let our teach-

ing concerning His Church never rest in it, or its privileges, or its rites; but ever lead on to Him, witness of Him, declare Him, apply Him in all His offices to every soul. Let us, if God enable us, make every one of our people feel that it is not through a love of any formal system whatsoever, be it the purest, but because we know that God the Holy Ghost works through her appointed ordinances on the souls of penitents and saints, that we would lead them to believe rightly in that great article of their creed—the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

And if such, my reverend brethren, be through God's grace, our course, I have no fears for the issue. The prospect, indeed, before us on many sides, is dark and threatening enough. But when has it been otherwise with the Church? When the Lord raised the curtain which hides her future, what—even whilst He bid her not be troubled—did He reveal to her as her portion but wars and rumours of wars, tribulation, persecution, and The End. But His beloved presence was to support her under all. And have we not His presence amongst us? If not, whence come these stirrings of our Church's heart? whence spring these gracious revivals amidst all our griefs? How is it that our churches multiply—that our services are more frequent—that growing numbers worship in them with growing devotion—that self-denying

works of piety and charity increase—that houses of mercy and homes for penitents are springing up—that our Colonial Church is at last beginning to replenish the earth with a holy seed—that our failing faith is a little stirred up, and our flagging love somewhat revived? From whom are these things, if they are not from our unseen, but ever present, Lord? And if He be with us, who shall be against us? Then, indeed, may we welcome trials, hindrances, yea, and darkness itself; for still, as of old, at that darkest hour, when the wind is contrary—when the strong are waxing weary, toiling in rowing, but still persevering in the work which He hath set them, is He nearest to them. Only let each one of us, in his own appointed place and work, so toil, and trust, and wait; and to each of us, in our single strife most certainly, to all it may be at any hour, he shall manifest Himself, walking by His kingly power upon the swelling waves of this troubled world; and amidst the glad calm which then shall spread itself around His presence, we too, like those of old, shall immediately be at the haven whither we would go.

XVI.

THE APOSTOLICAL EPISCOPATE.

. A MIGHTY crisis had been reached in the setting up of Christ's kingdom; and in the brief record of God's word, we may expect to see some of its deeper powers flashing into light. And so in truth it is. For to those who dwell upon them with a dutiful docility, almost every one of these words conveys some special revelation of the hidden wonders by which we are surrounded. Pause upon them with me, brethren, for a few moments, and let them fill your souls. "Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers;" here are the baptized held in their common fellowship under a visible ministry, whose members, according to their wont, "ministered to the Lord and fasted," when, amidst these human forms and outward instruments, is heard a voice from God the Holy Ghost: "Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." Here at once, as in an instant, we touch the very centre of this world of wonders,—for HE, the Holy Ghost, the Third Person in the adorable Godhead, He is with this company; He speaks from the midst of them as from His accustomed shrine. All the visible appointments of their new

life are full of His mysterious presence ; He has a work for them to do ; He has been preparing these His instruments to do it. We see, then, what is meant in God's Word by "The Church that was at Antioch." It is the company of men who had been baptized into Christ, amongst whom, because they belonged to Christ, dwelt this awful presence : and this transforms all their appointed acts from being mere outward forms into spiritual verities. We can understand why there is such a living power even in the hands of feeble men about the Sacraments of the Gospel, we can see the true binding and loosing which in the world of spirits waits upon the actions of a human ministry. For He the Holy Ghost is in very deed amongst them. We see the danger of resting on the forms which are the instruments of His working, as if they were in themselves anything, and thereby turning them into veils which shut out from our souls the near vision of His presence ; we see the risk of making light of them, since it is through them that He works, and Him whom we reject when we cast them away. We understand that the symbol of our faith combines these two utterances, "I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church ;" to guard us in our daily handling of the outward instruments of the Holy Spirit's working against a deadly formality, or an equally deadly unbelief.

Again, what instruction is there for us in that which is here the particular call of the voice of God. It summons two of that company to a special work: "Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." Manifestly they to whom the command came understood its bidding, for they set at once about an orderly preparation for obedience. It was, then, to some office with which they were already familiar that their brethren were summoned; and in it they were to be placed by human hands. Here is none of the startled confusion, the hovering uncertain readiness to obey, which follows upon the accents of a sudden and unintelligible summons; but an instant acquiescence in an understood direction. What the work was, in what office it was to be wrought, how that office was to be conveyed, were manifestly plain to those who heard the order. That call of God, though it singled out the two by name, was not of itself sufficient. "I have called them," ye must "separate" them. Though all the power is from Me, yet it is by your hands that I will array them with it. They had learned before this that His work was to be wrought by earthly instruments; that He had appointed the apostleship; and even as the first twelve filled up their number, so did they now add these to that company of witnesses of Jesus, of those workmen of the Spirit, through whose feeble hands the world

was to be subdued to their Lord—"and when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away." Oh, marvellous union of man's impotence and the power of the Holy Ghost! He who from his mother's womb had been separated^a for this work; he in whom the Son had been revealed^b; he to whom the Lord had "appeared in the way^c;" he, by the laying on of hands of mere men, is sent forth armed with the power of the Holy Ghost. For we read, "*They* sent them away;" "so they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed^d."

Here, then, we have opened to our eyes the very secret fountain of the mighty power of Christ's apostleship and of the Church's mission. Hands which the Holy One hath filled, must indeed be full of grace. Verily the triumphant song of ancient prophecy is fulfilled before our eyes. The ascended King hath poured out His largess. "Thou hast ascended up on high, Thou hast led captivity captive: Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them^e." "And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ^f."

^a Gal. i. 15.

^b Gal. i. 16.

^c Acts xi. 17.

^d Acts xiii. 3, 4.

^e Ps. lxxviii. 18.

^f Eph. iv. 11, 12.

Further, as we have here the foundation of the office to which these were called, so have we in many respects its peculiar features. For, first, it is a separated office ; parted by the voice of God from all besides itself ; endued by Him with an actual real being ; diverse from the ordinary life even of common saints, and this it has, not of man's appointing but of His ; not because wise men are lovers of order, and because in any mixed society, the pre-eminence of some is essential to the order of all, but because God is present in new measure with the Church of Christ, and is pleased to work through earthly instruments, and so His indwelling severs His ministry from all earthly offices. For, as one says of old, "neither man, nor angel, nor archangel, nor any other created power but He Himself, the Paraclete, hath ordained this calling ^g." And then, besides its separation, here is another feature of its character, that it is a WORK—and how is this evermore stamped upon it, as of its very essence ; "Separate them for the work," and so we read elsewhere. It was the fault of John Mark, that he "went not with them to the work ^h ;" and the Corinthian converts are claimed by St. Paul as his "work in the Lord ⁱ ;" and it is "for the work of the ministry" that the ascended Lord "gave apostles

^g S. Chrysostom De Sacerdotio, lib. iii. ed. Bened., p. 382. B.

^h Acts xv. 38.

ⁱ I Cor. ix. 1.

and evangelists^k;" and it is for "their work's sake" that such should be "very highly esteemed in love^l." And, "he that desireth the office of a bishop, desireth a good work^m;" and the last charge of the aged Apostle to the beloved Timothy was, that he should "do the work of an evangelistⁿ." Yea, and even the details of that work for God which is thus committed to His separated instruments may here be traced. For as the former chapters of the Acts of the Apostles have recorded chiefly the growth under other hands of the Jewish Church, so from this point are they filled with the history of that apostleship of the Gentiles, which here opens on us. For we have this full-furnished minister of Christ first preaching the Word, and sometimes by himself, but oftener by those who ministered beneath him, baptizing converts, and thereby on every side making disciples of Jesus: and when he had thus planted the Church, we find him afterwards confirming and ruling it, and providing for its continuance. So that in the sketch given of his life, most of the distinctive acts of his special function may be found severally mentioned. For in the record of the Acts of the Apostles, we may trace him not only always and everywhere preaching the Word, but also baptizing converts, confirming the baptized^o, ordaining

^k Eph. iv. 11.

^l 1 Thess. v. 13.

^m 1 Tim. iii. 1.

ⁿ 2 Tim. iv. 5.

^o Acts xix. 6.

elders in every city^p, consecrating a bishop^q, giving him directions how to rule the Church of God^r, committing to him power to silence or suspend its teachers^s, holding visitation of the brethren^t, and especially of the clergy^u, delivering ordinances to be kept^x, and by the like authority "setting the rest in order when he came^y," defining in synod^z the Church's doctrine upon doubtful matters, pronouncing the awful censure of the Church upon the evil^a; and again, restoring to its fold the awakened penitent^b; and throughout not only bearing, often with a burdened spirit, in weariness and painfulness that care of all the Churches which came upon him daily, but interceding night and day for his several converts, and with the tenderest sympathy sharing their weakness^c, burning in their offence, feeding them according to their power of bearing food, and seeking by unceasing watchfulness and labour to perfect what was lacking in their faith. This was the work to which the Holy Ghost had called him: this was the work by which, in the power of that same divine Spirit, he was evermore faithfully and truly bearing everywhere his living wit-

^p Acts xiv. 23.
passim.

^q Tit. i. 5.

^r 1 and 2 Tim. and Tit

^s Tit. i. 11. 13; xi. 15.

^t Acts xv. 36.

^u Acts xx. 17, 18, &c.

^x 1 Cor. xi. 2.

^y 1 Cor. xi. 34.

^z Acts xv. 2.

^a 1 Cor. v. 5.

^b 2 Cor. ii. 10.

^c 2 Cor. xi. 29.

ness of the resurrection of the Lord, and that His kingdom was indeed established amongst men. So that here is an ordinary ministry with the additions of the power of rule, the special custody of doctrines, the gifts of confirmation, and the power of ordaining and consecrating; of commissioning, that is to say, those who in the next order of the ministry should discharge their own appointed functions; and imparting his own office to others, who should hand it on even till Christ came again.

Here, then, was the work to which the two were separated, and this was the office in which it was to be fulfilled; and in looking at it, we must notice within itself a most important twofold character. It was, in part, the doing certain acts through which God the Holy Ghost worked: which, therefore, no uncommissioned man could do, and which when rightly done by one commissioned, did not depend for their essential efficacy upon the personal faith of him who wrought them, but upon the present power of Him who had appointed them. This was one part of his work and office: and the other was the devotion of a life, with all its energies of loving, and daring, and suffering, and enduring, to the service of the Lord their Redeemer. Nor, in the work as a whole, could these ever be separated. It was the necessary consequence of the employment of men to minister

to men, that even the very series of official acts, which severally were unaffected by their agent's worthiness, should be evermore interpenetrated, and so weakened or enforced by the life of him who wrought them; whilst in a large part of their work the actual efficiency of the agent depended on the spirit in which he wrought. Thus, though the clear perception of the truth might by revelation be given even to an unfaithful messenger, yet the power of declaring it in love, as from a soul leavened with its healing, purifying, elevating power, depended on his own reception of it. And so throughout their ministry; the unwavering faith, the healthy conscience, the untiring zeal, the tender sympathy, the boldness to dare, the meekness to endure, the joy in sorrow, the clear eye, the calm judgment, which were all needed for God's chosen instruments, were blessed fruits in their own souls, of their first "taking heed to themselves," and then "to the doctrine" which they preached to others. And how do the glimpses which we have of all that passed within the soul of Saul of Tarsus from the day when the lot of God separated him as His peculiar instrument of service, illustrate and enforce this truth! What a mighty grace strove evermore within him! How does the marvellous inner life of his spirit, those wrestlings of his soul, its ardent longings after Christ, its unutterable thirst for holiness, its seraphic love, its exceeding

purity, its deep humiliation, its burning zeal, its more than woman's tenderness, bear, if it were possible, an even plainer witness to his living Lord, than all the vast circumference of his outward labours! How deeply marked upon him are all the lines of the apostolical character! How had the Church's prayers been answered! How had He who said, "Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them," pervaded all the inmost being of His chosen servant with His own transforming influence!

XVII.

THE CHURCH'S TEACHING ON THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

SUFFER me now to lead your thoughts for awhile from these matters, which more especially belong to our own Diocese, to others in which we share the general interests of the Church.

In taking such a survey, we are met at once by a subject of the utmost importance, which just now occupies a large measure of attention, on which, therefore, you may naturally expect me, and on which some of you have privately requested me, to give you my judgment—I mean the teaching of our own Church on the subject of the Holy Eucharist, and our own duties with regard to it. As to the circumstances indeed which have given a present prominence to this matter, or the particulars of the pending controversy, you will well understand my silence. But the doctrine in question, and the mode in which we should treat of it in our instruction to our several parishes, are so important, that no private feelings would justify my passing them over without notice. The teaching of the Church of England, then, as to this great mystery, in strict agreement with the Holy

Scriptures and primitive antiquity, is, I apprehend, simply this. First, that there is a peculiar and supernatural presence of Christ with His people in that Holy Sacrament. That in it He does, in and by the due reception of the consecrated elements, convey to the faithful believer a real partaking of His body and of His blood, whereby the souls of His faithful people are nourished and refreshed. But, secondly, that He has not revealed to us the mode or conditions of that presence; which, being Divine and supernatural, is not to be thought of, or made the subject of argument, as if it either were governed by the laws, or involved the consequences of a material presence. To the many questions, therefore, which may be raised touching the conditions, or mode of this presence, our Church gives no answer; but protests against their discussion as being curious and dangerous; as being likely to lead, and as having led those who entertained them, into many errors; and as, therefore, to be discouraged as attempts to be wise above what is written. As to one of these, indeed, because it specially threatened the faith of her own children, she has pronounced a distinct and emphatic censure; condemning the Papal solution of the mystery in terms which apply to it alike in its grosser form of an undisguised belief in the transformation of the bread and wine into flesh and blood, and in that subtle refinement

of the fancy, whereby—whilst the theory of a material change is still preserved—its grossness is veiled, for more educated intellects, by the declaration, that the substances of the bread and wine, in their highest essential being, are removed, and for them miraculously substituted the essential substance of our Lord's body, whilst the accidents of that altered substance, such as taste, colour, shape, and the like, remain, through God's power, unchanged, so as to delude the senses. This doctrine of Transubstantiation,—the fruitful source, or apt ally, in the Papal communion, of so many and such dangerous superstitions,—our Church condemns in no faltering accents, as being unknown to primitive times, incapable of proof by Holy Writ, and repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, as overthrowing the nature of a sacrament, and having given occasion to many superstitions. But this direct condemnation of the teachers of error is not her common course. Rather, for the most part, has she guarded the faith by a simple denial of the erroneous doctrine, or even by asserting, with authority, the distinct truth, which those who have maintained the error she condemns, have endeavoured to disfigure, or deny. Thus in declaring, that “to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith, partake of that sacrament, the bread which we break, is a partaking of the body of Christ; and likewise the cup of blessing,

is a partaking of the blood of Christ." And again, "that the body and blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper;" and again, that "the wicked do not therein partake of Christ;" and once more, "that the body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner;" she asserts those truths which are darkened by the confusing and erroneous doctrine of consubstantiation, and denied by the cold naturalism of the Zuinglian theory, which resolves the reality of Christ's presence into the quickened apprehension of the devout worshipper; but whilst she has thus authoritatively re-asserted the truths which were in peril, she has not stepped aside to censure by name either the one error or the other.

This, then, being so, we may, I think, without difficulty, gather what should be our teaching as to this great mystery.

We should first, and above all, in opposition to the unbelief which is so natural to the heart of man, insist upon the reality and truth of that supernatural presence which our Lord is graciously pleased to vouchsafe in that Sacrament to the worthy receiver. Next, we should discourage, to the utmost of our power, all speculations as to the mode of that presence, the reality of which we inculcate. Further, whilst we should distinctly

condemn every specific form of erroneous teaching, concerning the mode of that presence, which our Church has actually censured, we should watch against that dogmatical spirit which would lead us to anathematize all with whose statements ours do not exactly harmonize ; remembering the moderation and wisdom which has led our Church to seek to maintain undefiled the purity of the Faith, by an unreserved and uncompromising re-assertion of the truth which heresy assails, rather than by a direct condemnation of the holders of error ; and being on our guard lest we be rashly led, on the mere strength of our individual judgment, to multiply censures which she has advisedly withheld. Lastly, we should labour to lead our people from curious questions as to that which is eminently a mystery, to be received simply by faith, and not argued out by the subtlety of reasoning, to an humble and unquestioning belief in the working of the Power of God, and to earnest longings for the great spiritual blessings, which, if they come aright, will be vouchsafed to them in thus partaking of Christ. And if at any time we are forced to enter further upon this mystery, we should keep as closely as possible to the letter of Scripture, and to the inculcation of the doctrine as a revealed fact in its bearing upon practice ; remembering, what is admitted even by Bellarmine, " that though it is a matter of faith to believe that

Sacraments are instruments whereby God worketh grace in the souls of men, yet that the manner how He doth it, is not a matter of faith^a." Surely, to turn our own minds, or the minds of our people, to such enquiries, instead of seeking simply that nourishment of our souls which the Lord is then imparting to us, is as if they whose bodies He was graciously feeding in the wilderness with the broken bread and the distributed fishes, had turned aside from that provision which He was making for their need, in order to ascertain whether, at the time of blessing, or in the breaking, or the giving, or the receiving, was vouchsafed the multiplication of the loaves and of the fishes ; on which, instead, it was their wisdom and their duty thankfully to feed.

Thus, for example, instead of speculating upon what is received by the unfaithful in the Lord's Supper, or dogmatizing thereon as to what may seem to some to be infallible inferences with regard to a matter on which Holy Scripture is well-nigh silent, and as to which, if the presence be, as we undoubtingly believe it is, indeed immaterial, we have no data for constructing an argument, we should remember that, though our Lord's promise is sure, and though, therefore, where the whole appointed rite is duly performed in all its parts, including equally the consecration of the

^a Quoted by R. Hooker. See Note 22 to *Eccles. Pol.*, V. 6. Edit. Oxford, 1836.

elements, and their faithful reception, the presence of the body and blood of Christ are certain to the faithful receiver, yet that we have no right to stop after the prayer of consecration, or at any other intermediate point in that which by the Lord's appointment is one undivided whole, and to argue that at that time, that Divine Presence must have been granted, which is promised only to the act of duly giving and receiving, and not to any of its several parts. We shall, therefore, do well, as to this mysterious matter, to confine ourselves to asserting with our Church, that the ungodly are, in partaking of the consecrated elements, "in nowise partakers of Christ," and yet, that, in eating that bread and drinking of that cup unworthily, they partake not of common food, but, as our Church teaches again, "to their own condemnation do herein eat and drink the sign or sacrament of so great a thing," as the Body of the Lord, and do that, for the doing of which of old many of the Corinthian Christians were "weak and sickly, yea, and many slept."

Suffer me before I leave this subject to sum up all that I would impress upon you in the words of one, whose devotion, sobriety, and learning, stamp him as a fit exponent of the views and temper of the English Church, and whom all posterity have consented to revere as judicious.

"The fruit of the Eucharist," says Richard Hooker, "is the participation of the body and

blood of Christ. There is no sentence of Holy Scripture which saith that we cannot by this Sacrament be made partakers of His body and blood, except they be first contained in the Sacrament, or the Sacrament converted into them. 'This is My body,' and 'this is My blood,' being words of promise, sith we all agree that by the Sacrament Christ doth really and truly in us perform His promise, why do we vainly trouble ourselves with so fierce contentions, whether by consecration, or else by transubstantiation, the Sacrament itself be first possessed with Christ or no? A thing which no way can either further or hinder us howsoever it stand, because our participation of Christ in this Sacrament dependeth on the co-operation of His omnipotent power, which maketh it His body and blood to us, whether with change or without alteration of the element, such as they imagine, we need not greatly to care nor inquire ^b."

1854.

^b This passage was objected to by the Puritan authors of the *Christian Letter*, 34, as "seeming to make light of the doctrine of Transubstantiation, as a matter not to be stooed upon or to be contended for, cared for or inquired into." Hooker's MS. note shews how far this was from his meaning: "Not," he says, "to be stood upon or contended for *by them*, because it is not a thing necessary; although, because it is false, as long as they do persist to maintain and urge it, there is no man so gross as to think in this case we may neglect it. Against them it is said

WHAT is clearer in God's Word than that, in the blessed Eucharist, to every faithful partaker, the bread which we break is the communion of the body of Christ, the cup of blessing which we bless, the communion of His blood^e? For that His "flesh is meat indeed," and His blood "drink indeed." Or, what can be proved more easily than the reverence and love with which this spiritual presence of Christ was held, as one of its choicest treasures, by the earliest Church? and into what a system of idolatrous impiety,—with its adoration of the wafer, and its masses for the quick and dead, and its notion of the Church's accumulating treasures of disposable merit,—has the added doctrine of transubstantiation, (an addition, which, whilst it seems to exalt, does yet most truly overthrow the very nature of this Sacrament,) practically converted, at least for the multitude, this great gospel ordinance.

Yet here, again, how certain is it that our resistance of the falsehood must be accompanied, as it was accompanied in the teaching of our great

It sufficed to have believed this, (the Communion of Christ in the Holy Sacrament,) and not by determining the manner how God bringeth it to pass to have entangled themselves with opinions so strange, so impossible to be proved true."—Hooker's *Eccles. Pol.*, Book V. Sect., Note 22, Oxford Edit. 1846.

^e 1 Cor. x. 16.

reformers, by a re-assertion of the primitive truth on which it is grafted, if we would resist successfully the twofold danger to which in this contest we are evermore exposed.

For if we falter here,—if, with some of the continental reformers, in our zeal against Roman superstition, we pare down a Gospel mystery,—if, because Rome has invented the fable of a substantial, we fear to assert a verity of a real, partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ by every faithful worshipper in that holy Sacrament,—if we diminish primitive truths because we think *they*, and not man's sin, led before, and may lead again, to superstitious error,—what do we but, first, make ourselves unable to strive successfully against the deceiver into whose hands we thus timidly resign the truth? For surely hereby we give up to her that which is her strength against pious souls. For they, hating, it may be, her frauds and inventions, yet despairing to find elsewhere the great primitive truth for which their spirits thirst, of a real presence of their Lord in His appointed ordinances, do well-nigh violence to their antipathies to what they still feel to be errors, in their overmastering longing to secure what they know to be truth, and so turn to her to give them, what we indeed possess in far greater purity, but of which, in our faithless prudence, we did not dare to speak. And then, secondly, and beyond this, do we not hereby en-

danger altogether the belief of bolder spirits, whom we do not give up to Rome, but whom we teach to eliminate mystery from their religion, and so to sap the very foundations of the faith? Surely it ought not to be in vain that God has set before our eyes the manifest downfall, through these very steps, of that Genevan communion which was fondly conceived by those who fashioned it to be the purest of all Churches, the morning-star of the faith, foreshewing the dawning of that day of true religious life, and freedom, and purity, to which they looked so confidently forward. Here again, then, we may see that only on the great principles of the English Reformers can we strive against papal error at once successfully and safely. What, then, can be more fitting than that here to-day, in this three-hundredth year from the time when, in this University and city, God gave them grace thus wisely and scripturally to maintain His truth, and to witness for it by their deaths, we should with humble thankfulness to Him make mention of their deeds, and strive to follow their examples? O that we could copy more exactly that goodly pattern, and hand on with greater brightness that light which *they* kindled, who with strong faith and ready wills here "played the men" in the last agonies of the stake, and were borne upwards to their rest in the fiery chariots of martyrdom!

And how, brethren, may we hope to do so?

First, by each one learning more entirely to place all his own hope and trust in Him who shed His precious blood for our redemption, and now liveth as our Intercessor and our Head ; by more truly casting ourselves down as helpless sinners at the foot of His Cross, to be saved by Him alone ; by seeking for a stronger personal faith and truer confidence in Him ; by living with Him more constantly in prayer, in obedience, and good works. And then, by fixing in our inmost hearts, through a constant study of His Word, and earnest prayer to Him for teaching and enlightenment, so deep and serious a sense of the inestimable value of the truths for which we strive, and of the greatness of the errors against which we contend,—that we shall cleave closely with our affections as well as our passions to the ancient faith, and reject even with abhorrence the corruptions which obscured it in the middle ages, or the contempt which threatens to slight it now : that we shall be unable, further, to endure either that any rob us by speculative doubt, or gloss, or scoff, of our assurance that in His Church, through His Word, and by His Sacraments, Christ is with us, and the Holy Ghost amongst us ; that we have as our special trust “ that good thing ” which was “ committed ” from the first to the peculiar charge of the undivided Episcopate ; or that we or ours should tamper with one single popish corruption,

indulge in the luscious sentimentality of their spiritual phraseology, or imitate the outward signs through which their inward spirit is displayed: in one word, that, like our faithful martyrs of blessed memory here in Oxford, in all things we cleave close to God's written Word as the infallible record of the faith, to the ancient creeds as its compendious summary, and to primitive practice as its best expositor.

Let this example, brethren, be our safeguard; maintained, through God's help, by a life of secret communion with Him; by a humble sense of our own infirmities and errors; by strong desires for the visible re-union of Christendom in one faith, and service, and love; and so, by labouring for peace as well as truth; above all, by earnest prayer for ourselves, and continual intercession for our brethren, that we and they may be led into all truth, and brought nearer to each other, by being brought evermore nearer to Christ our Head.

XVIII.

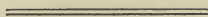
RECENT OUTCRIES AGAINST PREACHING, AND HOW TO MEET THEM.

ARE our sermons what they ought to be, or what real labour and prayer on our part might make them? Are we not too much in the habit of thinking of preaching as if it were that which all educated men could do competently, without any peculiar training or education of their faculties for that special purpose? Now I am by no means disposed to give an indiscriminate assent to the truth of the popular outcry against our sermons, which has of late reached the ears of all of us; but still, are they not, with many excellencies, too often deficient in precisely those qualities which are necessary to make them really effective with our people? For is not their general cast that of essays or disquisitions; their merit, soundness, moderation, perhaps exactness? And is not their fault—that really unpardonable fault with all listeners of every class, and specially with our class of listeners—that of dulness? And is not what we want to reach our people a style of composition the exact opposite of this; one which intellectually is terse, pointed, dealing in short sentences; using Saxon words, as close to every-

day life as it can be, without being profane or vulgar, in its subjects, applications, illustrations, and assertions? Should it not be rough enough to make itself felt through the dull skin of indolence and inattention? Should it not startle the careless, and positively jog the drowsy man ere his sleep is sound? Should it not be pathetic? for who more need, or more answer, than our common hearers to what reaches them through the affections? Should it not through illustrations convey truths which the unlearned never receive through argument? Should it not avoid the easy uniformity of a man applying a nostrum, and with the living earnestness of one who believes that he has all-important truths to convey, declare the curse of sin, and the blessed remedy provided for it in the sacrifice and offering of our Lord, and in the working of God the Holy Ghost? Should it not dwell upon and proclaim Christ on His Cross, Christ in His work of love, Christ in His Word, Christ in His Church, Christ in His Sacraments, Christ crucified, Christ risen, Christ mediating, Christ saving? And should it not impress these with all the variety, and fire, and love which belong, not to a mouth full of phrases, but to a heart, and mind, and soul full of their subject, and that subject eternal death or eternal life, man's loss or man's salvation, and the love of Christ, and the working of the Eternal Spirit, and the blessedness

of the Church of the redeemed? And should not all this be delivered as if we were in earnest, because we are in earnest? I must leave it to you to determine for yourselves whether you can best speak thus for Christ from or without a manuscript. I believe that the best course, generally, is to preach once each Sunday a written and once an unwritten sermon. But when I say an unwritten sermon, I by no means mean one which has been committed to memory, nor, on the other hand, one which is the mere pouring off of the first frothy surface of our minds; but one which, though the fresh utterance of the moment, is the product of thought, and study, and prayer. For the written sermon secures exactness and variety, and the unwritten the habit of speaking to our people from the heart to the heart, instead of reading compositions in their presence.

It would help us, I think, to gain this mode of preaching, if we remembered more constantly, that, especially for the mass of our illiterate hearers, preaching commonly is and must be the great instrument of converting souls to God; and that it is only, for the most part, through this, that the dull monotony of a life of worldliness is ever broken in upon in their case by that stirring of the spiritual affections which belongs of God's mercy to devotional addresses.



I BESEECH you, my brethren, sharers with me of the great responsibilities of the Christian ministry, to labour yet more abundantly in the great work of preaching Christ's Gospel to the flock. And here I allude not so much to the frequency of your sermons, as to the diligence, labour, and prayer that you should give to their preparation. Accounts have reached me from some parts of the diocese, which make me fear that in their honest and necessary efforts to escape from the dull routine which so often freezes up the ministry of the mere reader of written essays to his flock, some of you are in danger of falling into an opposite error; of entering the pulpit with too little preparation, and uttering from it, sometimes with a perilous facility of language, empty, vapid, and pointless generalities. The spread amongst us of such a style of preaching would be indeed a deadly wound to our usefulness, and I warn you earnestly against the snare. Let us not suppose it possible that we can please God or promote His glory by offering to Him that which has cost us nothing. More I will not say here upon the subject, because I have discussed it at length in the volume of "Addresses on the Ordination Service" which I have this year published.

YOU must live near to God, if you would know Him so as to be able to declare Him, and you can only thus live near to Him by loving Him; and love, which opens the blind eyes so that they see Him, is His gift; it is love which places you in "the cleft of the rock" as He passes by: "He that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God, for God is love." Yes, ever remember it, love is His gift, His gift to those who wait on Him. Without it everything else is vain; and it can from its own treasures supply everything beside which you may need.

For the love of God will make you indeed know Him for yourself; and it will make you love your brother, and so know him too, for love is ready-eyed and most sharp-sighted. The loving soul will see what his brother needs, and be able to supply it; for love is quick and true in applying remedies, and has that master power which must dwell in every healer, that it draws the sufferer to itself, instead of driving him away. There is a tenderness in love which makes its touch so light that even the most deeply wounded will bear its handling: there is a reality about it which makes it go straight to the true point. And this will make all our ministry, and especially our sermons, effective. Instead of the dry, wandering, unreal generalities, the fine writing, or the unmeaning repetition of phrases which make so many sermons so absolutely intolerable, they will be felt by those

who hear them to be indeed living voices, voices about God, voices about themselves; as good news from the far land; as the message the weary soul wants. They will have abundantly that strength and blessing which the living words of men otherwise, perhaps, somewhat unfurnished, but whose souls have been full of love to Christ, have been ever found to have, piercing through the crust of carelessness and sin, and reaching home, as the very power of God, to the drowsy or the stricken conscience.

I press this the more because no one can listen carefully to the majority of sermons preached in our churches; few, alas, can closely scrutinize their own, without deep sorrow, shame, and dejection of heart. We could not, indeed, hope to make all the members of so numerous a body as the English clergy orators. But then, it is not oratory that we want. We want the plain, earnest, real, practical addresses of men who, having found Christ for themselves, long, like St. Andrew of old, to lead their brother to Him. We want men to speak closely and really of sin and of salvation, of heaven and hell, of corruption and of Christ. And how little do the ordinary run of sermons fulfil these requirements! How many sermons seem to be composed with no better idea than that they must occupy a certain time prescribed by custom, and that they must be filled with the religious phrases current in this or that

school of theological opinion! Hence we find in them prefaces of inordinate length, porches larger than the buildings to which they lead; truisms repeated with a calm perseverance of dull repetition which is almost marvellous; vague generalities about the fall and about redemption, as if these awful mysteries were empty words, and not living, burning verities. We hear, perhaps, one sermon wandering languidly over the whole scheme of theology, containing in itself a prophecy of its perpetual repetition, with an altered text, and sentences interchanged in collocation, through all succeeding Sundays; we find the faintest and most general description of sinners, such as can reach no one in particular; mere outlines of men in the abstract, not portraits of individual men, amongst which each hearer shall find himself; empty general exhortations not to sin, not revelations of sin in itself, or sin in its deceitful working; cold, heartless, unreal words about Christ the Healer, not the earnest, plain-spoken zeal of one to whom, because he believes, "Christ is precious." And, my brethren, can we wonder if, under such preaching, men slumber on unawakened; if conversions are few, if edification is scanty, if sinners abound, if saints are rare, if, though the prophet prophesy, all be still as it was of old; if there be no noise, nor shaking, nor coming together of the bones, bone to his bone?

To such a dead, condemning ministry I earnestly pray God, even our Father, for His dear Son's sake, that none of you may at this time be sent forth. May He open your mouths, may He give you utterance, may He make you to "speak boldly as ye ought to speak," the mysteries of Christ's eternal Gospel.

Such messengers, once more let me remind you, you cannot be, whatever other fitness may be yours, unless your own hearts are indeed the subjects of His grace; unless in them be shed abroad the love of God, which shall surely breed within them the love of your neighbour also. For this only can make your ministry as it should be,—searching, close, nay, even startling; and yet at the same time felt to be indeed the voice of the most real, loving sympathy with every grieved spirit. This will indeed enable you to lift up the cross of Christ; this will make you feel the importance, in every sermon you preach, of having some one fixed and definite purpose, some great Gospel truth you mean to inculcate, some gracious promise you desire to unfold; some sin you mean to expose, some definite declaration of Christ and His redemption, some special need in the flock committed to you; and such sermons cannot be unmeaning.

THERE is one topic more on which, from its importance, as always, so now as it seems to me, especially, I would wish to address to you a few parting words. The subject on which I would speak is that great duty of our high office, the preaching of the Word of God. This must at all times be a most important part of our ministry, but it is, if possible, at this time of even peculiar importance. First, because the unsettlement of the minds of many as to religious truth requires that we be most fully furnished with all which is needful for expounding and justifying to them the ways and works of God; and next, because in an age of such general intellectual activity as the present much is sure to be required from us, and if we disappoint these requirements we shall lose our hold on the attention of our flock, and bring reproach on the ministry.

For if whilst the leading article of almost every newspaper is written with care, intellectual exertion, and so as to rouse the reader's attention, the utterances of the pulpit alone are dull, monotonous, and droning, it will soon be powerless and despised; and so one of the very chiefest instruments which God has provided for the saving of souls will, through our carelessness, lose its efficiency.

It is but a few plain suggestions I would offer, especially to my younger brethren in the ministry,

to help them to succeed in the discharge of this great duty. And first I would say, settle thoroughly in your minds the greatness of what you have to do. Never mount the pulpit without having your whole spirit awed by this thought. You are to speak for God to men. Your words, through His grace, are to bring them to Him. Many of them are altogether afar from Him; some are wandering further from Him; some are reaching ignorantly after Him; all need to be stirred up to seek after Him more earnestly. You have to bring them back; to lead them on; to direct their uncertainty; to arouse them in their dull distance from Him. Their eternal destinies hang in great measure on your words. For a space they will think your thoughts; yield their minds to be swayed, bowed, directed, elevated by you. What grander, what more awful vocation can a man have than so to speak to his fellow-men? This then, first. And from it follows all that I desire to say. For if preaching be this great opportunity of honouring God and blessing man, certainly we should prepare ourselves thoroughly for it. What reasonable being would go unprepared to such a task?

What, then, must be the preparation for this work? It must be both habitual and immediate. It must be habitual, that previous study may make our minds full of their subjects, without

which we soon degenerate into narrow, technical, and frigid statements of the noblest truths; and again, that we may be accurate in our statements of truth. It is God's truth which affects souls, and if we state it inaccurately we make it powerless or poisonous. What physician of the body would dare to administer carelessly the most powerful drugs of his art? It is not possible, I believe, for me to say too strongly to you, that loose, inaccurate declarations of God's truth do make preachers of the Word unawares the slayers of souls. We must, then, be thorough students to be preachers. We should use all means to be deeper and more successful students of the mysteries of God. For this end, besides our private studies, we may well have recourse to frequent meetings with our brethren for the direct examination of the Word of God. Shall politicians have their conferences, and men of science their consultations, and we alone neglect what may, as iron sharpens iron, give some point to our words, or stir the flagging zeal of our spirits in the blessed search for truth?

Further, to this habitual we should add immediate preparation: chiefly and above all that of prayer, that we may be taught by the great Teacher; that our words may be His words, and that in speaking them we may be His instruments—calm and yet earnest, reverend and yet lively,

deeply serious and yet homely and expressive ; that we may be what is above all else except being true, that we may be holy, loving, and devout in all our utterances.

But though prayer be the chiefest part of immediate preparation, it is far from being all. We must, if we are sincere, add to it patient labour, to secure for our discourses depth, solidity, and order. It is, I believe, mainly idleness which ruins sermons, which makes them vague, confused, powerless, and dull. We need ever to remember the somewhat caustic words, "The sermon which has cost little is worth just what it cost." We must labour first to comprehend our subject, and next to arrange clearly what we mean to say about it. Many of our flock are idle hearers, and if we are idle preachers we play up to their weakness. There is great force in another old saying, "The sermon which has cost the preacher little to compose costs the listener much to hear." Commonplaces, generalities, recapitulations fill it full, whilst over all is shed the blinding cloud of a meaningless confusion. We must resolve and patiently strive to be easily understood, for which end we must understand ourselves, and then leave no confusions to mislead others.

Thus prepared, we must be careful, further, what we speak. It is to be the Word of God—the word of His grace. His messages of love, not

curious speculations, not displays of our talent ; but His Word in its piercing, soul-dividing simplicity. His Word in the completeness of His message to man whom He has redeemed. Heaven and hell ; death and judgment ; sin and salvation ; the love of God—of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ; the incarnation of the eternal Son, with all its consequences ; His life for us and in us ; His death ; His resurrection ; His atonement ; the remission of sins ; the indwelling of the Holy one ; the Sacraments of His grace ; the communion of His faithful ones ; the new life in its beginning, its struggles, its victory, and its glory. Here are our subjects. Old and yet ever new to him who, loving God and loving souls, will labour to comprehend, to feel, and to state them. For to enforce these old and cardinal verities is our very vocation, “ non debemus dicere nova sed nove.”

To secure this, I should as a general rule say, never preach habitually the sermons of others, whether taken in mass or in fragments, mechanically re-arranged into a composite whole. This is commonly the resource of vanity or of idleness, weaknesses which in holy things deepen into sins, and drive away the influences of the Holy Spirit. Nothing short of incapacity can excuse this as an habitual practice, and then its use and its cause should be avowed with a humble shame-

facedness which will preach for the unfurnished man.

Widely different from this adoption of others' sermons, is the practice of reading some full discourses on a subject on which you are about to preach, in order to fill or to arouse your own mind, and then composing for yourself when you have made the thoughts your own. This is often a most useful course.

Suffer me to recapitulate in the form of a few direct counsels what on this great subject I have gathered from experience or the writings of others.

To secure thought and preparation, begin, whenever it is possible, the next Sunday's sermon at least on the preceding Monday. Let prayer for God's help be the beginning. Then select carefully your subject—if possible, from the Gospel, Epistles, Lessons, or Psalms of the day. Choose it according to your people's need, and your power. Let it be as much as possible resolvable into a single proposition. Having chosen it, meditate upon it as deeply as you can. Consider, first, how to state correctly the theological formula which it involves; then, how to arrange its parts so as to convince the hearer's understanding. Think, next, how you can move his affections, and so win his will to accept it. See into what practical conclusions of holy living you can sum it up. Having thus the whole before you, you

may proceed to its actual composition. And in doing this, if any thoughts strike you with peculiar power, secure them at once. Do not wait till, having written or composed all the rest, you come in order to them: such burning thoughts burn out. Fix them whilst you can. I would say, never, if you can help it, compose except with a fervent spirit; whatever is languidly composed is lifelessly received. Rather stop and try whether reading, meditation, and prayer will not quicken the spirit, than drive on heavily when the chariot-wheels are taken off. So the mighty masters of our art have done. Bossuet never set himself to compose his great sermons without first reading chapters of Isaiah and portions of Gregory Nazianzen, to kindle his own spirit. In some such way set yourself to compose, and, until you have preached for many years I would say, to write, at least one sermon weekly. Study with especial care all statements of doctrine; to be clear, particular, and accurate. Do not labour too much to give great ornament or polish to your sermons. They often lose their strength in such refining processes. Having written them, if you *must* deliver them with the manuscript before you, strive to do it as little as if you were reading, as much as if you were speaking them as possible. Do not be the slave of your manuscript, but make it your servant. If you see that a word is not

understood, vary it; that an appeal is reaching some heart, press it home. If you have the gift, after having written your sermon carefully, make short notes of it, and preach from these. This will help you greatly to shew in your manner that you feel what you say; the first and chiefest rule for making it felt by others.

But after all other words are spoken let me say, my reverend brethren, for this and all other parts of our work we must live as God's witnesses, if as His witnesses we would speak. For above all other things, we must be real. The affectation of feeling in any part of our ministry, and especially in the pulpit, is most chilling and hardening. And we cannot really feel the Gospel message unless its truth is in our own hearts. In secret meditation and prayer that love, which is the life of ministerial power, must evermore be nourished, as on the mossy mountain-top where the seething mists distil their precious burden are fed the hidden springheads of the perennial stream which fertilizes the lower vale. In these, my reverend brethren, and in the works of patient love and labour which spring from them, may our lives be spent, until, in the time which He knoweth, we too be one by one gathered into the Paradise of His perfected. Whither may God of His mercy, for Christ's sake, in His own good time bring every one of us.

XIX.

RESULTS OF MINISTERIAL INDISCRETIONS.

SEEK to hold the truth in love. Love alone can apprehend God's secret revelations; love alone can deal wisely, firmly, and yet without needless provocation, with your brethren. If you do love God truly, you will enter, as others cannot, into all the depths of His teaching. If you love your people truly, you will be as none others can be, firm, and clear, and unflinching in maintaining truth in doctrine and in discipline, and yet for Christ's sake will yield everything but truth to keep their love to you. This will save you from what is, alas! a very common danger. You will not mistake a quarrelsome temper for a courageous spirit; nor self-assertion for the love of Christ's truth. You will be tender towards all men, not taking offence, nor giving offence, but affectionately desiring to impart truth to others, not to maintain your own position.

How many a ministry would such a temper have saved from failure and reproach! Lacking it, and the humility which it breeds, a young man goes with ardent earnestness into a parish; finds its tone as to doctrine low, and its manners as to

discipline relaxed ; finds, it may be, its most religious men, through past insufficiency of teaching, little awake to the special truths of our holy Church ; and then, instead of seeking to win them to higher views by prayers for them, by a holy life amongst them, by building further attainments on their present religious knowledge, by gradually, in the loving and unsuspected influence of holy intercourse, raising the standard of truth in those who can endure its being raised, and then by acting through them on others—instead of this patient and humble course, he begins at once to assail the prejudices of all around him ; speaks as if he was the bearer to them of another Gospel ; alienates them wholly from his ministry, and even from the truths which he is with so little humility, and therefore with so little wisdom, endeavouring to instil ; and leaves behind him, when he goes, an angry, alarmed, disordered parish, the troubled waters of which may not lose for years the muddy turbulence which his unhappy vehemence has stirred into such fierce commotion.

XX.

MODES OF DEALING WITH THE STRANGE DOCTRINES OF THE SECTS.

OUR people ought to be so trained as to refuse to listen to the first whispered falsehood, and it is this training which the Church has provided for them. This is the meaning of that wise forethought which has appointed festivals for keeping ever in remembrance those leading events and acts of our blessed Master's life, out of which all the great truths of our Creed naturally unfold themselves. This is, again, the wisdom of providing for the common use of those various Canticles in which are stored the record even of the abstruser and more difficult articles of the faith : so that truths from which, in the naked severity of a dogmatic statement, the minds of unlearned men would shrink as harassing and perplexing, may make their way into their minds, and become familiar and established inmates, through the words of some well-known chant or accustomed hymn of praise. And if we would have our people strong in the faith, our ministry must bear this stamp ; following the Church's teaching, we must endeavour to build them up thoroughly

in all truth, not wearying and perplexing them needlessly with the names, dates, and narratives of past heresies ; but establishing them in all the contrary truths to what have been, and so, it must be feared may again be, prevalent errors. This work must be done in our sermons, in our visitation of our people, in our catechizing, and in our schools. Especially must we labour to work into the very texture of their souls those master truths, —the personality of the all-holy, all-mighty God ; —the mystery of the ever-blessed Trinity ;—the fall of man, and his corruption ;—the misery and defilement wrought in him by sin ;—the eternal counsels of the Father’s love in the Gospel scheme of salvation ;—the Incarnation of the ever-blessed Son our Lord, His perfect life, His spotless death, His all-sufficient atonement ;—the gift of the Holy Ghost ; the calling and grace of the Church ;—the presence of Christ in the Sacraments ;—the need of individual renewal unto holiness ; judgment and salvation, heaven and hell ;—of all of these we must labour to work a right knowledge into the souls of all committed to us, as the guards against and the antidotes for the various evils by which they will be assaulted.

But, again, another point of great moment in the “driving away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God’s Word,” is that we should understand wherein lies their strength and attrac-

tiveness ; for these will, in their essence, be ever found to be closely connected with some truth. The accidents of error are, indeed, often of themselves welcome to fallen men, as its lascivious rites have often recommended idolatry to an evil generation ; yet no falsehood, simply as a falsehood, has ever, or as far as we can see ever can, exercise any wide or deep sway over the minds of men. It is as a perverted truth that it has its great power. And in this the subtlety of Satan may oftentimes be very specially seen ; for he well knows how thus to wrap up in falsehood the truth which at the time the accidents or circumstances of an age or people require. In such a case pre-eminently, as indeed more or less in all cases, the only effectual hindrance to the spread of the false teaching is for the Church fearlessly to supply that very truth of which this current error is the perverted image. But this course requires a strong faith and a clear single-minded uprightness. It is far more easy, instead of fully stating the truth which is allied to the error, to put it for the time out of sight, as if at that moment it was dangerous to dwell on it ; and then to bring forth, as all important, the truth which is the direct contrary of the error which has been mingled with the perverted truth, whilst we inveigh loudly against it, and dart our thunderbolts against its maintainers. But this, though the easier, is not really the true,

and will not be the successful, way of putting down the error. For it is, after all, the disguised, altered, disfigured truth which gives the lie its power : and if it be thus opposed, it can hardly fail but that one or other of these evil consequences will follow,—either in driving out the error we shall lose the truth around which it was encrusted, and then the Church will be hurried from one extreme of danger to the other,—too common an event in the history of doctrinal opinion ; or, which happens still more frequently, we shall altogether fail in driving away the evil. For whilst we merely inveigh against the lie, even those who join us in condemning it feel that there is something in this false teaching besides that lie which they hate ; and as we do not shew them what that is, they give the falsehood the benefit of this secret feeling, and so do not utterly condemn it ; whilst those who have been seduced by it, having a true consciousness that there is something which our censures do not at all reach, set down all the condemnation as unjust, and through our unskilfulness hug more closely the deadly deceit. The history of all great heresies which have overspread the Church, and the history, on the smaller scale, of most successful parochial dissensions, are alike illustrations of this truth ; the vibrations of heresy for the first four hundred years after Christ, which are summed up with so mas-

terly a hand by Hooker^a, exhibit the first danger ; and for the second, almost any parish in which dissent has a powerful hold might be quoted as an example.

Every age, indeed, repeats the same lesson. Thus, for example, what truths can we name of greater importance than such as these,—that no man can enter into life unless the Spirit of God has indeed changed and renewed his own individual spiritual being ; that to know God as a reconciled Father, who, in Christ, has put away our sins, and enabled us to walk as dear children before Him, is the blessed privilege of His faithful people here ; that as the correlative of having a conscience, we are each one charged with and must exercise the awful right of private judgment ; and again, that in the Church of the redeemed are gifts of living grace free and common to all even without the direct aid of any earthly minister ; and yet that in it, too, is a ministry of absolution and guidance and consolation, to be received faithfully at the hand of Christ's appointed officer by every penitent :—what more important truths, I say, can we name than these ? Yet it has been from the careless handling of these necessary truths, giving occasion to the kindred false teaching which naturally encrusts itself upon each of them respectively, that the

^a Eccles. Pol., lib. v. cap. 52.

errors of the Antipædobaptist, the Methodist, the Latitudinarian, and the Romanist, have severally taken root in the Gospel field; and in no way can these be met successfully but by declaring fearlessly these very truths, which have been perverted, and shewing to our people that the truths themselves, and all the blessings which are to be obtained by believing them, can only be firmly held, and enjoyed in all their fulness, in the fellowship and teaching of the Church. It is not by withholding such truths, and inveighing against the erroneous exhibition of them, that we shall reclaim wanderers; the eagerness with which they are embraced shews the acute sense which the thirsty spirits of men entertain of their necessity. It is only by freely, openly, joyfully proclaiming in its simplicity the truth which the false teacher mutilates that we can shake his dominion over our people's minds. There is hardly any rule of greater moment for delivering our people from error than this,—see what the truth is wherein lies the strength of the misleading teaching, and in the strength of that truth oppose the system which is strong by its abuse.

But there is one other rule, without which, my brethren, all will be in vain. We must resist error in a spirit of love. Here, after all, is the secret power of the wise reprovcr. There is nothing which love cannot say without offence, nay, with a most winning persuasiveness. "Faithful are the

wounds of a friend^b." Well was it answered by one holy man to whom it was remarked, "I cannot think why your people bear such plain speaking:" "It is because they know I love them." But it must be a true love of which this is the fruit. It is not the addressing them with epithets of endearment and words of tenderness which will secure it for us; it must be a deep inward love of souls, learned beneath the Cross of Christ; it should manifest itself rather in the actions of a loving life than in ready and apparent demonstrations, and when it is real it will lead to the self-denying abandonment of ease, favourite pursuits, and of pleasant company, that in the morning, and at noon-day, and at eventide, whenever we can best reach them, we may be with the sick and with the whole, "weeping with them that weep, and rejoicing with them that rejoice;" teaching the young, and comforting the mourners, and recalling the wanderers, and building up the weak. Such love as this will impart to the loving pastor a character which all can understand, and which, in the long run, few can resist. The humility and sympathy which are true love's accustomed handmaids, give grace and ornament to all its words; diligence is its offspring; public and private monitions and exhortations, both to the sick and to the whole, are its certain fruits.

^b Prov. xxvii. 6.

XXI.

USE AND MISUSE OF CONFESSION.

NOW as to this important subject it is plain, first, that our Church never designed that the ministers of God's Word and Sacraments should abdicate that which is amongst the most important functions of their office, the dealing as ministers of God with the consciences of men. Yet, on the other hand, it is equally clear that there is a broad distinction between her intention herein and that of the Church of Rome. Can, then, this difference be referred to any guiding principle of action? It seems to me that it may, and that we may find the difference here. The object of the Roman Communion and of our own is widely different, and this difference at once affects our several practice. The object of the Roman Church is to bring the conscience under the power of the priest, to make him the judge to whose sentence it should absolutely defer. The object of our own Church is so to awaken, enlighten, and strengthen the conscience, that with the aid of Holy Scripture and the ordinary public ministrations of God's Word, it may rightly guide the individual soul.

With these different objects in view, there is between the two systems far more than a mere difference in degree. Every part of the priest's private ministrations with consciences is affected by it. The one is always seeking to subdue, the other to emancipate, the individual conscience. And this difference of object has by degrees greatly affected the statement of doctrine as well as the administration of discipline in the two Communions.

Thus it is not merely that private confession is enjoined upon all in the Roman Communion, and only permitted in certain exceptional cases in ours, but that the spiritual aspect of the same act assumes a wholly different character in the two Communions. The teaching of the Church of Rome is, that confession to a priest is a direct sacramental ordinance of the Church of Christ; and, that to be duly practised, it must be secret and complete, numbering all remembered sins. So made, it is to be followed by private absolution, which, as it is held, conveys a special pardon for the sins so remembered and confessed; and then, consistently with this system of confession, she recommends that every soul should be permanently under the direction of some priest; that this spiritual director should habitually guide those who consult him; that the conscience should be committed to his keeping: this is, in their view,

the result to be aimed at ; it is the best state of spiritual health when most regularly and systematically the conscience lays down all its burden in confession before the minister of God as a direct act of spiritual submission, and receives most humbly and obeys most implicitly his directions for all its conduct. It is not difficult to see what must be the effect of such a system. It will lead to many great evils, and amongst them these. When confession to man is thus enforced, or even encouraged as a duty, instead of being allowed as a last permission, to which under certain peculiar circumstances, and as an extreme remedy, the stricken soul, unable to re-assure itself, may have recourse, it will with many be used dishonestly. The habit of withholding the real and deepest sins of the soul, consistently with getting through confession, will soon be formed. On the other hand, those who strive to confess all will assuredly be led to weaken the spring of conscience by devolving that determination of what is right, which is its own solemn responsibility, to be discharged under the eye of God and by the light of His Word, to the decision of another for it. The confessor will take the place, first, of Christ, as the receiver of all the secrets of our guilt, and shame, and weakness, and then of the conscience as the judge, arbiter, and director of our lives.

Now in opposition to this system, the Church of England, in exact conformity, as we maintain, with the Word of God, and the teaching and the practice of the primitive Church, allows private confession instead of enforcing it, and recommends it only under certain prescribed circumstances and conditions, as a means of restoring health to a sick conscience, instead of treating the habit of confessing as the state of health. She treats it as wise men treat medical aids, as blessed means of renovation, stored by God's mercy for their need in times of sickness, but still as not meant for, and not wholly compatible with, a settled habit of strong health. And this difference of view is founded upon a great doctrinal difference as to the place which confession occupies in the new kingdom of Christ. The Church of England does not treat it as a separate ordinance of Christ, endowed with a special sacramental grace of its own; but she regards it as a permitted "opening of grief," as a "lightening" of a "burden," as in no way bringing any special pardon or absolution to the penitent over and above that which he might equally obtain by general confession to Almighty God, and public absolution in the congregation, but only as a spiritual confidence which might be entrusted to any brother Christian, but which it is most natural and best to commit to the physician of souls, as having more experience

of such cases, and as being specially provided by God with grace for their treatment and relief.

This, then, is what we should bear in mind in this delicate part of our office. We must seek to awaken a slumbering conscience, to heal one which is wounded. If we see it possessed by apathy, we must use all our strength to rouse it; if we think that we perceive it to be burdened with some secret load, we must strive to win it to hearty confession to God. If it be earnestly desired, we must ourselves receive, as God's ministers, the spiritual confidence of the burdened soul; but we must do all this with the distinct aim of restoring the conscience to that healthier action in which it shall be able to guide the soul which God has, with the gift of individual personality, committed to its watchfulness and keeping.

1860^a.

. . . . Take, by way of illustration, the teaching of the Church of Rome on one practical point on which, for many reasons, it may be useful to touch,—the power of the keys, and their use in the Church of Christ as to confession and abso-

^a Note by the EDITOR.—The several Addresses to “Candidates for Ordination,” from which this and other extracts are taken, are undated. It has seemed best, therefore, to assign to them the date at which they were first collectively published.

lution. Undoubtedly God's Word does teach the need of a penitent confession of our sins, and the grace and blessing of our absolution from them by those appointed ministers of Christ to whom HE spake the mysterious words, "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained^b." And with as little doubt may we affirm that the primitive Church put faithfully into practice that teaching of her Lord, when she introduced into her public services those heart-broken confessions of sin in which every penitent, with a special eye to his own transgressions, might breathe out to God his own woeful secrets of defilement; and those public absolutions in which he might hear, as from his Lord's mouth, the authoritative declaration of pardon. It is clear, moreover, that beyond this, in the earliest times, there were permissions of a more private confession, and of more particular absolution, for some special case of spiritual sickness, though the habitual adoption of the practice was discouraged^c. But into what a different and polluting system have these truths been drawn out, and how in it are they still exhibited by the Papal communion! For, first, that allowance, to extreme cases, of private confession and absolution which the early Church so sparingly

^b St. John xx. 23.

^c See Bingham's *Origines*, Bk. xviii. c. iii.,—the whole chapter.

sanctioned, has been laid down as the universal law. It is not now that the overburdened and well-nigh distracted penitent may, in his last necessity, cry to the steward of the mysteries of Christ for this reserved cordial, the use of which his extremity may warrant, but that every one before communicating *must* thus open to the priest the secrets of his soul, and receive his absolution. How fatal a change! For first, and above all, it leads the careless sinner to the perilous expectation of being able at the hour of death, by confession to his priest, to secure a certain escape from the consequence of sin; whilst it enervates the conscience of the trembling penitent by leading him to pour into the ears of man what he should address to God, and to receive, as an act of mere obedience, the direction of another, instead of quickening his conscience and bracing up his soul by living habitually under the eye of his all-seeing Judge and merciful Intercessor^d. Nor are these master evils all: for further, it too often introduces a deadly formality into the use of confession by the penitent and of absolution by the priest; it renders needful all that morbid anatomy of the soul which pollutes the mind of every candidate for Roman orders; it introduces, instead of the straight rule of Gospel morality, all

^d See pp. 80, 81. Extract from the writings of a Roman Catholic Divine.—EDITOR.

the inextricable windings and dishonest subtlety of a most perplexed casuistry ; whilst, to make her clergy fit ministrants of that priestcraft which is its certain fruit, it draws after it the enforced celibacy of their order, and so their separation from all the purifying and humanizing influences which God's holy ordinance of marriage sheds over a married priesthood ; and lastly, through the ever-encroaching presence amidst the sanctities of family life of one thus invested with a character of supernatural holiness, whom all are bound to make the official depository of every secret, and who is cognizant of every real or suspected infirmity of his devotee, and so (unavoidably) of those who have shared with him in the sins he has from time to time confessed, it dissolves the most sacred ties by which God has bound society together,—introducing another, and how often an adverse, counsel between father and child, between the mother and her daughter, between the husband and the wife of his bosom. Here is Rome's perversion of a great truth ; and mark for a moment, I pray you, how the double danger of which I have spoken arises from it. For, first, because confession is Christ's ordinance for sinners, and absolution His gift to penitents, she, professing beyond others to retain His teaching and to administer His gifts, wins over to herself the stricken and bleeding hearts of many who pant only for

that true Gospel healing which in their extremity she offers them ; and thus men who long, not for what is Roman but for what is Apostolical, are seduced by the truth on which she has grafted her error, and, seeking for the gifts of Christ, they drink of her cup of poison. On the other hand, stronger spirits and keener eyes, seeing clearly the falsehood and evil of *her* system, are continually hurried on to denounce as popish all close dealing with individual consciences, without which the pastoral office must become unreal ; and to deny, as an imposture of priestcraft, the grace of absolution and the reality of the ministerial commission. They speak of every declaration that the supernatural working of God the Holy Ghost does accompany the official acts of Christ's ministers, as a superstitious claim to magical powers ; and thus rob Christ's spiritual Kingdom of its glory, and degrade the Sacraments of the Gospel to the level of Jewish ordinances. From which, result two fatal consequences ; for hereby *some* are driven into that fog-land of a mere general spirituality, where the stronger devils of neological resolutions of all dogmatic truth into mere words, where scepticism, pantheism, and entire unbelief, roam evermore, waiting for their victims ; whilst others, fearing such an end, in order to obtain the spiritual aid they long for, turn, often even with reluctance, to the delusions of the Papacy.

From both evils, only the principle of the English Reformers, the cleaving with equal simplicity to the letter of God's Word and to primitive practice, can really protect us ; for this course alone, by casting off the added error and yet retaining firmly the original truth, can supply to man, without impure additions, what his spiritual necessities require, and what Christ has provided for him in His blessed Gospel.

1855.

XXII.

ON AVERTING GROUNDLESS SUSPICIONS.

WE live at a time when the miserable defection of many members of our body from our own reformed Church, and their deadly fall into the corruptions of the debased communion of the Papacy, have necessarily awakened a suspicious habit of mind amongst our people as to any tendency in their spiritual guides to this fearful apostacy. It is the character of such suspicions to be vague, unreasoning, and often most unjust. They may attach themselves to us from some mere accident, or from our resolving to abandon no truth because it is unpopular, or from our honestly and honourably refusing to persecute others from whom we ourselves differ, but to whom we will not be unjust. When these suspicions are thus awakened, deeply as we must lament them, we cannot blame ourselves for their existence. We must maintain truth at any price : we must not be unjust to others,—even to weak and foolish men,—in order to purchase for ourselves immunity from damaging suspicions. Such trials we may indeed take as persecutions for righteousness' sake, and humbly hope that our

Master's "Happy are ye," may reach to us; and that these seeming evils shall in the end, through His grace, turn out rather to the furtherance of His Gospel. But these suspicions often arise from a widely different source: and as to such, those on whom they fix are by no means the guiltless victims. If, for example, the wearing a particular dress, the addiction to unusual forms or modes of conduct in or out of our churches, will almost certainly arouse such suspicions, how can we be blameless, if, because they are more suitable to our own feelings, we adopt them, and so place stumbling-blocks in the way of weak brethren for whom Christ died? I will not enlarge upon this head. A mere hint will suffice to suggest to you all that I would say. But let no man suppose that his conduct as to such matters can be trivial. The common impassive eye of society is caught far more readily by such external badges than by the far deeper realities of doctrine. Many a man who might, without raising one suspicion, have won a parish by a holy example and sound teaching to the true tone of our reformed Church, has marred all his usefulness and destroyed all his influence by the suspicions which his dress or his manners have most needlessly but inevitably awakened. Nor is this suspicious habit, most injurious as, alas! it is, either wholly unreasonable in itself, or wholly misplaced in attaching itself

to these external indications of a supposed inward unsoundness. The colours and devices of the army's banners do but indicate to the eyes of all to which side it appertains, and men will naturally think that, except as signs and badges of a party, such trifles could not seem important in the eyes of men set to deal with the salvation of souls and the issues of eternity.

1860.

XXIII.

ON MAINTAINING PEACE IN TROUBLOUS TIMES.

IT was impossible that so great a change as the Reformation of religion in this land in the sixteenth century should be unaccompanied by evils of a magnitude in some degree corresponding with its blessings; and one of the first and greatest of those evils was the shaking of Christian peace and love. The mere quickening, indeed, of religious earnestness must, amongst fallen men, always endanger peace. The soul that is suddenly wakened up to the perception of the vast realities round it, and of its own share in them, is driven into action; whilst this action must of course partake of the nature of the agent. The quickened zeal of seraphim burns evermore with the pure flame of unmingled love. But so it cannot be with such as we are. For even when the man is indeed offering himself up to God, there are many earthly elements which, from their grosser nature, will mingle heavy clouds of dark and offensive vapour with his attempted offering. Limited knowledge, partial views, incompleteness in his best surrender of himself, and hence clinging selfishness, old pre-

judices, unworthy motives, cramped affections,—all these mar his service, and give it an earthly, self-willed, inharmonious tone. Consequently, there is in almost every case some want of full agreement among men of the most vehemently earnest zeal; often there is direct opposition, and the threat of bitter, mutual violence. This is the sword of which our blessed Master spoke as that which He was come to send on earth. His blessed truth, in its perfect purity, from His own lips of absolute knowledge and entire love, could not but awaken this earthly strife in earthly hearts. And such is the rule of His kingdom evermore. Wherever, therefore, there is a great awakening of religious earnestness either in a single heart, or in a parish, or in a nation, this evil of unquietness, religious strife, and discord are lying in some deadly ambush near. And evermore, therefore, at such a time is it a matter of the deepest wisdom to labour, as for the very chiefest and most necessary thing, for a spirit of quietness, peace, and love amongst those who form the fermenting mass.

This danger, which at all times besets such great movements, for special reasons particularly beset our own Reformation. For it is one part of the curse of an unrighteous tyranny, that it not only oppresses its victims during its supremacy, but that even in its removal it still blights them by the licence which is engendered by its dis-

solution. And so it was with us when, of God's great mercy to our land, the old papal tyranny being swept away, the reasonable rule of the early Church was re-established, and His holy Word put into the hands, and brought home to the consciences, of all. The new liberty bred in many parts a wild licentiousness; with such a visible tearing of its victims did the evil Spirit hardly depart from them whom it had possessed,

There were, indeed, of God's mercy to this land, many influences at work which made this evil far less amongst us than in most parts of the Church to which the Reformation reached. Yet even with ourselves the evil was distinctly marked. The Anabaptists, the Family of Love ^a, and various other sectaries troubled and disturbed our peace. All the records of our history at the time bear abundant marks of the fierce strivings of these spirits of turbulence and evil. . . .

The awakening people were in great peril of substituting an unbridled licence of religious speculation for the deadness of their old superstition. From this had sprung, already, unquietness, strife, and a lack of charity: and the minister of God's Word, therefore, was called solemnly to pledge himself that he would strive to maintain and set forward quietness, peace, and love in his flock. He was to use his utmost efforts to set them free.

^a Sparrow's Articles, p. 171.

from the trammels of the old superstition ; he was to awaken and arouse their consciences which had been sent asleep or enervated by the system of enforced private confession, priestly direction, and a vicarious religion ; he was to feed their souls with the strong meat of God's Word, instead of the sapless legends with which their appetite had been cloyed, and their spiritual strength wasted : but he was at the same time to guard them from the intoxication of soul which the sudden possession of great truths is so apt to produce ; he was to strive to teach them to find their strength in the quietness and confidence of a humble, loving, personal religion ; he was to remember how easy and how fatal it would be to make them noisy disputers about religious dogmas, instead of humble receivers of the truth, feeding their own souls, in a meek and loving peacefulness, upon the bread of life.

In many respects, my brethren, the temper of the times in which it is our lot to minister seems to make a like exhortation specially useful. For around us, too, religious disputations abound. It is a time marked by a good deal, let us hope, of real earnestness in religious matters ; and wherever there is earnestness there is temptation to division ; certainly this time is marked by a great deal of noise about religion, and this is earnestness already turning into strife. Religious questions meet us

in general society ; they form, to a wholly new extent, the topics of public discussion, even in our Houses of Parliament. God knows whether, with all this interest about religious matters, we are a peculiarly devout, self-denying, or humble generation. But, beyond all doubt, there is amongst us a great deal of religious life of one quality or another : opinions are carried amongst us to the utmost extreme on all sides ; so-called religious newspapers, which live upon our dissensions, stir up the strife, and often point it by the most shameless falsehood and personalities ; party meetings, party societies, party names, party watch-words abound ; and, to say the least, we have great ground for fearing that many lose their Christian love in their party zeal, and that the religion of Christ becomes to them at last little more than the struggle of a faction. Surely, then, at such a time as this, we have great need to listen to this searching, sobering question, put solemnly to us by our Church^b, and to weigh well the need of observing herein her teaching, and remembering that everything will be in vain in our ministry if it does not form humble, loving souls for Christ's heavenly kingdom.

^b viz., " Will you maintain and set forwards, as much as lieth in you, quietness, peace, and love, among all Christian people, and especially among them that are or shall be committed to your charge ? "

Let us endeavour, then, to see some of the ways in which the temptation against which we are here warned may assault us in our work, and how we may guard successfully against it.

First, then, let us see how it may attack ourselves. It may easily tempt us from that personal dealing with souls in our own appointed sphere which is the chiefest duty of every one of us. To most men of earnestness and energy of character there is something attractive in the large hazards of a public struggle. Some great truth which we do in very deed prize highly, or some institution which, as we believe, is bound up in the bundle of the Church's life, is rudely assailed. We cannot doubt that we are called by God's providence to contend herein earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; and perhaps we are so called: and if this be clear, let us by no means hang back. And yet let us enter on the encounter with a trembling fear, not indeed of our enemies, but of ourselves. For even as we enter on it, what risks must we run. As we are drawn from our quieter duties in their narrower spheres, to deal with what seem to be, and perhaps are, wider interests on a broader field, how hard is it to maintain quietness, peace, and love in our own hearts: how easy to lose the confessor in the combatant. The loss may, perhaps, be first perceived in the flagging of our full

interest in our own peculiar work ; we feel it to be hard to come back to it again, and find it just as engrossing, just as full of supreme interest, just as much an object of earnest prayer, daily labour, and perpetual watching, as it was before. To our corrupt nature it is indeed very hard, after "visiting our brethren" in the king's army, and "seeing how they do, and taking their pledge," and perhaps being drawn in ourselves to challenge, and with our sling and stone to slay, the contrary champion, to return when the conflict is over to our sheepfold in the wilderness with the same love and care for those committed to us as we had before ; to be as ready in defending them, to meet the lion and the bear in the solitary field, as to go forth against Goliath of Gath before the armies of Israel : and yet if our love be chilled, our affections disturbed, and our care for them drawn away, how spiritless and poor will be our service to them, how small our hope of good, how sure our own and their perpetual declension. How easily may the effect of such a course be traced in the parish. Whilst, perhaps, the busy pastor is maintaining the rights of the Church to conduct the education of the nation, his own village school, which was his constant, perhaps his daily haunt, is seldom entered, the visiting of the sick and of the whole within the cure is greatly intermitted, languidly laboured through, or hurried carelessly

over ; the parishioners no longer pass before him in his times of meditation and hours of prayer in all the deep interests of individual characters, studied, mastered, watched, and prayed for, and striven with, but they grow into a dull mass, in whose occasional presence his necessary public duties must be decently conducted. His weapon has lost its edge, his ministry its life.

Yet even these are only the external evils consequent on the change, and we have not yet reached their fountain-head of mischief within the pastor's own soul.

This may be most direct and substantive ; for the incessant public vindication of any one special truth or institution is not without its own danger to us. Our minds are so apt to grow one-sided ; the object on which they dwell becomes to our apprehension so preternaturally developed, that the due order and relation of the various parts of truth becomes disturbed in our minds. We may learn the instancy of this danger from that common judgment of men which is fixed in the second sense which the word to "dogmatize" has assumed. For it shews us that a special zeal for any peculiar dogma of the truth has become in men's minds naturally associated with the habit of a vapouring assumption of a state of authority. This acts back on our own temper. The truth and our view of the truth become confused in our

minds, and we grow narrow and authoritative, and obstinate, and too often violent ; unable to allow for the appearance which the same truth, as really held, may present to the mind of another ; and apt to exact, at the price of endangering peace, breaking limits, and losing love, the implicit reception of our peculiar statement as the test of orthodoxy. Alas ! how few are there of whom it can in any measure be said, as of the great champion of the Church's truth against the Arian heresy, " Only in Athanasius there was nothing observed throughout the course of that long tragedy, other than such as very well became a wise man to do and a righteous to suffer ^c."

But again, besides these dangers, more public labours must commonly plunge us into controversy with some, or into opposition to others ; we shall have gainsayers to confute, and adversaries to silence ; and the weapons of the world, so ready, alas ! always for our hands, will seem to be thrust into them. We may at first begin to use our various faculties in the encounter really for the sake of truth : but how soon does there spring up in our hearts the love of victory for its own sake ! And then how soon does the tongue learn the language of raillery and sarcasm, and biting insinuation ; how quick does the eye grow to see a weak point, and the ready hand to strike home

^c Hooker, Eccl. Pol., lib. v. 42. 5. p. 180. edit. 1845.

at it, and the heated spirit to rejoice in all the doubtful success, mixed motives, and manifold unkindnesses of the keen encounter of sharpened wits. How plainly in this case is the work of evil being accomplished in our soul, and all hope of the continuance of a faithful and prosperous ministry being destroyed. How likely is it that the once laborious pastor will be transformed into the restless, eager, busy, and by degrees unscrupulous, party leader, a troubler of the Church, a stirrer-up of its discords; above all, a hideous wreck within, living upon external excitements, and more and more a stranger to that deep quietness, inward peace, and heavenly love, which are the Holy Spirit's work, and which must mark the character of every one who is admitted into heaven.

Where, then, is our safeguard? Not certainly in inactivity and sloth. You will hardly suspect me of giving you such a counsel. God's truth must be maintained, the Church's doctrines must be vindicated, her powers of service must be attested and preserved, the dangers of life and action must not make us content with lethargy or death. We must contend, and that earnestly; but we must do it with self-recollection, with continual watchfulness against this ever-ready evil, with perpetual self-suspicion, extending to our motives, our methods, and our acts; with intervals of silence, with continual prayers, with an eye ever

fixed on our great Exemplar, with a full sight of Him who came to "send not peace on the earth, but a sword," and yet who did "not strive nor cry;" about Whom in closest presence all the hotness of the fight ever more gathered itself, and raged, and yet Who was ever "meek and gentle in heart," ever healing each separate sufferer who came to Him, ever giving "rest to souls."

But besides these dangers, which beset all times, there are some which specially beset such days as ours. For it is hard in times of strife and party-spirit to find men who are thoroughly in earnest, and yet who have not consciously identified themselves with any party as a party. Yet if we do become party men, our direct usefulness is fearfully blighted, and we are certain to be stirrers-up of strife; increasing party-spirit on both sides, by increasing exclusiveness of feeling on our own side, and embittering opposition on the other. Here, then, we must guard jealously both our own spirit and our own demeanour; for in times of trouble he who would really be a man of quietness must eschew all those party badges by which inward party feelings are at all times vented, manifested, and increased. The most innocent trifles may thus become of the utmost moment. I need hardly remind you that in times of great

civil suspicion the mere colour of a dress has been cause enough to deluge the streets of a city with blood. Most closely does this apply to us. Let me suggest to you a single instance. Some amongst us desire, for the very best objects, that our dress as clergymen was more distinctly demonstrative of our calling. They urge the wholesome restraint to ourselves which such an outward mark must prove against levity or sports unbecoming our sacred character. They dwell on the self-recollectedness it would help to engender, and on the aid it would give us in society by reminding others as well as ourselves who and what we are. They point to many and good examples of the usefulness of so natural a distinction. They have much to urge, and they are not unwilling to practise what they commend; they would fain, if it were possible, bring back into ordinary use the cassock and the tippet. Failing this, they adopt a dress as near as possible to it, and as remote as possible from that of ordinary laymen. On the other side, it is urged that the English clergyman is an English citizen; that, like other men, he marries, mixes in society, and takes his full share in all civil and social matters; that he is not like the Roman ecclesiastic, a member of a separate, unsympathizing class; and that on his retaining his freedom from this ecclesiastical separation depends greatly his

acceptance and his usefulness with Englishmen. This party, therefore, whilst it would retain those moderate badges of colour and shape which all men identify with clerical attire, would eschew all prominent and startling diversity of dress from that of sober laymen. On their skirts, as on the skirts of the other side, hang a loose cloud of extreme men, who pride themselves in throwing off all the established sobriety of a clergyman's apparel. Now how light a thing this is, and yet how important. For the adopting either one extreme or the other, marks internal unquietness, and soon disturbs external peace. The hottest strifes and the most lasting prejudices, are engendered and kept alive by these outward badges. Many a young clergyman, who might have preached Christ and spread the life of His Church throughout a parish around him, has marred all his usefulness and raised a host of enemies by the straightness of his collar or the length of his skirt. And what think you in the hour of death, and what in the day of judgment, will be the issues of such a loss? I would, my brethren, press most earnestly upon you the great Christian duty of quietness in such matters as these. "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand."

And this same principle applies with even greater force to our vestments in the sanctuary,

and to the adoption in our services of rites which, however they may be justified by the letter of long-sleeping laws, are strange and novel in the eyes of our people. I have no hesitation in saying to you that it is better in these matters to acquiesce for a while in a long-established custom of deficiency than to stir our people up to suspicion and hostility by the impetuous restoration of a better use. More harm has, I believe, been done amongst us by such attempts to restore bits of a ritual to which our people are unaccustomed, than by any other single error. Our people argue—and do they argue altogether amiss?—that these changes either mean something or nothing: if something, what, they ask, is it that they mean, and whither are they leading us? if nothing, do they not imply either puerility, unquietness, or folly in him who can for nothing disturb our minds, or even alarm our prejudices? Depend upon it, my brethren, that if we are to keep this promise of our Ordinal, we must as to these matters—so trifling in themselves, so momentous as indications of a drifting current—inwardly and outwardly manifest ourselves to be men of quietness and peace.

And if this is so, we must, as to the yet deeper quality of love, have learned ourselves to embody what we would fain reproduce in others. The spirit of love must have leavened and moulded

our spirits. We must have learned from Him, who only can teach them to us, its full reality, its constraining power, and its unwearying tenderness. Love in our own hearts will flavour all our teaching with its own blessed presence. We shall teach, and our people, through God's help, will imbibe, truth in a truly loving spirit. They will not be so ready to wrangle about the great doctrines of the Gospel as to live on them. They will not so much be keen to detect an error, as quick-sighted to apprehend a truth. Here, too, depend upon it, the pastor will to a great degree be reproduced in his flock. Love will generate love. The battle therefore here, as elsewhere, must be won in secret, and upon our knees. When we have been loosed beneath the cross of our Lord of the burden of our own sins; when we have looked, indeed, for ourselves into that calm, divine face of unutterable love; when we have heard His voice of healing pity speak to our wounded hearts; when His pierced hand has been laid on us; when we have, as accepted penitents, poured forth our souls before Him,—then shall we have learned, as we never otherwise can learn, how to go forth day by day amongst our people, reproducing amongst them His work upon ourselves, whilst we “maintain quietness, peace, and love amongst all Christian people, and specially amongst them that are committed to our charge.”

XXIV.

OBEDIENCE TO THE BISHOP.

IN answer to the question, "Will you reverently obey your Ordinary?" what is first promised, is a *reverent* obedience; by which no less can be meant than an obedience for conscience' sake, as a matter of reverence, and not of legal necessity. To interpret this, then, as if it meant no more than "I will submit to such commands as can by course of law and under penalty be enforced upon me," is a manifest evasion of the words, as it is of the intention, of the promise. For there would be no object in exacting a promise of submitting to that legal force to which without any such promise we must equally submit; and such a submission would manifestly be an enforced and not a reverent submission; a submission to power, and not to duty; from fear, and not from love; from necessity, and not from reverence. Next, we should notice that the words which immediately follow, explain and limit this promise. They first explain it. For the description of the "chief ministers," as those "to whom is committed the charge and government over you," at once leads our thoughts up

to Him who has committed to them this charge, and thus reminds us that our obedience to them is an obedience to Him, to be rendered, not for fear, but for conscience' sake. At the same time the words which follow confine this promise of obedience to that subject-matter to which alone the charge of our spiritual rulers extends, that is to say, to our conduct as ministers of the Church of Christ. Moreover, the obedience promised is itself limited by those general laws which bind the ruler as much as the ruled; so that the ruler can properly enjoin upon those under his rule only either what those laws have previously enacted or by true logical deduction imply, or such matters as the Law has left to be settled by the voice of living authority. And accordingly the words continue; "following with a glad mind and will their godly admonitions, and submitting ourselves to their godly judgments." Where, again, the ready submissive temper of one acting for conscience' sake, and not under legal compulsion, is distinctly expressed; and the gloss that we are bound to obey such commands only, as can, if we disobey, be enforced on us by processes of law, is absolutely excluded.

But another and a most important limitation to the duty of obedience is now brought in, namely, that the admonitions and judgments to which we submit must always be "godly." Here, then,

arises a new question: how far, namely, this last limitation extends, which cannot be dismissed without some more particular inquiry.

There is, indeed, no doubt thus far: that by this limitation all obedience to any command which is contrary to God's will is expressly excluded. But then arise the further questions; 1st. How far does this word "godly" extend? and then, 2ndly, Who is to judge how far any particular command is or is not godly?

For if the decision of this question rest altogether with the Ordinary, he may command that which he esteems to be godly, though in fact it is ungodly; and so, if absolute and unquestioning obedience be our duty, we may be compelled to do what is wrong; or if, on the other side, the receiver of the command is the sole judge of what is godly in the injunctions of authority, and if there be no certain limit to the extent of the term, he may conclude that every direction which crosses his own will, or is contrary to his own judgment, is one which, not being for the true furtherance of God's cause, he may lawfully reject as an ungodly judgment. Now the solution of this question must be found in a consideration of the ground on which alone the duty of obedience rests. We are, then, to obey those who have the rule over us, because their power is from God. For "there is no power but of God, the powers

that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God ; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation ^a.”

When, therefore, we are bidden by a competent authority to do anything or to leave it undone, we have at first sight simply one course, and that is to obey ; because we are bound to consider the command which comes to us from an authority placed over us by God as coming to us from God Himself. And to this there can be but one valid counter-plea, namely, that the command which comes to us from the deputy contradicts the command of Him who sends him. This was the Apostles' plea under the threatening of the Jewish rulers, “Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard ^b.” And again, “Peter and the other Apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men ^c.” And this plea, where it is rightly grounded, is undoubtedly valid. But then it is one which can be urged only in extreme cases, and it is put forward in every instance under a fearful risk. It does not claim for the subject of command the right of settling for himself how much of that which is commanded he shall obey, which were

^a Rom. xiii. 1, 2.

^b Acts iv. 19.

^c Acts v. 29.

to abolish all real obligations to obedience, but admitting that the measure of command is in the breast of authority, it impeaches him who holds this delegated power of being guilty of unfaithfulness to the highest source of all authority, and claims on the issue of this charge to be at last justified as one who is indeed obeying the Principal in disobeying the immediate ruler. So that it is a plea which cannot be urged in defence of our preference of one lawful course rather than another; nor of our judgment of the more expedient of two lawful courses, but then only when we can appeal to God Himself that the command which we neglect or violate is contrary to His revealed will; when we can distinctly affirm, "This is an ungodly command, and one therefore which I must disobey, or sin against the Lord." This ultimate licence to disobey,—used under the awful risk of appealing to the Supreme Judge to reverse the general sentence of damnation pronounced upon the disobedient—all must concede who acknowledge the supremacy of conscience as the last authority to each man. But whilst we freely concede this, we are bound to add that to concede more is, in truth, to do away with all authority. For such universal licence must be the result of that further liberty, sometimes claimed, at least in practice, for those under command, for whom it is urged that, under shelter of this limit-

ation of submission to such judgments only as are godly, each one may settle for himself whether any particular direction be expedient or inexpedient, and then may either act upon it or reject it according to his own conclusion. For by such a rule not only would each one be left, in truth, to act upon his own opinion, but to exact a promise of submission would simply be absurd, since where our judgment concurred with the voice of authority the promise would be needless, and where they differed it would not apply.

To this, then, we must conclude that our promise of obedience binds us ; that in respect of our exercise of that ministry into which we seek to be admitted, we will submit our will to the commands, and our practice to the judgment of our spiritual rulers, within the limits of those laws by which they as well as we are bound, subject only to the further limitation, that nothing which is contrary to God's revealed will can be by them rightly ordered, or by us lawfully obeyed. . . .

We cannot over-estimate the degree in which the life and efficiency of the Church must be impaired by the loss or weakening of this just subordination and connexion of her several parts. For this injury to her unity disturbs the flow of those currents of Divine grace on which alone depend her inner life and outward efficiency, and soon brings decay into her whole being. The

highest graces of seraphic love, intense and absorbing devotions, unsullied purity, and a noble prodigality of self-sacrifice disappear first; then the lower though most blessed gifts of earnestness and zeal in action are debased, first by the intermixture of personal vanity in her clergy, and then by party-spirit everywhere. Individual pastors work for themselves with a self-willed independence of choice and action. Brotherly love is weakened, and mutual confidence impaired. Then knots of men gather round self-chosen leaders, party watchwords and cruel shibboleths are framed, and these increase the evil from which they sprung. A few draw together and draw apart from others. Then follow still more straitened graces, and the loss of charity, mutual repulsions, hard judgments, hard thoughts, hard words of one another; then comes separated action, the Church's instruments must be divided, societies must rival and weaken one another, men are to be judged as they are ranged under the banner of this or that association; earthly passions, earthly motives, earthly names, are debasing and dividing the fair heritage of Christ. Then follow open strifes and angry recriminations, whilst, like obscene birds which scent from afar the coming carnage, calumnious and malignant publications, bred of our internal discords, flock unreproved about the servants of the Prince of purity

and peace. How is the gracious Spirit grieved by such fightings and divisions! How many prayers are blown aside! How many hands are weakened! How many hearts are broken! Alas! how many souls are lost, by such unholy strifes! How is the seamless coat of Christ torn! How is the Holy Name blasphemed! How are the Church's graces lost! How is her white raiment stained and the place of her candlestick endangered by their continuance and increase!

Here, then, are the certain consequences of insubordination in the camp of God. Alas! beloved brethren, can we fail to perceive, as we trace them out and then reflect upon our own condition, that we as a Church have indeed abundant reason to cry mightily to God to enable us to see the "great dangers we are in through our unhappy divisions," and to beseech Him to pour into our estranged hearts the loving spirit of His long-suffering and uniting grace?

XXV.

SOME DANGERS ATTENDING REVISION.

THERE is some risk in beginning alterations even when all have agreed beforehand where they shall stop ; because the love of change grows by its indulgence. But this danger is indefinitely increased if there be no agreement as to the limits of alteration, and if behind the moderate and somewhat impassive favourers of change stand a sterner body, with deeper convictions, ulterior ends, and a far more restless energy. And this is our condition. Behind the moderate revisionist, who would change a few obsolete expressions, render definite a few obscure rubrics, retrench a few redundancies, and give us a better compacted and, where it was desired, a briefer Office, stand men with far other objects and far different claims. Alleged doctrinal purity,—an accomplished reformation,—such a cleansing of the Common Prayer as would cleanse out of the ministry of the Church all who differ from their own view of truth,—these are the avowed intentions of some, the desire, half-hidden from themselves, of more.

There is no disguise or concealment as to this.

Both before and since the Reformation the Sacramental and anti-Sacramental view has wrought strongly in the religious mind in England. It was a mighty and anxious problem whether the favourers of these different views could be combined in one reformed Church, with articles and formularies free from dishonest ambiguity of diction. This problem God gave to our fathers the grace to solve. To a marvellous degree the Church of England did combine all the men of both sections of thought who possessed any moderation of character. The struggle, indeed, was long and often renewed; but, upon the whole, the fusion was most happily accomplished, and a rare inheritance of peace and purity was bequeathed to English Churchmen. The matter had been wrangled out; and we still enjoy the good fruits which have grown over the graves of controversies as old as those of Hooper and Ridley, of Travers and of Hooker.

This has been possible because our common formularies contain all the positive truth which is needful for each class of minds, with no such contradiction of what either holds as would make subscription to them dishonest.

Such a state of things is sometimes, but I think unfortunately, termed a compromise; unfortunately, because truth does not admit of compromise. Rather is it, indeed, a combination than

a compromise. And this is the special character of Catholic truth: for all revealed religion rests upon certain great principles; which the human mind can hold together in what it knows to be a true concord, whilst yet it cannot always by its intellectual processes limit, define, and reconcile what its higher gift of intuition can harmonize.

Thus, for instance, the master-truth of the absolute sovereignty of Almighty God, running out, as it must, into the necessary fulfilment of His eternal counsels and the omnipotence of His grace; and that second truth, the certainty of man's responsibility based upon his free agency, may both be received by the human mind as they are taught in Scripture; each in its fulness, and harmonized by the intuitions of a humble faith: or they may be wrangled over by logicians, or fashioned by minds of opposite temperaments into the exclusiveness respectively of the Pelagian or the Antinomian sects. They may be calmly and reverently viewed as two vast mountain-peaks appear to the natural eye,—one in very deed, however far apart they soar, in the great underlying unity of the common truth in which they are both embedded, and from which they both emanate; or their separate existence may be looked upon angrily as a hideous contradiction, which man, in spite of his feebleness, must either reconcile or destroy. Thus, whilst the sects have

risen and flourished, and faded through their arrogant and one-sided assertion of some great truth, perverted by the one-sidedness of its statement into a most dangerous form of practical falsehood, the Catholic Church has ever satisfied honest minds of both schools by contenting herself with stating, like the Holy Scripture which she guards, both sets of truths in their simplicity. Thus her Creeds and her Formularies are a combination, and not a compromise. And such are the formularies of our own Church, inherited, as in the main they are, from the earliest times, and marked with the broad stamp of combined truths and Catholic statements.

This is exactly the character of which our more ardent revisionists would deprive her. It is an easy process. It is but to take from the common document that which expresses the side of truth to which we are disinclined, and the Catholic statement is transmuted into the confession of a sect. This is all that is asked of us. Only let us alter the language of the formularies of Baptism, Absolution, and Ordination, and we shall remove occasions of misconception: only let us make, that is, the common document sufficiently one-sided to speak none but our own views. It is easy to see what would be the consequence of such a change. The removal of an expression in a religious formulary does not leave the altered

composition what it would have been if what is now removed had never been there. There is a pregnant meaning in the very act of removal which gives its own interpretation to the mutilated document.

As it has been admirably suggested, the excision even of an excrescence leaves a scar ; how much more the removal of one feature upon the presence of which depended the combined harmony of all the face. The success of any such attempt upon our Prayer-book would unquestionably lead to a disruption, which would break up our national Church, destroying alike her large tolerance, which God grant may never be lessened, and her comprehensive exhibition of all saving truth, which God grant may never be obscured !

I do not mean to imply that the narrowing of our terms of communion is the purpose of all the favourers of revision. Far from it. Some amongst them advocate change on the idea of making the Church of England more comprehensive, and of gathering into her those who now dissent from her doctrinal statements. But this they seem to me wholly to overlook,—that their comprehension is all on one side, and that whilst it is most doubtful whether they could change enough to gather any in, it is quite certain that it would be easy, by what they deem slight alterations, to change enough to drive many out. How

far these alterations, conceived in this spirit of comprehension, might extend, we may understand from the declarations of the noble Lord who represents in the Upper House the cause of the revisionists, and who, to include in the Established Church "a Livingstone or a Havelock," (acquisitions the value of which no man could more highly estimate than I should,) thought it a small matter just so far to alter her doctrinal statements as to give up Episcopacy and the Baptism of Infants. Concessions so devised, from a conviction of their expediency as measures of comprehension, and not from a belief in their truth, would be fatal to those who made, and most hurtful to those who accepted them. To strive earnestly for the faith as they have received it, is the common duty of all religious bodies who would not sink into the dead sea of absolute unbelief. Such a sacrifice of truth as has been suggested would ruin us; and it would, I am convinced, be most injurious to the highest interests of the dissenting bodies themselves to accept of such concessions as the terms of restored communion.

Nor are such proposals mere declamation. With a far deeper acquaintance with his subject, and in a truly serious spirit, they are urged on us for the truth's sake by the ablest and most honest advocate for change with whose writings I have met. For he, too, in his most matured convictions,

would, he tells us, "modify in some degree the present doctrinal character of the Prayer-book;" and he afterwards explains to what the "some degree" might extend, by informing us that it needs a "vital and essential purification in matters relating to doctrine^a."

Now such an altered tone in our formularies, even if it were adopted on this higher ground of its greater purity, and not with the miserable hope of contriving an unprincipled comprehension, would, in my belief, injure all the religious bodies around us as well as ourselves. For it is from the universal Church, represented here by its English branch, that they draw their Christianity, and receive their Bible and their Creed. Any faltering in her voice as to the Articles of the Catholic faith, would make fainter and more indefinite the echoes of the truth which now find their way amidst the mountains and valleys which lie around, though, alas! apart from the holy city. Let the tone of the Church's doctrine be lowered down, and the echo of it would melt away amongst those more distant hills into a mere inarticulate murmur.

1860.

^a See "Liturgical Purity our Rightful Inheritance," by J. C. Fisher, M.A., of the Middle Temple; Second Edition, p. 20.

XXVI.

PROTEST AGAINST EVENING COMMUNION.

THERE is one mode of seeking to increase the number of Communicants to which I feel bound to say to you that I entertain the gravest objection. I allude to the introduction of afternoon and evening celebrations. I have the warmest and most entire sympathy with the purpose and desire which has prompted some to begin or to adopt this custom ; I know that it has arisen from a tender longing to meet the difficulties of classes of our people, to whose presence at the mid-day celebrations our social habits present a formidable difficulty ; but I cannot allow that any difficulties warrant this innovation, and I believe that our difficulties may be otherwise and unobjectionably met. It is right that I should place before you the grounds of my objection to the practice. They are briefly these :—1. That it is contrary to the usage of the whole Church, certainly from very early, and most probably from apostolic times ; 2. That it involves an unlawful use of our Liturgy ; and 3. That it directly tends to the desecration of the highest rite of our holy

religion. Very few words, I think, will suffice to establish the truth of each of these propositions.

It has pleased God that, in the well-known letter of Pliny to Trajan at as early a date as 104 years after Christ, we have direct evidence upon the first point. "They affirmed," he reports to his imperial master of those whom he had put to the torture and to death for their religion, "that this was the sum of their fault or error,—that they were accustomed to assemble on a fixed day before light, to say responsively a hymn to Christ as God, and to bind themselves *sacramento*, not to any wickedness, but not to commit theft, robbery, or adultery, or breach of faith^a." Can there be any reasonable doubt what the *sacramentum* against sin was, wherewith these early confessors said that they bound themselves "very early" on the resurrection morning, even "whilst it was yet dark," and did but "begin to dawn towards the day?" Was it ever known in the Church of Christ that men should be allowed to take an oath that they would not commit sin? Certainly to the early Church such a notion must have been most strange. They knew full well that not in any vow but in closest communing with their risen Lord was their strength against iniquity; and, speaking to a heathen, to whom the secrets of their faith could not be revealed,

^a C. Plin. Epist. ad Trajan. xcvi.

they would most naturally apply the word *sacramentum* to the mystery of the Holy Eucharist. Doubtless it was for its celebration that they thus assembled themselves before light. And from this time downward we have an unbroken chain of proof as to the practice of the Church. The words of Tertullian ^b, in the second century, are plainly to the point: so are those of St. Cyprian ^c in the third; and in the fourth we have St. Augustine's reference to the practice of celebrating on one evening in the year, namely, on the anniversary of the institution of the Lord's Supper, in words ^d which prove the universality of the rule to which this was a special exception. Thus we trace up an unbroken custom of condemning late Communion to within the period when the voice of the beloved Apostle must have been instructing the Christian Church in the Lesser Asia.

That the custom of early Communion should have begun so soon, suggests, for other reasons than its mere antiquity, that it rested upon apostolical authority. For the divine institution and the first celebration were after the evening paschal meal. How within so short a period could such

^b Tertullian de Coronâ, c. 3.
ad Cæcilium, p. 109. ed. Bened.

^c St. Cyprian. Epist. lxxv.

^d St. Aug., Ep. 54, ad
Januarium, vol. ii. p. 126, ed. Bened. See also Conc. Carth.
can. 29; Labbé, vol. ii. p. 1171. References to and arguments
drawn from these passages may be found in an able article in the
"Christian Remembrancer," No. cix., July, 1860.

a change have been possible had it rested upon any lower authority? For every argument from the convenience of evening celebrations with which we are familiar must have applied with far more force to them. The social difficulties of servants in Christian households must be nothing compared with those of Christian slaves in heathen families; or, indeed, with those of the whole body in times of persecution. Yet, as it seems, these perils were not esteemed sufficient, even in the bloody Decian persecution, to warrant such a custom. The probability, then, is strong, that the inspired apostles themselves altered the time of celebration from the hour of the paschal feast to that of the resurrection of the Lord. And no careful student of the New Testament will doubt that, in the abuses which had crept into the Corinthian Church touching the holy Eucharist, and in St. Paul's treatment of them, they find the occasion and the time of the alteration.

First, then, I condemn these late Communion because they are a violation of the custom of the universal Church, which may be traced to the very first century, and which rests, most probably, on an apostolical ordinance framed to guard the holy rite from abuse.

Further, our own Communion Office, in my judgment, embodies this rule. It is not indeed anywhere expressly said that the Communion

Office is a part of Morning Prayer; the reason of the omission evidently being that when our Offices were compiled no Christian man thought of any other time for the public celebration of the Holy Communion. But though not expressly asserted, this is clearly implied in the very letter of the Office. It may be traced throughout: in the rubric, e.g., which orders that "the Collect appointed for every Sunday, or for any Holy-day that hath a vigil or eve, shall be said at *the Evening Service next before;*" which evidently treats the Communion Office as a part of the next day's Morning Prayer; and less explicitly is the same implied in the order that "so many as intend to be partakers of the holy Communion shall signify their names to the Curate, at least some time the day before:" and yet more plainly in the rubric before the Offertory, which orders, "Then shall follow THE Sermon," &c. For THE Sermon was then an essential part of the Morning Prayer, and of it alone.

This question being one of the legal construction of our offices, I have thought it my duty to consult the very learned Chancellor of our Diocese: and I am fortified by his opinion that any Clergyman violating herein the monition of his bishop would subject himself to the penalty of suspension.

Further, I am persuaded that if this usage became common it would greatly tend to the dese-

cration of this holy ordinance. If it were not a matter of apostolical injunction, it was, I doubt not, a deep and wise instinct of the Church, which so early associated this great mystery, in which the faithful Christian communes so specially with his risen and ascended Saviour, with the first services of the Lord's-day, that he may give to it the freshness of his spirits and the stillness of his soul before it has been wearied, worn, and soiled by the toils, and anxieties, and earthly dust from which, even on the day of rest, he cannot keep himself altogether free. At present the influence of this spirit is strong amongst us. Who that has dwelt in the bosom of a religious family does not know that a far more than ordinary measure of thoughtfulness and devotion pervades the whole circle before partaking of that holy Sacrament? Who can estimate the blessed effect of such a tone of feeling, both as to the immediate result of the devout partaking of that holy ordinance, and indirectly on the maintenance of a high standard of Christian doctrine concerning it? But all this must pass surely away if evening celebrations become common. They must come to share in the normal character of the later services of the Sunday, which, as compared with the earliest, all observant men amongst us would, I believe, admit to be marked by drowsiness in the afternoon, and in the evening either by weariness or excitement.

How great might be the effect upon the next generation, when these influences would have had full time to work out their results, it would, I believe, be very difficult to estimate.

Nor can I admit that late Communion is the only or even the best mode of meeting the difficulties which they seek to relieve. I can say, from the experience of a large parish, that the attendance of the class who are to so great a degree excluded by our social habits from the midday service, may be secured at celebrations either in the early morning or at some hour of the forenoon ; whilst the self-denial which this requires is most wholesome, both in bracing up the souls of those who come, and in bringing to bear on those who will not make the effort, exactly that amount of self-executing discipline which their case requires. Even if there were not the insuperable objections to late Communion which I have detailed above, I think that this last suggestion ought, for practical men, to settle the question. Every one allows that the early Communion is the best. Experience, I am assured, shews that where evening Communion has unhappily been tried, they do not, in the long run largely increase the whole number who attend. If then, which all admit, the earlier is the better hour, nothing short of our being able to declare that there is no earlier time which we could give

to such a service could justify our resorting, even if it were lawful, to the less profitable hour. Yet who can say that with some self-denial he could not find or make the time for an early celebration. In this diocese, I rejoice to say, this custom has not spread. Some of you have consulted me upon the subject, and have been content to be guided by my counsel.

1860.

Against one suggestion of most recent times for increasing these [Communion] services,—I mean Evening Communion,—I must again solemnly warn you. As in my Charge of 1860 I have stated at length the grounds on which I believe, 1st, that such a celebration is contrary to the law of our Church; and, 2nd, why I feel bound myself to enforce obedience to that law, and to resist, by all means in my power, the introduction of this greatest of innovations, I will not repeat what is in your hands already. I will only say that my reading and observation since that time have, if possible, deepened my own conviction, and that I deprecate,—even more earnestly than I did then,—the introduction of such a practice into any of your parishes, as contrary to the rule of the whole Church for 1800 years, and certain, in the long run, to lower men's reverence for that

great Sacrament. One fact only I will add to what I have said before, namely, that the judgment of the greatest of the foreign Reformers on this point is as clear as is that of our own Church. "At this day," are the words of Peter Martyr to Bishop Hooper, "we so administer the Eucharist in the morning time, that after dinner we will not have the Communion in the sacred assembly^e." And to the same effect Bucer writes, "Hence we celebrate the Sacred Supper neither in the evening nor in a private house, nor recumbent, nor among men only^f."

1866.

^e Gorham's "Reformation Gleanings," p. 195.

^f *Ibid.*, pp. 205-6.

XXVII.

RITUAL, ITS VALUE, ITS LIMITATIONS, AND ITS EXCESSES.

IT has always appeared to me to be the duty of a bishop of the English Church to throw himself heartily, without stint or grudging, into the labours of the clergy or laity of all the different schools of thought which are allowed within her communion. He must, of course, have his own definite line and thought of action ; the more definite the better. But he ought not in my judgment to allow a divergence from that type and model, within the limits his Church allows, to weaken his sympathy with any within his sphere who are labouring earnestly for Christ. And here I am speaking not of a cold grudging assent to the lawfulness of their position, but of all the fullness of help which he can give them in their own mode of working, by his prayers, his personal co-operation, and his confidence. Such a rule of action involves of necessity certain great difficulties. It is sure, till it is well understood, to lead narrow-minded men who can move but in a single groove, to suspect that such a course is tainted with a want of care for the absolute

truth, and a sinful desire to please men. These suspicions, bred in shallow minds of intellectual feebleness, a bishop must live down. But beyond these there is the further imputation ready, that such a course tends to deprive the Church itself of all definiteness of doctrine, and to make its teaching a mere bundle of conflicting opinions, held artificially together by the external bond of a common establishment. Now if this licensed variety did exceed in anything that which the Church has received as vital of dogmatic truth, the objection would be true, and it would be fatal; for the Church exists to be the pillar and ground of the truth, to hold and therefore to hand on without addition, diminution, or adulteration the faith once for all delivered to the saints. Of differences, then, on points which constitute the one faith, I am not speaking. But I do not believe that such difference does, to any considerable degree, exist amongst us. For it, where it does exist, I put in no plea. I ask for it, within our own body, no toleration. But I maintain that putting all question about these master truths wholly aside, there is room for large difference of tone, of feeling, and of the mode of expressing the common faith amongst those who hold, and hold earnestly, the same Word of God, the same tradition of creeds, and the same definiteness of articles. The temper of one man's mind leads

him to apprehend most readily, and to embody in his own spiritual life most completely, one aspect of a mighty, far-reaching, many-sided dogma. This leavens all his own inner being and all his own teaching. And I venture to say that it is well that it should be so. Well for him, because what he has thus made his own is the most real; well for the Church, because, first, what he most really holds he can most vividly express and reproduce in others; and secondly, because by this permitted variance the many sides of the common truth will be most faithfully maintained in themselves, and most readily supplied for the spiritual sustenance of others.

It is easy to say, as the Popish enemies of our Church are so fond of saying, that thus *our* teachers teach all conflicting theories, whilst *theirs* speak with one utterance, and therefore give their people what we cannot give to ours, the sameness and the certainty of truth. But the taunt proves as false under examination as it is easy in the utterance. For, first, they who use it do *not* all teach one doctrine. The slightest acquaintance with their writings and their internal action at once dispels the illusion. To name but one instance. They range from the Augustinian far nearer than we do to the semi-Pelagian theory of grace. But further. Whilst it is the essence of the truth that it should be one, it is of the

essence of a living reception of that one faith by different souls that it should in its subjective reproduction within them differ in its modes of acting. All life, because it is life, has of necessity this faculty of diversity of reproduction combined with essential unity. Dead things only can be stamped out with an absolute ever-recurring identity of shape and proportion. Instead, therefore, of considering this variety, within allowed limits, as an evil, I hail it as a sign of life; and I would no more make every voice in a diocese speak in exactly the same tone than I would abolish the music of nature by requiring the same note from every free songster in the brake.

There are, of course, limits to such a licence. If the fundamental articles of the Creeds, if the authority of God's revealed Word, if the atonement wrought for us on the Cross, if the gift of the Holy Ghost and the life of the new kingdom of Christ are assailed, all question of allowance within the Church is at an end. Where the claim for permitted diversity distinctly reaches up to these points, there is of course no difficulty in our course. We have but to say in love, but with all clearness, "If any man teach any other Gospel than that ye have received, let him be accursed." But there is a vast range of spiritual teaching within these well-defined limits as to the par-

ticalars of which a minute and tyrannous positiveness savours far more of the narrowness of a sect than of the real breadth of Catholicity; and the modern Papacy, as to these, exhibits far more exactly the temper of the Donatists than that of any of the ancient Catholics. As to these comparatively open questions, on the other hand, the Church of England has forborne to exact as the condition of conformity a mechanical exactness of agreement, and as to these it has always seemed to me that her ministers should act freely and generously in her spirit. In that spirit, my reverend brethren, I may take you, amongst whom I have lived, to witness, it has been my endeavour to administer this diocese; and it is to my acting on this rule, and to your great kindness, your large forbearance with me, and your wonderful confidence in me, that under God's grace I attribute the quietness, combined with earnest vigour, with which we have been enabled to work His work for this quarter of a century; and that now, when we are bringing to a close our united action, I have the blessing of seeing amongst the warmest of my friends, representatives of every school of thought amongst us. For myself I will say openly that I could not have endured to have been the bishop of a party, when God's providence had called me to be the bishop of a diocese.

To a certain extent this rule of liberty as to

thought must apply also to the rule of external observance. As to such outward forms indeed there need not, and consistently with any uniformity there cannot be, so large a licence. There need not be, because here the sacrifice of choice to charity implies no dishonesty of mind. He who could not honestly give up an opinion, may with entire truthfulness give up a dress or a posture by which a brother is offended ; and without some such sacrifices external uniformity is impossible. Feeling this strongly, few things have more grieved my own spirit than the course of recent controversies about dresses and externals. With the mighty work we have to do ; with the growing masses on every side of us who need the simplest preaching of the Gospel of Christ, and the most elementary instruction in the life of grace ; with the seething multitudes of our great towns steeped in sin and suffering, and with the irreligious coldness, dulness, and coarse sensuality which abound in so many of our country districts, it is simply heart-breaking to see the zeal of earnest spirits diverted from even passionate endeavours to bring the Name, the Cross, the power, and presence of Christ home to such sufferers, and to see it miserably wasted on unmeaning contests as to the cut of a surplice, or the colour of a stole. In such a strife both sides seem to me to be in the wrong, because both

exalt things comparatively indifferent into an utterly undue importance. It is hard to understand the religion which consists in refusing on the one hand to wear a surplice, or on the other in convulsing a parish in order to introduce into its public services the startling novelty of a gorgeous vestment.

Still, as to these merely outward matters, I have always held that, provided the law was not infringed nor the weak brother for whom Christ died offended, it would be hard to enforce on others my own disinclination to change. Where, therefore, with the rising tone of a parish there has been such a corresponding rise in its ritual, I have always felt it to be my duty in my office, instead of coldly discouraging such accidents of growth, whereby perchance the growth itself might be checked, to guide and moderate rather than oppose their development. Life, even with certain eccentricities, seems to me, after all, to be so much better than death; the sparkling stream, even though it does brawl, is so far more lovely than the reek of a stagnant pool, that I have always joyfully associated myself with the living workers of the diocese, whether, in their fear of change they sought, as to ritual observances, to maintain a somewhat starved and unpicturesque simplicity of manner; or in their desire of acting by all lawful instruments upon the souls of men,

they adopted a more ornamental style of worship. A reasonable growth in the decency and beauty of the externals of worship naturally accompanies and often helps forward increasing devotion, a growing sense of God's presence with His Church, and of the greatness of the service which we ought to render to the Heavenly King. The restoration of our churches, the comely and often beautiful adorning of our chancels, the vast improvement in our church music, the greater order, efficiency, and heartiness of our services, all instance this, and call for our deepest gratitude to God. The time has passed away, I hope for ever, when we could be content with dilapidated churches, the mould-stained walls of which were broken by patches of plaster into irregular deformity ; with their rattling rifted windows letting in every blast from which the high separating pews gave but scanty shelter, even to the favoured occupant of the safest corner. All this, I trust, is gone for ever : and with it the meanness of the holy table, with its discoloured coverings, its iron-moulded linen, and its discreditable plate ; with the dingy surplice put carelessly or reluctantly on in the face of the gaping congregation, preparatory to the poor and often stammering duet between the parson and the clerk, which a still surviving instinct named " reading prayers." All this, I hope, has vanished from us for ever. With these, too,

is disappearing, would that it was wholly gone, the monotonous reading from the pulpit of bought or borrowed essays, which, with their dreary dullness and cold lack of Christian truth, could reach no soul. For these great and growing improvements we may all assuredly thank God. Better, surely, is it to run the risk of some occasional excess in development, than to bind down the rising temper of the Church to the almost obsolete poverty of a doubtful life.

But whilst I rejoice in this altered tone of our services, I must not fail to remind you that there may be changes, in what look at first sight to be mere outward matters, which do involve great doctrinal questions ; and, as by the mere substitution of one flag for another, there may be indicated in a very small alteration, changes which reach very far indeed. As to all such changes, it is of course impossible to be too watchful. They may, if they are allowed to establish themselves without question, lead, almost before we are aware, into an alteration of our position as to great and fundamental truths. Thus, for example, our Church and nation did deliberately, at the Reformation in the sixteenth century, reject at once the tyrannous usurpations of the Bishop of Rome, and a whole system of superstitious accretions which, under the shadow of the Papacy, had, moss-like, overgrown the fair proportions of primitive truth.

This great restoration of an earlier purity was obtained at the price of a convulsion which could hardly fail to injure and even destroy some things, and to endanger more, which, though good and valuable in themselves, were by accident connected more or less directly with the discarded errors. As time passed on, the loss of these, inevitable as it was, and to be willingly endured as the price of the great gain of recovered purity, began to make itself felt. Negligence, carelessness, sloth, and coldness of heart increased the evil. On this state of things broke, as God saw fit to give them, "times of refreshing from the Lord." Such, I doubt not, was the great Evangelical movement, reviving personal religion at the end of the last and the beginning of the present century. Such again, I doubt not, was that awakening of the Church's corporate life which is known as the Oxford movement. Both of these aimed at arousing the dormant energies of the spiritual life amongst us within our own reformed Church. Both, in their main action, with human imperfections, mistakes, and failures, tended to accomplish this result. The changes introduced or attempted by each of these were a prolongation of the actually-existing lines upon which our sacred edifice is planned. They might, in many of their details, be wise or unwise, successful or unsuccessful; but both sought to perfect, not to change the Church

of England. To the efforts therefore of both of these, those who believed with equal faith in her Catholicity and her Reformation might, if their minds had breadth enough to free them from mere party trammels, heartily wish God speed.

But there is another set of changes which men may aim at introducing, changes which do not tend to the perfecting of our own system, but to the introduction instead of it, of that which is in whole or in part really another. Such changes as these, whether their advocates do or do not see the conclusion to which they are naturally leading, do really symbolise a body different from our own, and tend, so far as they are allowed, to transform our own into it.

Suffer me to name to you, as an instance of what I mean, one practice, the growth of which amongst us I view with great apprehension, I mean a tendency unquestionably manifested in certain quarters to change the idea of the Holy Eucharist from a Communion of the faithful into a function of the celebrating priest. Such a change is, in my most mature judgment, no lawful progress in increased reverence for that great Sacrament upon the lines of our own Church. I cannot but regard it as the adoption of the view, and therefore of the practice, of another Church, to whose doctrine as to the Holy Eucharist it naturally belongs, whereas it is absolutely subversive

of that which has been received amongst ourselves. For in strict agreement as we believe with the words of Holy Writ, and with the teaching of the primitive Church, we do not regard the Communion of the faithful as an accident of the Holy Eucharist, which may be added to it, or separated from it, at will, leaving the great function of intercession untouched by the omission, but as of the very essence of the Sacrament. So it was at the institution: "Take, eat, this is My Body." The mysterious presence and the actual Communion are bound indissolubly together. So they are in St. Paul's address to the Corinthian Church: "The bread that we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ?" Such was the custom of those first Christians who came together on the first day of the week, not to see even an Apostle celebrate, but to break bread; to partake, that is, plainly, themselves, of the consecrated element. From this the solitary Mass of Rome is so absolutely unwarranted a deviation, that we can have no assurance that it does not altogether overthrow the very nature of the Sacrament. It is certain that this practice is most intimately connected, both as cause and consequence, with the greatest practical corruptions of the Papal Communion. Whatever, then, tends to its introduction amongst ourselves appears to me to threaten the existence of our whole religious system. Such ten-

dencies I see in the attempt to make the celebrations of the Holy Eucharist at our principal Sunday Morning Service impressive, if not gorgeous, as a display, whilst the congregation are urged to remain through the service as spectators, but not to partake of the Sacrament as communicants. Such a tendency I detect in the multiplication of choral communions, where few members of the choir communicate. The very purpose for which these practices are recommended seems to me at variance with the true idea of the Eucharist ; for effectual with God, as we doubt not, through Christ our Lord, this great appointed act of the Church's intercession is, I know no ground for supposing that prayer, offered up by those who are present at the celebration but do not partake in it, is one whit more prevailing than prayer at any other time or in any other place. Nor does it seem to me that a surrounding crowd of non-communicants adds any honour to the Sacrament. On the contrary, to remain and not to communicate seems to me to dishonour Christ's institution, and to injure the soul of the worshipper. Far truer, far more reverend, far safer for the unprepared spirit, was the old warning, which, before the sacred mysteries, proclaimed to the unbaptized, to the catechumen, and to the unreconciled penitent that he should depart.

Against these changes, then, and such as these,

I venture with a parting voice to warn you. Never, so far as I can read the signs of the times, was there a period when re-union with the corrupt communion which has ever persecuted with a thoroughly Donatist hatred our Reformed Church, was more impossible than now. More and more, by an arrogance which increases with her weakness, by a growing intolerance for truth which she once endured, by a new fruitfulness in error, and by a blind infatuation which looks to me most like to a judicial sentence, which makes her able to forget truth alone and to learn nothing but falsehood, the Papal See is alienating from itself its own Italy, its favourite Spain, its old adherents in Germany, and its most enlightened children in France. At such a moment, we are told, its hopes are concentrated on England. It has always been, it still remains, the special charge of the English Church to resist these insidious assaults. Nor, God helping her, will that Church resist in vain. The sects, like the undisciplined mass whose burning zeal cannot compensate in the terrible time of an invasion for their lack of disciplined movements and compact organization, would soon fall before her: but the Catholic Church of England, whilst she is true to herself and to her God, can, and in Christ's strength I venture to say will, ward off from this nation so tremendous an evil as its subjugation to the yoke of the Papacy. Strange, in-

deed, it may appear to some, that empty visions such as these, which seem almost to belong to a delirious dotage, should pass before the eyes of the old enchantress. But they are not wholly without some semblance of probability. I will not detain you now to examine with me the curious problem of those laws of thought which ever make such oscillations of opinion possible. I will content myself with urging on your consideration the reasons for resisting the danger, and suggesting one or two modes of keeping guard against it.

We should then, I think, most earnestly resist all real movement towards Rome, first, because its accomplishment would most certainly involve the loss of that blessed heritage of the truth of God, which, of His great mercy, through the fires of martyrdom and the anguish of a whole generation of our fathers, He has given to us; and next, because any degree or semblance of such movement does more than anything besides to help on, by the shock which it gives to our long-established habits of belief, the progress of that flood of lawless infidelity which Revelation shews to us as the plague of the last days, and which seems to have been already poured largely forth by the angel ministers of wrath upon the air around us. Already we have, I believe, so suffered. Faith amongst us has already endured a far ruder shock from perversions to Rome, than

from those scientific discoveries which are by some supposed mainly to endanger its continuance. Between true Science and the Christian Revelation there can be no conflict. The Queen of sciences must be at one with her imperial sisters, even though the too eager and perhaps half-instructed followers of each may indulge in passionate brawls and unseemly contentions. For whilst there are those who bring true Science into disrepute with believers, by setting up her claims as hostile to the Christian faith, there are also those amongst ourselves who decry Science in order to exalt Revelation. The one evil creates the other. Surely any dread or hatred of Science is unworthy of a Christian man. For his God is the God of nature as truly as He is the God of grace. Nor need we fear for the result if shortsighted men do seek to array the powers of Science against Christianity. The assaults of such as these upon the sacred deposit of the faith the Church has from the first endured and defeated, and she can endure them again, and again defeat them. Only internal corruption can make her fall before her enemies. Whatever, therefore, weakens within herself the heart of faith is her chiefest danger, and this evil has been wrought in this generation by the perversion of mighty ones amongst her children to the corruptions, the untruthfulness, and the superstition of the Papacy.

Against this, as a real and great danger, we are bound to strive.

The main outline of that strife, as we ought to wage it, it is not difficult to trace. There must first be kept alive amongst ourselves a high estimation of the value of that truth which God has given to us ; that is, of the Christian dogma in their simplicity, of the Word of God in its authority, of the Church of Christ in the completeness of its organization and the fulness of its spiritual powers. There must be this, to make us vigilant in guard and ready in act to beat back the first assault.

Next, there must be unity amongst ourselves. How little do men estimate at their full weight of evil to the cause of Christ, those too common faults of hard words, peevish suspicions, and unbrotherhood in action ! What a grieving of the blessed Spirit of unity, what a dividing of hearts, what a weakening of hands, what a scattering of faith is the fruit of this, and yet how decently is it veiled over with the specious show of zeal for the truth, and fearlessness in its defence ! To you, brethren, I speak as to those to whom God has given largely hitherto of this spirit of unity, and I beseech you cultivate it yet more and more, spread it wider around you, proclaim its blessedness, and be witnesses of its power.

But beyond all else, if for our Church, our

country, and our age, we are to do the work of God, we must each one grow and abound more and more in the deep mystery of personal oneness with Christ our Lord. There must be no tarrying on the threshold, but a pressing in to the full knowledge and enjoyment of this blessed companionship. Respectability, earnestness, action, spotless orthodoxy, ceaseless labour, patient, successful study : all these are needful, all admirable ; but all of these must fail of the great end if there be not in us, as members of His Church, yea, and yet more abundantly as ministers of His Word and Sacraments, a close, entire, personal union with Him. We cannot witness of Him, we cannot be filled with His strength, unless having found peace through the blood of His Cross we have each one borne to Him the mystery of a life, laid it down at His feet, taken it again from His pierced hands, and then sought in prayer and meditation and holy communion to know more of His actual indwelling, so that He is one with us and we one with Him.

1869.

THE history of human thought is little else than a chronicle of re-actions ; and the true links which bind successive schools may most often be found in their antagonisms. Thus the rise of the great

evangelical movement in this land, to which not this nation only, but every quarter of the world owes so much,—was itself, through the working of the Spirit of God, a re-action against the sluggish apathy of the last century as to Christian doctrine and the spiritual life. It was stirred into fuller action by the infidel revolution of France, amidst the sparks which were blown amongst ourselves from that vast conflagration. This movement, by degrees, changed the whole temper of our Church. Being,—and needing to be to do its work,—essentially a protest against old formality in the dry use of common means of grace, its great labour was to stir up the spiritual life in individuals. It proclaimed the uselessness of creeds and formularies, and services and sacraments, to those whose souls were not awakened by the living breath of the Lord. Dwelling thus mainly on the subjective side of Christianity, to a certain extent it tended to prevent the putting prominently forward those great objective truths and institutions which provide for the permanence of the Church; and, as it died away in a generation, many of whom inherited more of its watchwords than of its spirit,—it left the Church with a vast increase of individual piety, with a general standard of religious feeling raised by the spasms of true life through which it had led so many,—but with some estrangedness amongst some of its

most exclusive adherents from the great external provisions which God has set in the new covenant for perpetually re-implanting, and so maintaining, the Divine life in the world.

Meanwhile, a new eddy in the great world-stream was making these very provisions pre-eminently important as safeguards of the faith. The rising temper of the day was one marked by an impatience of all authority, human and divine, which was running rapidly into utter lawlessness. Every opinion, every institution, almost every fact, in politics, in history, in morals, and in religion,—was attacked. Upon the established Church, as was natural, because it stood directly in the course of the revolving cyclone, the storm burst in all its fury. The men of the former school, who clung pertinaciously to their own shibboleth, were in some respects singularly disqualified from making head against it. Many of them, in their hearty zeal for individual piety, had come to see in their Church little more than the most national, the best educated, best endowed, and most sober-minded of the sects around them. The subjective and individual had swallowed up the objective and the corporate, just when the whole strain of the struggle must rest upon the Divine fact of there being a revealed external truth, and a Divine present machinery upon which the individual and inward could rest.

But this was not the case with all. There woke up in many hearts, which had been directly and indirectly affected by the last movement, a new modification of the old re-action. Loyal spirits were driven back to contemplate the true essentials of the Christian Church, as the divinely-constituted keeper of God's Word and God's truth, as, through the teaching of that Word, the unchanging authority in a world of perturbations, as the divinely-constituted channel of His grace to man. To maintain and spread these truths, to prove that our Church was for our land, this one Apostolical communion,—and to shew her forth in this character,—was the vocation of the new school. It took into its ranks, as all new and strong movements will, most heterogeneous supporters. But many of its leaders were the very men who, in the former generation, would have been the standard-bearers in the evangelical column. Inheriting their love to souls, their zeal for truth, their simple-hearted devotion to Christ, they were ready to bear every suffering and reproach, so that they in their day could but fight, as their fathers had fought in the generation before them, the good fight to which THE VOICE had called them.

How mighty for good, even with all its drawbacks, has been the result of this movement, even they can form some idea who measure it by the

mere outward standard of the spiritual power of the Church of England, as it was then, and as it is now. And yet this outward power is but the consequence of that growth in devotion, in self-sacrifice, in zeal for the faith, in belief in God's presence with her, which lie deep down below the outer surface.

But such a movement must have its own dangers. As it attracted the attention of eager, and drew the affections of passionate men, in whom was no great depth of faith, to the glorious vision of the Church of Christ, some would rest in it, and so become the victims of mere exterior sensations; whilst others would crave, amidst the unsettledness and questions of the day, for the assertion of infallibility and the utterances of absolute authority.

Besides such fantastic and undisciplined spirits, in their hour of weakness, ever stood our Church's oldest and deadliest enemy, the schismatic papal communion; offering them all that their mother in her wisdom withheld, promising them what she in her very love denied. And when troublous times came, when it seemed as if some great doctrine of the faith were not duly asserted amongst us, she succeeded, even with some nobler natures and more loyal hearts, in drawing them away, to drink of the cup of her sorceries, and exchange their true old English Churchmanship for the distempered

foreign growth of an intriguing Ultramontaniam. This was most especially the case with some whose earliest training had been in the Evangelical movement, and upon whom the vision of the Church in her completeness burst as a new discovery with an almost dazzling brightness. Yet still, in spite of such losses, and of the foul reproach and deep suspicion to which they exposed it, the movement flowed on unchecked, blessing often the most those who did not, as party men, belong to it, until at this day, restored churches, re-established ritual, more frequent and devout communions, works of faith, and love, and mercy, and a devotion to the truth and to the fellowship of the saints, and stirrings of life in Synods, Convocations, and Missions, such as our fathers knew not, attest,—we humbly trust—the presence with us of the good hand of our God.

Now, it is at this time and amidst such blessings, that there has risen amongst us (to deal first with that subject) this great development of Ritual. Doubtless it has sprung out of the two movements I have sought to describe. It seems to me like some brilliant fantastic coruscation, which has cast itself forth from the surface of the weltering mass of molten metal, which, unaffected by such exhalations, flows on with its full stream into its appointed mould. Those burning sparks witness of the heat of the mass from which they

sprung; they are not, in their peculiar action, of its essence or its end. For it is carefully to be noted, that, where the movement itself has been the deepest, there ritualistic extravagances have the least appeared. No diocese, perhaps, from various causes, has risen more than that of Oxford, with the general rise of Church devotion; none has been more free from these peculiar excesses. And this suggests some important considerations as to our conduct with regard to these newly-restored rites, and as to those who have sought to introduce them.

How then, first, are the introducers of these rites to be treated by us? Not, I venture to say, at once, with harshness and reproach, not with unloving severity, not with undistinguishing condemnation, not with unbrotherly suspicions. These are not the weapons of Christian men; by these, Christ's truth cannot be advanced. We are bound to admit, that amongst the clergy and the laity (for this has been anything but an exclusively clerical movement) who are conspicuous for the introduction of these novelties, are men inferior to none in self-devotion, in apparent love to Christ, in tenderness towards His poor, in zeal for His truth, or in the fervour of their own devotion. Such men we can ill afford to lose. I trust that no taunts from without, and no timorousness within, will lead any of the rulers of our Church

to aid in driving out any one who can, consistently with truth and faithfulness, be kept amongst us, lest we repeat again our fathers' fault, and lose our brethren as they lost John Wesley and his noble fellows^a.

^a I append some almost prophetic words from a predecessor in this See:—"It is peculiarly unhappy, that while we are employed on one side in defending the Gospel, we are accused on another of corrupting it. I have not now in my view either the Church of Rome, or the Protestants who broke off from us a century ago. The methods of dealing with both have been long since prescribed, and I repeat them not; but intreat your attention to the movements of each, especially the former, if you have any of them in your parishes. But I mean to speak of persons risen up in our own times, and professing the strictest piety: who vehemently charge us with departing from the doctrines and slighting the precepts of our religion; but have, indeed, themselves advanced unjustifiable notions, as necessary truths, giving good people groundless fears, and bad ones groundless hopes; disturbed the understandings of some, impaired the circumstances of others; prejudiced multitudes against their proper ministers, and prevented their edification by them; produced first disorders in our Churches, then partial or total separations from them, and set up unauthorized teachers in their assemblies. Where these irregularities will end, God only knows, but it behoves us to be very careful, that they make no progress through our fault.

"Now, it would not only be injurious, but profane, to brand with an opprobrious name, Christians remarkably serious, merely for being such; and equally imprudent to disclaim them as not belonging to us, to let a sect gain the credit of them, and labour to drive them into it. Surely we should take, even were they wavering, or actually gone from us, the most respectful and persuasive means of recalling such, and fixing them with us. Nay, supposing any persons irrevocably gone, we should not be hasty to condemn, even in our thoughts, either them or their party, as enthusiasts or hypocrites: *whatever they are, it maketh no matter to us.* And much less ought we to say of either, worse than we are

But, with this kindly forbearance, which strives to retain the men, there must be joined distinct

sure they deserve. When we are undoubtedly well-informed of any extravagant things which they have asserted or done, it may be useful to speak strongly of them, but not with anger and exaggeration, which will only give them a handle to censure our uncharitableness, and confute us ; but with deep concern, that when so few persons express any zeal for the Gospel, so many of those who do, run into extremes, that hurt its interests. Nor will ridicule become our character, or serve our cause better than invective. It may please those very highly who are in no danger of being proselyted by them. But what shall we get by that ? Persons negligent of religion will at the same time be confirmed in their negligence, and think that all they need to avoid is being *righteous overmuch*. Tender minds will be grieved and wounded by such ill-placed levity, and crafty declaimers will rail at us with success *as scoffers denying the power of godliness*. But if we let fall any light expressions that can be wrested into a seeming disrespect of any Scripture doctrine or phrase, we shall give our adversaries unspeakable advantages, and they have shewn that they will use them without mercy or equity. Therefore, we must guard every word that we utter, against misrepresentations : be sure to express in public and private our firm belief of whatever evangelical truths border upon their mistakes, and certainly be as vigilant over our behaviour as our teaching ; encourage no violence, no rudeness towards them, but recommend ourselves to them by our mildness, our seriousness, our diligence ; honour those who are truly devout and virtuous amongst them, much more on that account than we blame them for being injudicious and hard to please ; and be full as ready to acknowledge the good they have done as to complain of the harm ; yet beware, and counsel others to beware of being drawn by esteem of their piety into relishing their singularities and patronizing their schism.”—*Secker’s Charges. Second Charge, as Archbishop of Canterbury, A.D., 1762, pp. 256—9.* (Published by Rivington, 1799.)

“We have, in fact, lost many of our people to sectaries by not preaching in a manner sufficiently Evangelical ; and shall neither recover them from the extravagancies into which they have

utterances as to the truth committed to our charge. We do, my brethren in Christ,—I doubt not one and all,—hold fast to the great protest against mediæval corruption made by our fathers three hundred years ago. Certainly in our day we have seen nothing to induce us to let it die out in uncertain or ambiguous murmurs. We have seen the full bloom of corruptions which were then but budding; doubtful expressions of earlier times concerning the Blessed Virgin have been first exaggerated (“developed” is the Romish euphemism for the characteristic operation), then fixed in formal statements, and at last enforced as dogmatic truth. The growing cultus of the mother of our Lord, long bordering on the highest act of impiety against the only God, that of transferred worship,—seems to have reached its highest conceivable limit. Never did the English mind revolt more thoroughly than now against that whole system which hangs like a lurid atmosphere around ultramontane belief; poisoning, as it seems to us, the blessed sanctities of family life, and breaking into strange distortions the straight lines of unswerving truth.

No tenderness then towards men, can make us trifle with the protest of our Church against the

run, nor keep more from going over to them, but by returning to the right way, declaring all the counsel of God; and that principally, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.”—*Ib.*, *Third Charge*, p. 276.

Roman alterations of the primitive and apostolic truth. Should it at last unhappily be plain that any do indeed intend, through practices in appearance at least somewhat assimilated to those of Rome, to introduce the Roman teaching,—one course, and one course only as to them, would then remain. May God avert that evil day, and teach us in the meantime how to draw closer to ourselves those whom, for our very love of Him they love,—we cannot choose but love.

Most reluctantly should I admit any general charge of disloyalty to our own Church as the moving spring of this ritual development. In some few of its abettors such disloyalty may lurk,—I trust in very few. I cannot doubt the hearty honesty of the great number of those whose actions I am, nevertheless, compelled to condemn. I desire to believe that they have intended only to protest in act against the careless negligence which has shocked them in some of their brethren, and against the lowering down, through modern unbelief, of some of the great doctrines of our reformed communion; that they have desired to raise the English, not to introduce the Romish use.

But, leaving the men, the question remains as to these new rites. We in this diocese have read of them without; but our churches, as to these, remain as they were. To such a course I have

earnestly exhorted you both publicly and privately, and to-day, in the face of the Diocese, I repeat the counsel. Nor will I scruple to assign my reasons for praying you still to maintain this cautious abstinence from such changes as these.

First, then, let me say I do not rest this advice upon any authoritative decision of mine as to the illegality of any or all of these innovations.

There are two reasons why I avoid altogether this ground of advice.

1. Because I may at any moment be required, as an ecclesiastical judge, to decide upon this question, having heard it argued before me; and it seems contrary to the duty of my office to pronounce as if I had prejudged what I afterwards must hear with impartial care.

2. Because I think the mere legal settlement of such a question cannot meet the vast issues which are involved in it. I should have far more hope of healing our troubles by taking a broader view of the matter than merely ascertaining the exact limits, intended or unintended, of a statute passed some hundred years ago.

I would, then, ask all who long for these alterations, whom my voice can reach,—to consider for a few moments what are the purposes and what therefore, at any time, ought to be the limits of ritual. All religious ritual then, which is not used in conformity with the direct com-

mand of God, must of course be adopted for the end of assisting His people to set forth His glory. There can, therefore, be no absolutely fixed standard to which all public Christian worship should rigidly conform. It must, to a certain extent, vary according to the knowledge, the customs, and the temper of the country and age in which it is practised. This I notice first, because the necessity of such power of variation may, I think, lead us on to see what are the great fundamental rules on which the whole scheme of ritual ought to be framed. For to fulfil its purpose, it must lead the worshipper *to* God, not interpose itself as a veil between God and him ; it must express, whilst it may elevate his devotion. Whatever fails in this, fails of effecting its true purpose. For if it does not express the inward worship of the heart, it must be either an hypocrisy or an oppression, and in either case it must mar and not raise devotion. It may thus fail if, by extravagance, or by its mere unaccustomedness, it rudely shocks the religious instincts of the worshipper. It may thus fail if by its splendour, its variety, or its intricacy, it draws the soul, which should be lifted up to God, down to the painted images which float as upon an intervening mist upon its own presence and action.

If these principles are sound, it follows—first, that whilst ritual may rise with, and in its turn

help to raise increasing devotion, such a rise must be most gradual, that it may be free from the starts and shocks which must accompany the sudden acting of external force on any living body, and be able to adapt itself freely to the unseen growth of the inward and spiritual devotion of the souls whose outward worship it is to embody and express ; next, that all sudden changes of the externals of worship, which in violation of this harmony run greatly beyond the inner life of the worshipper's devotion, are like to injure the character of his worship : and thirdly, that, irrespective of any such shocks, a greatly raised ritual need not necessarily be in itself a blessing ; for that it may be approaching the condition in which the intricate and artificial character of its symbolism, or even its very beauty and gorgeousness, unfit it for being a transmitting medium of the soul's worship.

As to the application of the two first of these limitations, whilst we must always guard against weakly yielding to the love of pre-eminence which still leads many a parish Diotrephes to seek to dictate rudely to those who are set over him in the Lord ; yet there ought to be a loving, tender watchfulness on the part of those, whether clergy or laity, who desire any change, lest what they deem an improvement should become a stumbling-block to another. Still more care is needful as

to the third limitation. For as we have, in all the details of worship, no divinely-appointed ceremonial, we must watch jealously in all changes whether or no we have with us indications of the leading hand of God, and at once suspect as earthly additions, whatever seems to lack such discoverable tokens of the Divine approval. And now, when I proceed to try by these principles the extreme ritualism of which I speak, I have no hesitation in avowing that it does not appear to me to make good its claim to our adoption. Its growth has certainly been hasty and apparently excessive. For, first, the sudden restoration of unaccustomed vestments,—always trying to eyes used only to a simple and colourless attire,—has been accompanied by an obtrusive introduction of new, perhaps suspected, attitudes, postures, and actions, as well as by interruptions of the wonted service which, through addresses to the senses of sight, sound, and smell,—challenged to themselves notice and criticism. In all this, then, there has been no advance by insensible gradation, but rather a studied display of large and rapid change. Next, there has been no general preparation of men's minds for such alterations. All, I suppose, would admit that in most, if not all, of our old parish churches, the introduction of these new rites would be startling and disturbing,—we may even say offensive,—not only to a few jealous,

ignorant, and narrow-minded persons, but to the great mass of our sober-minded and devout worshippers. Thus, instead of finding the ground prepared for them, they would necessarily repel those (and they would be the many) to whom they would be offensive, and may we not further fear that they would too often tend to draw down from the great Object, to the mere vehicle of worship, too many of those to whom they were welcome?

Further; are there about the introduction of these rites those marks of God's leading which should precede, or at least accompany, such changes? I cannot trace them. Rather I see counter-indications. For, the working of the unseen Spirit which fashions and moulds the external aspect of the Church, must surely be traced by most orderly developments, or God were not the God of Order. So I think it has been in that marked rise in the tone of our services which has distinguished the last thirty years. The choral worship which survived, under the shelter of authority, in our cathedrals, has spread to one after another of our parish churches, as the parishioners became fitted for the change. Whole districts have been leavened gradually with a higher idea and practice of worship. With that has come a greater outward exhibition, and, I verily believe, a quickened inward spirit of reverence towards holy things, and in religious services. Faith in

God's presence and gifts has grown equally with the external manifestations which belong to and affirm them, until some, at least, of those without have been constrained to fall down and confess that God is with us of a truth. But can we with any like confidence claim His working in these later changes? We have seen already their lack of that character of gradualness which is a correlative of growth. Are they not wanting in other almost equally sure indications of the presence of His hand who is the author and the restorer of all good? Have they the marks of being, like all stirrings of the life-giving Spirit in nature and in grace, common and diffusive? Again, Have they with them, I will not say the encouragement, but even the clear allowance of living authority, whether in office, or in the weight which gathers in any church round wisdom, learning, and holiness? Is it not, on the contrary, a matter of notoriety, that they have been eminently sectional, if not individual in their rise; and that they have been mainly introduced, sometimes clearly by the rash, and generally by the young and the ardent, against the wishes of the more sober-minded, and the advice of those whom He has appointed overseers of the flock.

Is there not here again, a marked diversity between the introduction of these new changes, and the advance of that earlier and broader column

of which it is apt to deem itself the head. Opposition indeed there was to the earlier movement ; but until the publication of the celebrated "Tract 90," nothing like the general condemnation of the Episcopal body ; nor was there the voice of the Church's synod uttering, as now, its cautious but distinct words of censure on the character and amount of what had been attempted.

If I am so far right in my principles and my conclusions, I may venture, without any fear of seeming faint-hearted, to go one step further, and suggest to those who favour these changes the great dangers which wait on such a course. These seem to me manifold. There is no small peril that it must ere long raise before Courts of Law questions both of religious worship, and even of doctrine, touching those sacred and mysterious subjects which are never brought into such precincts without fearful injury to the reverence, tenderness of spirit, and devout love of many ; nor without absolute shocks to the faith and steadfastness of others. I may go further still and say, that, in the present condition of our Courts, such a reference to them might easily involve us in the peril of provoking, as to some of the most mysterious articles of the faith,—authoritative statements which would create a wide-spread schism. This first ; and then, beyond this again, there is the danger of provoking what is too likely to

prove the injurious because, if for no other reason, the premature legislation of Convocation and Parliament on these high matters. And again, there is the danger too of waking up the half-slumbering spirit of religious suspicion and narrow intolerance, which needs but to be awaked to do, as in the times of our fathers, deeds of ignorance and brutal violence which might make us hide our faces before Christendom in shame. Here, surely, are dangers enough to make us cautious; and all the more so, because in these dangers is involved the great risk of staying, if not of driving back, that gradual advance of reverence for holy things, and that modest and yet prolific increase of sober ritual, and withal of deepened devotion in worship, which the present generation has seen moving onward with such a blessed presence.

Two other dangers let me suggest, lying in a deeper sphere than those I yet have named.

As it is through the spiritual organization of their own Church that her ministers and members come into actual contact with that whole body of Christ in which the Spirit dwells, and which is moulded by that Divine presence,—is there not a danger, lest in resisting authority, even to promote, as they think, the efficiency of our services,—men may be found to have been putting rashly forth an uncommanded hand to stay the ark of the jealous God?

With the suggestion of one remaining danger, I will quit this part of the subject. There are, I believe, those who have favoured these changes because they appeared to them to introduce not Roman customs but those of England before the Reformation;—such as those embodied in the Sarum Missal or the Provincial Constitutions collected by Lyndwood, or his glosses thereon. This is true in fact, but it seems to me to go but a little way towards removing the just objections entertained to this revival by those who value purity of doctrine above all things. For these were not the rites of the earlier, but of the later centuries. There can be no question that, though our English rite preserved even at that time, like the Ambrosian at Milan, its own distinctive character,—yet that as we were then deeply imbued with the corruptions of the West, these errors would in some degree be represented in our peculiar services. Earnestly, in God's name, would I implore all who value His truth to weigh well the danger they incur by familiarising the young and the unwary even with such mitigated forms of error. For one, I tremble at our Master's words, "Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven^b."

For these reasons then, amongst many others, I deeply lament these extreme changes which have

^b St. Matt. v. 19.

been here and there introduced amongst us. I lament if possible still more the lack of temperate discretion, and the manifest unwillingness to obey, which has in many instances marked the mode in which the changes have been made. Most of all I deplore what seems to me the unquestionable fact that in some instances there has been a studied introduction of names and usages which seem to have nothing else to commend them than their distinctively Roman character. Words would fail me in condemning such conduct, if it implied in Church of England clergymen a secret attachment to that schismatical and corrupt body. But if it be free from this greater sin, how grievous is the fault of at once seeking to introduce novelties into God's service, and at the same time needlessly attaching to them that most certain of scandals, to all true and loyal-hearted English Churchmen,—a popish appearance! Most justly does the Committee of the Lower House of the Convocation of our Province "remonstrate against the adoption of a phraseology borrowed from foreign communions, and which is, in some instances, as applied to the ministrations of the Church of England, novel and offensive^c." Surely our Master's tenderness with the weak, and His love for souls, has been too much forgotten in such displays as these.

^c Report of the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury on Ritual.

But you may ask, What are the practical steps which the crisis requires? The indiscretion of our brethren has made any answer to this question difficult, and I propose one with unfeigned misgiving. But thus much appears clear to me.

I. That the remedy cannot be found in legislation: first, of course, through our Convocations and ultimately by Parliament. Such legislation would be eminently premature, and therefore dangerous. To be safe, it should embody and ratify, but not precede the Church's general conclusions. To take but one instance. Legislation, if attempted, must of course deal at once with the Rubric which is quoted as legalizing these restored ornaments. What could it do? If it simply repealed the enactment, it would, by the mere act of such repeal, stir many sleeping embers into a wide-spread blaze. For this is the enactment which connects the whole ceremonial of our Church with the ceremonial of Christian antiquity. It is the counterpart in outward rites of the claim which we put so fearlessly forward in doctrine that we hold implicitly all which was held from the beginning by the undivided Church. Circumstances may have suspended the common employment of these outward tokens of our unity with the past, but we claim them as ours should occasion require us to use our inheritance. How many amongst us who would greatly prefer allowing our existing customs to rule undisturbed in

act, would protest earnestly against breaking any links which yet join us to the pre-papal Catholic Christendom? Looking at the constitution of many minds, it is really impossible to say how far this might not reach.

But, besides these considerations; if this rubric were simply repealed, no rule for our ritual would remain. Are then the times propitious for Convocation and Parliament proceeding further, and enacting by canon and statute a new table of rules for all the ornaments and ceremonial of our Church? Every one of us, I believe, would deprecate a step so certain to be richly productive of evil in its discussion, so likely to promote in the end variance and schism, which might utterly rend our body and paralyse its usefulness. Any legislation, be it remembered, must be in the direction of restricting the large liberty now enjoyed by men of all shades of opinion in the Church, from the mere fact of the various present sources of rule. For statutes, canons, prescriptions, and usage all now tend to modify and to enlarge our licence. A new sharply-defined statutable rule would indeed make havoc of the Church's liberty on every side.

The same objection applies to seeking in judicial sentences new and authoritative interpretations of rules, the many-sided application of which has often enabled our Church to expand or con-

tract her ceremonial with the elasticity which a great national communion so eminently requires. Here, again, I think we may find words of wisdom in the Report of the Committee of the Lower House, when they give their opinion that "judicial proceedings would tend to promote rather than to allay dissensions," and that "to attempt to establish a rule applicable to all places and congregations alike, is to establish a uniformity which cannot be obtained except at the price of peace ^d."

Add to this, the certainty of another and perhaps a greater danger. However we might strive to limit the question to rites, we could not, in the discussion, avoid dealing with the doctrines of which rites are the shadows; so that we should incur the peril of requiring such tribunals as ours are, to interpret with authority definitions of the greatest mysteries of our holy faith, which we have inherited from an undivided Christendom, of the history of which, and of the value of the theological terms in which they are expressed, the Judges of such courts are likely to be absolutely ignorant.

Legal proceedings, then, as well as legislative measures, may, I trust, be avoided: and yet I fear both will be inevitable unless those who, by rash-

^d Report of Committee of Lower House of Convocation on Ritual, p. 11.

ness, to say the least, of action, have brought themselves and us into these difficulties, will make, under the fatherly counsel of those set over them in the Lord, some sacrifice for peace. My earnest counsel to them is, that, in every instance, they lay their whole case before their Bishop, and act absolutely on his direction. He will, no doubt, consider well and lovingly the special circumstances of each church; the difficulty of suddenly abandoning all to which a congregation has become attached, and, so far as he deems he lawfully can, will seek to meet such difficulties by a just and comprehensive settlement of the questions referred trustfully to him. In urging this course upon faithful Churchmen, I speak with the more confidence because it is assuredly the true Church line. Until the passing of the Act of Uniformity there is no question that the Bishop to a large degree fixed the Liturgy of his Diocese; those, then, who contend, on the strength of a dormant Rubric, for a legal right to innovate on the use of the Diocese against the judgment of the Bishop, are, in truth, seeking to supersede the Church's rule by an Act of Parliament. Peace, I believe, is still obtainable if, as I venture to advise, they will place the matter in their Bishop's hands. For, that which has most alarmed the great body of the Church, is a sense of entire insecurity as to what amount of alteration, and

what hidden doctrinal meanings, recent changes seem to threaten.

It may be objected to this that it would still leave some difference of ceremonial in different churches. To a certain extent it would. But I do not regard such a variation, if it be moderate, allowed by authority, and such as implies no discordance of principle, as in itself an evil. So far from it, with a general uniformity some differences in detail ought, I conceive, to be allowed. On this principle, I have now for twenty-one years administered this Diocese: never even urging upon those who from habit disliked it themselves, or feared the misunderstanding of their flocks, (and not in such cases urging it now,) obedience to such plain requirements as that the Sunday morning-sermon, when a part of the Communion Office, should be preached in the surplice and not in the gown. And, in leaving such matters open, I have feared no injurious breach of uniformity. What is most suitable in one church may be very unsuitable in another. Choral service, a sober splendour in ceremonial, all that our Church allows of symbolism, may be useful in one place and most harmful in another; and, for the most part, the just application of so flexible a rule as this of course implies, may, I believe, be trusted to the discretion of the clergy and their congregations throughout our

different parishes, under their Bishop's rule, if only we are prepared at once to remind the turbulent and disaffected that the due ordering of the services rests, within the limits fixed by the law, with the Ordinary, and not with them, and at the same time to consult, with a tender anxiety, ever for the infirmities of the really devout. So far, indeed, do I carry this principle, that where new churches have been built with a view to the practice in them of a legal ritual higher than the common, and where congregations have been gathered to it and learned to value it,—I should greatly regret any sudden and violent changes (except as to matters absolutely necessary) being forced upon them in the direction of a lower ceremonial in order to maintain a frozen uniformity. Within certain limits, and those somewhat wide ones, I should wish to see the Church of this free country left free to gather in the people to herself. If into churches in which there are no worshippers of longer standing, who, being used to another mode of conducting the service, would be rudely shocked by some increase of ceremonial, any of those multitudes who are now without, can, by any increase of the externals of worship which does not violate the law, or tend evidently to superstition, be drawn in to hear God's Word, and to worship Him,—I for one should unfeignedly rejoice. Nor, whilst I think

it our absolute duty to regard tenderly and lovingly the very prejudices which in our own people have entwined themselves with their devotions, can I understand why those who have preserved for themselves the simpler modes of worship to which they are accustomed, should grudge to others the more florid use to which their hearts incline, provided only that the differences involve no variety of principle or infringe upon the harmony of a common faith. By such conscientious self-restraint, alike in adopting changes ourselves, and in interfering with and judging others, I think we may best promote that growth in faith, in devotion, and in the accidents of worship, which has marked the present century, through the influence first of the Evangelical, and then of what I should term the Church movement, and which, I trust, through God's mercy, may yet advance soberly and healthily amongst us.

For surely there is much left to be attained. How far, for instance, are we below the standard set by our Reformers as to our celebration of the Holy Eucharist. They, as I have already remarked, to guard against the abuse of solitary masses, provided that the celebration of the great crowning act of public worship,—which they clearly contemplated as the rule for Sundays and holy-days,—should be arrested at a certain point of the service, unless four, or at least three, should

be ready to communicate with the Priest ; and we, alas, have adopted, as the normal condition of our services, what they prescribed, — under exceptional circumstances, — to prevent one special abuse ; and except on one Sunday in the month, too commonly interrupt our celebration as a matter of course, however many may be present who would communicate.

Surely the natural consequences of such a decline may be traced amongst us in our infrequent celebrations, in the comparative paucity of our regular communicants, and in the wide prevalence of low and unworthy notions concerning the blessed mystery of the Lord's Supper.

It is not, then,—and I trust that this may add weight to my words of caution,—from a blind contentment with our present standard as absolutely perfect,—that I have advised you to abstain from adopting the recently exhibited extreme development of ritual. Nay, it is not even because I would imperatively stay all ritual progress, so only that it conforms to these four conditions:—First, that it is not contrary to law ; 2ndly, that it does not tend to promote amongst us any false doctrine or corrupt practice ; 3rdly, that it be at the least not condemned by living authority ; and 4thly, that it be the gradual expression in outer things of the advancement of the Church's inward life. Such a moderate and

sober development of its ceremonial seems to me to belong necessarily to the Church as a living body: nor, if it be at all in its normal condition, can its ritual be healthily congealed into absolutely unalterable forms. Life implies, of necessity, change. As the sap rises abundantly or is impeded in its flow, the outer aspect of the living bough bears witness to the alternations of the hidden current. As the currents of the blood or the vibrations of the nervous energy, are healthy or diseased, the countenance, and even the very form of the limbs, will visibly alter. Death only secures immutability. No less certainly must the outward expression of the Life Spiritual change with the changes of its inner currents.

Again, in any normal condition of the Church, the spiritual necessities of the body necessitate changes. Every varying phase through which it is passing renders some change expedient, perhaps essential to life. The bark-bound tree, the hide-bound animal, must suffer, and too often die. The rigid clasp of an unalterable ritual may fatally repress zeal, generate formality, or nourish superstition. In the normal condition, therefore, of the Church, ritual must be, and ought to be, elastic, and subject to variations. But it may be thought that with us such changes are made impossible by the legal character of our rubrics and

services. Impossible of course such changes are not, even when they mount up to alterations of the letter of our rubrics ; since they may be, and have been, effected by Convocation and Parliament. Difficult they no doubt are, and, from various causes, which will occur to most of you, often dangerous ; and therefore not to be attempted save in the last extremity of some pressing danger ; or, better still, when they are authoritatively registered by the legislatures of the Church and of the State as the conclusions which have been generally adopted after patient waiting and wide discussion. But it is of the essence of living bodies that they provide spontaneously and without external or foreign aid for the multitude of lesser contingencies by which they are beset. The bough which is growing over-weighty to maintain in the blast its connection with the parent stem, secretes the knotty fibre which sheathes anew the threatened junction. Animal life abounds in such self-developed compensations, and the spiritual life is not less self-sustained or exuberant in resource. How often, alas ! in our own and in every other Church has the ebbing tide of the spiritual life, by its mere listlessness, reduced to its own new level its nominally unaltered ritual ? How often, thank God, has revived love and renewed earnestness in devotion filled the old limbs with a flood of life which has trans-

figured forms which it retained? And it is the special duty of the Church's living governors to understand such symptoms, and to minister to their relief whatever powers of relaxation or control have been left to them, without incurring the hazard or waiting for the tedious issues of actual legislation. Many such powers our own Church has lodged in its living governors. It is their charge to interpret ambiguous rubrics, to reduce to unity matters diversely taken, to acquiesce in or to disallow changes which by minute accretions the living body has silently developed. Great, no doubt, is the judgment, the courage, the knowledge, and, above all perhaps, the impartiality which is needful to enable them to discharge aright these delicate and often momentous duties. But they cannot leave these duties undone without grievous danger to the polity over which they are appointed overseers; and, however difficult be the task, there is a strength for its discharge which they who seek it faithfully will find. Such difficulties are the sure accompaniments of times of earnestness and growth; when the full current of the inner life must, by reason of its strength, cast itself forth into some new development. Dull and lazy governors marvel at and hate such times; and there is mixture enough of evil in all such movements to make such a feeling plausible at least, if not

natural. The mountain torrent which brings down the dust of gold carries with it a heavy load of far ignobler substances. But the opened eye reads in such flood times, with all their turbulence and perils, tokens of the marvellous in-working of the Spirit, opportunities of co-operation with it, pledges of the great restoration of all things.

It is in this spirit that I think we are called on to look at the present time. The waters surely are troubled, but what if the hidden presence of an angel of the Lord has troubled them, and it be, if rightly used, a time of healing from our God?

Whilst, then, I consider the actual ritual developments which have been so hastily adopted in their novelty, multiplication, and amount, as rash, unadvisable, and dangerous, may it not be that the attempt to introduce them, and the amount of welcome they have met with from many both of the laity and clergy, point to some part of our present system which may admit of perfecting? This is a grave question. Most of the heaviest blows dealt against our Church have been the result of neglecting such intimations. If Her rulers had read aright the signs of the times, and tried the wise policy of supplying within the Church that for which so many yearned, instead of retreating upon what must always be

the losing game of a chill repression of the desires of a multitude of hearts, the great Methodist division might, I doubt not, have been prevented.

Does, then, the present movement point to any want to be supplied, or to any point to be gained? I believe that it does. There is, I think, clearly to be traced, not only in our own communion, but in the more earnest of the religious sects around us, a craving for a more expressive symbolism in worship. This is probably a re-action against the chillness in which Puritanism has been long dying out, as well as against the utter vagueness of modern doubts. Now, if this is so, the wise ruler should, I think, consider whether it is possible in any way to guide and satisfy so legitimate a desire. Its mere repression may make some sluggish and apathetic who might have been trained up in all the glowing zeal of Christian soberness. This is perhaps the great danger of the policy of bare repression. It tends so terribly to dry up the springs of an earnest spirituality of life. Besides this, it will assuredly drive others over to adopt the deceiving symbolism of Rome, which is ever lying in wait to profit by any mistakes of ours. She manifests by her undisguised hatred to all Catholic movement amongst us, how well she knows the strength we might find against Papal perversion in a satisfying amount of English Ritual.

But here we are met, first, by the allegation that this increased ceremonial is, after all, only the expression of a feeble love of ornament, an unmanly desire to deck out the ministers of the sanctuary in gorgeous attire and sumptuous vestments, and is really incompatible with spiritual worship. This, when it is examined closely, proves to be the old Puritan objection to the Church's whole system of external rites and ceremonies; it really applies as truly to surplices and hoods as to chasubles and copes. I need not repeat to you Hooker's old argument against Travers, to expose such fallacies as these. All God's appointments in the Jewish, all early practice in the Christian Church, and all the symbolism of the Apocalypse, alike contradict such a teaching. So much, indeed, the more thoughtful objectors to all increase of ritual admit. For they object to change, not on its own account, but from their condemnation of the doctrines which the altered Ritual appears to them to symbolise.

They regard our limited customary rites as an essential part of our protest against Popery, and as all which can safely be allowed without some danger of restoring, with what they think Roman ritual, Roman doctrine. With me, and I doubt not with you, so far as our own judgment on the matter is concerned, this is the very essence of the question. We would tolerate no rites which do really favour the corruptions of Rome.

But do facts and does reason bear out this view? Is it not rather contrary to the facts, and derogatory to the character of our Reformation; derogatory to its character, as though it were directed against forms, and not against corruptions in doctrine, against ancient vestments, and not against the claims of Papal supremacy and infallibility, against transubstantiation, against the worship of the Blessed Virgin, against purgatory, against withholding God's word from the people, against "those sacrifices of masses in which it was commonly said that the priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead^e." The allegation that Rome uses this ceremonial, of itself proves nothing against it. The real question for us English Churchmen is; Is it a use of Christian antiquity, or is it a Popish addition? for this is the very point of our protest against Rome. We charge her with having added her own superstitions to the great deposit of primitive truth and practice which we hold and observe with her; and never, therefore, do we more emphatically protest against her than when, rejecting her novelties, we assert our own Catholicity by our adherence to the old customs in their simplicity, which, for herself, she has depraved with her superstitious additions. If the real rule were, the farther from Rome the nearer to truth, we must equally give up Scripture, Creeds, and

^e Art. XXXI.

Sacraments, and become Rationalists, Infidels, or Brownists^f.

The question, then, is one of fact. Are our present rites all that the earliest times, or that our own most learned Divines have admitted and practised? There can be no doubt about the answer to both of these questions. The ceremonial of antiquity was far richer than ours; so was that in use by such great Anglican Bishops, (to name no others,) as Cosin and Andrewes. The real influence which, at the season of the Reformation, lowered our customary ritual, was the presence not of the anti-Papal, but of the Puritan element; of that element which wrought on according to its nature, and never rested till it brought down, in one common ruin, our Altar, our Prayer-book, and our Crown. It was partly the need of Puritan support, partly the desire of Puritan comprehension, partly the influence of those who, after the

^f Our Church has always disavowed this mode of argument; hear, for instance, the language of the thirtieth Canon of 1603:—
 “But the abuse of a thing doth not take away the lawful use of it. Nay, so far was it from the purpose of the Church of *England* to forsake and reject the Churches of *Italy, France, Spain, Germany,* or any such like Churches, in all things which they held and practised, that, as the Apology of the Church of *England* confesseth, it doth with reverence retain those Ceremonies which do neither endamage the Church of God, nor offend the minds of sober men: and only departed from them in those particular points wherein they were fallen both from themselves in their ancient integrity and from the Apostolical Churches, which were their First Founders.”

Marian persecutions, returned amongst us with the glory and influence of Confessors, but with the feelings of the foreign rather than of the English Reformers, which carried forward these changes; it was the force of these influences, and not our protest against Rome, which gave its special shape and colouring to our own ceremonial.

Of this I remind you, 1st, for the sake of historical truth; and 2ndly, because I see little hope of peace amongst ourselves, and I see much danger of the loss of many, if matters are to be discussed in heats bred by misstated facts, and not in the calmness of reasonable consideration.

Yet it may be urged, that, as most of the points of ritual now in discussion, tend to exalt men's estimate of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, they must incline towards Rome. This common allegation seems to me to contain a most important error. The protest of our Reformers against the Roman teaching as to that great Sacrament, was not that it was lifted up thereby too high in men's estimation, but that its simple grandeur was defaced by human additions; that the doctrine of transubstantiation was a modern rationalistic mode of explaining what God had left unexplained; that it was not making the transcendental presence more real, but more material. All the Roman corruptions of this great Sacrament seem to me the results of applying to

it this rationalizing process. Instead of receiving with simple faith the institution as a whole, and resting on the assurance of God's Word, that, duly ministered and received, it conveyed to the receiver the partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ, speculation set busily to work to pry into what God had hidden, and ascertain how that conveyance was effected. Thus the immediate effect of the prayer of consecration was to be defined; the mode of the Presence to be explained; the difficulties attending it to be accounted for. Hence the solution of the change in the Sacrament of the matter of the Bread and Wine, with the preservation of their qualities; and, from this, the assertion of a material, and so, in truth, of a local presence on the Altar, and with this (as our Reformers most truly alleged), at once the overthrowing the nature and mystery of a Sacrament, and the giving occasion amongst the ignorant, to those superstitious, if not idolatrous, uses which are now so fearfully favoured by the new rite of the Benediction. It was to this chain of error, and not to the reality of the Presence, that our Reformers objected. I will not weary you with proving this; let, for such purpose, these few words of Ridley, (Bishop and Martyr here in Oxford,) suffice. "Think not because I disallow *that* presence^g," (the carnal presence asserted by

^g "Which the first proposition maintaineth."

the theory of transubstantiation,) "as a presence which I take to be forged, phantastical, and beside the authority of God's Word, brought into the Church by the Romanists, that I therefore go about to take away the true Presence of Christ's Body in His Supper rightly and duly ministered, which is grounded upon the Word of God^h," &c.

There need not, then, be any tendency toward Rome, but on the contrary, a safeguard against her wiles, in rites which shewed that we valued, as highly as herself, this great culminating act of Christian worship, whilst with our Fathers we protest in no faltering tones, against her corruptions of the great primitive doctrine of the Eucharist, and refuse to receive the ungrounded fiction of a carnal, for the unquestioning certainty of a real Presence in it of our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. A distinctive dress, then, for him who ministers at this celebration, need not be Roman. It is indeed at this moment ordered for our cathedral service; it was in common use at one of our Cathedrals within a century. It need not, if unaccompanied by other causes of suspicion, shock any now. I know not that I can better shew this than by quoting to you some striking words of a bishop of our sister Church in America, of the school of thought most adverse to Rome, in answer to the allegation I have just dealt

^h Works of Ridley, Parker Society, p. 201.

with: "Our glorious Reformation was directed not against the ritualism of Rome, so far as it retained the sanction of the Bible and the Primitive Church, but against those false and corrupt doctrines by which she had so grossly innovated upon the pure creed of the Gospel. The main labours of my ministerial life have been devoted to our controversy with Rome, to the defence of our martyred Reformers, and to the vindication of our own Scriptural, Apostolical, and really Catholic systemⁱ." "I have little doubt that my children will behold the 'glory and beauty' of our public worship brought back to its first stage in the Reformation, in accordance with the rule which has never been formally renounced, and still remains in the rubric of the English Prayer-book^k."

It may, I hope, allay the fears of some amongst us, who value, as I do, the great inheritance of primitive truth, won for us by our martyred Reformers, to see that the sober flow of reviving ritual is not hostile to that truth, and need not tend toward Papal corruptions: that it may tend, if rightly guided, only to restore to us what our Fathers had before those corruptions arose; to revive old English, not to ape new Roman, ways; and that, so viewed, it may be a movement of God's Spirit re-acting against the too prevalent

ⁱ "Law of Ritualism," by Bishop Hopkins, of Vermont, p. 5.

^k *Ibid.*, p. 98.

inclination to remove all mystery from religion ; a holy desire to mark more clearly in outward act and sign that the worship of the Church even here, for each one who has faith to read aright its true character, is but the shadow cast on earth of the intercession and the worship of the heavenly temple. Only let it never be forgotten, that every increase of outer ceremonial must be accompanied by an equal increase in the simple preaching of the Gospel of Christ, and of the heart's devotion of the worshippers : for that without this inward breathing of the soul under the inspiration of the blessed Spirit, all external imagery soon passes into the second death of a hypocritical formality.

1866.

XXVIII.

CHARACTER AND CAUSES OF MODERN INFIDELITY.

WE have God's Revelation as we have His Law, and we must cleave to it purely, wholly, and determinately. We must let no indolence of spirit make us yield up the great contention for the truth which in all generations God's witnesses have had to maintain; we must let no illusive promises of intellectual advancement beguile us from the simplicity of the Gospel; but holding fast the word of truth, and striving earnestly for the old faith once delivered to the saints, we must not fear to say with the great Apostle of the Gentiles, "If any man preach any other Gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed ^a." You will, I am certain, feel with me that this is neither the time nor place for entering at large on a refutation of these opinions. The objections advanced by these writers must to a very great degree be answered in detail; and he that would deal convincingly with them must therefore be prepared to examine them at a length which would be impossible here. Such

^a Gal. i. 9.

a treatment they have already received from many able hands, and we need not be in any measure ashamed of the answers given to objectors by the existing defenders of our faith. The issue of this strife is in the hands of God. It may be that the rapidity of the Church's growth, the great stirring within her of the religious affections, the shooting forth on all sides of the green tendrils of awakened feelings, and here and there perhaps something of the rank growth of a too hastily developed ritual, rendered such a sharp touch of frost needful ; and that, having nipped what was too forward to be matured, called up the sterner spirit of argument, and awoke from their temporary slumber the reasonable defences of our faith, the storm of infidelity shall pass away, as it has passed before. It may be so. But, on the other hand, it may be that we are but entering on the first approaches of that dreary winter of unbelief which shall usher in the glorious spring-tide, when the Son of Man cometh. It may be that what we hear around us now are the echoes of the coming footfall of the great Antichrist. God knows. But however it be, it equally becomes us to hold fast for ourselves the word of truth, and, as God's watchmen, to be marking vigilantly the signs of the times, that we may be ready to meet each error as it rises with the sure witness of His un-failing truth. Some utterance then you may, I

think, at such a time expect from one set over you in the Lord as to the general aspect of this assault upon our faith, and as to the mode in which it becomes us to bear ourselves in relation to it. To these points, then, God helping me, I will now address myself.

And, first, let me ask you to notice how widely this spirit is spread. So far from being confined to our own Church or nation, wherever throughout Christendom the mind of man is awake, equally amongst Roman Catholics and Protestants, there it is stirring^b. Next, observe, that it does not profess to be an attack upon the Christian faith, still less a maintenance of atheism. It professes to be an attempt to develop the true inward life of Christianity; to make its doctrines reasonable, its morals perfect, its pervading spirit large and comprehensive. It would find in the Christian Creeds, as in all other modes of belief, a residuum of truth: in the Holy Scriptures, as in all other good books, a remaining word of God, after the errors and prodigies had been discharged from its pages: in the Church, when the supernatural had been eliminated from its constitution and its life, a congregation ever advancing towards its complete development and full perfection.

^b A striking instance of this may be seen in the recent *Vie de Jésus*, by Ernest Rénan, which differs from the writings of our own authors only in its more plain profession of the Ebionite heresy.

It is quite essential to our comprehension of this movement, and therefore to our being able effectually to oppose it, that we should understand that it professes to aim not at the destruction of Christianity, but at its perfecting. Hence it has happened that a very few of our own body have persuaded themselves that they may retain their position amongst us, and yet lend their aid and countenance to the spread of the new opinions. Such a fact is an additional reason for our seeking thoroughly to understand the meaning of this movement, and the limits to which in consistency it must reach.

Now what has been already said may, I think, suffice to fix its meaning. It is an endeavour to get rid of all belief in the personal acting amidst us of any supernatural power, whether in the realms of matter or of spirit. Every movement in either kingdom is to be resolved into the working of a fixed system of unalterable laws pervading all being. But it is to be observed, that whilst so far there is a great consent within the school, yet that there is as great a variance on the further question of how those laws came to be impressed on the creation. As to this, indeed, all these writers are confused, indistinct, and often self-contradictory ; sometimes inclining to the Pantheistic view ; sometimes, however unconsciously, to that of a simple atheism. Thus

we are told in one of their latest volumes ^c, which I shall quote throughout the remarks I shall here make, with full confidence that it expresses most thoroughly, and in the most careful language, the last expressions of the advocates of this new scheme of Christianity, that "to a perfect intelligence, one particular individual existence being given, it would necessitate in thought the rest of the universe of Being; as a scientific anatomist can reconstruct in idea the whole of an animal organism from the inspection of a single member. To such an intelligence each individual existence would imply the whole of the universe as conditional and conditioned by its existence ^d," &c.

Now this it could of course do only on the supposition that all which exists, exists of necessity in one continuous chain of correlative being. Once admit the presence and acting of a reasonable Will in the midst of such a creation, and this necessary correlation is at an end. Even man, because he has a will, perpetually interferes through the acting of its higher law with the continuance of the lower chain of prefixed conditions. Every interference of the will of man with the

^c A Brief Examination of Prevalent Opinions on the Inspiration of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. By a Lay Member of the Church of England. With an Introduction by Henry Bristow Wilson, B.D., Vicar of Great Staughton, Essex, &c. (Longman, Green, and Co. 1861.)

^d Introduction to Brief Examination, &c., p. lvii.

laws of gravitation is an instance in point. When he projects upwards into the air the stone which the force of gravity would force to the earth, he interferes with the acting of the lower constant law by the simple introduction of the higher. It is absolutely dependent upon his will whether that stone shall, as all the inevitable sequences require, lie motionless upon the earth, or whether it shall mount upwards into the middle air against the primary law of its nature. The voluntary acting of the will of a reasonable being interferes, that is, with the chain of events around him. And if we suppose the entrance into such a world of Being of a Divine Person, acting so as to administer the lower creation for purposes of love and goodness towards reasonable creatures, themselves possessed of free will; and suppose, further, that for any reason he is willing to heal, to feed, or to teach them; such interferences as we call "miracles,"—that is, no true infraction of any law, but the subjecting for the time the lower law to the higher,—become, so to speak, natural. But the presence of such a Divine Person with us is exactly the fact which these writers wish to deny; and so they are driven to such statements as this, which involves in its very terms the whole doctrine of atheistic necessity. Probably its utterer was himself unconscious that he was teaching atheism; his only aim being to exclude alike from

nature and from grace the voluntary actings of a personal God ; but not the less surely, though it may be unconsciously, do he and those who think with him in their strife with what has hitherto been received as Christianity attack theism itself ; for whilst they seem to themselves still to maintain it, they do in fact deny one or other of its necessary consequences.

Perhaps it is the attempt to veil this from themselves which leads them more commonly to attack the acting of God amongst us, by adopting the Pantheistic method of confounding the Creator with His works. Thus the same writer says again : "This universe is interpenetrated and combined into an infinite whole by an all-pervading infinite Spirit He is not withdrawn from the universe, or from any of its parts, as governing it from without it is the natural and necessary expression of His thought according to a divine nature and a rational necessity^e." And again, he tells us that God "is in the most intimate relation with the whole universe of finite existences, which is, as we have said, the experience of His own life and reason^f."

The end to be gained by this Pantheistic confusion of the Creator with His works is what we saw before to be this writer's object. He would exclude from the administration of the worlds

^e Introduction, p. lix.

^f Ibid., p. lxii.

of nature and of grace the direct acting of a personal God; and so he tells us that "the distinction between natural and supernatural is fluctuating and arbitrary . . . that which is as yet unknown is supernatural^g." Here we should note a well-concealed but very mischievous fallacy. It is of course quite true that to ignorance many things appear to be infractions of the ordinary laws of nature, which knowledge ascertains to be their simple fulfilment. An eclipse in the heavens over us, or the volcanic eruptions of the earth below us, are instances in point. In this sense, therefore, it is most true that the line between the natural and the supernatural is fluctuating and arbitrary. But it is simply a fallacious assumption to infer that there is no line between the two, because the mists of mis-apprehension prevent the ignorant from tracing it with perfect accuracy; or that God does not personally interfere in His world when He says that He does, because untaught men have believed Him so to interfere when He has not done so. Having, then, thus fallaciously confounded together, as though they were identical, our subjective notion of when God may be pleased to interfere, with the objective fact of His interfering at all with the creatures of His hand, he proceeds to state that "We cannot suppose God to construct an

^g Introduction, p. lxiii.

universe in order to shew power by infringing laws which observed order had led His creatures to believe constant, nor to constitute a moral order causing to grow up in us sentiments of justice and of love in order to shock them, in the contents of any Revelation He should make to us ^h." By "infringing constant laws," and "shocking moral order," the writer means to describe those introductions of the higher law of the action of the will of a Divine Person which, as I have above suggested, are the fittest attributes of that supernatural presence with us which it is the writer's great object to deny. This, I think, we shall clearly see, if we examine the detailed application of the principle he has thus enunciated.

For first, the direct action of God is hereby excluded from the Holy Scriptures, which become "the product of a special, though not supernatural, working of the Divine Spirit in a race endowed with rare moral strength, centrally placed for influence upon history," &c. "There must," we are told, "be much error mixed up in such a literature; error not touching scientific matters only, but also moral and spiritual subjects ⁱ." "If there were," it is suggested, "no principle or force in operation,—natural or supernatural,—ensuring absolute truth or accuracy in the Scriptures as to comparatively unimportant particulars,

^h Introduction, p. lxiv.

ⁱ Ibid., p. xxxii.

with what reason can it be inferred respecting the more weighty? if the Scriptures be not found self-consistent in narratives of ordinary occurrences, can there be demanded for them an unhesitating assent when they relate things prodigious^k.”

The “marvellous stories^l” are, therefore, first to be “eliminated:” such, for example, by way of specimen, as the waters of the flood covering the mountains; the waters of the Red Sea standing as a wall on the right hand and on the left; Abraham hearing an audible voice from Heaven; Joshua arresting the light; Isaiah’s reversing the shadow on the dial; Jonah being swallowed by the fish, or “the prodigies related in the first part of the book which goes by the name of Daniel^m ;” God’s writing of the Ten Commandmentsⁿ. Then we are to understand that “the Pentateuch and other narrative books of the Old Testament” are only “the natural development of an historical literature^o,” drawn from “monuments,” “lays,” “tales of recitation,” “annals^p,” which have been subjected to “the process according to which the histories of ancient peoples become invested in course of time with a supernatural character;” that in such writings “meta-

^k Introduction, p. xxxiii.

p. xxxix.

p. xlvi. —li.

ⁿ Ibid., p. xl.

^l Ibid., p. xxxiv.

^o Ibid., p. xlvi.

^m Ibid.,

^p Ibid.,

phor abounds from limitation of thought and paucity of words^q ;” that “metaphor easily runs into simile,” poetical amplification helps, and then “metaphors have grown into similes, and similes have been expanded into allegories, and allegories have come to be taken for histories^r.” Thus the “prodigies” having been eliminated, and prophecy accounted for “on the supposition of happy conjecture^s,” they are now followed by such *facts* recorded in Scripture as “the interviews of Moses with Jehovah, and Elijah’s commission given him in Horeb^t.” Next follows the moral purification, by a judicious “discrimination^u” of this well-meant but most erroneous book. Thus we learn that in it “some narratives are instinct with strong national prejudices ; such as those of the Exodus, or of the occupation of Canaan.” For that as to these, “there was no doubt an Egyptian, a Canaanitish, an Assyrian point of view, from which public transactions appeared very differently than they did from the Jewish one. The Jewish actors in the history may have imagined they had express Divine command to expel the nations of Canaan, and Jewish historians would naturally so represent it^x,” though really they were only actuated “by the play of their own passions.” Thus we get rid of the moral evil supposed to

^q Introduction, p. lii.^r Ibid., p. liv.^s Ibid., p. xxxv.^t Ibid., p. liv.^u Ibid., p. xiv.^x Ibid., p. xlii.

be involved in the cruelty of killing the Amalekites, of Jehu putting to death the worshippers of Baal, of Elisha's guilt in "stirring up the rebellion of Jehu." The amount of immorality which our new divines find it needful to remove from the Bible is indeed great: for they have discovered "how very like . . . are some Biblical passages to parts of the Homeric poems which Plato thought^y to convey profane and unworthy notions of the gods^z." These immoralities, then, which Plato has censured, must be removed from the Bible at all costs, as being "unworthy of Jehovah." And so stronger passages only call forth a stronger treatment; and as it is expressly written that Elijah called fire from heaven to destroy the companies of fifty, and as he could have done this "only in a faithless and resentful spirit," the "quickened moral judgment" detects the "impossibility" of the account, and finds that "tradition" in inventing it "has done dishonour both to God Himself, and possibly to His servants^a." So that it is not altogether certain that the falsehood was Elijah's invention.

^y It is not easy to read such words from the pen of a Clergyman of the Church of England without astonishment. Could he have read Plato's "Dialogues," and compared them with the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, when he thus proposed to introduce Plato as a sort of moral verifying faculty for Holy Scripture?

^z Introduction, p. xv.

^a Ibid., p. xlv.

But there remains behind a yet greater instance of the power of overcoming such a difficulty. For some of these eliminated prodigies and rejected immoralities are "alluded to in the New Testament," and even by our Lord Himself, as "historical transactions or actual facts." To most men this would have presented an insurmountable barrier in the way of the modern theory, except on the simple hypothesis of absolute infidelity. But it is none to our modern critics. For we are told, "The New Testament writers could only express themselves according to the modes of interpretation which were current in their own day^b;" that is, our Blessed Lord and His Apostles declared false and immoral traditions to be actual facts because they could only express themselves according to the current modes of interpretation. Does the enlightened critic forget how large a part of our Lord's discourses is taken up in ruthlessly exposing exactly such traditional falsehoods as it is here supposed fettered Himself and His Apostles? Surely they who heard His condemnation of "making the Word of God of none effect through your tradition^c," would have learned with some surprise that He could only express Himself according to the modes of interpretation current in His day. But strange as this is, it is surely surpassed by the attempt

^b Introduction, p. liv.

^c St. Mark vii. 13.

to take from the miracles of Holy Scripture the support given to them in the fact of the Resurrection of our Lord, which, if it happened, must be the chiefest of miracles, by the suggestion that, instead of its being "an exceptional miraculous fact," it was "the revelation of an universal law^d;" words which, if they mean anything, must to ordinary readers mean, that instead of our Lord being the first-fruits of them that slept, and raising them by the same Divine power by which He rose Himself, He did but reveal the unknown fact that by a universal law all dead men had been in the habit of rising again on the third day. Into these sad absurdities these writers are driven by the one desire of excluding the direct interference of God from the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, and resolving them into "a literature the product of a special, though not supernatural working of the Divine Spirit."

Holy Scripture, then, being thus dealt with, the same principle is next applied to that kingdom of grace the very essential characteristic of which is that in it God the Holy Ghost does by His inscrutable working bring to bear upon the family of redeemed man, and upon individual souls within it, the personal presence and acting of God. Now this is *the* point which is denied by these writers. Accordingly, as Holy Scripture was degraded into

^d Introduction, p. xxxvi.

the literature of a selected people, with special but not supernatural assistances, so the Church is in their view a living congregation of men in whom knowledge, morals, and imagination are higher than in others; but there is no supernatural working amongst them.

All those organs, therefore, through which the Blessed Spirit works are to be disparaged to the utmost. To believe that God the Holy Ghost actually works on the faithful soul through Sacraments is to trust "to magical formularies." It is "a superstitious theory" to teach that "the clergy can convey to the soul, by a material intervention, some spiritual influence in an occult manner^e;" that is, that Baptism or the Supper of the Lord are means of grace. To believe that Christ has Himself appointed a ministry, the official acts of which when done according to His will are His acts, is accordingly a special stumbling-block. Nothing, we are told, but an "imagination misled by the fervour of ecclesiastical feeling could lead the clergy to fancy themselves really the recipients in their ordination of a mysterious power transmitted to them from the Apostles^f." And it is "with difficulty to be conceived how within a recent period extreme views could have become current, attributing a supernatural influence to the

^e Introduction, p. xxvi.

^f Ibid., p. xxviii.

ministrations of an episcopally ordained clergy^g." Indeed, it would seem that we should have been better off without such a ministry at all. For it is, we are told, "not without fair reason considered" that it is "an unhappy thing on the whole for the English Church to have preserved its chain of episcopal consecrations unbroken^h;" because, as we gather, if it wanted this, instead of trusting to its membership in the Church Catholic, and receiving its Bible, its Creeds, and believing in the teaching of the Spirit; instead, that is, of believing in the Holy Ghost, and therefore in the Holy Catholic Church, it "would have had no option but to throw itself unreservedly upon the principles of national independence of rational interpretation of the Biblical Scriptures," (we have seen, my brethren, what that would be,) "and of the living and therefore growing convictions of the congregationⁱ." What they would ere this have been let Geneva testify. But indeed we need not travel to Geneva for a witness, for the well-grown convictions of these writers, who would have led such a congregation, may teach us the lesson. Thus in full consistency with denying supernatural agency in the world, in the Scripture, and in the Church, we learn, further, that the "current doctrines as to the relation" of fallen children to God is the root of most im-

^g Introduction, p. xii.

^h Ibid., p. xxvii.

ⁱ Ibid., p. xxviii.

moral teaching, and that it is therefore a culpable ignorance in Laymen not to "inquire into the real significance of the narrative of the creation and fall of man in the first chapters of Genesis, and into the value of the references to it in the Epistles and in the Church Catechism^k;" because it seems the acceptance of this fabulous story in the Epistles and Catechism, together with the teaching of miracles, leads to the general belief in that most immoral conclusion that our natures are corrupt, and that we each one need the converting influences on his own soul of God the Holy Ghost. For we are told, "As God is believed to have acted in history, so will it be expected He will act in the individual. If He manifests Himself by interference in nature, and by signs and wonders in history, He will doubtless operate by supernatural conversion of the corrupt heart in His dominion of grace¹."

Here, then, my reverend brethren, we have, I believe with some completeness, the scheme of this new Christianity before us. It professes to receive the Christian revelation, and the Christian Church, with its Creeds, its Scriptures, and its hopes; only it would remove from them everything supernatural. It would remove from them and from us all idea of a personal God administering by a personal presence and direct interference

^k Introduction, p. xiii.

¹ Ibid., p. xvi.

His world of nature or of grace. The Godhead is reduced to the mighty self-originating cause of all being, which He pervades and in some unknown sense is ; but which proceeds along its pre-determined course self-governed and self-administered, according to eternal and unchanging laws and gradually ascertainable sequences, whilst all the pretended revelations of His interference are either fables, allegories, metaphors, or mere human inventions, which were permitted to exist for the education of man until the living and growing convictions of the congregation were sufficiently developed to cast them aside, and rest on the great abstract philosophy into which a sublimated Christianity would thus expand and evaporate.

To you, I know, I need not say that this humanizing of Revelation, this robbing theology of its God, however little, as we trust, many of its votaries understand their own theory, is in fact, so far as man's heart and soul are concerned, only a disguised atheism. If there be no supernatural Revelation of Himself by the unsearchable Jehovah, there can be no certain knowledge of Him as a personal God ; and if no such knowledge of God, there can be no leaning of the soul upon Him. On such a theory, then, we lose not only Christian hope, but even Jewish belief and Patriarchal aspirations.

How, then, are we to meet such a system? First, we should be careful not to impute to it any evil which does not belong to it. Every false imputation is really an argument in favour of the system to which it is imputed.

If, then, we charge these teachers with intending to overthrow the Christian Revelation, as they have no such intention and know that they have not, we weaken our own hands and strengthen theirs.

Next, we must have clearly before us the master principle of their delusion, that we may contend against that equally everywhere.

Now that master principle is, as we have seen, the denial of the presence with us of the supernatural, and so the withdrawal from us of the presence and of the acting of a personal God : against this, therefore, we must strive equally everywhere ; in nature and in grace ; and in grace equally in every part of its blessed kingdom. For if we yield one part of the truth here, it will be in vain for us to seek to maintain the rest. Thus, for example, we shall in the long-run be unable really to maintain the Divine authority of Holy Scripture if we give up the Divine authority, in its proper place, of "the Holy Catholic Church." The two are absolute correlatives. In our sense of the words we could have no "Bible" if we had no Church ; if, that is to say, the Primi-

tive and as yet undivided Church had not, under the breath of the Divine Spirit, settled for us its canon^m; and if the Church Universal had not maintained it. For the Church, as our Article teaches us, is the witness and the keeper of Holy Scripture. It is its witness, because it witnesses to us that this particular Book is God's revealed will; and it is its keeper, because it preserves that Book whole and unaltered, without addition and without mutilation, as *the* inspired record. Without such a witness there could have been no "Bible," no Book which we could receive as a whole as the record of God's Revelation. For if its claim rested only on its internal evidence, every individual might strike out from its pages what did not recommend itself to him: we might lose the Epistle of St. James because one objector rejected it, the Epistle of St. Peter to please a second, and those of St. Paul at the dictation of a third.

Although when the Bible is once given the Church must receive its teaching implicitly as the Word of God, yet in priority of time the Church was of necessity before the Bible. For it is the record of God's dealings with and reve-

^m Any one who desires to follow out this subject should refer to the work of Bishop Cosin, "Scholastical History of the Canon of the Scriptures." Of course the Anglican Church, though a true branch of the Church Catholic, yet as only a branch, could not settle such a matter as the canon of Holy Scripture.

lations to the Church, and the thing recorded must in time precede its record. That it did so in fact we know. The Church of the Old Testament was founded on that day when God made a covenant with Abraham : but four hundred and thirty years passed away, patriarch after patriarch lived and died in the faith, before Moses set his hand to those inspired books, the earliest in Scripture, which bear his name. It was not otherwise with the Church of the New Covenant. That was born on the day of Pentecost ; but it was many years before the earliest Gospel, that probably of St. Matthew, was given to the Church. Moreover (as we have seen) to have that fixed canon of Holy Scripture which defines what is "the Bible," the Church must receive it ; and upon this authority of its reception it must propound the Bible to each separate soul as the Word of God. For the external evidence which proves the Bible to be the Word of God must from the nature of the case precede the internal evidence. Once received on external evidence as the revealed will of God, soul after soul will have, in passage after passage, the inward witness that through it God Himself is speaking to its inward ear. The delicate needle of its own spiritual being will tremble under the awful Presence ; and to the faithful soul this, the last in point of time, will be for itself the crowning evidence

that through it God is indeed revealing Himself to His creature. But the Book, as a Book, must come to him from the witness of the Church before it is capable of receiving from his own spiritual experience these inward confirmations. The will of any testator must be propounded and received as his by external proof before any benefit can be claimed under its separate bequests. And how could the Church fulfil this office unless of a truth God were personally with her? Unless her whole system be supernatural, unless a Divine breath inspire her judgment, how could she discern the truth amidst the conflicting claims of many writings to be included in the sacred record, or settle the canon of the inspired books—how could she witness to or keep them? How, indeed, can she without this fulfil any part of her charge for God's glory or man's salvation? Unless God be with her,—not as a causative power acting now only through the self-administering laws of a Divine order, but as a present, interfering Person, how can her intercession be real, or her prayers anything but a disguised and deceiving self-magnetism? For if all things that are, exist in an unbroken set of inevitable sequences, what room can there be for prayer or receiving answers to prayer? or under such a scheme how can there be any one to whom to pray; for how can prayer be addressed to a Di-

vine Order? How, again, unless the Divine Spirit, as a real present Person, acts indeed upon separate hearts, regenerating, converting, renewing, purifying, strengthening, and saving them, can any of the means of grace within her be anything else than what these writers so profanely pronounce them to be, lying magical delusions?

There can, in the strife which is forced upon us, be no intermediate position between the dull naturalism to which so many are tending and a simple faith in God's presence with His Church, and so a hearty belief alike in her Sacraments, her Creeds, her Orders, and her Bible as the separate portions of the great system of instruments through which her God, her Saviour, and her Sanctifier are present with and working in her. And such a faith will breed a wholesome reverence for all which God has given us, which is the safeguard our own spirits need amidst the manifold perturbations around us. We shall feel, when alterations are proposed to us in our offices of prayer or in our Creeds, even before we see the direct evils they would work, what the wise surgeon feels as to the subject of his skill; that he is dealing not with a mere mass of matter, but with the delicate organization of a living being to whose very existence one careless touch of the knife may be fatal. We dare not handle rashly any organism through which we do indeed believe that God the Holy Ghost, who

has framed it for His indwelling, is yet stooping to work. This, then, secondly : we must throughout the strife maintain the supernatural against the naturalist theory. Thirdly, and as a subdivision of what has last been said, we must maintain fearlessly the same truth in dealing with the seeming discrepancies which anxious or sceptical minds are seeking to exasperate into contradictions between the voice of God in Nature and His voice in Revelation.

This I believe to be of such importance that I will add a few words specially upon it.

It is alleged, then, that recent discoveries in science contradict direct assertions of the Bible.

Now how should we treat such allegations, or deal with the apparent facts on which they rest? First, we should never refuse, or hesitate, or dislike, or fear to receive any really authenticated fact because it seems to contradict any other fact, either in Nature or in Revelation. Secondly, we should never twist, distort, or mutilate any such fact in order to make it fit into any system. All such conduct is more or less either fraud or weakness; as it is most certainly unbelief. Nature is as much the voice of God as is Revelation. We may through our own infirmities or ignorance misunderstand or mistake that voice, either in Nature or in Revelation; but the voice itself must be true; and our faith is to be shewn by our simple

acceptance of it, without any regard to consequences. When two such voices, then, seem to contradict each other, faith is not startled and uneasy; she does not look eagerly about for some reconciliation of them, or snatch at seeming explanations, as though eager to save an endangered character; still less does she seek to suppress any fact because she does not at once see how it will fit in with her own system. But she is calm, self-sustained, and satisfied that there *is* perfect agreement between these two voices, and that the seeming disagreement is altogether the fruit of the present ignorance of man. The confiding child who has no doubts of his earthly father's truth and knowledge has no feeling of misgiving when he is told by him that the fire with its heat and the ice with its intense cold will alike burn his flesh: he does not know the philosophic reason which makes each altogether true; but he believes and is satisfied, because he knows that his father's word is true. And the believer in like manner, if his faith is firm, knows that what God says both in nature and in grace is true, even when he cannot yet reconcile what seem to be discordant utterances. And here, too, faith is the best philosophy. For it is altogether as unphilosophical for him who knows but one part of a mighty whole made up of many dependent portions, to sit with his partial knowledge in judgment on what is pro-

pounded to him concerning it by one who knows the whole, as it is unfaithful to question what is received from another on the faith of that other's word.

Thus, then, these difficulties are to be met. Nor need we fear to avow that—so far as we can learn the plan of the Almighty with us from the analogy of His other dealings—we should even expect their presence, both as a discipline for our will, and a trial of our faith. And this we may certainly add, that whilst we receive with a like docility both voices, on different evidences,—not daring to doubt the witness of the senses our Maker has given to us, nor to distrust the Word which on the evidence of His Church He has spoken to us,—and know that, like bodies moving in various planes, they may cross each other's path without collision; yet that on the whole, every wide increase of our knowledge has tended to shew that many things which once seemed to be, were not really contradictory, and that those which still have not reached, are yet approaching to a full reconciliation.

XXIX.

ON THE RE-UNION OF CHRISTENDOM.

ON the second movement, which appears to me to have arisen from the same source as the ritualistic tendency, I will compress into a few words the suggestions I desire to make to you. To restore the true unity of Christendom,—that for which our Master prayed, that for which every heart He has touched with His own love must most intensely long,—who would not gladly die? Every such attempt then,—whether it be to remove the barriers between ourselves and our separated brethren in this land, or to heal the breaches between the East and the West, with their several subdivisions,—must, I think, attract to itself our deepest interest, and call forth from us most earnest prayers for the gift of one mind in our one, common Faith. God forbid that I should chill one such prayer, or check one such aspiration. Yet I must remind you that all practical attempts at re-union must be made with a full recognition of the wide difference between mere coalescence and unity. Coalescence may be of the earth, earthly; it may be the veiling of essential differences under well-prepared ambiguities of action

or of profession: unity must, in our holy religion, be unity in Christ; and Christ is Truth. There can be no unity in Him based on disregard of error.

With these principles full in view, I yearn for the re-union with us of our brethren of the home separation. What might not be our strength against evil if this sore wound were healed? I see no formal differences of the faith which need hopelessly part us. I believe that time has, to a great degree, worn away the causes of our existing division. Let not the memory of past disagreements keep us for one day needlessly asunder.

Nor, with the great Eastern Church, if the spirit of unity breathe in mercy on us, should I despair of union. Old ways, old thoughts, old words, seem indeed to hang unchangeable, as in a charmed air, throughout the venerable East; and many of these are diverse from ours. Still the East is bound to no irreversible sequence of developed corruptions of the One Faith, and with her it may yet be that we may regain open intercommunion.

But, earnestly as we may long and pray for unity, we can make no overtures for it to any whose first principle is the absolute retention of what we hold to be grave error in doctrine and in practice. I see not how to avoid the conclusion that this must make at present impossible all such overtures from us to Rome. At the very gate

of her spiritual dominion sit the two stern Portresses, Supremacy and Infallibility ; forbidding, as it seems to me, all attempt to us to enter. "Since Rome"—these are her own words, spoken but yesterday—"is infallible, union with her cannot be accomplished except on her own dogmatic base, i.e. by the method of absolute and unreserved submission to her authority^a." How can we take the first step to such submission, contending as we do against many of her statements of Christian doctrine, and more of her practical abuses ; against her claim to supremacy and infallibility ; her cultus of the Blessed Virgin ; her maiming of the Eucharist ; her enforced confession ; her enjoined clerical celibacy ; charging her, as we must, with Donatistic self-exaltation and schism ; and, abhorrent as is to us, that cruel, faithless, arbitrary temper, which we believe these corruptions of the Faith have introduced into her moral nature ? No, brethren, I mournfully declare that I cannot believe that any honest explanation of conflicting terms can, whilst Rome is what she is, remove these hindrances to union. I, for one, could never, even for so great an end as the doing away of division, endure to see the English Church, the English people, English family life, or English straightforwardness, adapted to the standard in which Italy and Spain exhibit the true conse-

^a Dublin Review, No. xii. p. 448.

quences of Roman supremacy. I believe that,—though we are bound to wait and pray and watch for unity,—it is not, as I read the signs of the times,—given to us in our day to look for union with those who are of the Papal obedience.

Meanwhile, the old assumptions of Rome seem only to increase in arrogance. With more than her earlier hardihood she denies all membership in the Church of Christ to those for whom she has rendered union with herself impossible. Specially does she rage at this time against National Churches, seeking in the midst of its evident decline to exalt her own exclusive monarchical supremacy, and, as her power decays, waxing fiercer in her sentences and denunciations. Yet is this against which she thus rages the system which from the beginning had been established in the Church, in which each Bishopric was one independent whole, federally joined to all the rest, the seat of its own jurisdiction, and governed, not by an external despotism, but by the Holy Spirit expressing His overruling Will through the decrees of the common synods of the universal body. This was most clearly the system which St. Cyprian maintained, and on which, in spite of all opposition, he acted in all his memorable contests with Rome. Her present pretensions differ in nothing material from that which, in the mouth of John, Patriarch of Constantinople, woke up the

righteous wrath of Gregory the Great, and led him, in his expostulation with his brother Patriarch, to declare that "in assuming the name of Universal Bishop he had caused scandal to the hearts of all the faithful, invaded the rights of all other Bishops, and learned from the old enemy to desire proudly to be like God^b." And, again, "confidently to declare that whosoever calls himself, or desires to be called Universal Bishop, is the forerunner of Antichrist^c." The English Church may surely rest quietly in a position in which she is defended against Pius IX. by Gregory the Great.

Sad, too, as to loving hearts must often be the sense of our isolation, may we not trace in the existence, and even, in some sort, in the separation of national Churches, one of those providential arrangements by which even chastisements are, by God's goodness, converted into blessings? Just as it seems to have been His purpose to keep the perfect truth of our blessed Master's twofold nature ever clear before the Church, by suffering four independent witnesses to write the Gospel histories with the permitted varieties which the diversity of their own several characters stamp upon their narrative,—so may we believe that He has provided, in the chastisement of division, by the diversity of testimony, for the guardianship of His Truth. How diverse from the beginning

^b St. Greg., Epist., lib. v. 18.

^c Epist., lib. viii. 83.

have been the special vocations of the East and of the West;—the East maintaining, against all the subtlety of heretics, the great objective truths of the Trinity in Unity, the Incarnation, and the Godhead of the Eternal Son:—the West, with its more subjective tendencies, defending the doctrines of grace from all the wiles of the school of Pelagius. May it not be our special vocation, in maintaining our protest against those changes of the Faith which Rome has so corruptly sanctioned, to be the Witness who shall combine the active energies of the West with a maintenance of the primitive faith as absolute as that of the unchanging East; and at last perhaps to be the body whom God shall employ to fuse again into unity with those who stand on either side of her,—breathing younger life into those venerable but lethargic Oriental forms, and drawing back the West from the intoxication of her numberless developments into the sobriety of the Faith once for all delivered to the saints? Only let us not forget that if ever this service is to be rendered by us, it must be by us not as a sect, but as a Church, that it can be wrought. If we would keep alive the hope of so glorifying God, we must maintain our true membership in the written Word, in Creeds, in Sacraments, in the Apostolic ministry, and in the mysterious presence, power, and gifts of God the Holy Ghost with the Church of Christ from

the beginning. So alone can we hope in the mean season to leaven this Land and its widening Colonies with the true life of God. In spite of all difficulties, if He be indeed with us, this we may accomplish. His Grace, His Word, His appointments carry with them His Almighty power; and we, earthly instruments as we are, by the foolishness of our ministry may keep His revealed truth alive to be the salvation of this Land.

These great functions God has committed to our hands for this people, yea, and for His Church throughout the world. May He grant us grace and faithfulness duly to discharge our trust! May no slothfulness of spirit, no weakness of faith, no worldliness of temper, mar our work and forfeit our Crown! There are not wanting those who would counsel us, by all the arguments of expediency, to take another and a lower line. They urge us to consider the greatness of the position we may aspire to fill as the chosen clergy of this great empire, if we will but throw ourselves into full sympathy with what they tell us is its spirit, and speak to it the accents which it loves to hear: "Behold now," it is the old whisper of this world's messenger, "the words of the prophets declare good unto the King with one mouth: let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak that which is good^d."

^d 1 Kings xxii. 13.

It is but to give up the supreme claim of God's written Word ; it is but to drop the stern requirement that men, to whom it is clearly proposed must believe in the dogma of revealed truth, and not develop a suitable religion for themselves, conformable to the fleeting intellectual movements of the hour, or the fanciful acting of their own inward consciousness ; it is but to be content with the respectable position of doctors of the national religion, and so to consent to give up claims which are uncongenial with what are assumed to be the nation's opinions. Let us but get rid of the old-fashioned notion that the Church is indeed the very body of Christ, and we, servants of the Crucified, His Apostles, with powers committed to us through the Dispensation of the Holy Ghost, which man gave not, and which man cannot take away ; with a supernatural kingdom around us and within us,—this is all, and we shall be as gods to this grateful people.

God grant that not one of us may listen to the seducing whisper, and so abdicate his trust. Let Micaiah's declaration be ours : "As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak^e." Woe were it for us, woe to this people, if we failed. If the Church of England ever consents to renounce her Apostolical character, and to receive her commission from man, she cannot

^e 1 Kings xxii. 14.

for a day defend God's truth against the Papist or the Infidel. In giving up these pretensions, be they popular or unpopular at the moment, she would give up that which from the beginning has enabled her to withstand the enemy, and to bless this land. How can she do for God any act of her daily vocation unless His own power does in very deed attend her ministry? How else can she believe that through her feebleness He will regenerate, or convert, or nourish with the bread of life, one single soul? What miracle is greater than these her daily works? If she dared to drop her royal claim, every sacrament she ministers would but seal her degradation, and the subject spirits would triumph at her fall.

No, beloved brethren in the Lord, let us stand fast in our holy calling. Let us witness for Christ, in word and in deed. Let us speak in all the power of God the Holy Ghost. Having received this ministry, let us faint not; no one better knows than we how earthly are the vessels He has chosen for His service; yet in those vessels, earthly as they are, is the treasure of the Master's covenanted presence. Let us bear His testimony meekly, but unflinchingly, learning ourselves, through His grace and love day by day, to live more in the secret place of His tabernacle; to labour for Him more abundantly, to pray more constantly; to abound more in works of charity;

and to suffer meekly, if it be His will, so only that on us may be more deeply stamped the impress of His Cross. These, I believe, are the special requisites for the due discharge, at such a time as this, of the ministry which He has committed to us.

At such a time, moreover, distinct dogmatic teaching must be especially required from those who bear the testimony of the Lord. And yet with what tenderness of spirit, with what wise adaptation to His people's power of receiving it, with what a freedom from spurious self-asserting dogmatism, with what a living sympathy with all other truth, must dogma be taught, if we would avoid the great fault of placing stumbling-blocks in our brother's way.

We cannot indeed, veil, still less distort, any truth. We must proclaim,—whether or no men will listen,—the authority of God's Word, the simple promises of Christ's Gospel; the mystery of the Triune God; the Incarnation and Atonement; the presence of God the Holy Ghost and His real acting through Sacraments and means of grace, on every side of us in the Church of the living God.

But these great truths, and all that flow from them, may be set forth drily, hardly, and pugnaciously; or, with every winning adjunct of tenderness and conciliation, as a nurse cherisheth her children. There may at times be forced upon

us opposition to what the general intellectual excitement of the present day leads shallower minds to vent. There ought to be no opposition between us and the highest intellectual actings of our age. All that intellect requires for its grandest development, Christianity not only allows but furnishes. The temper she loves to form, that modest all-venturing courage, that ardent docility, that tender receptivity, that critical nicety of perception, that large observation, is the very temper of the true philosopher. No question can be raised which it is her interest to silence; there are few which it is not her special province to handle. Christianity has always tended to advance the intellect. Let any man who doubts this, study the pages of Origen, Augustine, Athanasius, or Aquinas, and he will see how the believing Divine may, in mere power of thought, be centuries before the deepest thinkers of his time.

In some measure, perhaps, the too prevalent disposition to question this, is due to faults of ours. If many of the reproaches cast upon us rise from the carping poverty of thought which belongs essentially to unbelief, many more,—let us honestly confess it,—are the fruit of our own narrowness, our want of a fitting elasticity of mind, making us unable to sympathise with our age and our people; from our faithless fearfulness for the truth, and our shallow knowledge even of our own mysteries. Hence, even for the

power of teaching dogmas, the first of all prerequisites is to have received them into our own spiritual life, not to have heard of them merely by the hearing of the ear; to have learned them in watching and in living: above all, in a life of continual prayer, to have so imbibed their blessed fragrance, that our own life may be redolent of their sweetness. This will give us depth and comprehensiveness, and these are but other names for humility; and, with that, dwell holy love, and large forbearance, and tender sympathies, and unwearied labours; so shall we not *hold* dogma, but,—if I may so say,—*be* dogma: so shall we place it before others, not as a restraint on, but as an assistance to, the acting of the intellect; not as a short formulary to be produced instead of thinking, but as the axiomatic principle on which the vast edifice of thought is to be erected. With dogmas so used, not thrust threateningly at them,—men of any fairness will have no more quarrel than with the axioms of mathematics, or the admitted principles of science.

But time warns me to conclude. And, as I cast my eye back on the various course over which I have been led, I am indeed tempted to sigh forth my innermost confession,—“Who is sufficient for these things?” And yet, brethren in the Lord, whether clergy or laity, let me say,—Fear not; be strong, play ye the men; in watching, in striving, in praying; and your God shall

fight for you. It is yet but a little while, and *He* shall come who is the Great Renewer. Already the Eastern sky seems as though it were lighted up with the brightening glow of its Advent glory ; the tarrying ages are at last surely running out their weary span ; and, by every sign of which He has spoken, we may see that "The Coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

For each one of us, in his several sphere of work, this is the thought fullest of strength and consolation. Then shall end for ever, the upbraiding of the evil, the uncertainty of the good ; then shall be swept away our own doubts, and fears, and short-comings, and divisions, and infirmities, our lack of faith and charity ; then shall be gathered up every faithful effort, every struggling prayer, every secret tear, every throb of love ; then shall He who giveth the rule over Cities to reward the diligent use of but a single talent, stand suddenly beside us in our work ; and the "Well done, good and faithful Servant," shall sound in the ears of the Elect, and the presence of their only Lord shall wrap them round in perfect and never-ending blessedness. Thither, brethren, may God's mighty Grace bear on even our utter feebleness, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

XXX.

ON THE ENGLISH REFORMATION.

THE Reformation period must always rivet the attention of Englishmen. For then, whatever evils were inseparable from it, was the birth-time of their liberties both in Church and State. Its long sufferings were but travail pangs, and though many of the attendant operations were rudely managed, with no little loss of vital energy and threatenings of still greater evils, yet was the birth at last gracious, and on those who were the instruments of its accomplishment must always rest with the deepest interest the enquiring gaze of after generations. Never, perhaps, was this more the case than at the present time, when we are passing again through many struggles both of religious thought and of national policy, not unlike those with which our fathers grappled. For the great questions which stirred so deeply the souls of our Reformers that they were ready to burn and to be burnt, at a thousand stakes to procure their settlement, seem, after a torpor of three hundred years, to have suddenly re-awoke among us, and we have almost each one of us

again to examine the Pope's claim to supremacy and infallibility, with all the train of teaching which is involved in such an admission :—the necessity of auricular confession ; the celibacy of the clergy ; the maiming for the laity of the great Sacrament of the Eucharist ; the cultus of the blessed Virgin Mary ; the offering of masses for the quick and dead ; and purgatory with its pains, its indulgences, and its corresponding pecuniary advantages. Questions of public policy, too, which were then in course of settlement, and the settlement of which has been thenceforward interwoven with the very warp of our national life, are all suddenly re-opened. The existence of a Church really national—the only bulwark as our fathers believed, and as our children may find to their cost, against the arrogance and the usurpations of Rome—is suddenly threatened. For if England and Ireland be one united kingdom, with one Established Church, and not two separate monarchies loosely allied by the overshadowing of two Crowns Imperial resting for the time upon one brow, the destruction of the Church's nationality in one island must logically imply its destruction as a national Church in both, although it may still survive as an anomaly in one. To build this up, which it is now so lightly proposed to pull down, was, in fact, the master-aim of the great Reformation statesmen. Thus, in the grand

old English of the Statute of Appeals, it was declared that :—

“By divers sundry old authentic histories and Chronicles it is manifestly declared and exposted that this realm of England is an empire, and hath so been accepted in the world ; governed by one supreme head and king, having the dignity and royal estate of the imperial crown of the same ; unto whom a body politic, compact of all sorts and degrees of people, divided in turns by names of spirituality and temporality, be bound, and ought to bear next to God a natural and humble obedience . . . the body spiritual whereof having power when any cause of the law divine happened to come in question, or of spiritual, having declared, interpreted, and shewed by that part of the body politic called the spirituality, now usually called the English Church, which also hath been reported and also found of that sort, that both for knowledge, integrity and sufficiency of numbers, it hath been always thought to be, and is also at this hour, sufficient and meet of itself without the interfering of any exterior person or persons, to declare and determine all such doubts, and to administer all such offices and duties as to their room spiritual doth appertain.”

It was on this foundation of the unquestioned existence of a national Church of the empire, as a body spiritual, that the usurped claim of the Bishop of Rome to interfere with this kingdom was by enactment fully and for ever excluded, and all attempts to re-introduce his jurisdiction were branded with the guilt of treason against the high reserved nationality of the realm which

centred in the Crown of England. How well that bulwark was conceived, how straight its lines were devised and drawn across the main stream and flow of papal aggression, how deeply laid were its foundations, how well compacted were its stones, has been shewn beyond the possibility of question by all succeeding events : by its standing under Henry VIII. and Edward VI. the first buffet of those proud waves, by its speedy restoration from the demolition attempted under Philip and Mary, and by its continuance from Elizabeth to Victoria as the very breakwater of our nationality against whatever storms have burst from time to time upon us, from the dark and turbulent depths of that spiritual Black Sea, which has never ceased to rage against our borders. . . .

One leading object of the Dean^a has evidently been to shew the unbrokenness of this Church of England from the beginning until now ; to exhibit it one and the same body from the mission of Augustine to the present hour ; to shew it protesting against the rising aggressions of Rome under the Plantagenets, and compelling and enforcing the protest with the brave hearts and the strong hands of the Tudor kings.

“ When we speak,” he says, “ of the continuity and perpetuity of the English Church, we only affirm an his-

^a See “ Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury,” by W. F. Hook, D.D., F.R.S., Dean of Chichester.

torical fact. By both Church and State measures had been adopted to annihilate the Papal authority in England, long before any notion was entertained of dealing with any points of doctrine. In the twenty-eighth year of Henry's reign, when King and Parliament and Church were vehement in their opposition to Protestantism, some of the chief Acts against the Pope and his pretensions were passed in parliament. . . . The Church of England was anti-papal before it was reformed; at the commencement of the dispute between the Church of England and the Court of Rome, in the sixteenth century, the State accepted as a fact what the Church affirmed, that the work to be done by the co-operation of the civil and ecclesiastical authorities in England was not the displacing of the old Church and the supplanting of it by some new sect, but the gradual reformation of that old Catholic Church, which had been established here in the first instance by the joint labour and devotion of Augustine the first Archbishop of Canterbury, and Ethelbert, king of Kent, the Bretwalda."

One chief merit of these volumes may be traced to the distinctness with which their author has throughout realised this unbroken continuity of the Church of England. For it has saved him from the necessity of considering Cranmer as in any real sense the founder of a new communion, and so has made it easy for him to draw his character with absolute impartiality. The Romanist who charges him with the crime of founding, instead of the old Catholic Church of England, the new schismatic body which has replaced it, and the

ultra-Protestant who believes that he and his fellows founded a new Church at the Reformation, are alike incapable of such impartiality: to the one he is from first to last an apostate and a traitor; to the other he is, with the like universal applause, a saint and a martyr. In these pages he is one in a long line of Archbishops of Canterbury. He is distinguishable from others especially by the circumstances of his episcopate. His days are cast when a mighty change was passing over the minds of his countrymen; in that change he himself largely participated, and few were themselves borne along by the current more palpably and completely. Something he contributed towards the change; he is to be tried, like other men, by what he was, by what he effected, by what he let slip. There is here no temptation to exaggerate either his excellences or his defects. He was neither a demi-god, whose personality is lost on the rise of a new empire, nor a convicted villain, who treasonably overturned a well-balanced kingdom. Viewed as he was, and not through these distorting media, he appears to be rather an ordinary man: affectionate, forgiving, gentle, caring for and making good provision for his family, very fond of field sports, physically brave, but morally not over-courageous, sincerely religious, a great master of English, a diligent student of his Bible, and,

though not eager for intellectual or spiritual discoveries, with a mind slowly but surely receptive of increased measures of truth as they were presented to him.

But this is by no means the only advantage which the clear mastery of this truth has given to the writer of these volumes. It has aided him as an historian as well as a biographer. It has kept him clear from the strange confusion which represents the Church of England before the Reformation, as having been a spiritual body almost independent of the State, and since the Reformation as an Act of Parliament establishment, which has consciously renounced its claims to an independent spiritual personality. In truth, before the Reformation, as well as since the Reformation, the Church of England was, on one side, an Act of Parliament Church. It was a branch of the one Holy Apostolic Church, settled within this realm, welcomed by the realm, honoured, endowed, established; and so exercising upon certain honourable conditions its spiritual functions in the land. What the Crown, the Parliament, and the people claimed was, not to have created the spiritual body, with its creeds, doctrines, ministry, and sacramental life; but to have created, and so to have the right to enforce, and if need were to modify, the conditions under which that life and ministry were exercised. All

the struggles of the Acts of Provisors, and the like, were the exercise of this power of the realm over the external conditions through which the spiritual power acted. At the time of the Reformation this struggle reached its most critical point. The State, and to a great degree the national clergy also, felt that the original conditions of acknowledged nationality, under which the spiritual body ought to act, had been infringed. The nation rose in all ranks and orders to rectify these broken conditions. The strife at its beginning was limited to this. But, as soon as it broke out, it became evident that the violation of these more outward conditions was itself an effect of yet higher obligations, and that the great deposit of religious truth itself had been corrupted by its guardians. The second wave broke upon the crest of the first, and the religious reformation rolled in upon the ecclesiastical. The Church, which had been the subject of old Acts of Parliaments, became the subject of new Acts, which aimed at restoring the old compact between the spirituality and the temporality to their original conditions, and guarding for the future against the evils of the past. But whilst as an establishment the Church was brought, as the consequence and punishment of former Popish insolence, under straiter bonds, there was no leaven of real Erastianism in the change. From first to last the.

spiritual power, and the ecclesiastical conditions under which it was to be exercised in England, are kept wholly distinct in the Acts of Henry VIII. "The Institution of a Christian Man" laid clearly down this principle: "Christ and His Apostles did institute and ordain in the New Testament, besides the civil powers and governance of kings and princes, that there should also be continually in the Church Militant certain other ministers and officers, who should have special power, authority, and commission under Christ to preach and teach the Word of God to His people, to dispense and administer the Sacraments of God unto them, and by the same to confer and give the graces of the Holy Ghost." "This office, this power, this authority was committed and given by Christ and His Apostles to certain persons only; that is to say, to priests or bishops, whom they did elect, call, and admit thereunto by their prayers and imposition of hands." The English language is scarcely capable of being made to express a declaration more at variance than this with what we read in the Erastian press of the day, as the result of the change intended and wrought by the Reformation on the old English Church and its pretensions. . . .

There never was a time when it was more important to make this truth universally known and recognised. For, on the one hand, there is

a party,—ably represented by the ingenious writer of what we must term the Romance of the Reign of Henry VIII., under the title of a “History of England, from the Fall of Wolsey to the Death of Elizabeth,”—who delight to speak of the Reformation changes as being an abandonment on the part of the Church of England of her claim to be an integral part of the Church Catholic—a spiritual body, with spiritual power given by our Lord through His Apostles,—and an acceptance of a new position as holding from the will of the State alone her authority and position as a religious body; whilst, on the other side, there are those who groan over the utter loss of spiritual liberty at the Reformation, and who under the garb of a spurious Catholicism, preach disaffection to their Father’s Church. These last conveniently forget that, antecedently to the Reformation, Convocation could pass no canons without the King’s consent; that no bull or ecclesiastical constitution could be published in this kingdom without his sanction; that the bishoprics of England, being of royal foundation, were filled by the Crown as donatives, before it granted to the Chapters the modified rights conferred by the allowance of the *Congé d’Elire*; and that under the *Congé d’Elire* the Sovereign still so effectually selected the Bishop to be elected, that Warham could write in 1522 to Cardinal Wolsey, “Whereas

I am informed that it hath pleased the King's most noble Grace to name to the bishopric of London, Master Cuthbert Tonstall, Master of the Rolls, at your Grace's special recommendation, furtherance, and promotion, I thank your Grace, therefore, as heartily as I can." Equally oblivious, in their longing for re-union with Rome, are men of this school of the troubles which, long before the Reformation, embittered the relations of this land with the Papal communion; nor do they seem to have heard that though the Pope continually renewed his efforts to obtain the recognition of his claim to be the fountain-head of ecclesiastical jurisdiction before the Reformation quite as earnestly as after it, these efforts were resisted and put down by the Crown and by the law of England. These great principles were indeed endangered, as the Dean points out, amidst the various struggles of the Reformation and the Laudian period:—

“The distinction between the royal and the sacerdotal powers was totally disregarded by Crumwell and the unprincipled men who formed the government of Edward VI.; and the royal supremacy was too often permitted to encroach on the sacerdotal powers through the weakness, the servility, and want of fixed principles on the part of Archbishop Cranmer. Much injury was done to the cause of the Church through the mistaken policy of our leading ecclesiastics under the unfortunate dynasty of the Stuarts. To strengthen their position

against the Roman nonconformists on the one hand, and the Puritan nonconformists on the other, they exaggerated the royal prerogative."

But in spite of these accidental perversions, the doctrine of the Church of England was at all times essentially that which the Convocation declared in 1534, and which Parliament subsequently ratified; that "the Pope of Rome hath no greater jurisdiction conferred upon him by God in Holy Scripture in this kingdom of England than any other foreign Bishop." The Dean quotes at length from Mr. Gladstone's remarks on the royal supremacy, the clear and memorable statements, which set so courageously forward the true position of spiritual freedom, secured alike by law and practice to the Church of England. If the truth on this subject were more generally borne in mind, we should be delivered from those Erastian claims on the one hand, and from those disloyal diatribes on the other, with which extreme men create, renew, prolong, and embitter those dissensions and disputes which so grievously injure the Church's power, and at times threaten even to rend her asunder. . . .

The further progress of the reformation of religion is traced in the following pages with a master's hand. The Dean shews that,—

"neither Henry nor Cranmer was a theorist, they had no particular schemes of their own to carry. He found

the Church of England bowed down by the galling tyranny of Rome, through powers gradually usurped. When they had asserted the freedom of the National Church, and declared the king to be 'in all causes and over all persons civil and ecclesiastical within his dominions supreme,' they had to legislate not with a view to further their pre-conceived opinions, but simply to meet the difficulties arising from the circumstances in which they were placed. In an age of inquiry they soon discovered that the Catholic Faith, though always preserved in the three Creeds, had been obscured by superincumbent superstitions ; and they sought, as they were discovered one by one, to remove them."

In this work, throughout Henry's reign, he and the Archbishop worked in the main steadily together, though

"Henry was of a conservative temper, and would move slowly, whilst Cranmer, though slow to receive a truth, laboured eagerly when he had accepted it for its promulgation ; both were frequently inconsistent ; the one urged on by his passions, the other retarded by his weakness."

It was of God's great mercy to this Church and nation, first, that two men of these opposite temperaments were acting together, one from the throne of England, the other from the marble chair of Canterbury, to guide the coming changes ; and next, that the changes themselves were but remedies for immediate practical evils. There was in the nation a wide-spread dissatisfaction with

the whole body of Papal corruptions. If the first attack on these had been conducted by one who had once been what Luther describes himself to have been, a "most mad Papist," and who in his first intoxication from newly-discovered truth had appealed to that feeling, and had found the strength with which to carry his reforms in the passions of the populace, England's Church might have become what the religious systems of Saxony, of Geneva, and Scotland have been. But the first energy of the English Reformation was spent in demolishing the master evil of the Pope's usurped supremacy, and denying its sister vice of his infallibility. Slowly, cautiously, and like an ebbing tide, rather than with the violence of a cataract, with reluctant pauses, and seeming returns, the stream of feeling turned against those distinctly doctrinal errors which had affected the great mysteries of the Christian Church; and this branch of the Reformation was in consequence approached calmly, and dealt with moderately, so that the evil parasites were removed, without shaking the truth round which they had wound themselves, and to which they clung. That the English Reformation was wrought by men of this calibre is, perhaps, its most notable characteristic. Undoubtedly it is to this fact that the Church of England owes its absolutely single and separate character amidst all the reformed com-

munions. It bears the mark and impress of the intellectual or spiritual peculiarities of no single man. Herein at once it is marked off from the Lutheran, the Calvinist, the Zuinglian, and other smaller bodies. On each one of them lay, as the shadow on the sleeping water, the unbroken image of some master mind or imperial soul. The mind of that founder of the new faith, his mode of thought and argument, his religious principles, and his great defects were reproduced in the body which he had formed, and which by a natural instinct appropriated and handed on his name. And so it might have been with us too, had there been amongst the English Reformers such a leader. If Wycliffe—the great forerunner of the Reformation, whose austere figure stands out above the crowd of notables in English history,—if Wycliffe had lived a hundred and thirty years later than he did, his commanding intellect and character might then have stamped upon the religion of England the essential characteristic of a sect. But from this the goodness of God preserved the Church of this land. Like the birth of the beautiful islands of the great Pacific Ocean, the foundations of the new convictions which were so greatly to modify and purify the mediæval faith were laid slowly, unseen, unsuspected, by ten thousand souls, who laboured, they knew not for what, save to accomplish the necessities of their own spiritual

belief. The mighty convulsion which suddenly cast up the sub-marine foundations into peak, and mountain, and crevasse, and lake, and plain, came not from man's devising, and obeyed not man's rule. Influences of the heaven above, and of the daily surrounding atmosphere, wrought their will upon the new-born islands. Fresh convulsions changed, modified and completed their shape, and so the new and the old were blended together in a harmony which no skill of man could have devised. The English Reformers did not attempt to develop a creed or a community out of their own internal consciousness. Their highest aim was only to come back to what had been before. They had not the gifts which created in others the ambition to be the founders of a new system. They did not even set about their task with any fixed plan or organised set of doctrines. Their inconsistencies, their variations, their internal differences, their very retractations witness to the gradualness with which the new light dawned upon them, and dispelled the old darkness. The charges of hypocrisy and time-serving, which have been made so wantonly against Cranmer and his brethren, are all honourably interpreted by the real changes which took place in their own opinions. The patient, loving, accurate, study of Holy Scripture was an eminent characteristic of all these men. Thus the opinions they were receiving

from others who had advanced far before them in the new faith, were continually modified by this continual voice of God's word sounding in their ears, and by corresponding changes in their own views. Thus they were enabled by God's grace, out of the utter disintegration round them, to restore in its primitive proportions the ancient Church of England. Surely, in bringing to an end this review of their great enterprise, we may well say with the late Professor Blunt,—

“God grant that a Church which has nearly for three centuries, amidst every extravagance of doctrine and discipline which has spent itself around her, still carried herself as the mediator, chastening the zealot by words of soberness, and animating the lukewarm by words that burn; that a Church which has been found in experience to have successfully promoted a quiet and unobtrusive and practical piety amongst the people, such as comes not of observation, but is seen in the conscientious discharge of all those duties of imperfect obligation which laws cannot reach; that such a Church may live through these troublous times, to train up our children in the fear of God when we are in our graves; and that no strong delusion sent amongst us, may prevail to her overthrow, to the eventual discomfiture (as they would find, too late, to their cost) of many who have thoughtlessly and ungratefully lifted up their heel against her.”

XXXI:

“THE EARTHLY SIDE OF HEAVENLY THINGS.”

THERE is, even to the most earnest and devout, a danger, lest too great delight in those lower actings of the religious life in which our senses and our earthly affections take a part, should unawares rob us of the highest and truest spiritual communing with God. If the pure delight of the holy Apostles in the sight of their Master in the flesh could hinder their being led on to desire His spiritual presence, and if therefore His removal from them was a necessary step to their seeking the higher communion, how far greater must be our peril in our use of all those outward forms which address themselves to the same affections in us! How easily may things which are given us to lead us on to a true spiritual apprehension of Him, by their misuse, become hindrances instead of means to our communing with Him in spirit and in truth! The ritual of the Church, its music, its gatherings, nay, even its highest appointed ordinances, may have such attractions for us that we may rest in them, and make them ends instead of means, and so lose, in what becomes to us a beautiful painted wreath of

intervening mist, the realities of intercourse with Christ, which only can maintain our souls. At a time when, thank God, the bare cold sourness of Puritanism has so greatly passed from us, and when the tendency on all sides is towards some amount of higher ritual, we need in a special manner this solemn caution; and especially is it needed by the young, in whom imagination and feeling are strong and lively, and so, apter to intrude their dangerous presence within forbidden limits, and to draw down to their lower level the higher actings of the enfranchised spirit.

Nor does this apply only to ritualistic development. There is a strain of earthly passion running through many books which profess to be instruments of high and extatic devotions which are full of the same danger. The wings of the soul are so easily clogged with this earthliness of affection; there is such a tendency to know even the ascended Lord rather after the flesh than after the spirit, to substitute a new form of earthly for the reality of spiritual love; and this is so weakening and so lowering to the soul; it so certainly draws it down from Him, and therefore injures the whole moral tone of the spirit which allows it, and tends to deaden the conscience, that we cannot too zealously or too earnestly watch in ourselves against the very beginnings of the danger.

Between 1863 and 1870.

XXXII.

“SENSUOUS RELIGIOUSNESS.”

THE two temptations of this [inward] class which I have named as at this time specially besetting your spiritual life address themselves to minds of different constitutions. Both are most dangerous : against both the safeguard is the same.

There is the temptation to a sensuous religiousness. You will not suspect me of entertaining any puritan dread of the externals of worship. Though God is a Spirit, and is to be worshipped in spirit in order to be worshipped in truth, He has made us not spirits but men, reasonable beings with spirit, soul, and body ; and He is to be worshipped by us with all the separate parts of that marvellously compacted whole. They who, to make our worship more spiritual, would shut out from it the worship of the soul or the body, make it a mere play of the fancy, or a struggle of the intellect, till they evaporate its essential characteristics as the worship of redeemed men. But whilst this is most true and most important, it is no less important and true that our worship may easily be smothered by the weight of its external

adorning, till it sinks into the death of mere formality, or is sentimentalized into the languid feebleness of an unmanly emotion. This temptation exists amongst us, and when yielded to, it utterly emasculates the character; it brings on an universal languor in action; it enervates the will, and soon clogs with a cloying sweetness the healthful acting of the affections. The victim thinks himself growing in devotion when in fact he is learning more and more to substitute for devotion an æsthetic attachment to well-rendered services, to an ornamental ritual, and to highly-demonstrative forms of material worship. What do such men want to break the charm which binds them? They want to know Christ, to know Him on His Cross dying for their sin, for all is real there; to know Him awakening by His word within their heart the sense of guilt; to know Him bringing to them the blessed message of forgiveness; to know Him holding communion with their reconciled spirits; when this mighty revelation of Himself has visited the soul, it cannot rest in outer things, it cannot endure to have sign or symbol, be it of never such bewitching beauty, intercept one ray of His countenance, who is fairer than the children of men. To see Him, to be alone with Him, to hear His voice, to know His touch, to lean on His breast, to yield itself to Him: this, and no less than this, can satisfy the soul which for itself has learned,

in the deep mystery of personal experience, that He and He only has the words of eternal life. Such an one comes to comprehend that the æsthetic love of ornamented service may be no true love of Christ, but some mere fancy play wrought for the soul's ruin by the deceitfulness of Satan transforming himself into an angel of light, as a mocking substitute for that true love of Christ. It apprehends that this love is evermore a severe thing, a piercing, penetrating, personal affection, and that what falls short of this is not the love of Christ Himself, but of the accidents of His presence. It comes to understand those deep words of S. Augustine, “*Quod non propter se amatur non amatur*”^a.

Here, then, is the safeguard against this temptation also; and there is no other. You cannot get rid of it by merely lowering the tone of services, and baring them of their external ornaments; for it is just as possible for one man to be deceived by his love for the bareness, which he calls simplicity, in worship, as it is for another to be beguiled by the splendour which is dear to him. Like the parasite, which will cling to any prop around which it can cast its tendrils, these spurious affections will find their own support in the forms which habit, natural inclinations, and, above all, party-spirit, endear to them. The snuffle of the

^a Tom. i. 366, a. Ben.

conventicle is as precious to some tempers as is the gorgeousness of Eastern ceremonial to others. You cannot starve the busy intrusive fancy into a heavenly affection. You must exclude it by occupying the soul with a plant of higher nature and nobler origin. The love of Christ must so elevate the spirit, that it shall rest in no form, but in every form seek Him supremely; it must so enlighten the eye, that in every sign of His approaching it can see Him, and see nothing else as beautiful but that which does reveal Him. Then, and then only, are we safe in worship.

Between 1863 and 1870.

XXXIII.

“THE REAL TALISMAN AGAINST UNBELIEF.”

IT is by almost insensible gradations of decline that the end of utter irreverence and unbelief is reached. There is first the mere unwatchfulness of a heated spirit; then the pleasant whispers of an asserted self-will, or the gratified sense of a secret superiority to others, perhaps to parents or instructors; then the tinsel brightness of the new discoveries of seeming truth, with which arrogance and ignorance dazzle the eyes of those they would bewilder and mislead. Then come all the motley crowd of encouraged doubts; then the cold shivering ague of scepticism, and at last the wilful hardness of unbelief. But were there not here also restraints broken through and whispers disregarded which might have shielded and saved the miserable soul? Most assuredly there were, and the listening to that one voice, “See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh,” would have saved a soul from everlasting death.

This, then, is the history of cases such as these, and surely it is a history which is full of awfulness.

For the depth of the downfall answers to the greatness of the former elevation, and each of these are only less than infinite, when the regenerate soul has become a castaway, the redeemed of Christ has chosen to be Satan's slave, and the temple of the Holy Ghost is turned into a cage of unclean spirits, and a dwelling-place of devils. If it were possible for anything to add to the awfulness of such a picture, it would be the sight of what might have been the blessedness of one so highly favoured. Even as we see it, shorn of so much of its glory, shattered and defaced by the work of sin, how grand even in its ruin, shews that soul of man which was created in the image of God! How various its endowments, how noble its qualities, how vast its reach! What must it not have been, when in its original excellence it was dwelt in fully by the grace of God! Yet it is to that, and it may be to far more, that the regenerate under the moulding of God's hand are here in progress. Oh! thought of awe for those who are marring this work and losing its perfecting. Oh! blessed thought for those in whom this work is advancing.

For that loss reaches everywhere. That perfecting extends its work of restoration throughout the whole nature. Even in that which, high as it is, is not the highest part of man, I mean his intellectual powers, it is impossible to overrate

the blessedness of this gift, or the great damage of losing it. Sin in every form, but especially in that of self-will, is ever bidding for our hearts by the old promise of making us through our self-choices to be like gods, knowing good and evil. But it is the false promise of a lying spirit. Sin, even as regards the intellect, is always weakness. Sooner or later, wanderers from God in the far country of their wilful choice "begin to be in want." They miss even their intellectual perfecting. The softness, the impatience, the arrogance, the scornfulness which sin brings into the soul are films which soon thicken into blindness, and shut out from the darkening eye the bright beams of the world of light around. He that would know the full powers of the marvellous intelligence which God has given him, must seek for that acting of the uncreated intelligence upon his own which will set free all its energies, and give it back at once its strength and harmony. And even this is but the least and lowest part of that unspeakable work of renovation which is wrought, within those who yield to Him, by God the Holy Ghost. His chiefest work is on man's highest spiritual nature. It is the purifying of the soul, the filling it with love, and joy, and peace; the cleansing it from all its stains, the opening of its eye-sight to drink in the radiance of the uncreated light.

Oh that my words might persuade any of you, brethren in Christ, who have not as yet tasted of them, to believe indeed in these powers of the world to come, which are all around you, and to make them yours. Before their might, all difficulties melt away; under their influence, the soul rises to its true strength, and expands to its proper dimensions. Doubts, and fears, and weakness, and all the evil heritage of the Fall, vanish where He is. Oh, for ourselves, and for the Church around us, let us seek with a new earnestness His presence and His gifts. Yea, this day come down amongst us, Thou blessed Spirit of the Father and the Son, and work mightily in this Thy Church Thy manifold work of love. Amidst the strivings of the busy intellect, Oh Wisdom of the Father, shew us what is truth. Amidst the tumults of the earth, Oh mighty Comforter, vouchsafe us peace. Amidst our many discords, Oh bond of the uncreated Trinity, knit us into One by the sure binding of Thy unbroken unity. Amidst our pollutions, Oh Spirit of holiness, vouchsafe us purity; in spite of all our coldness, Oh breathe into us some inspiration of Thy love!

Then shall we love and serve Thee as we would; then shall Thy languishing ministry be filled again with noble, burning, loving spirits; then shall hearts be opened, then shall tongues be loosed,

yea, and the blessed day be hastened in its dawning, when all the elect shall have been gathered, and when in spite of all our manifold infirmities, our eyes shall see the King in His beauty, and our spirits rest for ever on the bosom of our Lord. . . .

. . . . I need not tell you that an insulting levity in the treatment of Christian dogma abounds in the present day around us. You have all read or heard the sneers, the insinuations, the depreciating compliments, and the withering scorn with which simple earnest belief in the Word of God and the great Credenda of Christianity are now-a-days too often treated. The whole blame of this is not fairly to be laid on those who so speak or write. They have, doubtless, had many provocations to bear from the narrow prejudices which so readily entwine themselves with an ignorant and imperfect belief. Nor is the temptation to be traced exclusively to what is evil amongst us. Ages have their own temper, just as natural seasons have their own character; and to that character, be it what it may, peculiar disorders, as well as peculiar advantages, are akin. No good is to be done by simply flouting at the temper of our age. The only wise course is to acknowledge and act with the good, and to strive to precipitate the evil in the great stream which is

weltering round us and bearing us and ours along. There is very much that is noble in the temper of our own age. It may contrast most favourably with sensual, dull, drowsy, easy-living times, when mind seemed almost stifled with matter, and the soul embrouited by the dominance of its corporeal mate. In physics, in history, in philosophy, in religion, ours is an active, busy, inquisitive, discovering, critical age. Little enough it knows of rest. Labour, conflict, victory—these are its watchwords. There is a great deal that is noble in all this: a great deal with which the young and the ardent, and the high-minded, and the intelligent must specially sympathise. It is, most certainly, a very interesting time in which to live; but it has its dangers, and some of those of the gravest character. Its victories, of necessity, breed in it a certain audacity. The authority and the genius of the Christian revelation oppose themselves to this element of its temper. It revenges itself by subjecting the claims of which it is impatient to a newer and stricter criticism than former times have used. To the apprehension of many, it seems to succeed in greatly reducing the range and authority of those claims, and unbelief and lawlessness spread with no mean increase on every side.

Now in what course at such a time is safety to be found? Certainly not, I think, in sleepily

disregarding what is passing around us : as certainly not in simply setting ourselves against the temper of the day : in hating progress ; in worshipping ignorance or dulness ; in suspecting science ; or with a timid restlessness, bred of the weakness of faith, seeking to invent some new concordat between it and revelation ; nor in forbidding criticism ; in turning away from discoveries ; and scoffing at advance. No, brethren, these cannot help us. The rock which with its rugged breast affronts the violence of the torrent, cannot stay, but can only chafe into a ruder anger, its troubled waters. Christian philosophy should know some higher wisdom than that ;—and where else, but in this same safeguard, is to be found the talisman for such times as ours? If there are hard sayings discovered in the Christian record ; if many turn back because of them, and walk no more after Him, what is all this but a sifting of the inner willingness of hearts to go away from Him? What else do the many voices round us proclaim, but that, more than ever, we need a personal knowledge of Him to keep us safe amidst the strife of tongues? That not in ears closed artificially against syren songs, not in minds manacled and ignorance courted, but in a more abundant presence with us of Him who is our faith, shall be our safeguard. When faith becomes more difficult, when sayings become harder,

we do but want the more a real personal acquaintance with Him. We need to trust, with a simple affiance, in His atonement; to walk more with Him in our Galilee; to lean our burden more entirely on Him; to have more inward experience of what He is to the soul who lives in communion with Him; so that the chafing surf of intellectual difficulty, when it breaks upon us, will but lead us, like the limpet, to its rock, to cling, by the renewed instincts of the soul, the closer to Him.

This is the real talisman against unbelief. It is not to be found in hard, narrow, exclusive views, but in a personal love to Christ; for this rises in its strength as difficulty rises; this arms the soul with new instincts, which defend it in the day of danger. For such an one, when questions trouble him, there is a whole life of resistance to unbelief, which is quickened into action by the mere touch of what might harm the spirit. There is the remembrance of past communings with his Lord; there is the sense of His present nearness; there is the clasp of deepening love; there is the soul's passionate cry, "Lord, to whom should we go?" there is the realization, by our own spirit, of the great simple philosophical verity, "Qui recte amat procul dubio recte credit^a."

True love to Christ will sweep away a thousand

^a S. Aug., tom. vi. 240 d.

doubts, and answer a thousand speculative difficulties; and as this is to be our own internal safeguard, so it should set the note for those who have to handle the mysteries of God before such a generation as this. With this safeguard, there can be no danger to the truth from any amount of increased intellectual activity. It is mere unbelief to suspect that criticisms or science can threaten Christianity. Such fearfulness belongs to the defenders of an imposture, not to the keepers of truth. It does but increase our difficulties; for suspicion evermore breeds suspicion. It is not by limiting the intellectual side of our religion, but by exalting its spiritual side, that we can be safe and keep others safe. It is not by striving to repress intellectual activity, nor by jealously warning it off the precincts of revealed religion; it is by lifting up before men's eyes the Cross of Christ, and teaching them personal affiance in Him, that we shall keep uninjured the great deposit of the truth. And this is the only talisman: without it all speculations upon the mystery of life and of God are full of danger; for though such peril is pre-eminently present in studies and enquiries which tend to shake received belief as to things sacred, it is not with them only that it is present. It is almost as easy for controversial orthodoxy, as for adverse speculative criticism, to land the spirit in the

valley of the shadow of death. Nothing can more endanger the true life of the spirit than the cold charnel-house breath of a mere reasoning, unloving, uncharitable orthodoxy. Alas, the pathway of the Church, through times of great controversy, is marked by the mouldering corpses of such combatants for truth. This, and this only, can keep us safe amongst our own perils,—to have known ourselves the love bred within the soul by a true belief in Christ's atoning blood, in Christ's perpetual presence, in Christ's abiding love. And of this we may be sure—no speculative difficulties can endanger one soul, which has been taught by experimental knowledge to say in times of darkness, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." . . .

We must learn the need of reverence in seeking. For as the finding is not the natural result of our endeavour, but the free gift of His Will, all true seeking must be a perpetual bowing to His Will; a receiving His communications of Himself as He is pleased to make them, not as we think they ought to be made. What a lesson this is. And when more needed than now? If you will but learn it, you will be delivered from many of the most dangerous of your temptations. For nothing more tends to weaken resistance to indolence, or even to gross sensuality, than doubts as to the reality of the truth of the Gospel.

And these doubts are often bred, and always strengthened, by our irreverend impatience as to the difficulties which beset the revelation God has given us. If, therefore, you will settle in your souls this truth, that our God is a God who hideth Himself, you will be able to see that the presence of difficulties which you cannot solve is a necessary condition of the dispensation under which you are living : that they must be inseparable from a state of imperfect knowledge, and from a limited revelation ; that they essentially appertain to a state of trial and probation ; that they are needful for your own full development, and may be made moral instruments for working out your own perfection.

Further, you will see that the true mode of treating them is neither to deny their existence, nor to fear their presence, still less to let them minister to the production of doubt or unbelief, but to look at them as men look at the clouds which fleck the heavens ; which, though for the time they hide the sun, yet do not make it the less present in the firmament, but which may themselves become so full of its light as to give back its radiance with a beauty which, if its burning brightness had not been broken by them into the infinity of light and shade, it could not have possessed. For difficulties, and temptations, and all the permitted accidents of our life of trial

here, will become to those who bear them patiently, and use them faithfully, new instruments for conveying to the soul the assurance of His presence who casts His light upon them; and whilst He veils Himself at will behind them, at His own will breaks through them with the manifestation of His presence. This is the way in which we may learn the secret of God's nearness to us. It is the discipline by which we may get rid of the unreality which talks about God, and in a certain way connects Him with what we think the religious part of our days, but forgets His nearness to us in the common everyday actions which make up our lives. For, just as we cannot see the natural light in its own essential being, but only in its reflections from that on which it falls; so can we never fully learn the presence of God with us unless we see it reflected on us from all things round us, and not the least from the trials and temptations which that presence gilds with heavenly radiance.

Here then, brethren, is this truth, and here its practical bearing on our lives. But one word more, and I have done. It is also most full of comfort. Whose heart amongst you all, even amongst the youngest and most joyous, has not known some touch of deep sorrow. As life goes on, you must know more of it. The spring of the spirit slackens, outward cares and troubles

multiply, inward struggles increase. Life becomes, with very many even of those who seem the most successful, a day of clouds and thick darkness. How unspeakable is the blessing to every one thus visited, of knowing that if only he be faithful all this shall pass away. That the God in whose presence is life, is but out of love hiding Himself for a season, but that He will reveal Himself. That for every faithful believer in Jesus the clouds shall pass away, the sun shall break out in its glory; that his eyes, strengthened then to bear the vision, shall see the King in His glory, his spirit cast itself in permitted completeness on that eternal love which created, redeemed, and has perfected it.

Between 1863 and 1870.

APPENDIX.

VILLAGE-CHURCHES IN 1842—45.

THE impression I have gathered from my inspection of the parish-churches of the county [viz. of Surrey] is, upon the whole, of an encouraging complexion. With some few exceptions, these hallowed heir-looms of our land are yet sound in the material part of their structure; their ecclesiastical character, though often humble in its pretensions, is, in its main outlines at least, undestroyed; whilst the injuries which past negligence or ignorance have inflicted on them are capable of remedy. In many of the village-churches much has been done within these last few years: some have been absolutely dug out of the ground which long neglect had suffered to accumulate round them, to the destruction of the symmetry of their proportions, and the grievous injury of the building from damp and want of ventilation. The broken pavements, crumbling windows, decayed seats, and mouldy walls of too many more, no longer continue to reproach the impiety which had surrounded them with houses "ceiled with cedar, and painted with vermilion," whilst it wantonly or indolently permitted the house of God to lie ruinous and waste. New churches, too, have risen both amongst the crowded multitudes of our metropolitan district, and in many an out-lying hamlet of our rural parishes.

Yet much remains undone; and it is rather from the evident awakening of better feelings in a multitude of quarters, than from what has been already ef-

fected, that I gather my chief encouragement. Still are there multitudes amongst us who know no pastor's voice, who have no place in any house of God; still is it too often a painful and humiliating thing to enter the parish-churches which we inherit from our fathers' piety. We find, perhaps, in some remote district^a, the ancient building preserving marked traces of the unsparing expense at which it was erected, and by which it was adorned. The hands of its founders and its gravers have long since mouldered into the dust of the surrounding churchyard. Alas, that with them should have been too often buried the blessed spirit which led men to delight in rearing up and making beautiful the altar of their God! For what do we see now? Their poor estates have grown great with the increasing wealth of the land. The houses in which the fathers dwelt have been found too strait for the children; palaces have sprung up instead of mansions; every land and every climate have been ransacked to furnish the beautiful woods, the costly silks and carpeting, which minister to their magnificence and ease. The abundance of wealth has even overflowed the dwelling-house itself; the fruit and flowers which our fathers knew not, cluster on our walls, or scent our gardens. And how, meanwhile, has it fared with the house of God? There, as it seems, alone, all expense is grudged. The narrow walls have never expanded for an increasing population; nay, its straitened area has been too often made straiter still by the grasping hand which has seized on the best situations on which to erect private enclosures, which are carpeted, and cushioned, and warmed, to secure as large a share as possible of merely personal comfort, whilst

^a The village-church of Leigh, Staffordshire, is a good illustration.

the surrounding building is suffered daily to grow poorer and more waste. Unshapely galleries block up its windows, in which the beautiful stone-tracery of other times has been replaced, when repairs became unavoidable, by the commonest materials : other windows have been closed wholly, because to close was cheaper than to restore them. For the same cause whole arches have been walled up, and their very aisles demolished ; whilst on every side the waste of gradual decay, or the meanness of cheap repairs, give an air of depressing desolation to the sacred building.

This is but too faithful a picture of holy places bordering upon private mansions which are decked and furnished with every instrument of splendour and luxury. And surely that so it should be, is a fearful sign that there has grown widely up amongst us an earthly, luxurious, and unchristian temper, which has lowered the general standard, and thus injured grievously even the best amongst our people. For though, doubtless, superstitious motives, from which we, thank God, are free, mingled often with better purposes in the minds of those who spent of old thus nobly, it is a deep disgrace to us that, instead of purifying the motive, we have renounced the zeal ; and when we learned that we could not purchase heaven with our offerings, have therefore ceased to offer to the Lord our God

Before any alteration whatever is made in a parish-church, the concurrence of the ordinary must be obtained.

It is of great moment that the law on this point should be clearly understood, as it will henceforth be strictly enforced by those whose duty it is to enforce it. Neglect of this in times past, as well as too great

readiness to grant faculties, has brought the interior of most of our churches into a state which calls most urgently for some immediate and stringent redress. In a mere clamour against pews, if by pews are meant fixed seats of convenient construction and just allotment, I am not disposed to join. I have no sympathy with views recently put forward with great ability by a writer on this subject, who would remove from our churches all facilities for sitting. That our fixed seats were one consequence of that Reformation for which we can never be too deeply grateful to Almighty God, is with me no discredit to them. With the great men who, in the 17th century, did resist their novel formation, we shall do well to object to their abuse, and not to their existence^b. Wholly unsuitable as they no doubt are for a worship which consists chiefly in gazing upon the official devotion of another, they may assist the "common prayer" of our reformed Church, they are suitable to our national character, they tend to foster habits of family religion, and, by preventing the inconvenient confusion of different classes, they may, whilst they protect his rights, be even more welcome to the feelings of the poor man than of the rich.

But that these advantages attend their use is no justification of their abuse; and that they have been greatly abused, the churches of any district will prove. During

^b In the curious "History of Pews" published by the Cambridge Camden Society, it is plain that the objections of Bishops Montagu and Wren were not to pews, but to "pews or new seats erected by private men on their own authority;" or, again, to "seats or pews which hinder and encumber the neighbours in hearing God's word and performing Divine service;" and, once more, to "high and close pews," which made it impossible for the wardens to present for irregularity of behaviour.

my parochial visitation, I have met with manifold instances of the evils to which I refer. For the most part, the oldest pewing is, in all essential matters, far the best. It is the most adapted to general devotion, and the most suited to the architectural character of the church. The earliest seats are the lowest, the widest (both important assistants to general kneeling;) they are the most regular, the most substantial, of the best materials, and, above all, the least unjust in their arrangement. The first change is commonly marked by the insertion between the oak-benches of anomalous deal-doors. These are followed by deal skirting-boards raising the sides of the old oak-seats. As you advance up the nave, large square seats, with sides often six feet high, entirely of deal, painted or unpainted without, and often of matting or green baize within, swallow wholly up the old oak-benches. Soon after these, a gallery has commonly appeared, blocking up the arches, choking the windows over which it stretches, and oppressing with its low ceiling the worshippers below.

All this is bad enough as a mere disfigurement of the church; but in its moral aspect it is far worse. For this change in the character of the seats has been the consequence of the private appropriation of what once were acknowledged as the common rights of the parishioners. It is wealth, or parish influence, or some other earthly power, which has enabled pretension, even in God's house, to seize upon benches which were freely occupied before by humble worshippers, and to appropriate their Christian birth-right to the maintenance of its own barren grandeur. The degree to which this evil has risen can hardly be suspected without a detailed examination of our churches. In my progress

through this archdeaconry I have found chancels, which, within these few years, contained benches free to all, wholly engulfed in two vast pews allotted to the squire ; in other cases, I have found all the best parts of the nave entirely engrossed by private pews of similar dimensions and allotment, in each of which sit two or three straggling inmates, nursing their separate dignity. Whilst in others, a vast pew, raised up to the height of a low gallery, absolutely shuts out the whole chancel from the church, rendering even the rubrical performance of the service thenceforth impossible.

Charge, 1842.

For the most part, as far as our parish churches go, we succeeded to the marred inheritance of a penuriously spendthrift generation, which gruded the necessary means for keeping up that which their poorer ancestors ungrudgingly erected. The system, too generally prevalent, has been that seemingly economical, but really most costly plan, of repairing insufficiently ; covering defects, rather than curing them ; putting off a little present expense, by allowing it to run on from year to year at the compound interest of self-aggravating dilapidation. In some of our parishes this has gone on so long, that the church must soon be rebuilt, or cease to be at all. The evil day has been put off until repairs become, at the same time, impossible and unavoidable. In many others, the evil, though existing, has not reached this head. In many it has of late been effectually removed, and the church thoroughly and worthily repaired. Still, in too many of country districts, some church may be found approaching to this sad condition ; and others, which, in one or other of their parts, exhibit tokens of a like neglect. The very aspect of these

buildings is unworthy of their purpose, and depressing to the merest chance observer:—their church-yards, with ill-kept fences, full of ragged, mouldering monuments, which openly proclaim descendants' utter carelessness of a memory, which too fond a confidence bequeathed to them with other hopes:—the earth heaped high round the ruined, sunken walls of the sacred edifice itself; which, undrained, unuttered, and patched up with mean substitutes for true repairs, invites on every side a wider ruin; casements closed with masonry, because bricks, darkness, and want of ventilation, cost for the moment less than windows decently restored; the pitch of the roof lowered, and so symmetry destroyed, damp invited, and the walls strained or rent, because it was cheaper to saw off than to restore the ends of solid beams, whose whole extent our fathers grudged not, as a free gift to God and to His poor:—all this prepares us for the scene within; where, stumbling over the pavement broken into holes, or repaired unevenly with the cheapest materials other floors reject, we proceed up aisles bounded by high irregular pews, into whose ancient oak foundations, and modern deal additions, the moist green walls are perpetually breathing damp, decay, and rottenness. Often, too, as if to aggravate the sense of desolation, cheap expedients for relieving personal discomfort may be seen in cumbrous cushions, gaudy pew-linings, and columns sheathed carefully with hat-pegs, which plainly intimate that, in the house of God alone, would the frequenters of this building bear around them such disorder and neglect.

On the moral influence which such buildings exercise upon a parish I will not enlarge, because it will suffice for me to shew you their direct physical effect. Their damp, unventilated atmosphere makes them inaccessible

or fatal to the sickly and infirm; their ill-conditioned casements, ill-closed doors, and draughty roofs, lead to the continual heightening of the pew-sides, from which alone any shelter can be gained: these, in turn, enclose, block up, and obscure the church; shut out the young from the wholesome restraint of observation, and the occupation of the eye, so useful in fixing a volatile attention; while they exclude the old from the opportunities of sight and hearing; and all from the possibility of kneeling, or joining, as one whole body, in many of the public services. Public baptisms, for instance, as a congregational solemnity, "representing to each" adult "his own Christian profession," become almost impossible. Some ordinary vessel, and a private corner, replaces the darkened font, which is mutilated, broken up, or filled with the litter and rubbish which a rare act of purgation occasionally gathers from the more open spaces of the church. Such, in too many instances, was the building we received from those immediately before us; such, in some at least of the features I have painted, still remains the House in which God is to be honoured by our united worship, His blessing sought upon an assembled parish, His Gospel declared to waiting souls; in which all His flock, and especially His poor, ought to find their own place provided for them in which to hear His word, to seek His name, and to give Him thanks.

Such evils, then, it is ours to repair.

Charge, 1845.

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