

# The Brevian.

THEY RECEIVED THE WORD WITH ALL READINESS OF MIND, AND SEARCHED THE SCRIPTURES DAILY, WHETHER THOSE THINGS WERE SO.—Acts xvii. 11.

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## "GOD IS LOVE."

[The following lines were composed by a lunatic, and scratched on the walls of his cell:]

Could we with ink the ocean fill,  
And were the skies of parchment made,  
Were every stalk on earth a quill,  
And every man a scribe by trade;  
To tell the love of God above  
Would drain the ocean dry,  
Nor would the scroll contain the whole,  
Though stretched from sky to sky.  
The Churchman's Monthly Penny Magazine.

## PROVE ALL THINGS; HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD.

A Sermon on 1 Thess. v. 21., preached at St. Ann's Church, Lancaster, on Sunday the 14th of February 1847, by the Rev. Charles Bury, Incumbent.

Among the almost numberless proofs which have been mercifully vouchsafed to us of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, one very strong and very striking one is the extraordinary adaptation of the precepts and promises, the warnings and exhortations of Holy Writ, to all times and all people. And it is not merely the abstract theory of its universal adaptation which is so remarkable, but the testimony which every heart spontaneously bears to its suitability and applicability. For, in every age, even those who value it least are made to feel, that it is quick and powerful, while those who have really tasted the goodness of the Lord, find, as all the Lord's people have in bygone ages, that it quickens, purifies, directs, enlightens, comforts. The exhortation enjoined in the text was evidently necessary in the Apostle's time, when Judaizing teachers and others rose up and, mingling truth with their doctrines, so as to gain them a hearing, added to the word of God that which was contrary to, or neutralized, the Gospel, making the cross of Christ of none effect.

But if it were incumbent on the Apostle to enjoin on the Thessalonians, in the very infancy of the Gospel Church, the duty and necessity of proving all things; surely it was increasingly the duty of Ministers of the Gospel in the times which followed the Apostles, to reiterate earnestly the apostolic injunction. For heresies of every kind were rife among the earlier Christians, and spiritual and carnal pride, urged on by the great enemy of God and man, sowed the seeds of false and erroneous doctrines which found, in the hearts of men, soil too congenial to their growth, so that they sprung up rapidly, and were diffused widely.

But are we not all persuaded of the adaptation of the words to the times in which we live? when so many perversions of Scripture are brought forward under a specious guise, and with the sanction of names much reputed for piety and learning; nay when the crudest theories and speculations, broached with boldness and with some mixture of truth, have their admirers and followers; nay how needful is it to enjoin the duty, when some are found bold enough—shall I not say wicked enough?—to desire to take away the key of knowledge from the people? But we find also in the Scriptures indirect but surely designed condemnation of many practices the lawfulness of which, if not asserted, is supposed to be doubtful. Consider the practice of the so-called Church of Rome in withholding the Scriptures; while passages may be brought from the word of God, proving the advantage of reading them, and the command to do so. The words of the text shew the absolute necessity of having the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue to consult in order to be preserved from error and led into needless truth; and surely those who would forbid the reading of the Scriptures, are guilty of taking away that light for the feet, that lamp for the path which can alone guide men safely and surely through this wilderness world to the promised land of everlasting rest. To what other test can we bind doctrines, opinions, practices, which must exercise a powerful influence for good or evil on the eternal destiny of man?

In considering the duty which now presents itself in its turn to our notice, we will divide the text into a precept and an exhortation. And first the precept enjoined: *PROVE ALL THINGS.* How sad and humbling a proof of the deep depravity of human nature, and the power and malignity of Satan, that the precious and invaluable gift of God, the Gospel of his Son, which should be a saviour of life unto life, is perverted by unholy, nay devilish ingenuity into a savour of death unto death, and that those who thus pervert it, glory in their shame, and rejoice over those whom they succeed in leading away from the truth as it is in Jesus! I think that, such as the exhortation is needed, it is not attended to as it ought, even by those who profess to consider it their privilege, their birthright, to possess and peruse the word of God. Owing to natural indolence or a culpable indifference as to the truth, or an indisposition to enquire prayerfully for themselves whether what they hear is in strict conformity with the word of God, men are apt to take for granted, to take as proved, that which they ought to know for themselves to be so, by personal experience, and by comparing spiritual things with spiritual. This is especially the case when men are pleased with what they hear from the pulpit when it falls in with their ideas of what is in accordance with the Gospel, and thus receive it intellectually or speculatively, without troubling themselves to search whether these things are so, or desiring to know the truth pronounced, experimentally and practically. Let a man hear a favourite preacher, and if he do not hear enunciated any thing very startling, he may be, nay, alas, he is insensibly led away to receive much that is beside the truth, until he come to receive unhesitatingly that which is contrary to the truth. Error, unknown to himself, is gradually insinuated, which, if distinctly and openly taught at first, would have alarmed him, and he would at once have rejected that which now his mind has been prepared to receive; and this owing, not only to man's proneness to error, but to his omitting or neglecting to bring what he hears to the test of Scripture, neglecting to prove all things. The same is true with regard to reading a favourite writer, or the works of one who has obtained a reputation for learning or piety. We are too prone to allow our minds and opinions to be guided by others, and to imbibe their views if on the whole we admire them,

and too backward to bring every sentiment to the law and to the testimony. Pleased with the writer's style, and not arrested perhaps by any observations which militate strongly against our own opinions, we receive as true, as proved, all that is brought before us, instead of proving it by that unerring touchstone, the word of God. Thus many a fatal error, dressed up in the garb of truth, is speciously insinuated; and many are led from the good old paths by yielding up their judgments and minds to the teaching of others, without being careful to try the spirits whether they are of God.

We would then urge on you, brethren, as needful now in a tenfold degree in these perilous times, when, if it were possible even the elect would be deceived to their ruin; when there is a proneness to give heed to seducing spirits; times when men will scarcely endure sound doctrine practically applied, we would urge on you to prove all things; lest ye should be turned away from the truth, and be deceived to the great danger and detriment of your souls. We urge you then, for your souls' sake, to prove the doctrines and statements you hear and read. We would not have you cultivate a criticising spirit which would sit in judgment on a preacher and pronounce censure or approval according to your own fancy; but as he who seeks the precious metals does not satisfy himself with examining the precious ore to approve or reject, but putting it into the furnace, proves it and returns only that which is really valuable, so would we have you prove by God's word—the only sure test—the doctrines and principles you hear propounded, that you may ascertain what is really the bread of heaven, food which will nourish the soul, distinguishing it from that which is merely pleasant to the ear or gratifying to the intellect, and cannot really profit, and also from that which is not in accordance with the revealed word of God, and therefore worse than the refuse and the dross. Yes, prove all doctrines, all statements or subjects connected with your spiritual interests; but prove them not by human systems, not by your own preconceived opinions, not by your wishes, but by the pure word of God, without human glosses or interpretations.

Prove your own selves whether that change be really wrought in you, without which ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven; whether there be in you a change of heart as well as of judgment. Prove your tempers, whether they are being brought more into conformity with the meekness and gentleness of the Lamb of God, who, when He was reviled, reviled not again, who prayed even for his persecutors and murderers. I do not ask whether your tempers are entirely subdued to the law of Christ—for temper is almost the last evil to be entirely controlled—but as the Apostle says, "be ye angry and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath," are you striving to overcome this temptation, proving yourselves by the word of God where it is written, "that they are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts?" Evil tempers ought to be, will be dying in the true believer, though, alas, they may occasionally gain the mastery.

Prove your dispositions towards God and man, whether these be so in accordance with the word of God and the example of the Redeemer as to evidence that you are a child of God, by adoption and grace, and growing more meet for the heavenly inheritance. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his: and what disposition pre-eminently characterized the Redeemer? Was it not love? love to God? love to man? Love to God, which made him delight to do his Father's will, though at the cost of so much suffering: love to man, which induced him to lay aside the robes of light and glory, and to put on the nature of poor degraded man—a love which induced him to bear the contradiction of sinners, to endure their provocations, to pity their infirmities, to compassionate their misery, and to die for their souls. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. Are you habitually striving to fulfil this law of Christ? Are you praying for an enlarged heart towards God? Are you cultivating—for oh! it needs diligent cultivation—the spirit of love towards all? Alas, when brought to the proof, which of you can say you love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your strength, and your neighbour as yourself? But what if we cannot in sincerity and truth adopt the words of the Apostle: the love of Christ constraineth me?—if we cannot say that the motive which rules in our heart and actuates us in the discharge of the various duties we are called to, is love? loving the Lord, because he first loved us, loving the Lord for all he has done and is doing for us and in us? Can God indeed be our reconciled Father through faith which is in Christ Jesus? If he be our Father, where is our love? What if love is not felt, and a spirit of love manifested towards all with whom we have to do? Can we be really brethren in Christ Jesus, members of one family? heirs of the same kingdom? If a man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? Nay, brethren, prove your spirit by this Scripture: "Love is the fulfilling of the law"; and what is all your professed obedience and subjection to Gospel requirement worth, if there be not love in the heart, love to God and love to your brother also?

But prove yourselves, further, prove your spirit whether it be of God. Compare with Christ's holy example, with the requirement of Scripture, the spirit in which you receive crosses, vexations, trials, bereavements, disappointments. I well know that in the most advanced, though the spirit be willing, the flesh may be weak; but you need to prove yourselves whether you have the willing spirit. A spirit willing to follow Christ whithersoever he leads, is not attained by any mental discipline of human device. The Spirit of God alone can work in you to will and to do of his good pleasure; but unless there be this willingness in increasing measure, what proof have you of being renewed in the spirit of your mind? and if you are not better able than once you were to say in sincerity "not my will but thine be done," can you persuade yourself that the same mind is in you which was in Christ Jesus? And if the vexations and disappointments you meet with excite a murmuring and repining and rebellious feeling which is not striven with, and prayed against, unceasingly, what proof have you that the world is crucified to you, and you unto the world by the cross of Christ? Nor can you say with the Apostle, "the life I live

in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." And if you are not living a life of faith here, you have no scriptural ground to hope you will live a life of glory hereafter.

Prove your whole conduct by Scripture rules. Is your conversation habitually as becomes the Gospel of Christ, and do you carry into practice the precept "let no corrupt communications proceed out of your mouth?" Is your speech always with grace, and do you remember, so as to be influenced by them, the words of our Lord "every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgement, for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned?" and "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh?" Do you, in short, strive to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, and, whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do you all to the glory of God?

Prove your feelings on religious subjects. There may be much apparent feeling, many exalted frames while there is little or no grace in the heart. Nay, the tears may flow and the heart may throb under a touching or exciting discourse, at the narrative of the Saviour's sufferings, or from an eloquent and pathetic appeal; but do the tears of godly sorrow overflow? does the heart throb with glowing gratitude and love to the Saviour—for deliverance from sin? for strength against temptation, in time of need? for fresh victories over Satan, the world, and inbred corruption? for a good hope of glory through grace? for the efficacy, in your individual case, of His all-cleansing blood, of His all-prevailing intercession? Do you rejoice most in feelings and supposed evidences, or in the excellence and power and grace of the Lord Jesus? and do you prove that your strong feelings flow from genuine love to Christ, by doing more than others for him? "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven?" and "he that is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit."

Prove the reality of your conversion to God. See to it, that old things are passing away, and all things become new; that the old man is daily put off with his affections and lusts, that you are becoming more spiritually minded, and love the Lord's appearing more. And desire and pray, that you may have the Spirit more distinctly witnessing with your spirit, that you are the child of God.

Prove the reality of your FAITH, that it is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, looking at the things which are not seen but which are eternal, rather than at the things which are temporal; with your loins girded, and your lamps burning. Prove the reality of your HOPE, whether it is the anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, or whether it centres in self and present gratification. Prove the reality of your LOVE, whether it is influential alike in joy and sorrow, whether it casteth out fear. Prove yourselves often, lest ye be insensibly led away, or go backward, or be deceived and fall into error.

And hold fast that which is good. We must take this exhortation as the conclusion of our discourse. Whatever sound doctrine you have received—what truth you have been taught—hold it fast with the utmost tenacity; however you may be sneered at as prejudicial or illiberal or narrow minded or bigoted. You have need truly to hold fast the form of sound words delivered by our Lord and his Apostles, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus, for many false and specious notions are abroad which are but too well adapted to beguile you of the simplicity of the truth, and to deprive you of comfort at the last. Take heed to the truths ye have heard, lest at any time ye let them slip; and hold fast by the practice of them, assured that if any man will do the Lord's will, "he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." And though your attainments in faith and grace may be comparatively low, yet hold fast and press on in the path of duty; follow out to know the Lord, assured that he will never leave thee nor forsake thee; that he giveth grace for grace.

Thus proving all things and holding fast that which is good, against the snares and devices of Satan, against the world's allurements and seducing doctrines, you will advance in the knowledge of self and your own deficiencies, you will grow in the knowledge of him whom to know is life eternal, in the experimental knowledge of a Saviour's love. You will be preserved from error, will have your senses exercised and become acquainted with and enabled with the sword of the Spirit to defeat, the devices of Satan, though he come as an angel of light, and fallaciously quote scripture to lead you into sin. And though thus proving all things you may often find yourselves wrong, find yourselves possessing little knowledge, little holiness, and no spiritual strength; though you will find no righteousness of your own—you will find Christ made unto you of God "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." You will prove Christ and find that he never fails you, you will prove his fullness and freshness, his love and power, the efficacy of his blood and righteousness and intercession, and find yourselves "complete in Him."

## GLEANINGS FROM CHARLES SIMEON.

SAVING FAITH.—Having read a great deal of Hervey's works, I was much perplexed in my mind respecting the nature of saving faith. I have some idea that I expressed a wish to my father to have some person who could give me information on the subject; and that it was he who advised me to apply to Dr. Loveday of Caversham for instruction. To him I did apply, and he lent me Archbishop Sharp's third volume, containing his casuistical sermons; these I read with great profit; they shewed me that Hervey's view of saving faith was erroneous; and from that day to this I have never had a doubt upon the subject. I think it clear, even to demonstration, that assurance is not necessary to saving faith; a simple reliance on Christ for salvation is that faith which the word of God requires; assurance is a privilege, but not a duty. The true religion of all the mistakes that are made in the religious world about assurance is, that men do not distinguish as they ought, between an assurance of faith and an assurance of hope. There are three kinds of full assurance spoken of in the Scriptures (as I have shown in one of my printed Skeletons);

a full assurance of understanding (Col. ii. 2), of faith (Heb. x. 22), and of hope (Heb. vi. 11). The first relates to a clear view of revealed truth in all its parts; the second to the power and willingness of Christ to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him; and the third, (which is generally understood by the word assurance) to our personal interest in Christ. This last may doubtless be enjoyed; but a person may possess saving faith without it; he may be fully assured of Christ's power and willingness to save him, and yet not be assured that Christ has actually imparted salvation to him. The truth is, that these two kinds of assurance, namely of faith and of hope, have respect to very different things; assurance of faith having respect only to the truth of God in his word, whilst assurance of hope is founded on the correspondence of our character with that word: the one believes, that God will fulfil his promises to persons of a particular description; and the other, that we ourselves are of that very character to whom they are and shall be fulfilled. This latter therefore, I say again, is not a duty but a privilege (an inestimable privilege no doubt); and it is certain that our Lord himself very highly commended the faith of the Canaanitish woman and others, who possessed the former assurance without one atom of the latter. This shews, I think, that we ought to read all human compositions with caution. The best of writers have their favourite notions, which they are apt to carry too far; and this I consider to be the case with Hervey, both with respect to the doctrine of assurance and that also of imputed righteousness. I do myself believe the doctrine of imputed righteousness; but I do not approve of refining upon it, and insisting upon it, in the way that Hervey does; I love the simplicity of the Scriptures; and I wish to receive and inculcate every truth precisely in the way, and to the extent, that it is set forth in the inspired volume. Were this the habit of all divines, there would soon be an end of most of the controversies that have agitated and divided the Church of Christ.

THE WAY TO BE TAUGHT OF GOD.—I could not receive the doctrine of Election, not being able to separate it from that of reprobation; but I was not violent against it, being convinced, as much as I was of my own existence, that whatever others might do, I myself should no more have loved God if he had not first loved me, or turned to God if he had not by his free and sovereign grace turned me, than a cannon-ball would of itself return to the orifice from whence it had been shot out. But I soon learned that I must take the Scriptures with the simplicity of a little child, and be content to receive on God's testimony what he has revealed, whether I can unravel all the difficulties that may attend it or not; and from that day to this I have never had a doubt respecting the truth of that doctrine, nor a wish (as far as I know) to be wiser above what is written. I feel that I cannot even explain how it is that I move my finger, and therefore I am content to be ignorant of innumerable things which exceed, not only my wisdom, but the wisdom of the most learned men in the universe. For this disposition of mind I have unbounded reason to be thankful to God; for I have not only avoided many perplexities by means of it, but actually learned much, which I should otherwise have never learned. I was not then aware that this simple exercise of faith is the only way of attaining divine knowledge; but I now see it is so; and in fact it is the true way in which we attain human knowledge also; for the child receives every thing first upon the authority of his teacher, and thus learns the very first rudiments of language; he does not say, How do I know that a, b spells ab? or, that this is the nominative case, and that is the verb, and that is the accusative case that is governed by it? No; he calls things as he is taught to call them, and then in due time he sees that these things are not the arbitrary dictates of his master, but that they of necessity appertain to language, and exist in the very nature of things; and thus in time he comes to see a beauty and propriety in things which were at first no better to him than senseless jargon. This, I am persuaded, is the way in which we should receive instruction from God; and if we will do so, I verily believe, that we shall in due time see a beauty and harmony in many things, which the pertinacious advocates of human systems can never understand.—Memoirs of the Rev. C. Simeon.

## MR. SIMEON'S BIBLICALISM,

Described by Bishop Wilson of Calcutta.

Moderation on contested and doubtful points of Theology contributed to his ultimate success—not moderation in the sense of tameness as to the great vital truths of the Gospel—not moderation as implying conformity to the world's judgment of Christian Doctrine—but the true scriptural moderation arising from a sense of man's profound ignorance, and of the danger of attempting to proceed one step beyond the fair and obvious import of Divine Revelation. In this sense he was moderate. A reverential adherence to the letter of inspired Truth was the characteristic of his preaching. He never ventured to push conclusions from Scripture into metaphysical refinement. Unless the conclusions themselves, as well as the premises, were expressly revealed, he was fearful and cautious in the extreme. He conceived early in life the design of forming a school of *Biblicism*, if the term may be employed. Instead of detaching certain passages from the Bible, deducing propositions from these passages, and then making these propositions the starting points of his preaching, he kept the Bible as his perpetual standard; and used articles of Theology for the end for which they were intended, to supersede the Bible, but to be a centre of unity, a safeguard against heresy and error, and a means of discipline and order in the Church. He did not consider it his duty to attempt to reconcile all the apparent difficulties in St. Paul, but to preach every part of that great Apostle's doctrine in its place and bearing, and for the ends for which each part was evidently employed by its inspired author. Here shone forth that wisdom in Mr. Simeon's character to which we have already adverted—the wisdom of bowing before the infinite understanding of the Almighty, and not venturing to speculate on matters placed far above human comprehension. As Lord Bacon in Natural Philosophy considered

not theories, but facts; not what agreed with principles, but principles themselves; not hidden inattent, but phenomena; not speculation, but practice, as the points of greatest moment; so every word of Holy Scripture was in Mr. Simeon's view a fact, a principle, a phenomenon, a practical point of the utmost consequence. And it was from the aggregation of these that he aimed at constituting his *Biblicism*, or Scriptural Divinity.

## THE LITURGICAL QUESTION.

From a notice, in "Evangelical Christendom," of a new publication: "Union Liturgy," containing Forms of Prayer for the Public Services of Religion, and also for Family Worship and private Devotion." NISBET, London.

Not many years are past since the very name of a "Liturgy" would have been suggestive to the minds of many an eminent Christian among us, of anything rather than the epithet "Union," with which it is coupled in the title of this work. Those days, we are encouraged to believe, are fast going by, and let us hope, for ever. We have lived to hear the ministers of a Church, strictly liturgical in all its public services, pour forth the unfettered desires of their hearts in petitions framed in conformity with every varying circumstance, every peculiar emergency of private life, and in religious assemblies of brethren of other tribes; and, on the other hand, the descendants of the Puritans willingly join, upon occasion, in employing the time-hallowed and sublime forms of the Established Church, as the vehicle for a devotion as earnest in its aspirations as that of their sainted forefathers. We do not forget that minds are still to be found, unhappily fixed, by early influences and associations, at the opposite extremes of opinion and feeling on this subject; that there exist, within the four seas of Britain, devout men, whose peculiar antagonism to forms of prayer is carried to the length of objecting even to the use of the words which Christ taught his disciples; and others, whose repugnance to any effusion of Christian desires in public, through the medium of unpremeditated language, is equally difficult to be conquered. But we cannot be blind to the auspicious indications afforded in so many quarters, that our men of sincerest piety, and soundest and largest practical views, are coming in from the extremes at which party has left them, and that, as regards the public devotional exercises of Christian assemblies, the Evangelical mind of the country is gradually converging to the opinion, that their solemnity and profitableness might be jointly advanced, by combining the solid and lasting advantages undoubtedly attendant on the use of certain fixed forms, expressive of the perennial and perpetually recurring wants of the whole "Household of Faith," with liberty and room for those unrestrained supplications which may meet the special exigencies of particular communities and congregations.

This last consideration is that which most mainly modify the prejudices—or, let us call them, prepossessions—of the nurslings of a Liturgical Church. Those which tend to mitigate the objections on the other side are numerous, and merit, from all the pious and intelligent members of non-liturgical communions, that attention which their undoubted weight has procured them from some of the more thoughtful and dispassionate of their brethren. The great argument, however, is the practical one—that in what is termed extemporary prayer, many of the scriptural or conventional expressions unavoidably recurring, have in them the real essence of a form—that the very arrangement which leaves the choice of petitions and words to the person officiating in social worship, renders it necessarily a prescribed form to all who join with him, a form to which they cannot add, from which they cannot subtract, and in which they cannot alter, any more than in a Liturgy, a single expression—and finally, that this form is modelled by the conductor of the service, and must bear the impress of his individual mind, and the tinge of his temporary mood; whereas it is, in the case of a Liturgy, a form which has already been made known to those who are to follow it, and has received the stamp of general approbation.

Such considerations, however, involve those who are disposed to admit their weight, in no approval of any existing ritual now in use in any religious community. They merely present to candid minds a view of the abstract question, of old styled the Liturgical Controversy, which may lead to its practical settlement, at some future day, by the adoption of a greater similarity in worship than has hitherto prevailed amongst us—a similarity demanded, we humbly conceive, as the outward expression, before God and man, of our inward union in doctrine and spirit, and the want of which, is we are certain, one of the greatest practical obstacles to effective co-operation. If in all but externals we are agreed, it is by no means a sound inference from this agreement, that we should continue our disagreement in externals. A sounder inference we should think would be, that we should make our agreement in fundamentals the very ground of greater outward uniformity. If it be only or mainly in externals that we differ, then it is to these that every practical friend of peace will direct his attention, with a view to the removal of those visible badges of party which are all, it seems, that keep asunder those who recognise each other as having "One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism."

It is on this ground that we think every encouragement ought to be afforded to those who, like the author of the work before us, aim at the legitimate and necessary practical result of the identity of the faith held by the truly godly, scattered among our various Protestant communities—who, not content with idly proclaiming, "we are one," would lead us to express, embody, and secure our unity by common symbols of worship and discipline, as well as of doctrine.

The mention above made of the Liturgical Controversy; leads us to note two historical facts; first, that in the earlier, and certainly not worst, days of the Church of England, extemporary prayer—by which we mean prayer according to no enjoined form—was very generally offered up, at the close of the usual prescribed service, before sermon, as well as after it; and, secondly, that the objection to forms of prayer, in the abstract, and in *loco*, was entertained, previous to the Westminster Assembly, only by an extreme section of the Independents, and has