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[From the Edinburgh Review.]

ART. I.—1. *The Divine Rule of Faith and Practice.* By W. Goode, M.A. 2nd edition. London: 1853.

2. *Discourses on the Controversies of the Day.* By W. F. Hook, D. J. London: 1853.

3. *Means of Unity.* A Charge by Archdeacon Hare. London: 1847.

(Concluded.)

To ascertain the relative strength of the different sections into which the Church of England is divided, is not an easy task. At first it might be thought that the proctors elected to represent the Clergy in Convocation would furnish data for such a calculation. But these elections have become mere forms, and are seldom contested; and even in the few contests which have occurred, a very small proportion of the electors has taken part. The income of the religious societies would give an element for determining the resources of the parties by which they are respectively supported; but it is impossible to find any society supported by only a single party. We may, however, deduce from this source some information bearing on the question. The subscriptions to the Church Missionary Society amount to about 100,000*l.* a year; those to the Propagation Society to about 50,000*l.* The former is supported by all shades of Low Church and Broad Church; the latter by all shades of High Church and Broad Church. Hence if we suppose the number of adherents of the parties to be proportional to the amount of their subscriptions, we arrive at the conclusion that the Low Church party is (including its lay and clerical members) more than twice as numerous as the High Church party.* Again, the Curate's Aid Society, supported mainly by the High Church, collects rather under 13,000*l.* per annum; the Pastoral Aid Society, supported mainly by the Low Church, collects a little above 30,000*l.* This leads to much the same inference as before.†

The circulation of the religious newspapers, on the other hand, seems to have a different result. The 'Record' which is the organ of one extreme party, and the 'Guardian,' which is the organ of the other, have about an equal circulation. But here again it is impossible to eliminate the elements which prevent us from founding any accurate calculation on these data. Many take in these journals as good 'family newspapers,' without agreeing with their views. Moreover, neither of the moderate parties is represented by any newspaper. And again, the whole 'average circulation' of both 'Record' and 'Guardian' together does not amount to eight thousand, whereas the number of clergymen in England alone is above 18,000.

The address to the Archbishop in favour of the Gorham Judgement was signed by more than 3,200 clergymen, of the Broad

and Low Church parties; that against the Judgement by nearly 1,800 High Churchmen, including lay and clergy. This latter was signed by every Tractarian clergyman in England, and we have thus a proof that their number does not exceed a thousand, for at least 800 of the signatures must have belonged to laymen or Anglican clergy.*

As another mode of obtaining an approximation to the proportion of parties, we have gone through the Clergy List, marking the names of all the clergymen whose opinions we know, to about 500. The result of this examination has been, that supposing those unknown to us to be in the same proportions with those known, we should be led to classify the 18,000 clergy of the Church of England as follows:—

High Church.	{	Anglican	- -	3,500
		Tractarian	- -	1,000
		'High and Dry'	- -	2,500
		Evangelical	- -	3,300
Broad Church.	{	Recordite	- -	2,500
		'Low and Slow'	- -	700
		Theoretical	- -	1,000
		Anti-theoretical	- -	2,500

and about 1,000 peasant clergy in the mountain districts, who must be classed apart.†

The twenty-eight Bishops and Archbishops of England are divided in a somewhat different ratio; viz., thirteen belonging to various shades of High Church, ten to the Broad Church, and five to the Evangelical parties. But for obvious reasons we can scarcely ground any general conclusions on this datum.

But whatever may be the relative strength of these subdivisions, it is evident that the triple cord in which they interlace could not be easily untwisted, nor could either of its strands be cut, without a risk of severing the rest. The object of every wise Churchman should be to keep each of the main schools of opinion from extravagance on the one hand, and from stagnation on the other; and the existence of counteracting parties is a 'providentially operating' for this end. Nor should we forget that the difference which divide each from each are much exaggerated by party spirit. Most of them can be resolved into mere disputes about terms, which might be ended by stricter definition. Those which he deeper result from a difference of mental constitution, and belong to the domain of metaphysics rather than of religion. For it is in theology as it is in philosophy; every distinct sect strives to represent and embody a separate truth. A few great ideas are intuitively stamped upon the groundwork of human reason, but not illuminated with equal brightness. The ideas, which in one mind stand out in dazzling light, in another is dim and overshadowed. Hence each idea has its exclusive worship.

* This protest was sent for signature to every clergyman in England, by a London Comm. The address in favour of the judgment was only circulated privately by the efforts of a single clergyman, Mr. Goode, and to our knowledge it was never sent to many who would gladly have signed it.

† The Clergy List of the present year gives the names of above 18,300 clergy in England; this does not include the Irish Clergy.

But as the understanding, logically develops its favourite truth, it at length deduces consequences which seem to contradict some other truth equally fundamental. Then follows a conflict, which in a few minds produces absolute Pyrrhonism; but which more frequently issues in one of three alternatives. First, the mind may abandon the principle whence it started, considering it reduced *ad absurdum*, now that its logical consequences seem to contradict another axiom; secondly, the truth of both principles may be admitted, although their consequences seem irreconcilable; or thirdly, the consequences of the first principle may be embraced, and the modifying truth rejected. This last is the course adopted by extreme parties. Thus there are different stages in the development of opinion, each marked by the rejection or reception of some modifying truth, and each forming the halting place of a different sect or school.* Nor is there any evil in this variety, so long as the truths of morality and religion are not contradicted. And even where we might, at first sight, suppose them to be so (as for instance, in the case of fatalist opinions), we must be cautious of yielding this impression. For piety has a transmuting power, and often turns the inconsistency of the understanding into food for the goodness of the heart. Therefore, instead of murmuring, we should rejoice when we see the same character of Christian Holiness manifested under diverse opinions. For Christianity, embraced under one form, might have been rejected under another. All cannot see through the same telescope, but different eyes require the tube to be variously adjusted. And the image formed will at best be blurred and dim, unless charity furnish us with her achromatic lens, and blend all the rays into one harmonious brightness.

But is there then, that it may be asked, no evil in the spirit of party? Are we preaching acquiescence in our unhappy divisions which are so often the subject of official lamentation? That be far from us. Strife and enmity are justly lamentable. But the mischief is not in variety of opinion, but in variance of heart; not in theological idiosyncrasies, but in unscrupulous partisanship. Thus last, the besetting sin of all parties, is most offensive in those which are contending for religion. A 1 yet we fear that none is free from it. O the one side, if a renegade priest will make effective speeches against the Pope, and betray the secrets of the Church which he has deserted, the foulest scandals in his private life cannot shake the confidence of his admirers. On the other side, if a champion of orthodoxy is qualified by talents or position to render good service to his partisans, they will defend him though he be convicted of more than Jesuitical meanness, or of a sharp practice which would strike a provincial patibulger off the rolls. It is not that men consciously resolve to become accomplices in immorality, but they willfully shut their eyes to all evidence against their favorites, and bring in a verdict of 'not guilty' before the trial has begun. In advocating mutual charity, we advocate no such

* The same results follow, whether the principles be derived from reason or from Scripture.

* Because B + L = 2(B + H) = 2H + B. In the above statement, we have only taken into account the income derived from subscriptions and donations, the other sources of income not affecting our present subject. † The number sold of each separate copy of this work, through the press, was 2,200, in No. 182, page 34, note.

† See No. 198, Art. 3.