

The opening of the first book of the great Hooker, contains matter which is here to our purpose and with the requisite adaptation, will apply to concerns which are upon a much smaller scale than those of which he treats :—

“ He that goeth about to persuade a multitude, that they are not so well governed as they ought to be, shall never want attentive and favourable hearers ; because they know the manifold defects whereunto every kind of regiment is subject ; but the secret lets or difficulties, which in public proceedings are innumerable and inevitable, they have not ordinarily the judgement to consider. And because such as openly reprove supposed disorders of State, are taken for principal friends to the common benefit of all, and for men that carry singular freedom of mind ; under this fair and plausible colour, whatsoever they utter, passeth for good and current. That which wanteth in the weight of their speech, is supplied by the aptness of men’s minds to accept and believe it. Whereas on the other side, if we maintain things that are established, we have not only to strive with a number of heavy prejudices, deeply rooted in the hearts of men, who think that herein we serve the time, and speak in favour of the present State, because thereby we either hold or seek preferment ; but also to bear such exceptions as minds, so averted beforehand, usually take against that which they are loath should be poured into them.”

Now, with reference to the Church, in the American States, which is simply our own Church under different political circumstances, God forbid that I should speak of it in any other terms than those of the warmest affection and the most cordial respect. I should violate, were I to do so, my own personal feelings, no less than the common claims of truth and justice. And let it be admitted that, in some particulars, that branch of the Church may possess advantages denied to our own.—Men, in questions of this nature, are apt to seize hold of what suits them, in carrying out a favorite idea, and to pass unregarded all countervailing considerations—but to look fairly at the question here before us, there are two points of enquiry which we should set in the front of our survey—1. assuming that there are advantages and disadvantages on *both* sides, on *which* side the benefits, upon the whole *preponderate* ; and 2. whether the *actual process* of the *change* would not carry with it injurious consequences which it could not be thought desirable to encounter, except for the unequivocal promise of something very great to be gained beyond.

It is quite foreign to my intention to undertake here the discussion of the question at large between the two branches of the Church in the British Empire and the United States respectively, or to pursue any technical argument, article by article, upon the subject ; but I am desirous of drawing your attention more closely