

character of the times." After adverting to the delightful condition of the Church, he gives what he considers the two chief causes of that improved condition. "First—That instead of adopting any novelties of doctrine or expediency in our ministry, there has been a decided going back to 'old paths,' trodden by the Martyred Reformers of our present Church, as *they* followed the steps of Martyrs and Apostles of the primitive Church." The second cause that he mentions is, "Improved views of the Sacraments and of Confirmation." You will readily perceive that these causes are directly opposed to those practices, of which I have felt bound to take notice in this discourse. Adverting to the state of the various denominations around him,—a state caused in a great measure by the sanction given by them to "protracted meetings,"—Bishop McIlvaine remarks, "I refer a very large proportion of the great evils, which have come upon the Protestant communities of this age, and their alarming increase, to the putting asunder, in a great measure, of these two things, which God has joined, to be carried on together, not only in the Sacraments, but in all the worship and doings of the Church, the *outward and visible—the inward and spiritual*. In seeking the latter, its necessary connexion with the former has been too much overlooked. Some have laid aside all prescribed externalism, as among the 'beggary elements,' the 'childish things,' which a spiritual Church has no need to retain. They have reaped what they sowed. Others, in various degrees, have *approximated* to this extreme; some retaining outward institutions in a measure, while, with an over-jealousy of too much ceremony, they have gone into too much nakedness, and though free of superfluous form, have grievously suffered by an over-done abstraction; and lest they should be too much restricted to sameness, have opened the door to a spirit of licentious change and rash innovation, and in aiming at primitive simplicity, have arrived at a most un-primitive leanness, and to avoid a seeming condemnation of all forms but their own, as destitute of good, have spread the scarcely less injurious idea, that if one has only the spiritual grace, it matters little to what outward form of association, under the name of a Church, he may belong. Such is the seeding with which the field has been gradually 'laid down,' in the process of things, in the Christian community, during the last few years more especially. It has sprung up and brought forth fruit: '*after its kind, some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred fold.*'"