

recently by a public writer in referring to the abject condition of the Episcopal church in this respect, "whether to secure parity of doctrine or morals in a church, or efficiency in a state department one thing is indispensable—discipline. This is no Theological or Ecclesiastical proposition. It rests upon the primary conditions, exigencies and defects of mankind. No body of men, call them what you will, can act well together unless upon some "mutually recognized" principles of order, under some practical laws, and with an executive capable of governing." In harmony with the laws and regulations laid down and agreed to, Sessions have the power of exercising discipline upon members; Presbyteries and Synods, upon congregations and office bearers. The discipline of each and of all is effected agreeably to laws mutually binding, and within the church herself.

Another important, yea vital advantage, should be noticed. The dignity and sacredness of the Pulpit are maintained and guarded in the most solicitous manner. In so far as human oversight can avail, the talent the doctrine, the character of piety of the Pulpit are watched with scrutiny. No Minister can be admitted into the church, to exercise the sacred office unless by the vote of the Synod. Before this vote is taken, the Synod satisfies itself with respect to the applicant's credentials, his talents, his character, and his standing in the church which he may have left. And those trained within the church itself require to pass through a long curriculum of steady, and are under the careful supervision of Presbyteries during the time. A high standard of literary and theological learning and training is attained before being taken on trials for license to preach. And only such as are regularly licensed are allowed stately to occupy any pulpit.

Here, then, is a system which we regard as not only founded upon, and agreeable to the word of God; but as being the best adapted for the church to work out freely and independently her own grand designs and gracious mission; for securing the rights of individual members; for maintaining her purity by authoritative discipline; for guarding the dignity and sacredness of the pulpit, and in this way to propagate and extend the Gospel in precept and in practice.

We occupy the middle position, which is almost universally the right position. In times of reformation, and especially in times of revolution, men run to extremes and these are dangerous. Between those, then, who have no thoroughly systematized and consolidated church polity, and those who have got so well consolidated as to be incorporated with the secular power and subjected to the state, we occupy the middle position. We have order, laws, government, and yet are free. We submit to no control. We own no authority in matters spiritual, but the authority of Divine Truth.

Second. What is our profession as christians? As to faith and practice? Not polity, but doctrine? As under the last particular, so here I cannot be expected to go into detail: but only to state the more prominent or fundamental doctrines of the christian faith, which are most surely believed and acted upon amongst us as a Denomination.

1st. In the first place, then, in opposition to all infidels, sceptics, and such like, who do not submit to the authority of all and every part of the Bible, as the inspired word of the One Living and True God, and in opposition to all who, as Papists and others, add to and make of equal authority their own traditions and dogmas; we believe that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." And that it is the only rule of faith and practice: "Teaching us what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man;" asserting with Locke, "The Bible has God for its author,