

some reasons for the opinion, that according to Dr. Burgess's mode of argument, there is but *one* true Church, and this the Church of England: (See page 76.) possibly in our inference from his premises we may be mistaken. To prevent mistake for the future, will the approvers of the Catechism, just say in express terms, how many and what *true* Churches they believe are in the world, not forgetting to give particular information respecting the number to be found in the *British Empire*? In the mean time, we take the liberty of saying—a *part* is not the *whole*; neither is *episcopacy* essential to a *true* Church. The Church of England, therefore, is not the *parts* and the *whole* of this one holy Catholic Church.

"And *Thirdly*, that the *Sects*, which are so divided from any true church, as to have no communion with it, it is to be feared cannot be parts of the one Catholic Church for which Christ died."

Why not say at once without any *periphrasis*, the Church of England is the only true Church, and all, not in communion with it, are outcasts from the mercy of God and in a state of damnation? This is the meaning of the answer, though wrapped in the softened circumlocutory phrase,—"*It is to be feared*." If for all, not in communion with the Establishment, Christ did not die, just as sure as they live and die in this state of non-communion, so sure, they must *perish* eternally! unless persons can be saved for whom Christ has not "tasted death." "It is to be feared" there is little charity here! It is *certain* there is much bigotry—a narrow-mindedness pitiable in the extreme—a most unwarrantable and daring appropriation to the members of the Established Church of the boundless love of the GENERAL SAVIOUR of mankind. We thank God that the individuals who can entertain, circulate, and instil into youthful minds these unchristian, illiberal sentiments, are not our *Judges*! That our present applications for mercy, and our eternal destinies, will not depend upon their decisions; otherwise "it is to be feared" we should indeed prove "we have no covenanted hope of salvation!"

"Q. Tell me in a few words your chief reasons for uniting with the Church of England?"

"A. *First*, because the Church of England is a true Church." (§6 & 7.)

This reason is not peculiar, for other churches are as true as the Church of England.

"*Secondly*, because it is established by law."

The preference is between true churches, the one *established*, the other *tolerated* by law.

"*Thirdly*, because it is contrary to the Christian Unity to separate from a church which follows the doctrines and ordinances of Christ, and his Apostles, and answers every good end of Christian worship and Christian fellowship."

This can only apply to those in *union* with the Establishment, as without previous union there can be no *separation*: but the question refers to reasons for *uniting*, which implies an union has not taken place: therefore this reason is not applicable. It were easy to assign a similar argument for *union* with any other *true* Church: but though we cannot append A. M. or D. D. to our name, the little knowledge we have of ALDRICH and WATT's *Art of Reasoning* would effectually deter us from making a similar attempt.

"*Fourthly*, because we are sure that we are in a covenanted state of salvation, while we live in a godly and brotherly union with a true church:—('We know we are passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.' 1 John, iii. 14. By the *brethren* was meant the Christian Church then existing.)—but have not the same ground of assurance when we are separated from it." (§12.)

Here is a mixture of truth and error which must be separated. Observe, then, 1. A mere external union with a "true church" will not secure personal salvation: the "wheat and the tares" often grow together. A mere external union with the Church of England will not, therefore, secure personal salvation. 2. There must be a "godly and brotherly union" with a true church. What is this but to require that *inward renewal* by the Holy Ghost, those religious affections, habits and acts, and that sincere love to the "brethren" springing from the love of God, which the Scriptures require of all as a qualification for heaven? 3. If all these be experienced and manifested by members of true Churches, not in union with the Established Church, they are in a "covenanted state of salvation." 4. This "renewal" and these "affections habits and acts" &c., are required of members of the Establishment as well as of members of other churches; otherwise, they have only a "name to live" whilst they "are dead." Here is the fallacy: a *nominal* union is confounded with a "godly union;" and the "covenanted state of salvation" is attributed to the former, which is only predicable of the latter—except by a "covenanted state of salvation" be meant, a *salvable state*; but then, this is nothing more than can be scripturally affirmed of the "chief of sinners" unconnected with any church, as Christ has "tasted death for every man." A mere nominal connection with the Church of England can never produce a positive *sureness* of a state of *actual* salvation, without which there is no salvation hereafter. 5. If the latter clause of the answer be intended to refer to religious communities, not in connection with the Established Church, we say, it is not only uncharitable and unscriptural, but decidedly erroneous. What is "the ground of assurance" of salvation? An union with any Church merely? No: but a *living faith in Christ*, accompanied with the forgiveness of sins, a change of heart, and the direct witness of the Holy Spirit testifying to the fact of personal adoption and enjoyment of the Divine favour. The person, possessing this faith knows he is a child of God and has "passed from death unto life," not only from the indirect and collateral evidence arising from his "love to the brethren," that is true Christians of whatever name; but from the direct, indubitable testimony of the Spirit of Adoption crying in his heart "Abba Father." (Rom. 8: 15, 16.) This is true whether he be a member of an Established or a Tolerated Church. Thousands of individuals, out of the Establishment, have this faith, and "know in whom they have believed" and walk in "the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free." They love God, his ways, his people, and their fellow men generally, and are happy in the divine favour, and can "rejoice in hope of the glory of God." This experience flatly contradicts the constrained application of this part of this *Christian*! Catechism.—We regard the language of this answer as being most objectionable, not only because it is calculated to implant in the minds of those who pay deference to the compiler's opinion a prejudice against sincere Christians of other denominations, but principally on account of the injurious impressions it is likely to make on the minds of the very friends of the Established Church on the all important subject of their own salvation. We very much fear, that, being seduced by the sophistry, perhaps unintentional on the part of the Reverend Author of this work, they will hereby be induced to place their dependence of personal salvation on a mere external union with the Establishment, and on an outward observance of its forms and ceremonies, instead of seeking earnestly, perseveringly, and successfully, "a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness," in the exercise of unfeigned "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ,"—so essen-