

which may fairly be called the Anglican Breviary and Missal combined,—used by laity and clergy alike,—has no less surely produced, in those who have been faithful to its use and teaching, an equally distinct and characteristic type of “English Churchman.” It is a type, moreover, which, spiritual and literary — the latter is worth noting, here—is most assuredly not to be classed as “Protestant,” in the common acceptation of the name, even if it cannot be called Catholic. The mere mention of a few typical names, culled by Augustine Birrell, in his charming essay on the *Via Media*, from Newman’s “Loss and Gain,” will suffice to prove my contention. “I am embracing that creed,” so the quotation runs, “which upholds the divinity of tradition with Laud, consent of Fathers with Beveridge, a visible Church with Bramhall, dogma with Bull, the authority of the Pope with Thorndyke, penance with (Jeremy) Taylor, prayers for the dead with Ussher, celibacy, asceticism, ecclesiastical discipline, with Bingham.” You may add, if you will, as more homely types. Nicholas Ferrar, the original of “John Inglesant,” George Herbert, his biographer Izaak Walton (the “compleat angler”), and Samuel Johnson.

But if this be granted you will, I trust, admit the cogency of the inference with which I will close this attempt to show the influence of Catholicism on English literature, from Bede’s day to our own. That inference is that, since the English Bible is, beyond all cavil, the Church’s gift to the English people, non-Catholic, no less than Catholic, and the English Book of Common Prayer, as an unauthorized adaptation of the Breviary and Missal, no less due to her, it is for us, to whom all that is best in both belongs, by divine right, to reclaim in both the heritage which the English Catholic laity have neglected or ignored for the last three centuries. The sheep are no less sheep, as Saint Gregory reminds us, because the wolves sometimes “come to us in sheep’s clothing.” The Bible, and the essential parts of the Prayer Book, are not less Catholic because they have fallen into the use and possession of those who deny both their literary and spiritual debt to the Church, even as, or because, they deny her God-given authority.

If we admit the source and means of Catholic influence on English literature, the Bible, namely, and the Breviary; if we acknowledge their secondary effect, the formation of a distinct literary and spiritual type of character, in our Catholic ancestors, lay and clerical, in our present Catholic clergy and religious, and among many of our separated brethren, we must return to