

Church and of the Realm, binds the Clergyman of the Church of England to take heed that he teach nothing in his preaching but that which is agreeable to the doctrines of the Old Testament and the New, and that which the Catholic Fathers and ancient Bishops have gathered out of that doctrine. Thus is he obliged to reject all novelties, to be sparing of private interpretations, and to continue to walk in the old paths, although the consequence of his doing so be, that he is accused by some of not declaring the whole counsel of God.

Nor ought this to be accounted a hardship either by the preacher or his hearers. For is it not manifestly absurd to suppose that any truth at all necessary to salvation should be left to be discovered at this late period, or that the same doctrine which in the primitive times made such multitudes of converts to godliness, and rendered them willing to sacrifice life itself for Christ's sake and his Gospel's, would not serve all the needs of the present generation, were it received and obeyed by us as it ought to be? And have we not seen enough of the bad effects of rash speculation in religious matters, in the disturbance of the Church's peace and unity, to make us very reasonably afraid even of small innovations? Even the established phraseology is worth preserving, for the sake of the less educated portion of our people, who cannot fail to be confused by hearing the same terms used in different senses by different preachers. So great in fact is the confusion which has arisen from this cause, that not only are those who think it behoves them to preach the doctrines of the Church in the language of her formularies liable to be considered and represented as not preaching the gospel, but also some of the formularies themselves have fallen into disrepute with persons who have learned from our dissenting brethren to understand some important terms in a sense different from that in which they were evidently used by the compilers of these formularies. Most especially is this the case with regard to the Baptismal Service, the language of which it requires more ingenuity than people generally possess to reconcile at all satisfactorily with the now popular doctrine of regeneration.

The proper remedy for this evil appears to be, a strict adherence, on the part of the preacher, to the language of the venerable formularies of our Church; and a more accurate and attentive study of them, on the part of our people. And who can doubt that this is a safe course for both to pursue? The eminently learned Reformers of our Church may be (nay, surely they are,) believed by all of us to have thoroughly understood the doctrine of the Scriptures, and the records of primitive