

native which might be advocated with the greatest skill and ability. As we glance down the list of names before us, it is impossible not to see which party would usually possess that advantage. Among the High Church spokesmen are several learned, dexterous, and eminent controversialists, deeply committed to Ritualism, and most zealous in its support. Among their twenty-two colleagues there are few capable of contending with them in argument, and fewer still prepared to demand as much on the one side as they would demand on the other. Since there is an irresistible gravitation towards compromise in all conferences of this kind, we cannot shut our eyes to the probable consequence. The tendency will be to settle each disputed point on a basis favourable to Ritualism, and to deviate in that direction from the *via media* of long established usage in the English Church. Such a verdict may be right, or it may be wrong, in law and reason, but if it be delivered by a jury suspected of having been packed it will be worthless, or worse than worthless.

It would have been far better had it been possible that no pronounced Ritualist or anti-Ritualist should have been placed on the Commission. The next best thing, however, to an absence of all prejudices is an equipoise should at least have been secured by the Government. If either party was to be over-represented, it certainly ought not to have been the one which, numbering but a small minority of the clergy, numbers but an infinitesimal fraction of the laity. It is said that Ritualism boasts of commanding 2,000 pulpits; an estimate which is most likely excessive. Now, the Church of England musters about 20,000 clergymen, and making every allowance for indifference and timidity, the pre-emption is that fully 10,000 are non-Ritualists, if not anti-Ritualists, by conviction. But we entirely deny that Ritualism is an exclusively or mainly clerical question. It is for the supposed edification or mystification of the people that all these practices are borrowed from the ceremonial of the Romish Church and foisted into our Protestant system of worship. Yet to most English congregations they are, and, it experience proves anything, ever will be, utterly distasteful. It is only in great towns and especially in the metropolis, where there is vast floating population of church-goers, that Ritualism acquires even an apparent popularity, chiefly due to its novelty and aesthetic attractions. Fashionable people in London flock to churches in which Ritualistic developments are to be seen in the greatest perfection, just as they might flock to hear a remarkable preacher. It would be as reasonable to fancy that all Mr. Spurgeon's hearers were converts to Baptist doctrines as to fancy that all the spectators in a Ritualistic church were converts to Ritualism. Were the Commission to report ever so emphatically in favour of the vestments and ornaments abandoned at the Reformation, it would not quench in a single parish that antipathy to mummery and symbolism which seems to be a part of our national character. The significance of isolated facts, which purport to show the progress of Ritualism among the working classes, appears to have been ludicrously exaggerated. It is not by slight evidences of success under very peculiar circumstances that we are to be convinced of so portentous a phenomenon as a popular reaction towards Romanism in England, and that, too, when the power of Romanism is being rapidly undermined in Catholic countries. While educated minds reject with scorn the claims of priestly authority, the common people detest Popery as cordially as ever, and regard Ritualism as Popery in disguise. Because they no longer maltreat priests in the streets, or carry their Protestantism to the length of rioting, credulous foreigners are led to believe that England is ripe for a return to Rome. If anything can effectually dissipate this delusion, it will be the inevitable effect of any attempt, under pretence of extending clerical liberty, to reimpose on Protestant congregations a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear.

(From the Daily News.)

When the Government promised to issue a Royal Commission on Ritualism, it was very generally understood that it would do so as a step towards legislative action. The Commission, it will be remembered, was proposed in lieu of a Bill which some of the Bishops were said to have prepared, and Lord Shaftesbury was urged to withdraw his Clerical Vestments Bill on the ground that the Government was dealing with the subject. A glance at the composition of the Commission shows that no practical result is to be expected from its proceedings. It is a commission of inquiry, nothing more; and it will inquire into subjects as to which Parliament and the public have already abundant means of information, but upon which its members will certainly find it impossible to agree in

opinion. It is important to consider what must be the consequences of Lord Derby's course of action in this matter. In the first place the Ritualists have gained a year. The subject has been before Parliament for several months, but its practical consideration has been put off by the Government, and now the Commission cannot report in time for legislation to take place this session. The next result will be an additional sanction obtained for Ritualism. The Commission cannot and will not unite to present a single common report. It will produce at least two, more probably three, or four, or six. The Rev. T. W. Perry, of Brighton, is a determined Ritualist, and the Bishop of Oxford and Mr. Hubbard are among the staunchest protectors of the school, while most of the Commission are of a type of Churchmanship which forbids them to discountenance the extreme development of ceremonialism, except on grounds of prudence. No condemnation of priestly assumptions, no assertion of Protestant principles must be looked for from such a body, which is more likely to give Ritualism the strongest support it has hitherto received. Neither the name of the Earl of Shaftesbury nor that of the Archbishop of York is on the Commission, it being understood that the Peer and the Prelate both declined having anything to do with it. If so, we cannot help thinking that they exercised a sound discretion. Between the principles of the Ritualists and those of Protestantism there can be no possible compromise, and the fact may, as well be recognised now as twelve months hence. In the meantime, the Government is playing into the hands of the Ritualistic party.

(From the Record.)

The character of the Ritualistic Commission may be read in the names of its members. "No one," said the *Guardian*, "will complain that the Ritual Commission is not numerous enough; no one will say that it is not well assorted. It flames with the most flaming hues, relieved by patches of neutral tint. Indeed, one can with difficulty conceive what sort of recommendations for the future celebration of Divine service are likely to be agreed on by Lord Beauchamp and Lord Ebury, Mr. Perry and Mr. Venn." The *Guardian* might have added what the *Times* said on Saturday, that no one can doubt that the preponderance has been given to Ritualism. In the same spirit, Dr. Lee's paper, the *Church News*, eulogises the Commission, and the *Churchman* adds, "The composition of the Royal Commission on the Rubrics and Lectionary has given Mr. Walpole much trouble, but he will be repaid by feeling that the result has been received on the whole with satisfaction. No party could wish more than to be fairly represented, and each is fairly represented. The extreme men will balance one another, and there is a sufficiently large space of soft cushion for the combatants to fall back upon." The eulogies of the ultra-Church press on the Commission are in fact such as might be expected from the Fenians, if on a jury of twelve intended to try Fenians, there had been four Fenians and four sympathizers.

THE ENGLISH CHURCH.—The following remarks from the *London Times* on the great dividing question of the English Church at the present day, will be found interesting, as giving a summary of what may be said on one side of the question:—

Can it be necessary, in the present year of grace, three centuries after the Reformation, and nearly two centuries after the expulsion of a Popish Sovereign, to reassert "the distinctively Protestant character of the Church of England?" Is there really one single divine or lawyer, who, with the formularies of our Church before him, would undertake to dispute such a proposition?—one single "Anglican" lay or clerical, who could venture to disavow the name of Protestant? Unhappily, we all know what the answer to a question of this kind must be. What all members of our National Church would have accepted as a truism forty years ago has come to be regarded by a large party within it not only as a paradox, but almost as an insult. There are many divines, and some lawyers, who affect to deny that she is an essentially Protestant Church, and would vainly erase all the Protestant clauses from her title-deeds. The challenge of the Bishop of Ripon, then, cannot be considered inopportune, whatever may be thought of the view which he avowed. It is high time that educated men should face the issue thus presented to them—an issue which is perfectly capable of being understood and decided without any profound theological learning. Any unprejudiced person, with an ordinary knowledge of the Articles and Liturgy, is quite competent to judge whether the authority now claimed for the Church was recognized by those who framed them, and even whether the Sacramental theory was part of their creed. The controversy about vestments and ceremonies may involve a good deal of curious research; but an hour's study of the Rub-

rics, with a little assistance from the Canon, will leave very little doubt on any honest mind as to the general intention of our Reformers. Infinite difficulties may, of course, still be raised on the letter of documents, such as the Articles, which deal with the most abstruse subjects in a somewhat antiquated phraseology. The spirit, however, is clear enough, and that spirit is emphatically Protestant.

It is not, indeed, upon the express and deliberate language of those who founded the Church of England that opponents of her Protestant character prefer to rely. They tacitly admit that very awkward passages are to be found in the Prayer-book; but then, as they maintain, the Church does not owe its origin to the Reformation. It may be Protestant in a legal sense, but that is an accident; in its essence it is Catholic, and inherits from the ages of Romish ascendancy all the doctrines not expressly repudiated in the Articles, if not some of which are so repudiated. We do not care to controvert an opinion so entirely speculative as this. It is enough, for our present purpose, that in the simple language of the Bishop of Ripon, "the Church of England has no *locus standi* in this country except as the Church of the Reformation."—What the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury or future Diocesan Synods may do when the Church—that is, the clergy—has relieved herself of State control, and been relieved of State endowments, is no concern of ours. We are now speaking of no shadowy conception yet to be realized, but of a living institution created by Parliament, and invested with unique privileges upon condition of undertaking the spiritual instruction of the nation. Of that institution we fearlessly affirm with the Bishop, that it is Protestant or nothing. Whatever be the element from which it derives its metaphysical identity, it derives its historical *raison d'être*, from the Reformation alone. Nor is this all, for the history of the Reformation teaches us that such Romanist features as it still embodies were introduced into it by that very influence which is the favourite bugbear of extreme Anglicans. Had Bishops and theologians guided for themselves the course of the English Reformation, they would infallibly have deviated further from Rome and approximated nearly to Geneva. It was the strong will of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, and the rigorous exercise of the Royal supremacy, which tempered the zeal of our Reformers and preserved those relics of Romanism in our ecclesiastical system which are now alleged to prove that it never underwent a radical transformation at all. Could those sagacious but imperious Sovereigns have foreseen the revival of pretensions like these, they might perhaps have availed themselves of the Puritan spirit to carry out the work of Reform with a more unsparring hand, and the fate of English prelacy in the sixteenth century.

The reaction against Protestantism within our own Church, and in these times, has caused, as we venture to believe, much needless alarm. Shortsighted observers watch narrowly the pretty backwaters and eddies of religious opinion, but fail to mark the steady onward flow of the main current. To restore mediæval habits of thought and practices of worship in the state of English society is as wild an enterprise as any that fanaticism ever undertook. A gorgeous ceremonial, a grotesque display of sacerdotal millinery, impressive architecture, thrilling music and fragrant clouds of incense will always attract large congregations of æsthetic devotees and sightseers. The presence of a supernatural right and the possession of a real power over the consciences of men will always prove seductive to young priests, and especially to those whose personal character does not qualify them to acquire a more legitimate influence over their flocks. The spell of genuine devotion and the example of a holy life will never fail to have a magical effect on youthful and feminine minds, which cannot make the effort necessary to distinguish between goodness and truth. A natural shrinking from the abyss of unbelief and the agony of scepticism will drive many into a craven renunciation of their intellectual responsibilities. Causes such as these are simply sufficient to account for the temporary success of what are called Romanizing tendencies. Bunyan was too sanguine when he described the Giant Pope as grown so crazy and stiff in his joints as to be incapable of much further mischief. In a nation of twenty million souls Ritualism, and the darker superstition of which it is the shadow will ever find thousands upon thousands of ready converts. This is no light evil, but it is far short of what many people seriously apprehend. Let one who trembles at the progress of Romanism and Romish doctrines in this country look abroad into the Continent of Europe, estimate the nature and relative force of the rival principles now struggling for the mastery in the world of politics no less than in the world of speculation, and then ask him self what chance there is of authority triumphing over reason in our own age. The

same lesson may be learnt by the observation of facts nearer home, the prevalent tone of literature, the debates on certain questions in Parliament, the latitude of opinion in unreserved conversation, the impatience of dogmatism among the ablest students at our Universities. It is only by narrowing unduly our deal of Protestantism that we can be led to lose faith in its destinies.

A COLONIAL BISHOP SPEAKING OUT.—In a discourse to his congregation at Trinity Church, Islington, Dr. Alford, the new Bishop of Victoria, made the following remarks on the Romish movement in the Church of England:—

I call to mind yet another important parohial meeting, which the circumstances of our day both justified and made a bounden duty. I refer to our Protestant meeting of last spring, when as a congregation you met and adopted memorials, both to our Bishop and to the Legislature, against the use of vestments and Popish practices which have been introduced into too many of our churches. I rejoice that we made our protest—respectfully, I believe, but firmly. And I am sure you are prepared on any future occasion, when an expression of opinion may seem desirable, to testify your adhesion to, and value of, and love for the principles of the blessed Reformation; and to make your protest charitably but unmistakably against the abominations of Popery, however and wherever manifested. Alas! that we should live to see the day when, not only in the Roman Catholic chapels, but in the churches of our Protestant land, some of the worst heresies of Rome—such as the elevation and worship of the Host—should be practised, as I myself have witnessed it; and that the arm of authority should seem weak to correct the offender, and effectually remove so great an offence in the sight of God and man! The liberalism of the day is appealed to, to tolerate such practices in the Reformed Church of England and Ireland. What I tolerate in our Protestant Church the very practices which, at such cost of agony and blood, necessitated the Reformation. Besides, what, either in or out of the Church of England, has Popery to do with toleration? Let the fires of Smithfield testify (and let their testimony never be forgotten) what Rome means by toleration! It is but the wolf in sheep's clothing stimulating the bleating of the lamb; and, if we be deceived by so wretched a disguise—and that with the history of the past before our eyes—indeed a Satanic delusion must have bewitched us, which may God in His mercy soon dispel!

Has it indeed, come to this—that our Church has lost her doctrinal creed? that Holy Scripture has lost its authority? Have we now no standard of right and wrong? no test of truth and error? Have the law and the testimony lost its power, and is it no longer the case that, if men speak not according to their teaching, it is because there is no light in them?

But look at the matter in another point of view. Is it to be supposed that Englishmen will long suffer in their national Church, which ought to be "the pillar and ground of their truth," two systems of Ritual worship and doctrinal teaching antagonistic the one to the other? If the one be right, the other must be wrong; and it is to libel the good sense of our countrymen to suppose that the spectacle of a Church divided upon the very essentials of our common Christianity can long retain her hold upon the affections and respect of the people.

Shall we, then, renounce the Reformation? Shall we, as some unfaithful pseudo-Churchmen have affirmed, pronounce the Reformation "a grand mistake"? Shall we go back again to "the Romish doctrine concerning purgatory, pardons, worshipping and adoration as well of images as of reliques, and also invocation of saints"? Shall public prayer in the Church and the Sacraments be ministered in a tongue not understood by the people? Instead of the two sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord, shall we speak of some two or three more, or of Rome's seven? Instead of "duly" using the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, shall it be carried about to be gazed upon? Shall the substance of the bread and wine be said to be "changed," and then reverently lifted up, and worshipped? My dear brethren—and I speak now to the faithful laity of the Church—there is need that we utter no uncertain sound upon these points; it is "needful that we exert our power to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." The future of our beloved Church—and I address those who use her services loyally, and believe her Thirty-nine Articles heartily—is in your hand. If fatal error spread among us within these next ten years—or five, or three—as during the preceding period, the very existence of our national Church is more than jeopardized. O think of your sons and daughters now worshipping by your sides—will you not hand down to them the open Bible and Protestant worship your forefathers entrusted to your safe keeping?

Will you suffer a captious scepticism on one hand, and barefaced Popery on the other, so to undermine the very foundations of our Zion, that when destroyed the enemy shall taunt you, and your own conscience shall too late reproach you, "What hath the righteous done?" Done to save her? For their supineness hath been her ruin? O that the Lord Himself would interpose in our behalf, and rouse us from the fatal lethargy that has entranced us. Let Churchmen study well the history and fate of the apocalyptic Churches. Christ's Church is built upon the rock and never can be moved. But "stars" can be quenched, and "candlesticks" can be removed.—"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches."

A Dissenting minister of some celebrity, the Rev. Henry Christopherson, late Professor of Theology in New College, St. John's-wood, was ordained deacon by the Bishop of London.

The editor of the *Directorium* gives his full sanction to the Commission thus:—"Of its composition, now finally settled, we can only say that it is honestly impartial, and though we tender our thanks to the Government for having appointed it we are most heartily glad that being appointed it is neither one-sided nor unjust in its composition. We have good reason for knowing that as long as the Tories are in office no *ex parte* legislation will be allowed. Let us ask our friends the High Church Radicals, if the Whigs would have given such a Commission?"—*Church News*.

—We are very sorry to find that although the Bishop of Exeter has reached the age of St. John, he is by no means exhibiting the spirit of the beloved Apostle. For no assignable reason, excepting that the Rev. W. Acworth had been causelessly inhibited by the Bishop of Oxford, the aged Prelate has allowed his Chaplain to use his Lordship's name for the purpose of extending Bishop Wilberforce's inhibition to the diocese of Exeter. The result is that great excitement prevails there, and a Public Meeting of great respectability has been held at Plymouth, to which Mr. Acworth was invited, and where he has given a very full and crushing exposure of the tyrannical and irresponsible power which is thus brought to bear upon a valuable clergyman, not only uncondemned but unaccused.—*Record*.

DEFEAT OF THE VESTMENTS BILL.—The Government sent out a circular to obtain as much support as possible in resistance to Lord Shaftesbury's Bill. The result was, as already stated, the bill was shelved. The Archbishop of Canterbury and Dublin assisting in this. The Bishops who voted against the bill were Chester, Ely, Gloucester and Bristol, Landaff, Oxford, St. Asaph, The Prelates in favour of the bill were the Bishops of Carlisle, Cork, &c. Down, &c. Durham, Lichfield, Lincoln, London, Ossory, &c. Peterborough, Ripon, Winchester.

Lord Derby has agreed to have a Royal Commission appointed on the Ritual question, but it is to have a wider aim than the examination of the Rubric ornaments. Other ambiguous Rubrics and ceremonial observances generally are likely to come under its supervision. This, we opine, will be but small comfort for the Ritualists; but it should not be allowed to interfere in the slightest degree with the Earl of Shaftesbury's Bill.—*Constitution*.

—In the recent charge of the Bishop of London, his Lordship recommends some slight changes in the English Prayer Book, in matters not affecting doctrine, such as the Burial Service, (an objectionable feature of which has been changed in the American Prayer Book) provision for "some shorter daily service for men of business," &c.; but opposes, as unnecessary, the adoption of any new safeguards against doctrinal error.

The Petition presented in the House of Lords by the Earl of Shaftesbury from Oxford and its suburbs against Tractarianism and Ritualism was signed by 1,040 women.

—The Bishops of Worcester, Durham, and Carlisle, have declined to attend the Pan-Anglican Synod. It is said that upwards of sixty Bishops have accepted the Archbishop's invitation.

—The Bishop of Salisbury, in his late Charge, has asserted high pretensions. It does not appear to have ever occurred to his Lordship that the great majority of the whole number of bishops in Christendom consider him a heretic. Had he not better square his accounts with them before talking quite so much as he does about ecclesiastical authority?—*Weekly Reporter*.

Colonial.

COADJUTOR BISHOP OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR.—The *Telegraph* says:—The Venerable Archdeacon Kelly and