

that the property of Cathedrals should be vested in Trustees, who should give a stipend to their late possessors, and out of the remainder support preaching ministers, both in towns and through the country where required." Thus the whole prelatic hierarchy of England, as an ecclesiastical establishment, was overthrown by an injured and indignant people; and that too, by a Parliament containing a large number of Episcopalians. This national recoil against an unscriptural, oppressive and intolerant ecclesiastical system, was just the natural and necessary consequence of carrying despotic violence beyond the limit of endurance. England then, for a time, was without a recognized national system of religion. But England was not without religion. True piety was *not* extinguished or even injured. A national established church and the church of Christ were not always, and in every respect identical. Generally they have been, and in this instance were specially so, antagonistic. And as long as the governments of this world will be as they have been, and still are, to a fearful extent, influenced by the spirit of irreligion and infidelity, it is difficult to believe that any church, however perfect organization, can sustain a state connection with them, pure and unaffected. History and universal experience contradict such belief. The same malignant poison which vitiates them will most assuredly permeate her holy institutions, disorder and corrupt them. And as constitutional governments derive their legislative and executive powers from the people, so must all moral and religious reformations begin with the people and work their way up to the highest civil department. It is unreasonable, therefore, to expect that any government will ever introduce any reforms into the church. But it is the duty of the church to reform the government. This she can never do while fettered by state influence and connection. The only legitimate and beneficial connection that can ever exist between the governments of this world and the church of Christ is, that of all government officials, from the highest to the lowest functionary, be consistent members of the church and guided in their public administrations as well as their private life, by the divine principles which she inculcates. This idea has never yet since the introduction of Christianity at least, been realized, and never shall be realized, "the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord Saviour, Jesus Christ." Pure religion, and undefiled before God the Father, does not depend for its evidence upon state recognition, support or control, nor yet upon prelatic sanction. We have the promise that "where two or three are met together in the name of Christ that He is in the midst of them, to bless them, and to do them good."

In the age of which we write, the opinion was almost universally entertained, that a uniform, national, ecclesiastical system was indispensable to the successful operation of Christianity in the kingdom, and that it was the duty of the civil rulers, to exercise their power and influence, in order that such a system might be devised and adopted. In accordance with this opinion, the English Parliament on the 12th June, 1643, issued an Ordinance, summoning three hundred and fifty-one of the most distinguished among the clergy and laity, for piety and learning, in the whole nation, to meet in General Assembly on the first of July, at Westminster, for the purpose of devising a national form of church government, on a scriptural