

FROM AMERICAN PAPERS.

## THE BISHOP OF OXFORD ON THE OXFORD TRACT WRITERS.

The Bishop of Oxford, in his late charge, has the following reference to the well known Oxford publications, so called. All who have read them, will be struck with its singular wisdom, justice and moderation. Such as have not, will be deterred by it from hastily adopting the indiscriminate and violent censures which are current in some quarters. On this subject we say with the Bishop, "Into controversy, we will not enter." The truth is great, and with fair discussion, will prevail.—*Banner of the Cross*.

"Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name, be all honour and praise."

I have spoken of increased exertions among us, and of an increasing sense of our Christian responsibilities; and therefore you will probably expect that I should say something of that peculiar development of religious feeling in one part of the Diocese, of which so much has been said, and which has been supposed to tend immediately to a revival of several of the errors of Romanism. In point of fact, I have been continually (though anonymously) appealed to in my official capacity, to check breaches both of doctrine and discipline, through the growth of Popery among us.

Now, as regards the latter point, breaches of discipline namely on points connected with the public services of the Church, I really am unable, after diligent inquiry, to find any thing which can be so interpreted. I am given to understand, that an injudicious attempt was made in one instance, to adopt some forgotten portion of the ancient clerical dress; but I believe it was speedily abandoned, and do not think it likely we shall hear of a repetition of this, or similar indiscretions. At the same time, so much of what has been objected to, has arisen from minute attention to the Rubric; and I esteem uniformity so highly (and uniformity never can be obtained without strict attention to the Rubric,) that I confess I would rather follow an antiquated custom (even were it so designated) with the Rubric, than be entangled in the modern confusions which ensue from the neglect of it.

With reference to errors in doctrine, which have been imputed to the series of publications called the Tracts for the Times, it can hardly be expected that on an occasion like the present, I should enter into, or give a handle to any thing, which might hereafter tend to controversial discussions. Into controversy I will not enter. But, generally speaking, I may say that in these days of lax and spurious liberality, anything which tends to recall forgotten truths, is valuable. And where these publications have directed men's minds to such important subjects as the union, the discipline, and the authority of the Church, I think they have done good service: but there may be some points in which, perhaps, from ambiguity of expression, or similar causes, it is not impossible, but that evil rather than the intended good, may be produced on minds of a peculiar temperament. I have more fear of the disciples than of the teachers. In speaking therefore of the Authors of the Tracts in question, I would say, that I think their desire to restore the ancient discipline of the Church most praiseworthy: I rejoice in their attempts to secure a stricter attention to the Rubrical directions in the Book of Common Prayer; and I heartily approve the spirit which would restore a due observance of the Fasts and Festivals of the Church: but I would explore them, by the purity of their intentions, to be cautious, both in their writings and actions to take need lest their good be evil spoken of; lest in their exertions to re-establish unity they unhappily create schism; lest in their admiration of antiquity, they resort to practices which heretofore have ended in superstition.

N. B. As I have been led to suppose that the above passage has been misunderstood, I take this opportunity of stating that it never was my intention to pass any general censure on the Tracts for the Times. There must always be allowable points of difference in the opinions of good men, and it is only where such opinions are carried into extremes,

or are mooted in a spirit which tends to schism, that the interference of those in authority in the Church is called for. The authors of the Tracts in question have laid no such painful necessity on me, nor have I to fear that they will ever do so. I have the best reason for knowing, that they would be the first to submit themselves to that authority, which it has been their constant exertion to uphold and defend. And I feel sure, that they will receive my friendly suggestions in the spirit in which I have here offered them.

From the Gospel Messenger.

REV. AND DEAR SIR:

You undoubtedly, in common with your fellow Churchmen, have been often charged with *unchurching* those individuals composing the religious communities who have not as we humbly conceive a valid ministry and Divine commission. Would it not be well for those who make such grave charges to read the following, and seriously inquire whether they or their predecessors in whose ways they walk, have not brought on themselves the evil they so sorely complain of our bringing upon them?

The extract is from a speech (as published in the New York Evangelist) made by the Rev. Mr. Cartt-hers, of Chillicothe Presbytery,—Ohio, in Philadelphia, at the late meeting and division of the body called the "General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States."

The Speaker belonged to what was called the "New School" party, yet was opposed, it appeared, to division. The speech was made soon after they had divided and formally organized, and while (it should be remembered) they still hoped for reconciliation.

There were others who were much opposed to rendering "the seamless coat of Christ," but none spoke more explicit than the Rev. Gentleman who held the following language:

"A voluntary separation from the Church is *schism*. When God organized the Church under the old dispensation, he so made it that no man could separate himself from that Church without *unchurching* himself."

"It might become so corrupt as to be a den of thieves, and yet the man who set up another altar *unchurched himself*, and turned his back on the Church of God."

Now who among us, Mr. Editor, has held any stronger language than this? And is not the speaker's position a correct one? Does it not furnish a conclusive answer to those who complain of our high principles and the legitimate consequences which follow therefrom? Consequences which are often so troublesome to the convenience of those who choose to seek out new paths according to their own pleasure, rather than to stand patiently "in the ways and ask for the old paths," in which He who bought the Church by his blood hath commanded them to walk. And should not we and all others not only to know our duty but to obey God and in this, as in every thing else, strive for as well as pray "thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Of one hundred and seven Presbyteries, composing the Presbyterian Church in the United States, sixty-four have adhered to the Confession of Faith, and twenty to the secession; of the remaining twenty-three, some have refused to express any opinion, and others have suffered the matter to pass quietly by. It is further stated, that three only, out of nineteen synods, have formally declared for the secession, and that two of these contain no more than three prebyteries each.—*Banner of the Cross*.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.—Phil. II. 5. 8.

Short Sermon.—True religion, like a transmuting talisman, turns all it touches to gold. It does not annihilate the feelings, but gives them a point on which to rest, and that point is heaven.

FROM ENGLISH PAPERS.

## MEETING AT BRIGHTON IN BEHALF OF THE INCORPORATED SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL IN FOREIGN PARTS.

A meeting of this Society was held on Thursday last at the Town Hall, when the Bishop of Chichester presided. There were also present the Bishop of Barbados, the Bishop of Nova Scotia, the Earl of Chichester, the Rev. Mr. Campbell (Secretary of the Society), G. H. M. Wagner, Esq. (High Sheriff of the county), the Hon. Captain Sir Ashley Maude, R. N., George Byng, Esq., M. P., J. W. Freshfield, Esq., M. P., the Hon. and Rev. R. Cust, the Venerable the Archdeacon of Lewes, the Rev. Dr. Holland, the Rev. H. M. Wagner, the Rev. J. S. M. Anderson, the Rev. T. Cooke, the Rev. T. Trocke, the Rev. H. V. Elliott, the Rev. S. R. Drummond, Laurence Peel, Esq., T. West, Esq., &c. &c. The large room at the Town Hall was filled.

The Meeting having been opened with prayer,

The Bishop of Barbados arose, and commenced by expressing his heartfelt gratification that the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts was, at length, taking that position which, as the national society of his mother-land, and as the strict representative of the Church of England, he ever thought it ought to have taken. His lordship then said he would pass on to the state of the West Indies, and relate to the meeting what the Society had done in that quarter, what they had long wished to do, what they were now doing, and what, with the assistance which he trusted they would receive from the British public, they would still continue to do. In the first place, he would endeavour to rescue the Society, on behalf of which the meeting had assembled, from a portion of the obloquy, under which, for the last ten or fifteen years, they had laboured. It had been brought as a charge against the Society,—a charge which, happily, could no longer be brought against it,—that it was the holder of an estate cultivated by the slaves. Several circumstances had been mentioned by the previous speakers, which might, alone, have rescued the Society from the obloquy that had been cast upon it; but he would briefly allude to the importance of having, in every portion of their colonies, a college in which native missionaries might be raised up for the work of the gospel. Where could he hope to have found means to relieve the spiritual wants of, at least, 400,000 of his African brethren, had not this Society, a hundred years ago, accepted a trust for the express purpose,—the high, and holy, and blessed purpose,—of establishing a Missionary College? It was in the year 1710, that a soldier, high in the favour of William III., bequeathed two estates in the island of Barbados to this Society, in trust for the express purpose of establishing a Missionary College. At that time slavery was upheld and supported in this country and in the colonies; and though the Bishops of the Church of England—and they alone—did, at the anniversaries of the Society, endeavour to procure the abolition or amelioration of slavery, the country did not respond to the feeling. The Society, then, received the estate under the laws of the Colonies of this country. At that time, no voice was raised in favour of the slaves, except from the pulpits of this country; but when the Society received the trust, they immediately set about the fulfilment of the intention of the founders, waiting for the time when slavery should be abolished, and, in the intermediate time, performing all that might be necessary for the religious instruction of those who might thereafter be emancipated, and thus fitting them for a state of freedom. It was in 1720 that the Society received the trust; and they immediately set about building their college, which was finished in 1745. They then sent out clergymen to the college, to superintend the work of education, and gave instructions to them and to their catechists to extend, as far as they possibly could, religious instruction to the negro population. Twice did the hurricane, under God's visitation, destroy the whole of their labours; their building was levelled with the ground; and in the year 1780 they were almost on the point of abandoning the estate. They, however, continued to hold it, amidst many difficulties, till the slave