

sign a document asking the Bishop's opinion, or to acquiesce in it, resolving at the same time to adopt whatever course his Lordship may see fit to recommend," I am advised to say it is not considered that the question of standing or sitting during the reading of the offertory sentences is one that calls for such a reference; there being no order or rubric on the subject, and concerning the correct interpretation of which it would not be proper to ask the Bishop's decision. The question ought to be settled by the clergyman and the congregation. As our conversation was not private, I as a further objection to the reference, beg to remind you that you informed me you had ascertained that the Bishop's opinion on the subject was in accordance with your own—a circumstance which, however great the respect entertained for His Lordship, would render a reference to him for a decision already arrived at, with an engagement to abide by it, out of the question.

It is however considered that if he has expressed such an opinion, it is more than probable that all the circumstances of the case were not laid before him, it having been admitted at the Easter meeting that His Lordship had declined to recommend from the pulpit the change of posture you desired, and that in consequence of the unfortunate and improper suppression in the printed minutes of a resolution adopted by an overwhelming majority at the Easter meeting, disapproving of the change which had been advocated by you, His Lordship has had no opportunity of knowing the opinion of the congregation on the practice of sitting during the reading of the offertory sentences—a custom which has prevailed for the half century during which the late Bishop of Quebec officiated in the diocese—and which has been observed all over Canada, as well as in England, with the exception in the latter country of a few congregations in which extreme views prevail. The practice of standing at that part of the service was introduced into Canada a few years since by a single family from England of high social position, and has made little or no progress.

Although the proposed change of position involves no principle, and may not be considered important, yet a large portion of the congregation refused to comply, having in view the constant attempts at innovation which disturb the peace and unity of the church in these days; and being also aware that you had been advised by several members of the select vestry, including the people's churchwarden at the close of a meeting when you mentioned your intention of recommending the change, not to do so, on the ground that it would create difficulty. The position taken by those who resisted, was supported at the Easter meeting—the change being condemned by nearly all present—only six voting against the motion. This decision was unfortunately not communicated to the congregation; if it had been, those who complied with your request to stand, might have yielded for the sake of peace to the opinion of the majority. It is considered more consistent with the respect entertained for the Bishop, to avoid unnecessarily troubling him with a mere parochial difference. I may add that an admission of asking a Bishop's decision in cases not governed by rubric or rule, and therefore best settled by the minister and congregation, would involve the principle that if a clergyman sees fit to disturb long settled customs, or to introduce novelties distasteful to the people—as for instance turning to the east during the reading of the Creed, bowing at the name of Jesus, not in the creed only as customary but at every mention of it during the service or in the hymns, bowing at the Gloria Patri, &c., solitary instances of which practices are beginning to appear amongst ourselves—and can induce his Bishop to support him, the congregation would have to submit. The danger and impropriety of innovations, more especially in the present excited and naturally suspicious temper of the laity in England and here, is well pointed out under the head of "Ceremonies" in the Prayer-book in the following forcible language:—"Let all things be done among you as saith St. Paul in a seemly and due order, the appointment of which order pertaineth not to private men, therefore no man ought to take in hand nor presume to appoint, or alter any public or common order in Christ's church except he be lawfully called and authorized thereunto."

Surely the sudden and uncalled for alterations of a "common order" which had prevailed in the Cathedral, and all over Canada, since the childhood of the oldest churchman, might without any straining be held to come under the prohibition set forth in the foregoing passage.

In conclusion it only remains for me to express my deep regret at the failure of the

mission I undertook in calling upon you to invite that portion of the congregation who had complied with your request by standing to oblige you, in consideration of the heart burning and dissension to which it had unfortunately given rise, to resume the posture which had formerly prevailed, for the sake of peace; and to ask you to anticipate its presentation by a voluntary compliance with the request. The memorial alluded to will of course, after your letters, be abandoned; and as it is quite improbable that those members of your flock who have felt bound to decline compliance with your request will now abandon their position, I fear the responsibility of the present state of things must rest with yourself. Those persons are at a loss to understand how it can be irreverent to present their alms in the usual posture at the Morning Service, and unobjectionable to do so at Evening Prayers, as is still the universal custom of the Cathedral congregation. Meanwhile the injury done to the best interests of the church by this unhappy affair, can hardly be over-rated. The congregation has been divided into two parties—members of the same family, and even husbands and wives being arrayed against each other; the energies of the congregation paralyzed; the cause of missions injured by the increased difficulty of collecting money for that purpose; while some are prevented by the feeling created from approaching the table of the Lord. In view of this unhappy state of things, which cannot be unknown to you, Reverend Sir, it was hoped you would have seen no difficulty, while retaining to the full extent your own opinions on the subject, and being therefore free from any suspicion of inconsistency, in asking the people generally to unite in the practice which has so long prevailed. It will be a source of comfort to the gentlemen who contemplated the memorial, and to myself, that they have made an earnest effort to restore the harmony which formerly prevailed, and that the responsibility of its failure does not rest with them.

As our conversation and this correspondence has, with your own concurrence, ceased to be private, I shall subject it to the approval of the gentlemen with whom I have acted, and reserve the right of making such public use of it as may be considered expedient.—I am, Rev. and Dear Sir, Yours faithfully,

JOHN JONES.

To Rev. G. V. HOUSMAN,
Rector, St. Paul's Cathedral Quebec.

Correspondence.

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PROTESTANT WORSHIP.

To the Editor of the Church Observer.

Sir,—We use the obsolete, vulgar word Protestant, because we will not surrender a good term for a good thing, on account of its unpopularity. By it we mean Christian worship. Protestantism is but another name for Christianity: it is Christian zeal earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints; it is not a mere effusion of human passion, but the result of the infusion of human reason with divine authority. Protestant is a more distinctive appellation: Christian, in this connection, is often a misnomer. What is sometimes mis-named Christian worship, might pass very respectably for semi-Judaism. The terms Christian worship, these times, are a mere indefinite hieroglyph, a bold metonymy, a conventional trope, significant of anything but the spiritual service of those who were first called Christians at Antioch. Protestants take their principles, not from a school or a period, but from the infallible volume of inspired truth. Are the extravagant goings on now in vogue in many Protestant churches, in which the astonished people are exhorted to adopt the anti-Christian practice of praying for the dead, are they characteristic of pure Christian worship? Are they not rather a burlesque imitation, a melodramatic medley of Paganism, Judaism and Christianity, half orthodox, half heterodox, making one whole religious, paradox? Christianity is a system, not of material and symbolical, but of spiritual worship. The idea that men form of God's character, must necessarily give a form and character to their worship. One would suppose, from the developments of these last times, men had forgotten that the Christian's God is a Spirit, and that they who worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth.

The public worship of God may be said to consist of three parts—preaching, prayer and praise.

The divine ordinance of preaching is now held in low estimation by the amateur per-

formers in our high church theatres, which appeal to the senses rather than to the faith of the auditory. It would seem as if the Edinburgh preacher referred to by "E. B." in a late *Observer*, who intoned his sermon, did not believe in the efficacy of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, or assumed that his refined hearers in the modern Athens were ignorantly worshipping an unknown God, as he spoke in an unknown tongue. No wonder, then, that these successors of the apostles quote the authority of the church for this miserable whining, instead of the book that, in the following prophetic words, rebukes this intoning as a burlesque upon Christian instruction:—"In the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, than by my voice I might teach others, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." A preached gospel is the divinely appointed instrument for the conversion of sinners, and the edification and sanctification of believers. "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth." An apostle who preached with a tongue of fire, in season and out of season, and on one occasion till midnight, tells us that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." That the grace of faith is wrought by the Holy Spirit in the act of hearing the preached word, is further confirmed by the same inspired writer, where he thanks God that he baptized none of his Corinthian converts but Crispus, Gaius and one household, "for Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel," adding—"yet have ye not many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through"—what—baptism? no—"through the gospel." Now, if Paul believed in the Romish dogma of baptismal regeneration, his teaching here is exceptional, for he presents a preached Christ as the means by which this glorious transformation is effected. This apostle's comparative estimate of the importance of baptizing and preaching exhibits a striking contrast to the teaching of our Anglo-Catholic fathers who make baptism the efficient instrument for bringing the dead soul into life. Had God's spiritual children been invariably begotten through baptism, and not through the hearing of faith generally, it could hardly have been to him a matter of thankfulness that he had baptized so few.

Real, spiritual sanctification of soul can then only follow the new birth through faith, which the Spirit imparts. Hence all true children of God are described as "created anew in Christ Jesus: begotten again by the word of God. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." By the instrumentality of Paul's preaching, the Lord converted Lydia, after which she was baptized as the sign and seal of her regeneration.

The divers washings and symbolical ritual of the Mosaic economy are abolished and replaced by the two ordinances, simple yet expressive, of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Under the gospel dispensation, truth known and felt, sanctifying and elevating the heart to God, disposes the soul to offer spiritual sacrifice and service acceptable through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Our sacrifices now are prayer and praise; now, there is no priest but Jesus; the victim is no longer consumed on the altar—the smoke of the incense no more perfumes the air—nothing more is included in the public worship of Protestant Christians; with them, Christ is the Alpha and Omega; the source of all spiritual life, the quickening spirit of all ordinances, and the supreme head of the church, which is the mystical body of God's elect knit together in one communion and fellowship. Christ, not a wooden table, is their altar; Christ, not a consecrated wafer, their sacrifice; Christ, not a fellow sinner, their priest; Christ, not a material building, their temple. Herein Christianity and Popery are entirely at variance. The one encourages us to press forward, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith: the other exhibits a retrograde movement, directing to the priest and the church, a return to the beggarly elements of an abrogated dispensation.

Prayer and praise may be said to consist of essence and accidents; the latter, although not essential to spiritual, are essential to public united worship. Because the sweet Psalmist of Israel speaks of stringed instruments as accidents of praise, some make instrumental music essential to praise. "Praise him with timbrel and dance." Are not these expressions to be taken as symbolical of joyous, spiritual worship? Miriam danced as a religious exercise; so that, literally speaking, there might be found scriptural sanction for dancing in public worship, as well as for musical instruments. As sacred music and song may be called the poetry of religious sound, sacred dance may be as well termed the poetry of religious motion. Custom is said to be second nature; but is it always productive of spiritual natures and

affections? To some minds, custom and early association have made music essentially necessary to devotion; to other minds, it is disagreeable and obstructive of devotion. Some consider the sanctuary gold and comfortless without a full choral service and a pealing anthem to swell the notes of praise; others consider the sanctuary more cold and comfortless without Christ crucified, and a full gospel in the pulpit.

Under a gospel dispensation, the only instrumentality essential to praise is the harmonious utterances of regenerated hearts, the full chord of renewed souls sounding forth the praises of their covenant God for the blood-bought mercies of redemption. Doubtless, a full choral service has a powerful influence on the natural feelings; but are the emotions excited by such an appeal to the senses, in exact harmony with the devotional feelings which enter into an act of Christian spiritual worship? To a congregation uninitiated, unaccustomed to such a sensuous exhibition and heartless pageant, would not the emotions thus excited be the opposite to spirituality? would not the spiritual aspirations be rather dissipated, or subordinated to the emotions of sense? Such sensuous appeals to the spiritual sympathies are more in accordance with Popish than Protestant worship. If, by such means, any worship God in Spirit and in truth, it is not on account of the theatrical auxiliaries, but in spite of them. Prayer and praise, in their relation to intoning and musical accompaniment, are now regarded as a part of worship done for us, and not by us; as if the whole service was a transaction between the priest, the choir, and God; in which the congregation individually have neither part nor lot; as if it was not so much their concern to understand the words, as to know what is done—done for them by others, instead of by them; as though the whole were an operative performance to be heard and seen, and not felt. Now, candid reader, is it not so? And don't you agree with me that, so far from intoning or singing prayers being conducive to devotion, it is the opposite? is it not a device of the great adversary to devotion, the devil, to divert the attention of the spiritual worshipper from the meaning of the prayers, and the real object of the preached word that makes wise unto salvation?

Christian reader, ever bear in mind that the blessing attending all religious exercises depends on the Spirit being given, and that a worshipper may expect to derive grace, strength and comfort in proportion to the earnestness and sincerity with which they are sought. We all need more spirituality of mind, a capacity for things purely spiritual, that we may worship in the beauty of holiness, and make melody in our hearts to the Lord.

Therefore, when you next enter your place of worship, ask the Healer and Answerer of prayer to vouchsafe the Spirit to yourself, your minister, and your fellow worshippers.

H. B. W.

Stoney Creek, Dec. 6, 1870.

THE GREEK CHURCH IN NEW YORK.

The Greek Church, the only Christian denomination unrepresented here by a church edifice of some kind, will soon have a chapel in this city dedicated to their worship. This chapel, now almost ready for use, is on the parlour floor of the residence of the pastor, Father Bjerring, No. 951 Second Avenue, where it will remain until the erection of the Greek church on Lexington Avenue. The parlour is divided by a black walnut railing with doors in the centre. Seven chairs for ladies constitute the whole furniture of the auditorium, seats being exceptional in churches of this denomination, as the custom is to stand, or recline against supports prepared for the purpose.

Within the sanctuary, and attached to the dividing railing by staffs of cedar, are two banners, one on each side of the entrance, gilt, fringed, and curiously wrought in crimson and gold. These banners are divided at the middle into three parts, typical of the Trinity. A goldenassel depends from each part, and from each end of the cross-bars of the staffs. Surmounting the staffs are golden crosses over globes. On one banner is a picture of the "Baptism of Christ," with the "Mother of God the Divine Child," on the reverse.

On one side of the other banner is the "Ascension," and on the reverse is a portrait of "St. Nicholas," the patron saint of Russia. Near each banner is a choir-stand covered with thick golden cloth, worked with flowers in different shades of gold, silver, and coloured threads. At the side of each stand, on the floor, is a massive silver-plated candelabra, about four feet high.

The sanctuary is divided by the holy doors, beyond which no one is permitted to pass except the priests. Whenever repairs are to be made therein by the profane, the sacred vessels are removed. On the left is a full-length picture of the Virgin Mary, bearing the infant Jesus with out-stretched arms; above are the portraits of Vladimir, Helena, and Constantine. On the right hand side is a portrait of our Saviour holding a globe surmounted by a cross; above are portraits of Joachim, Simon, and Anna.

The holy doors are beautifully gilt,