

is my prayer book, and I find in the Psalms, and in the Epistles, prayers fitted for every rank and all conditions, not in "words which man's wisdom teacheth;" the apostle tells us that "we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." [Rom. viii. 26.] I am afraid, therefore, that by a written form which cannot always suit every case, I "quench the Spirit" [1 Thess. v. 19], which the apostle forbids; and I strive through grace to imitate rather the apostle's example, who said, "I will pray with the Spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also." [1 Cor. xiv. 15.]

VIII. I AM A PRESBYTERIAN, because the Presbyterian Church is surpassed by none for its spirit of Evangelical zeal, conciliation, and charity; its missionaries are labouring at home, in the colonies, among the Jews, and among the heathen;—we "honour all men and love them as brethren," that acknowledge Emanuel, "God made manifest in the flesh;" and although the Presbyterian Church has often endured persecutions from others, we know not an instance in which the Presbyterian Church has persecuted others.

IX. I AM A PRESBYTERIAN, because I love unity, "even the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." [Eph. iv. 3.] But in order to obtain this unity, I find that it need be built on truth: for "the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable." [James i. 17.] And while the apostle says, "Mark them which cause divisions, and avoid them" [Rom. xvi. 17], he speaks of wicked men that separate from the truth, not of believers that separate from error; for in relation to a corrupt Church, the Lord himself says,—"Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." [2 Cor. vi. 17.] And again, the express command in relation to Babylon [every system that corrupts the truth of God] is, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and ye receive not of her plagues." [Rev. xviii. 14.]

X. I AM A PRESBYTERIAN, because the Scripture tells me to be subject to "the powers that be" [Rom. xiii. 1], and "to submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." [1 Peter ii. 13.] But it also tells me to distinguish things that differ [Phil. i. 10], "to render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's." [Matt. xxii. 21.] And that God "will not give his glory to another, neither his praise to graven images." [Isa. xlii. 8.] It is the glory of the Presbyterian Church, that while she trains up her children to "lead a quiet and peaceable life in all goodness and honesty." [1 Tim. ii. 2], and has always set an eminent example of rendering "honour to whom honour is due" [Rom. xiii. 17]; she also maintains that "Christ alone is King in Zion" [Ps. ii. 6], and that agreeably to her confession, ratified by the State, "The Lord Jesus as King and Head of his Church hath therein appointed a Government in the hand of the Church, officers distinct from the civil magistrate." [Westminster Confession 30, sec. i.] At the Reformation in England, the reigning monarch there was declared to be the head of the Church, and so is the law of England to the present day; but at the Reformation in Scotland the Lord Jesus Christ was declared to be the only King and Head of his Church, and so is the law in Scotland to the present day. My motto, as a Presbyterian, is, "Fear God, and honour the King."

XI. I AM A PRESBYTERIAN, because the Presbyterian Church has the marks of Christ's Church, it is persecuted by man, and yet blessed by God. "If the world hate you" [John xvii. 14]. "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more," &c. [Matthew x. 25.] The Presbyterian Church has this mark of the persecution of man; and, therefore, I conclude that it is Christ's Church. But what confirms me the more is, that "as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth in Christ." [2 Cor. i. 5.] The Presbyterian Church has the mark of being blessed by God; the revivals in that Church have been many, and in many places, and these all the more remarkable that they have occurred at a time when the opposition of the world assailed her in testifying to the Headship of Him who is "King of kings and Lord of lords."

XII. I AM A PRESBYTERIAN, because I can find no form of doctrine, discipline, and government

better than the Presbyterian. That we have faults in our practice, however pure our system, I grant; but I can find nothing faultless upon earth. And while I bless God that I am a Presbyterian, and a member of that Church, either in England or Scotland, I judge no man wherever I find the image of Christ, in whatever person or under whatever cross, then I adore God for his grace, and would remember that all such are brethren. Believe God has his people among different denominations of professing Christians, and while I rejoice in the light that I possess, I pray that all that are called by Christ's name may have this mark of being his disciples, that "they love one another" [John xiii. 35], "that Ephraim may not envy Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim" [Is. xi. 13], that the watchman may "see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion" [Is. lii. 8], and "that the Lord's way may be known upon the earth, and his saving health among all nations." [Ps. lxxvii. 2.]

CONTRAST BETWEEN THE FRENCH CHURCH OF THE REFORMATION AND THE PRESENT REFORMED CHURCH OF FRANCE.—IMPORTANCE OF RECALLING THE HISTORY OF THE PAST.

The history of the erection of the Reformed Church in France is one of the deepest interest. The light of the Reformation had burst through the gloom, and soon began to scatter the clouds of Popish darkness. It had penetrated even to the court of Francis I. It had illuminated the mind of his sister, who thenceforth diffused the mild radiance of her piety around her. Amid fierce persecution, in the course of which many a martyr lifted up with his dying breath his noble testimony for Christ, the number of the faithful increased. After a time the Psalms of David were turned into verse by one of the French poets, and began to be sung by the Protestants in all parts of the land. Then, too, there came forth in French that wonderful work, "Institutes of the Christian Religion," by Calvin, the most remarkable of all the Reformers for the accuracy and profundity of his knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and the strength and depth of his understanding, which laid the foundations of a deep, vigorous, and comprehensive theology. At length came the year 1559, memorable for the first General Assembly, when the foundations were laid of the future Reformed Church. It was held in Paris itself, in the very face of a hostile court, by an authority derived from Christ alone. The able and excellent men who constituted that Assembly at once took the Word of God as their only statute-book, and proceeded, not to fashion doctrines not to enact laws of their own, but to ascertain and embody in a Confession the doctrines and the laws which were found in that Word; and they produced an admirable Confession, full of the clearest and most comprehensive views of the great doctrines of the Word of God, which are so bound together, that scarce any one can be omitted without casting obscurity over the whole of the rest, and such as wonderfully coincided with the Confession of the other Churches of the Reformation.

But it never occurred to these excellent men, while they took the great statute-book of Heaven in their hands, that a Church was to follow the directions of that statute-book in regard to doctrines, but not in regard to order, to government, and to discipline. They found the apostles, by virtue of an authority which they derived from Christ, laying down laws in regard to the characters and the work of the office-bearers of the Churches, and the qualifications they were to possess, and the manner in which they were to be chosen, and the government which they were to exercise, and all of them addressed either to Churches generally, or to the office-bearers in particular, as to the only persons by whom these laws were to be carried into execution. They felt that the same Divine authority which had revealed doctrines for their faith, had revealed rules of discipline and government, which, according to the light that was given them, they were bound to follow by their allegiance to their Divine Lord. Hence they declared (Art. 25) that "the good order in the Church which was established by Christ's authority ought to be kept sacred and inviolable"—that they were (Art. 26) "bound to submit themselves unto the common instruction,

and to the yoke of Jesus Christ, in all places where he shall have established the true discipline, although the edicts of earthly magistrates be contrary thereto,"—thus teaching that, when earthly magistrates issued commands prohibiting them from submitting to the discipline of the Church, they were bound by their allegiance to Christ to disobey them. They declare (Art. 29) that "the true Church ought to be governed by that discipline which our Lord Jesus hath established, so that there should be in the Church pastors, elders, and deacons,—that the pure doctrine may have its course, and vices may be reformed and suppressed,"—and thus teach, that they consider that the three orders are appointed of God; that the office-bearers have to exercise discipline, and that this discipline is to be exercised for the purpose of preserving sound doctrine, and suppressing the vices that appear among the members of the Church. They proclaim (Art. 31) "that it is not lawful for any man of his own authority to take upon himself the government of the Church, but that every one ought to be admitted thereto by a lawful election, if the Lord permit (although they allow that sometimes, the state of the Church being interrupted, God has raised up some persons in an extraordinary manner to repair the ruins of the Church)," thus denying utterly the right of the Civil Magistrate to interfere in the government of the Church of Christ. Finally, they assert that all "true pastors have all the same authority and equal power among themselves under Jesus Christ, the only Head, the only Sovereign, and only Universal Bishop." Thus these devoted men announced their resolution, without reserve, without selection, without hesitation, to follow out the laws of their King and Head, and in the clearest manner proclaimed his sole supremacy over his Church.

It is interesting to remark, in passing, that the very next year to that of the calling of the first General Assembly in France was that of the summoning the first Assembly of the Church of Scotland. The Protestants of this kingdom had first addressed a petition to Parliament, praying that "the doctrines of the Popish Church should be discarded as antichristian, and purity of worship, as exemplified in the discipline of the primitive Church, be restored," when Parliament, fully comprehending its own position, simply requested the Protestant ministers, whose office it was to act in the name of Christ, "to prepare a summary of doctrine which they held conformable to Scripture." This was speedily done, and the Confession of Faith, professed and believed by the Protestants in the realm of Scotland, was ratified and approved by the Estates of Parliament, as "wholesome and sound doctrine, grounded on the infallible truth of God's Word." Afterwards the Church proceeded to draw up the First Book of Discipline, taking the infallible Word as its only rule, and consulting neither King, Lords, nor Commons. Finally, on December 20, 1560, she held her first General Assembly, by the intrinsic authority which she derived solely from her Divine Head, and proceeded, without fear, and without hesitation, to discharge all the functions of a free and independent Church of Christ. The French Assembly had been held but the year before; the doctrines and the principles of government maintained by both were the same, both drew them directly from the Word of God,—their only and perfect statute-book. Since then, long periods of slumber or of disaster have occurred both in France and in Scotland; but our own Church has begun to awaken from its sleep, and to return to the principles, and, we trust, in some measure to the zeal, of her forefathers. Let us hope that our Protestant brethren in France will also awake,—will recall the principles and the history of their forefathers,—the days when the Church in France, faithful to her Lord and Head, went forth, in the glorious morning of the Reformation, fresh, and young, and beautiful, sparkling with the dew of her youth.

We have said that that the first French Assembly was held in 1559. It consisted only of eleven ministers, just as that of the Church of Scotland of only twelve. But they must have been men of large views,—of vigorous understandings,—deeply versed in the Holy Scriptures,—and of that energy and courage, tempered with moderation and judgment, which led them fully to carry out the principles of the Word of God. And God seems in a