

a few earnest and good men, hearing the mutterings of a rising storm against the Church, set themselves seriously to investigate the whole history of her constitution. They asked, whether Establishment was the real foundation on which she rested? Had her Prayer-book no link with the past? Were her orders traceable to apostolic times? Had her bishops and clergy any authority independent of what the State could confer? Could the State, consistently with the enactments of Parliament itself, and the declarations of our monarchs, dictate to the church what our doctrines and our ritual should be, irrespective of the deliberations of Convocation? These inquiries were, it must be remembered, made by men unversed in architectural knowledge, who certainly were not Ritualists. But the notion of any powers wholly spiritual, and independent of the state, appeared so novel and so foreign to men's minds, that men lashed themselves into fury at the thought. It would not be saying too much to describe them, like their predecessors, throwing dust into the air, and crying out, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live."

It is now possible to take a calmer view of the situation. After all this extraordinary tumult, we have lived to find men's minds no longer agitated by practices which now appear perfectly innocuous. Ancient pews have been swept away, yet few murmur. Ancient churches are restored to somewhat of their pristine glory, and every one rejoices. Long processions of surpliced priests are formed, even with Archbishops and Bishops at their head, to consecrate, or to celebrate the anniversary of consecrations; thousands of earnest laymen await the entrance of the white-robed choir into St. Paul's Cathedral and join heartily in the plain song of the church; fonts are restored to their original use and place, and altars, duly