

“easy.” “How dreadful is this place. This is none other but “the House of God, and this is the Gate of Heaven.” You would think so if your eyes were opened. There are Angels in the Church by your side, looking at you. When St. Paul told the women at Corinth that they must wear something on their heads in Church, he gave this reason,—“Because of the Angels” (1 Cor. xi. 10). When the Angels worship God they fall on their faces. How they must wonder when they see you *sitting down* to pray, and perhaps leaning forward face in hat, or holding a handkerchief to your face !

*We bow to the Altar in Church.* We do so because it is God’s throne. In the House of Lords, at Westminster, there is the Queen’s throne. It is the custom of the lords when they go across from one side of the House to the other to turn and bow to the Queen’s throne. Of course, this is a mark of respect to Her Majesty. When the Queen is present they do a great deal more. They walk backwards before their Sovereign ; they never turn their backs on her. Just in the same way we bow to our friends when we meet them, as a mark of respect. Soldiers, too, are taught to salute their officers and the flag of the regiment. If it is right to bow to earthly friends and to the symbol of an earthly monarch, surely it is right to do it to the Altar-throne of the King of kings.

But here you break in with a very heavy charge. You say, “It is idolatry to bow to the Altar, it breaks the 2nd Commandment.” Well, but do the lords and the soldiers worship the Queen’s throne and the flag ? If you meet a lady in the street and bow to her, do you commit idolatry ? Do you suppose that we worship anyone or anything but God Almighty ? Do *you* ? Could you imagine yourself doing it ? And do you suppose that *we* are so foolish (to say nothing of so wicked) as to do such a thing ? Isn’t it rather childish to talk like this ? Is it right to charge your fellow-Christians with such a dreadful sin in this off-hand way ? What if you are bearing false witness against your neighbour ?

“But (you say) supposing you don’t *worship* the altar, or the “altar-cross, or crucifix, you break the 2nd Commandment by “*having* it at all. Doesn’t the Commandment say that you are “not to *make* ‘the likeness of anything in heaven above?’ And