

that has led us again to do so, than because of the subject itself, which is of so important a character that an occasional reference to it may prove extremely useful. We are pained that one of our subscribers has withdrawn his name from our list because we have ventured to insert letters supporting what he designates ritualistic practices without expressing editorially the horror which we entertain for them. What these ritualistic practices are we are left in ignorance. We have lately had a most interesting discussion between two of our correspondents on the question as to whether on days generally observed as holidays by the mass of the population around us, our own people should have an opportunity or not of attending service in our own churches. The advocate of the affirmative and negative have pleaded their respective sides with great ability, and we are sure that the great majority of our readers must have perused the letters with much satisfaction, and received some information also. Other subjects have been taken up in these pages which have been warmly and keenly discussed in the parent Church, whose leading men have not thought it beneath them to take part in the controversies that have arisen, and have not thought that by so doing they were either dishonouring themselves or their Church. We ask our late subscriber how error is to be dispelled, or truth established except by the free interchange of opinions? We have no desire, nor do we believe any correspondent would ask us, to insert flippant or grave attacks upon the fundamental principles of our religious belief, but surely there is such a range of thought as to allow of differences and doubts being discussed not only without prejudice, but to the great benefit of the doubters. We have too strong and well grounded a faith in the security of the Rock on which our hopes are fixed, too well settled a conviction of the Scriptural character of our form of Church government to be afraid of any attacks which may be made. It is the careful avoidance of the difficulties and doubts which often arise among our younger members, which leaves them helpless to resist plausible arguments whose fallacy they are unprepared to detect. It is from the half instructed, who attend Church and take their religion without enquiry and without intelligent knowledge, that the greater part of those who leave us is drawn. It is

such as those who are entrapped by the assumption of Apostolical succession, not knowing that, granted such a claim could be established, it is ours in the fullest measure. Having had no doubts explained because to doubt is forbidden; if our subscriber's practice be carried out, they are furnished with no weapons to overcome them when presented to them as they go into the world; and so they leave the Church of their fathers, and join others with greater pretensions; but, to say the least of it, not more Scriptural in their character.

We trust our subscriber will reflect seriously on the meaning of his letter. We complain that the Romish church stifles discussion. Does he seek to identify himself in that respect with a persecuting body, whose garments are stained with the blood of our martyred fathers, slaughtered for the defence of the very freedom our subscriber seeks to extinguish? Carried to its legitimate conclusion, the very spirit that dictated the stopping of the *Presbyterian* because it contained something not exactly in accordance with his views, would lead to another massacre of St Bartholemew. It may seem extravagant to say so, but the spirit is the same, the power only is wanting.

But whilst we desire to give every liberty to correspondents in discussing questions, we must repeat what we have before said, that we cannot admit personal attacks whether these come signed or anonymously. And this we think it proper to do, the more especially at present, as several such communications have for some time past been in our hands. All communications suitable for admission to these columns we shall be glad to receive.

GENERAL SUSTENTATION FUND.

A western minister writes to say that he is determined to be in advance of the inevitable "*printed circular*," and hastens to inform us that his contribution for the Sustentation Fund for the present half year is "now ready." This is the best possible way of putting a stop to the circular nuisance—if it is a nuisance: and whether it is or not, there is nothing like coming up to time. The congregation of Three Rivers has also announced that its quota of \$50 for the half year is ready. Several congregations who fell short of the sums apportioned to them last half year, have