

and the approximation of parties to each other, each losing something of its own and borrowing from its opposite, is, according to my own convictions, the issue for which we should devoutly pray and for every manifestation of which (and these are not few) we should render thanks to our God.

I apprehend that there is no one doctrine of the Gospel which does not receive the tincture of error, when pushed to an extreme; and we are sometimes accused of not going far enough, when the very fact of our stopping where we do, is the evidence of our keeping step, if I may use so familiar an illustration, with the Gospel itself. Truth exaggerated is not higher truth: it is rather truth deteriorated by some alloy. Instances might be given, without number, to support the justice of this remark; and we see it very plainly exemplified, if we have recourse to the stronger shades of difference among believers in Revelation upon certain points of their Faith. Because one party will lower and dilute to nothing the vital doctrine of the work of the Spirit in the heart and understanding, another deals in sensible revelations and impulses, or proceeds to the extravagance of claiming the miraculous gifts of Apostolic times:—Because one party preaches the law rather than the Gospel, another seeking to magnify the covenant of Grace, will tread upon the verge of Antinomian error: Because one party makes Religion consist in forms and ritual observances, another makes it an evidence of spirituality to depreciate or even to dispense with the very Sacraments themselves.

Upon similar principles, I cannot forbear from stating my opinion that we ought to manifest a wise spirit of allowance, and charitable construction in some lesser matters relating to particular habits, usages, observances, or religious phraseology. Things which are often found among the *accidental characteristics* are thence liable to be regarded as the