

A short account of the controversy between Mr. Grant and the writer is necessary for the information of those parties into whose hands this tract might fall unaccompanied by others which preceded it. In July, 1865, I published a sermon at the request of some valued parishioners on "The Tares and the Wheat." The sermon was directed against a sect called the Plymouth Brethren, who had long wrested the parable from its original meaning, in order to prop up their views on the subject of a "Pure Church." Their theory being "That evil of any kind, if sanctioned in the assembly, will quench the Spirit." The parable of the Tares and the Wheat of course stood in their way, and with no little ingenuity they fixed on the expression used in the parable, "the field is the *world*," and then boldly stated that it had nothing to say to the Visible Church at all.† In my sermon I called the attention of my congregation to the fact that it was in God's *Kingdom* (not the field) that the Tares grew; that they were to be left in the *Kingdom* with the wheat till Christ came, and that on His Advent He would gather them out of His Kingdom and cause them to be destroyed. This Kingdom I stated to be the Visible Church, in accordance with the generally received opinion of most Christian bodies.

For six months the sermon remained unanswered, and then Mr. R. T. Grant (formerly an Episcopalian clergyman) answered it, or rather professed to answer it on the part of his sect. In his reply he did everything but grapple the point as to what the Kingdom of God was. He stated that it could not be the Church; "that the Kingdom is in mystery now, but will be established when the Lord comes; that the Church is in it and others in it too, and that the Jews will be in it."‡ So vague, undefined, and mystical a statement of course required explanation, and in a short reply I called on Mr. Grant to inform me what our Lord meant by the expression "Kingdom of God or Kingdom" used once in the parable and three times in its explanation.

* *Prac. Unity Ch.*, page 6.—J. N. D. † *Reasons for withdrawing from Church of England*, page 22.—H. B. ‡ *Brief Remarks*, page 4.