

The Church.

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PRIMARY CHARGE,
DELIVERED TO THE CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF EDINBURGH, IN THE SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH, BY
C. H. TERROT, D.D., BISHOP OF EDINBURGH,
On the 13th April, 1842.

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,—Having been so recently selected by you to the post of precedence in which I now address you, I cannot but feel some diffidence when called upon to speak authoritatively to those with whom I have so long lived on terms of fraternal equality. I trust you will believe me when I say, that while your choice of me as your Bishop gave me all that satisfaction which naturally follows the unanimous approbation of those whose judgment I had so many reasons for respecting, I was well aware that it was not honour merely that you were imposing upon me, but a deep responsibility, and labours which, though not onerous in their ordinary course, might upon occasions demand very great care, and even a very painful exercise of resolution. As yet it is only by negative evidence that you can satisfy yourselves of the fitness of the choice you have made, for no necessity has hitherto occurred to call for the exercise of any nice discretion, or of any particular boldness of resolution. I feel, however, that the present is an occasion which in some respect calls for both. The humble state of the Episcopate in our communion brings with it this advantage, that the Bishop knows the feelings, the sentiments, and the opinions of his Clergy, far better than can be done by the Bishops of England, who live much apart from, and are elevated by temporal distinctions much above the parochial clergy. And I think I should not take due advantage of this my position, were I merely to address you now on the ordinary duties of the pastoral care, or by a laborious disquisition upon some point of dogmatic theology. Such topics of constant unvarying importance are the proper subjects for books and treatises, which, if worthy of their subject, become a possession of the Church for ever. But an occasional discourse, like that which I am now addressing to you, ought to have an especial reference to the occasion—to the time and the circumstances of ourselves, and of the Church over which God's providence has made us overseers.

I cannot doubt, my reverend brethren, but that all of you have been for some time convinced that we are living at a critical epoch. The very youngest among us has witnessed great changes in Church and State, in the temper and habits of the people. You must all perceive that men's minds are generally unsettled, either with the desire or the fear of farther change; and while obstinately to insist upon keeping things as they are would be a most impotent and fruitless endeavour, it seems to be the duty of every good citizen towards the State, and of every sincere Christian towards the Church, to use all his influence, wherever it may be, to promote not to forbid change, but to provide that every change that is made be in accordance with the revealed will of God, and have a probable tendency to the well-being of our fellow-creatures.

The immediate change which appears to be going on in our own Church, and without any plan or any particular co-operation on our part, seems to be this, that after trying her for nearly a century with great humiliation and poverty, it appears now to be the intention of God to raise her to much greater prominence, and to a much wider field of exertion, than she has hitherto occupied. It might be flattering to our feelings if we could believe that this has in any way been produced by our personal talents and exertions; but to me, at least, it appears to have been done not by us, but for us. We have made no aggressive movement—we have studied to be quiet, and to mind our own business; and when those who are without wish to express their approbation of the conduct of the Episcopal Clergy, I find that they uniformly refer not to the proselyting zeal, but to the sober peacefulness which has been the characteristic of their conduct.

But though we have not been aggressive, the providence of God has decreed that we shall be progressive; and it is our duty to consider how we may best occupy the field that is opening before us. Two great steps we have already taken. The one is the formation of our Church Society, which, though only of three years' duration, is already an integral and important member of our ecclesiastical polity. The other is the scheme for the establishment of Trinity College, of the ultimate establishment of which I have now no doubts, and very little doubts that its efficacy for the consolidation and extension of our Church will be most important. Respecting the first of these, it is scarcely necessary that I should say anything to you, who were parties to the first rude scheme in which something of the kind was proposed, who have watched and conducted all its proceedings, and to whose zeal and influence, with the laity, its present successful efficacy are mainly to be attributed. It is sufficient to say, that under its operation, no minister of our Church, however poor his congregation may be, can now be in a state of destitution; and that no congregation, however poor, can be debared by their poverty from securing the services of a minister, and the regular administration of God's word and sacraments.

With respect to the College scheme, I presume you are all aware that it partakes of the character which I gave a little [while] ago to the whole progressive movement of our Church. It was originated not by us, but for us. What we have done is merely to express our gratitude for the offer; to express our sense of its importance; and, when the scheme was once started, to use our influence for its accomplishment. I presume also that you are aware, that when the scheme was first published, and the present time, the sum of £15,000, more than the one-half of the required amount, has been subscribed. At no distant period, therefore, it is probable we shall be called upon to consider the important questions connected with the detailed organisation of the College—a matter of great weight, in which we shall require very careful consideration, and the assistance of divine grace; and for that end, the prayers of all those who wish well to our Zion, and desire to see science and letters ministering, in their proper place, as the handmaids of orthodox religion.

These, my Reverend Brethren, are points on which we have reason to be thankful that the moving spirit of the age has acted, and is still acting, for the good of our Church. We have reason, moreover, to be thankful, that in an age peculiarly marked by the virulence of its religious controversies, our Church is at one with itself. We have no parties,—no divisions. No portion of those who minister at our altars are charging another portion of their brethren in the ministry with maintaining and disseminating *soul-destroying heresies*. We have not, thank God, in our Church, a Catholic and a Protestant faction arrayed against each other, with all the bitter passions of a civil war. But do not, my brethren, suppose that while I say this, I say it with anything of unholy triumph, as if by our wisdom, or for our righteousness, we were as yet preserved from those divisions which appear to be so deplorably dividing the unity of the Church of England. I here lay an emphasis upon the word appear, because I am convinced that this division appears much greater to us at a distance than it does to those who are upon the spot, or than it is in reality. The facts of the case, undenied and

unquestioned by any body, are these:—The Church in England, with which, in all such organic acts, we must identify ourselves, reformed her doctrine and discipline in a very different manner from that pursued by any of the other national churches which about the same time threw off the usurped dominion of Rome. She took at the very first, and has maintained ever since, a *via media* between the Church of Rome and the other Reformed Churches. When reform was absolutely necessary, and was called for by the voice of the whole European community, Rome and the adherents of Rome refused to reform any further than was compatible with the claim of infallibility—that is, to correct any fundamental error into which she had fallen. The Protestant Churches, viewing her as apostate, and as no Church at all, set about the formation of new Churches altogether, linked to the primitive Church in no way but by supposed identity of dogma. The Church of England having no hopes of reformation in substantial form, reformed herself—but not so as to break the visible perpetuity of the Catholic Church. She did not drop nor abolish the Episcopate; she did not create a new succession of presbyters; but under great difficulties, and when persecution had rendered it all but impossible, she maintained the apostolic succession, while she restored the purity of the apostolic doctrine.

Now, though in most critical periods the *via media* be the way most consonant to truth and to expediency, it is, no doubt, the most difficult to draw with precision, and to maintain with consistency; and, farther than that, it is that in which men are least likely to combine and co-operate heartily with one another. For myself, I have no hesitation in saying, that I do not believe that the formularies of our Church, as we now profess them, contain the full expression of the whole mind of the body of men employed in drawing them up; but that, on the contrary, many parts of them were the subject of much discussion among men of opposing views, and that many expressions are the result of compromise; and for that very reason are unsatisfactory to those men among us at the present day who are of an uncompromising spirit.

If such be the character of the Anglican Reformation, it is not to be wondered at if there are, and always have been, in the Anglican Church, some who think that she reformed too much, and others that she reformed too little,—that some should be disposed exclusively to admire the homilies and articles for their eminent Protestantism, while they would willingly supply the Catholicity of the liturgy by extemporaneous prayers,—and that others should long to soften the asperity of the Protestant Articles, and hope against hope for a fair reconciliation with Rome. I say, we are not at this time of day to wonder if there be such parties in the Church; but we must wonder, and that with somewhat of indignation, if we are authoritatively told that there is no longer room for compromise or indecision; that we must no longer halt between two opinions; that we must adopt one of the two extremes, or be classed by both parties with the Gallios who care for none of these things. Now, my brethren, I am persuaded that the great majority of the Bishops, the Clergy, and the laity of England are determined that they will submit to no such compulsion for themselves, and, moreover, that they will not permit the two extreme factions to persecute one another. Among ourselves, as I have already observed, no such extreme parties have hitherto appeared. But though there is no open division, it would be unreasonable to imagine that we are all exactly of one mind,—that there exist no tendencies toward the one extreme or the other,—that we are in no danger of catching the infection of controversy, and imagining ourselves bound to declare for Protestantism or Catholicity. While, then, I am thankful for our greater degree of internal conformity upon the controverted points than is to be found elsewhere, I must still remind you that we are in danger; and this danger will be most reasonably and effectively guarded against,—not by determining to hear and read nothing upon the subject,—but by determining, by the best use of all our powers, to understand the subject thoroughly, and to examine it, not by the partial artificial light of controversial tracts, but in and by the broad light of day flowing through the book of inspiration from the fountain of all light. And multitudes as are the points at present controversially argued in the Church, they appear to me to be all grounded upon the fundamental questions—What is the Church of Christ?—was it really founded and organised by Christ? And if it was, with what main purpose was it instituted, and with what powers and functions was it endowed? And these questions, suited, as I think, both to the general state of the times and to the particular occasion of our present synodal meeting, I propose, Reverend Brethren, not controversially, but exegetically, to examine.

In the first place, then, we have to inquire, what is that Church of Christ to which the general promises of the Gospel are addressed? And in this inquiry I would, in the commencement, advert to the definition of the Church as given in the Articles of that religious communion to which we belong. The 19th Article, then, declares, that "the visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments are duly administered, according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same."

Now, the epithet *visible*, which occurs here as well as in the 26th Article, ought by no means to lead us to imagine that our Reformers had in view a distinction between the visible and invisible Church, such as is very commonly made in the present day; a distinction by which the *visible* Church is considered as composing the whole body of professing Christians; the *invisible*, as consisting of those only who are Christians in heart and in deed, as well as in name and profession. By the visible Church, I understand the Article to mean the Church on earth, as distinguished from the Church in heaven; that is, to refer to a distinction which is made in Scripture, and not to one which is nowhere to be found in Scripture. That the distinction which I have supposed to be intended is a scriptural distinction may be proved from Ephesians iii. 15, where Christ is declared to be the person "from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." The portion of the family which is on earth is manifestly the visible Church; the portion which is in heaven is the invisible Church. And that there is in Scripture no warrant for any other double view of the Church appears, I think, very strongly from those parables of our Lord which explain, under figurative imagery, the nature of the kingdom of God—under which title I hope it is unnecessary for me to prove that we are to understand him as speaking of the Christian Church. Thus, in Matthew xiii. 24, we are told that "the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man who sowed wheat in his field, in which afterwards an enemy sowed tares." Upon this the owner of the field, in opposition to the wish of his servants, determined that both should grow together until the harvest, and that then a final separation should be made between the wheat and the tares. I need not occupy your time by quoting the well known explanation of this parable given at the 37th verse. I only observe, that "the kingdom of God" is here the visible Church, in the sense of the Church upon earth, containing both real and merely nominal believers.

Again, at the 47th verse of the same chapter, we are told that "the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net let down into the sea, which gathered together of every sort, both good and bad;" and this also, it is evident, must be a figure of the whole visible professed Church upon earth; and neither of the invisible esoteric Church upon earth, nor yet of the invisible Church in heaven, into which we know it is impossible that anything had should enter.

But to return from the language of Scripture to the language of the Article. It says that the visible Church is a congregation of faithful men. I have already shown that if we are to understand this word *visible* in the sense of the Article, that is, as designating all the ministers of Christ on earth; and, on the other hand, as designating all the faithful who discharge their ministerial duties; as we may, in direct opposition to the language both of Scripture and of the Church, talk of a *visible* and *invisible* Church upon earth.

We must observe, farther, that the Article asserts the visible Church to be "a congregation of faithful men." It is visible, inasmuch as it is a congregation, that is to say, a society organised and distinguishable by the world and by one another; and this cannot be affirmed of the sum total of sincere practical believers, who do not form an congregation, or visible definable society, distinct from the general society of professing Christians.

But then, it may be asked, how is the whole congregation, or aggregate of congregations, assembling in Christ's name, to whom the pure Gospel is preached, and the sacraments duly administered—how is it a congregation of *faithful* men? Certainly, in the highest sense of the word *faithful*, that is to say, as possessors of a practical, and, therefore, of a justifying faith, this cannot be affirmed of the visible Church. No human eye can see, no human judgment can distinguish, what portion of any congregation or any Church are possessed or destitute of such a faith; and therefore it is clear that the possessors cannot with any propriety be said to constitute a visible Church. As, then, we are bound to interpret the Article so as to make the writers of it express themselves rationally and consistently, we must understand by *faithful* some quality that is sensible and visible. And such a public profession of the true creed, whether so wrought into the heart as to produce a practical, and therefore a justifying faith; or merely intellectually entertained and professed. "Faithful men" must therefore mean professors of the true faith; and if any one is disposed to hesitate at the adoption of such an interpretation, I would advise him to consider, whether he is not thinking about some supposed invisible Church, while the Article is treating expressly of a visible Church.

But now to go on with the description—"In which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered." If there be any who limit their notion of the preaching of God's word to the sermon, they must have a very indistinct and a very shifting notion of the limits of the visible Church of Christ; for, on such a notion, a congregation may be on one Sunday in the Church, and on another out of the Church, without any co-operation or consent on their parts. By the preaching of the word, I must therefore understand the constitutional and professed founding of all religious instruction upon the Canonical Scriptures; whether that instruction be contained in the reading of the Psalms and Lessons, Epistles and Gospels, or in such explanations and commentaries as are contained in sermons. I might powerfully confirm this argument by references to the questions and answers contained in the Ordinal both for priests and deacons; but as I am afraid of being tedious, I omit what every one can readily supply for himself.

But besides the preaching of God's word, it is requisite, according to the Article, that the sacraments be duly administered according to Christ's ordinance. And what is to be understood by this ordinance? And what is to be understood by this ordinance? And what is to be understood by this ordinance? And what is to be understood by this ordinance?

Now the public authority referred to, within the realm of England, at the time when this Article was drawn up, was vested in the bishops; and therefore, within that territorial limit, we must necessarily understand the Article to say, that no ministrations were lawful, that is, that the sacraments were not duly administered, except by Episcopally ordained clergymen. And as we can hardly imagine the framers of the Articles to have held that the authority to administer Christ's ordinances could emanate from anybody but Christ himself, so we must conclude that they acknowledged a divine origin to the authority by which Bishops, priests, and deacons alone administered the sacraments within the realm of England. At the same time I cannot help confessing, that it seems to me that a fear of offending the Non-Episcopal Reformed Communions on the Continent, or perhaps a generous and overpowering admiration for their manly struggles in defence of evangelical truth, prevented the framers of the English Articles from propounding their opinion in a more general form, so as to apply to the whole Catholic Church. We must neither construe their silence into an assertion of the lawful authority of all who may elsewhere be called according to the laws of each particular nation; nor, on the other hand, have we a right so to construe their assertion as to infer that it denies the possible lawfulness of any ministry but that which is Episcopal.

As, then, it appears to me that our Reformers, from some reason unknown to us, have avoided the solution of the general question—What is the Catholic Church, and have only fixed the marks by which it is to be distinguished, that is to say, which was and is in England, to be determined; we may consider the general question as left open by the Reformers, and proceed to consider what are the marks of the Church Catholic throughout the world. Circumstances, I think, prevented our Reformers from looking this question steadily in the face; circumstances now so imperiously require that we should steadily view it in all its bearings, and form, if we can, a decided scheme, by which we may be secured from latitudinarianism and from bigotry.

The first consideration, then, to which I would direct your attention is this—Who are we to consider as Christians? And I would certainly protest against answering, all who profess to receive the Bible as the word of God; or even all who profess to believe in the Catholic doctrine respecting God as revealed in His Son. For just as surely as I am convinced that Christ revealed a doctrine from heaven, so surely, and upon exactly the same evidence, am I convinced that he instituted a society for heaven; and consequently I believe that adherence to that society is as necessary for being a Christian, and of course for being in a state of salvation, as belief in the doctrine for the maintenance and dissemination of which the society was founded. And in holding and in maintaining

this conviction, we must not be startled by being tried with extreme cases. We know of no state of salvation except the kingdom of God; we know of no admission into that kingdom but by baptism; but then we must admit that this our knowledge, while it is the necessary limit of our assurance, is not to be taken as the necessary limit of the power and the grace of God. It is not for us to deny the possible extension of the divine mercy under any circumstances, except those of hardened wilful rebellion against God; nor, on the other hand, is it for us, in the hopes of attaining an imaginary liberality, to extend the promises of God beyond the conditions which He has himself propounded in the covenant of grace. We read, as revealed by anticipation, that "except a man be born of water and of the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." We read as a fact historically revealed, that after the Church had been organized, and had begun to exercise its saving functions upon a world lying in wickedness, those who were anxious to know what they must do to be saved, were directed "to be baptized, and wash away their sins, calling upon the name of the Lord."

I see not, therefore, how, when we speak of the Church Universal or Catholic, as a visible definable society, we can give to it any other definition than that which consists of all those who have been baptized, according to Christ's ordinance, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost—always supposing that by no public act, either of the local community or of the individual Christian, has the baptismal confession of faith been manifestly renounced.

But there is one caution to be observed here, which is not in general sufficiently attended to. Of any religious community or sect, it does not follow that it is a branch of Christ's Holy Catholic Church merely because all its members are baptized Christians, still holding ostensibly their baptismal faith, and thereby members of the Catholic Church. Take an easy illustration: Every regiment in the Queen's service is a branch of the British army; but if a thousand soldiers were to desert from different regiments, and form themselves into a new regiment, and elect and appoint officers for themselves, that would be a collection of soldiers, but it would not be a branch of the British army. And just in the same way, a member of our communion may with perfect consistency assert of any of the numerous sects around us, that he does not believe it to be a branch of the Catholic Church; and yet assert of all its members that they are individually members of the Catholic Church. And these two assertions he may make consistently, because he holds that their personal Catholicity arises, not from their connection with their sect, but from their baptism, whereby they were admitted, not into any branch or sect, but into the one Catholic Church of Christ.

As to determining whether certain sects and communions of professing Christians are to be considered as branches of the Catholic Church or not, we shall be very ill fitted to pronounce any judgment, unless we are fully possessed of certain facts and principles which lie at the root of the whole inquiry. We must first be sure that there was a Church of Christ—not merely that there was an organized body of believers in the doctrine revealed by Christ and his Apostles, but a body organized by Christ and the Spirit, for the purpose of maintaining and disseminating that belief. Then we must be satisfied that there never did happen—what may easily be conceived to have happened—a total failure in the continuous organization or succession of this Church. Then we must be convinced that wherever it has partially failed, it is impossible, without a new revelation, that human authority could institute a new succession of ministry possessing the rights and the commission of that which had died out. Finally, we must be convinced that the ministry of our own communion is no such recent figment of human ingenuity, but in reality and by uninterrupted transmission the ministry of Him who appointed "some Apostles, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

If, my reverend brethren, we can conscientiously and assuredly proceed so far in the affirmative proof of our own Catholicity, I see not how it is necessary, either for our security or comfort, that we should be able to settle the claims of all other religious communions. To a certain extent, the being a member of the Episcopal communion in this country, is a practical assent of the great body of our fellow Christians who are Non-Episcopal. For either we must hold, what I trust we all assure, that every man has a right to choose what form of ecclesiastical government he chooses; or else we must believe that there are reasons discernible in the revealed will of God why we, and of course all other Christians who possess the same revelation in common with ourselves, should be Episcopalians, and neither Presbyterians nor Independents: and it does appear to me very preposterous, that while the fact of our separation is viewed with complacency as a reasonable use of our Christian liberty, any attempt to give a reason for our separation—any attempt to show that we act, not upon caprice, but under a sense of necessary obligation—should be treated as illiberal, uncharitable, perhaps papistical. We ought in the present day especially, to be on our guard against being swayed in this matter by any charges of illiberality or want of charity. It is no doubt illiberal to deny the Catholicity of any body of professing Christians, merely because they are not the society to which we are attached: it is still more clearly uncharitable to have a *wish* that any religious society should be found unworthy of the rank which it has hitherto held. But when the question respecting the Catholicity of any particular denomination is necessarily brought forward, then charity and liberality have no more to do in the inquiry, than they have in the judicial question, whether a man be or be not a British subject. I may like a man very much, be sincerely desirous of doing him all the good in my power, esteem his character, and enjoy his society. But if I am called as a jurymen to say, whether he be or be not a British subject, all these feelings must go for nothing; I have nothing to consider but the law and the facts of the case.

Taking, then, for granted, that the Church Universal is the aggregate of all Catholic, National, or Provincial Churches, and that that is to be considered as the National Church in any country, which, without respect to Establishments or Non-Establishments, continues in the Apostles' doctrine by scriptural purity of creed, and in the Apostles' fellowship by unbroken continuity of succession, I shall now proceed to consider the power and authority of the Church. And this inquiry appears naturally to divide itself into two heads.—1. The authority of the Universal Church, and then the authority of Provincial or National Churches.

First, then, of the authority of the Universal Church. The doctrine of our Provincial Church on this head is contained in the 20th and 21st Articles. "Though the Church be a witness and keeper of Holy Writ, yet, as it ought to decree nothing against the same, so, besides the same, ought it not to enforce anything to be believed for necessity of salvation." And again, (in reference to General Councils, the only authoritative organs of the Universal Church.) "General Councils may not be gathered together without the commandment and will of Princes. And when they are gathered together, (forasmuch as they are an assembly of men, whereof all are not governed with the spirit and word of God,) they may err, and sometimes have

erred, even in things pertaining unto God; wherefore things ordained by them as necessary to salvation, have neither strength nor authority; unless it may be declared that they are taken out of Holy Scripture." This is certainly to rate the power of the Universal Church very low; and not improperly so; for what acknowledged power can there be, when there is no acknowledged officer to enforce it? In respect of power, the Universal Church is like the universal community of human kind. The former is "a witness and keeper of the revealed will of God;" the latter is a witness and keeper of his natural law, written upon the heart of man. As a nation which outrages the law of nature and nations may be expelled from the community of international relations; so that religious community which abandons the faith or discipline of the Catholic Church, may be cut off from its communion, either by the decree of a General Council, or by the separate consent of each Provincial Church. And this is all that we can say of the power of the Universal Church. For as in temporal politics we neither require nor admit of any universal Emperor, to whom the governments of France and England and Spain, and of all the other kingdoms and republics of the earth, must render an account; so neither in ecclesiastical discipline do we recognize any one earthly head, to whom all Diocesan Bishops and all Provincial Churches must be amenable.

But while we thus deny all authority of discipline to the Universal Church, we must be careful to acknowledge with our Article its high authority of testimony. And to what points it is that the Church bears witness? It is, first, to the truth; secondly, to the genuineness; and thirdly, to the meaning of Scripture. To form some notion of the importance of this testimony, it will be sufficient for us to ask ourselves, what we should have known of Christianity, if there had been no such society as the Church; if no authoritative care had been taken to multiply and correct the copies of Scripture; if we had never been instructed by a parent, never catechized by a pastor; if our sole acquaintance with Christianity had consisted in picking up a stray copy of the Bible, and making out from it a system of doctrine and morals to the best of our judgment, with no aid but its own internal evidence. For all the difference between what we thus should have been, and what we actually are, we are indebted to the Universal Church, to its testimony, guardianship, and exposition of the word of God; and if any are unthankful for this service, and overlook the agency of the Church in this matter, the most charitable opinion we can express of them is to say, that they know not what they do.

But we must reason very differently with respect to our own particular Church, by and through the operations of which alone it is that Christians in general can be put into communication with the Catholic Church. She has the authority of evidence; not equally with the Catholic Church; but in her proportion as a constituent branch of it, and as referring, in confirmation of her evidence, to the concurrent testimony of the whole body. But besides this, she has an authority of rule; because she is an organized body, and has a constitution, laws, and officers legitimately empowered to administer her affairs.

It is to be kept in mind, however, that the constitutional law of the Church Universal, and of every particular Church which is a true branch of it, was not enacted by the Church, but by its great Founder; and that all which any particular Church can rightfully do in the way of legislation, is to enact by-laws for the purpose of carrying out the great purposes of the original constitution. Thus, since Christ himself instituted a ministry, with which he promised to be always, even unto the end of the world; and has by his providential care maintained its continuity to the present day; I take it to be utterly *ultra vires* of any religious community, though embracing the whole population of a country, to establish a new order of ministry, having like powers and promises with that already existing. It may regulate this true ministry, so as to render it more effective for spiritual purposes, not than it was originally, but than it has become through neglect or abuse. For example, it may fix the age at which a candidate shall be admissible to Holy Orders, the course of study which he shall pursue, the forms according to which he shall conduct the public services, the peculiarities of dress which he shall be required to wear in his public ministrations or in ordinary life; and all such laws are good or bad, just as they tend to produce a pious, intelligent, orderly, and effective body of clergy, or the reverse. But whether they be good or bad, they are binding upon the conscience of every minister, not because he has signed to canonical obedience, for that signature implied the previous conviction of the duty of submission; but because the authority of the Church is in all such matters reasonably and rightfully superior to the personal opinion of individuals; and this leads me to consider the proper nature of canonical obedience, which I fear is not universally felt and acknowledged in its full force and character.

It is, I fear, imagined by some, that the Clergy are at liberty, without any breach of conscientious obligation, to violate the Canons, so long as these are not enforced by judicial proceedings and the sentence of a Bishop. But it ought to be considered that the authority of the Church like every other lawful authority, involves not merely a right to punish, but a right to prescribe; and that the duty of individuals correlative to this authority, must be the duty, not so much of submitting to merited reproof or punishment, as of adhering to the prescribed line of duty. I would, therefore, my reverend brethren, earnestly advise you to study carefully the Canons of our Church, and the rubrics of the Service-book; to consider every part of them as law imposed upon you by that society which God has appointed for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. If, indeed, there be any points which you see to be generally, and to have been for a long time neglected, you may then lawfully consider whether such neglect by the enacting body does not amount to a virtual repeal; and before attempting to introduce any such antiquated and unusual practice, however rubrical, I would advise you not only to study the temper and preparation of the congregation among which you minister, but also officially to consult your Bishop, part of whose weighty duties it is to take upon himself the responsibility in such matters.

I might go farther than this in estimating our duty to the Church, and might show that we owe to her a love and gratitude whereby true Church principle is elevated far above mere obedience, and takes its place in the same category with, but far above, the noble principles of patriotism and loyalty. Considering, however, the temper of the times, I fear, that in speaking thus of our relation and duties towards the Church, I may incur a charge that has been brought against certain associated theologians in England, that they put the Church in the place of Christ. This is of course spoken figuratively; and I do not think that extinguishing charges ought to be thus made in figurative terms; under which form they must always be subject to a direct denial. No English Theologian, or to speak more plainly, no Oxford Tractarian, so puts the Church in the place of Christ as to believe that the Church purchased his redemption; or that the Church hears and answers his prayers; or that the Church has any authority whatever over him, except what she derives by commission from Christ. If, indeed, any should maintain that this commission amounts to a full delegation of all Christ's regal powers, he makes the Church the lieutenant, the

lieutenant of Christ, and may justly and with a definite meaning be charged with putting the Church in his place. But such a charge is not true against any body of English Theologians; it is not true even against the general profession of the Roman communion. Something very like it may be found in the doctrine of the Jesuits, and of the Ultramontane of Italian school in that communion. Wherever it exists, it is a fond and idolatrous error.

We must look elsewhere, however, for the characteristics of High and Low in the Anglican Church; and among many minor points, which often attain in controversy a greater importance than they deserve, we shall find that the fundamental difference subsists in this, that it is the principle of Low Churchmen to consider personal religion and divine grace as acts intermediate between God and the soul of each believer; or, if mediate, by means variously chosen of God in each particular case. On the other hand, it is the characteristic belief of High Churchmen that God has appointed under Christ one great channel, the Church, through which solely his grace may with full assurance be expected to flow.

So far as this may be considered a fair view of the two opposing principles, there can be no doubt that the Scottish Episcopal Church has, during its whole existence, been characteristically High Church; and it is my conviction, that it would to a certain extent depart from the truth as it is in Jesus, if it were to change this its character. For though we know that Christ gave first the doctrine of his personal preaching, and then the sacrifice of his most precious life, and then the gift of his Holy Spirit; yet all this was not sufficient to complete the great work which he proposed to effect. In addition to it and in co-operation with all this, he instituted a society of human beings, and gave to it officers, "some Apostles, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." From this and similar texts, it is clear that Christ appointed officers to edify or build up a holy society, for the purpose of training upon earth those who were inheritors of the kingdom of heaven. This organized society we call the Church, and consider as a great mean of grace, and as the great depositary of other means of grace. We speak, indeed, of the Scriptures as a mean of grace whereby men may "be made wise unto salvation." We speak of private prayer as a mean of grace whereby "those who seek shall find, and those who knock shall have the door of heaven opened unto them." We thus acknowledge certain means of grace, intermediate between God and the heart of every one who knows and loves the truth as it is in Jesus. We are thus convinced; and it is a blessed conviction, that in the depth of a solitary dungeon, or in the segregation of a single believer among surrounding infidels, there is still open a plenteous channel for the communications of divine grace.

But equally with all this do we believe that Baptism is a mean of grace, "which also doth now save us;" that the Lord's Supper is a mean of grace, wherein those who "eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man have eternal life." We believe that social prayer is a mean of grace, whereby, "whenever two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ, he is in the midst of them." We thus believe that there are also social means of grace, to be found in and through the Church alike, which are, equally with the preceding class, generally necessary to salvation.

And thus, my reverend brethren, we may come to the satisfactory settlement of questions, which the controversies of the day are very painfully fixing upon serious minds. In the religious periodicals, and even in the ordinary newspapers, the supposed opposition of Protestantism to Catholicity is perpetually agitated; and those whose wish it is in quietness and peace to do their duty, are called up by the sovereign power of the press, to answer to the questions, whether they are Protestant or Catholic; that is to say, whether they are prepared to affirm, that our Reformation did not go far enough, or that it went too far. Now to such inquisitorial demands, let us, as members of Christ, and partakers of the liberty wherewith He maketh his people free, entirely decline to answer. Let us, in the first place, object to the authority of the examiner, and ask how it appears that the Great Head of the Church gave to the anonymous editors of newspapers and Magazines, or even to the public, for whom they profess to act, any authority to examine and judge the religious opinions of the faithful. Furthermore, let us object to the usual terms of the dilemma. I conceive we may be sound Churchmen and orthodox Christians, without believing that our Church has reformed too much or too little; without believing that the baptismal service is too Catholic, or that the Thirty-nine Articles are too Protestant. We may be good Churchmen, and yet have no wish to fraternize either with Popery or with Schism. We may believe in one Holy Catholic Apostolic Church, and neither believe that its centre is or ought to be Rome, nor yet that it comprehends among its branches every disorganized sect of professing Christians. We may be Catholics, and yet protest against usurpation in discipline, and idolatry in worship; we may be Protestants, and yet repudiate all ecclesiastical affinity with the heresies and the schisms that have made the name of Protestant offensive to many who are Protestants in deed and in truth.

But while we thus claim the full extent of our Christian liberty, and refuse to be hemmed in to the choice of one out of two exclusive extremes, I am willing to say that, so far as the choice of terms goes, Catholic is better fitted to designate our religion than Protestant. Protestantism is manifestly a negation; and to talk of Protestant doctrines, is to use words to which no precise ideas are to be attached. If a man says he believes all the articles and symbols of the Anglican, the Scottish Presbyterian, the Helvetic, the Lutheran, and the Dutch Churches, with all their differences and discrepancies, he says he knows not what. But even these do not constitute the whole of Protestantism. The Racialian Catechism is a Protestant symbol; the English Socinians are Protestant Dissenters; and may fairly claim a right of Christian fellowship with all those who ground their religion upon the broad basis of Protestantism.

It is right, however, to observe, that any such objections to the term *Protestant*, as a characteristic epithet for our religion, do not apply to the proper use of it as marking our accidental and forced position in reference to Rome. In this reference it has always been used by the most learned and Catholic Doctors of the Church of England; and it is only when the two terms are improperly placed in competition with one another, that we are, I think, bound to prefer the positive and essential to the merely negative and accidental term. And still more are we forced to this preference, when we find the negative term used with a positive meaning, and *Protestant* applied, not to mark protestation against Rome, but agreement with, or complacency towards, schismatical errors.

For Catholic, on the other hand, is a positive term. It implies that there is one, and but one Church of Christ. It does not imply that of all the separate communities in the world, one, and one only, is the entire body of Christ; but that none of them can be a branch of the true vine, except in virtue of its derivation from the original stock. It implies, that whereas the promises of Christ and the means of grace were committed to a definite organized society in the first century, and were to abide with it, and it only, for ever, that therefore, if there be such a thing as an existing covenant between God and man, this society