

ably connected ; but, if I read Scripture aright, it was sin and not suffering which engaged his first thought. He "gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works."

Think you that God sets more store upon sacraments and outward forms than he does upon righteousness? Why, these things are but the machinery employed by God in order to deliver men from sin. They are the means,—righteousness is the end. What a suicidal course, therefore, to sacrifice the latter for the former. As well destroy the house in order to embellish the scaffolding! What a perversion of the whole thought and plan of God! Resort to sin in order to advance the Church of God ; as though that Church had not been called into existence for the express purpose of waging war against sin. Resort to sin in order to save men's souls! As though deliverance from suffering were the only thing to be thought of, as though salvation were of more importance than justification, as though a salvation which did not imply deliverance from sin were worth having or would ever take a soul to heaven. Resort to sin in order to advance the Kingdom of God! What is the Kingdom of God anyhow? Is it not essentially righteousness and truth, and any departure from this, no matter for what end proposed, is a direct blow at the pillars of His throne.

We should be extremely glad were the tendency referred to found only in the instances mentioned. We should rejoice indeed were we able to assert that Protestantism had never felt its blighting influence. Facts, however, are to the contrary. This much we can say that true Protestantism is right in principle on this matter. Her standards cannot be charged with exalting sacrifice above mercy. Where it is done in practice it is due to the natural tendency of the human heart despite pure principle. With Rome the error is inwrought with the system. This makes all the difference in the world between the two cases.

But wherein you ask have Protestants transgressed? What of our friend, for example, who thinks more of apostolic succession than of apostolic likeness ; who abominates dissent more than he does unrighteousness ; who takes greater comfort from the fact that he belongs to the true church than that he possesses the spirit of Christ, and who places more reliance for salvation upon baptism, confirmation and the holy communion than upon aught else.