

del of "the divine origin of episcopacy," and shooting from its ramparts against their fellow-Christians and ministers arrows of "apostolical succession."

"Q. What do you mean by the Church of England?"

"A. By the Church of England I mean the Church of Christ, as it is established by the laws of England."

In this answer does the Compiler mean there is *no other Christian Church in England* than the one which is established by law? If so, to the correctness of the assumption we demur *in toto*. But if he only mean that the Church of England is that *part* of the Church of Christ which is established by the laws of the land; then all the difference between it and other true churches is,—the Church of England is that part of the Christian Church *established by law*,—other true churches are that part of the Church of Christ freely and fully *tolerated* and *sanctioned* by law!

"Q. Is the Church of England a true Church?"

"A. Yes: because the *word of God* is preached in it, and the Sacraments are *duly* administered by persons *rightly* ordained."

Suppose all this to be true: yet other churches are true churches, for the same reason, because the word of God is preached in them and the sacraments are duly administered by persons *rightly* ordained.

"Q. Is it also a legal Church?"

"A. Yes: because it is established by law."

This has been already shown to have no weight in the argument. A legal church may not be a true church: a true church may not be a legal church. The laws of England, whilst they established one particular church as the State-Church, extends the shield of its *protection* to all others.

"Q. Is it not our duty to conform to the laws of our country?"

"A. Yes. St. Paul says, 'Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers:' (Rom. xiii. 1) and St. Peter bids us to submit to every ordinance of man for the 'Lord's sake.' (1 Pet. ii. 13.)

Having already shown that the Church of England, as to its claims of being a "true" church, stands precisely on the same footing as *other true* churches, the only argument to be disposed of in favour of absolute conformity to it, is the one derived from its *legal establishment*. On this topic some remarks have been made; but as this is a "strong hold," a few more may be added. To prove then that all British subjects are obliged to conform to the Establishment, the endeavour is made to show, that, as the Scriptures require obedience to civil Governors, and as the Church of England is established by law, so therefore it becomes the *bounden duty* of all of whatever profession to become members of the Establishment, no allowance being made for partialities or preferences, or dictates of conscience to the contrary. Now although we do think it not repugnant to the spirit of the Bible for kings and governments, but the positive duty of such, to make provision for the supply of the spiritual wants of their people—and in this view we are not hostile but friendly to the Church of England as an Established Church—yet this is to be done with due

regard to the judgments, consciences, and religious rights and privileges of all other Christian Societies whose tenets are not subversive of the civil government,—otherwise the Civil Power is entrenching upon the prerogatives of Deity. A religious establishment, without *full toleration*—we dislike the word "*toleration*," but use it for want of a better—for all sincere, genuine Christians to worship God in the way agreeable to conscience, has no sanction from SACRED WRIT—is based on narrow, unchristian principles—and calculated to alienate respect and affection. No "Power" is scripturally authorized to tyrannize over the consciences of its subjects and dictate to them in matters of religion. These are affairs between them and their MAKER. But Dr. Burgess claims for the Church of England an *unqualified* conformity, because it is established by law—this claim being confirmed, as he supposes, by the Scriptures *previously* quoted. To show that we do not mistake or misrepresent his views, we quote the two next questions with their answers.

"Q. Is it not then your duty to conform to the Established Church?"

"A. Yes."

"Q. Why?"

"A. Because it is a true Church *established by law*; and because: "the powers that be," *by whom it is established*, "are ordained of God." (Rom. xiii. 1.)

This is plausible but not sound. To sustain the inference the premises must be unquestionably true. The argument is this—"The powers that be," being ordained of God, must be obeyed.—But the "powers that be" in England have established the English Church—Therefore it is the *duty* of all British subjects to conform to the Church of England.

"The powers that be" must be obeyed. *Obeyed in what?* Here the question rests. They cannot scripturally bind our conscience or the conscience of any other man. "The powers that *were*" in the days of the Apostles were as much "ordained of God," as are those of the present time. Whilst therefore the Apostles commanded Christians as well as others to "be subject unto the higher power," it was, from the *very nature of the case*, in things pertaining to their civil office, as the RULERS were *Pagan* and not *Christian*. Hence St. Paul exhorts,—"*Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour;*" (Rom. xiii. 7.) and St. Peter,—"*Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king as supreme; or unto governors as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men,*" &c. (1 Pet. ii. 13—15.) And yet shall we be told that had the "powers that then *were*" established that Christians should *conform to the religion of the State*, that is, to *Idolatry*, the passages in question would have sanctioned or enforced *obedience* as a "*duty*?" No. In a case like this, had their advice been solicited, the Apostles, doubtless, would have said,—In all matters *civil*, tending to the support and well-being of the State, you

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