

P R E F A C E .

THE REV.'D MR. COSTER has lately circulated throughout my Parish, and for aught I know, through other parts of the Diocese, a printed paper, entitled "The Companion to the Prayer Book defended against the unfounded objections of the Rev. Dr. I. W. D. Gray." The first question that presents itself is, *How did Mr. Coster become possessed of those objections?* This is a point that requires some explanation. By some unusual process, differing certainly from the ordinary routine of conventional practice, a portion of my private correspondence with the Lord Bishop of the Diocese has found its way into Mr. Coster's possession, and has forthwith been made the basis of a personal attack upon me, through the medium of the Press. Had the correspondence been a public one, even in that case, it would have been unfair for a third party to interpose, and throw the weight of his opinions into the scale, until it had reached its termination. But, when private letters, instead of the public Press, had been the channels of communication, and while the interchange of those letters was still pending, for a gentleman, unchallenged, uninvited, unauthorized, as far as it yet appears, to enter the arena, and bringing with him a fragment of the correspondence on one side of the question, to undertake the refutation of it before the public, does certainly, in some measure, set at defiance the courtesies of the social compact. I may be mistaken, but I am under the strong impression that, throughout society, in any of its gradations, a candid and intelligent person could scarcely be found, whose judgment would not pronounce upon such a proceeding the verdict of condemnation.

One simple fact, that shows the impropriety of this course, is, that a few brief quotations in my letter are, without the slightest hint as to the circumstances under which they were made by me, held up to public view as unfair extracts. The correspondence which embodied them arose in consequence of a request, on the part of the Lord Bishop, to be referred to the names of Authors, and to passages in their Works, which had been thought objectionable. In compliance with that request, Books were named, passages referred