

ached word, which
of Romo in Eng-
larities—Latimer,
own in heaven than
it regard to parish
he power of dark-
ugh the fears of
rown and secular
the whole country,
Queen Elizabeth,
aluo of ordinances
reat apostasy was
erence of God may
erily and publicly
ould have to say
nmersed in and

godly men in the
the consequence
forfeiture by the
and that not on
em.

heart, the godly
Establishment;
sentiment, will
Christ, because
ted, men whom
eadly error. A
whose teaching
nation, so far as
y can he not do
own subscription
or of the sheep
ss the parochial
nd comfort the
is "a wolf in
souls at heart,
gyman cannot,
those whom it
f Christ. No
t be so owned,
church? Let
; more than a

the professing
chial arrange-
ministry there
ment by con-
ection seek to
erence to Old
Independent
affairs: the

Wesleyan by the principles of expediency, because the founder of the sect so arranged it, without any reference to Scripture at all.

In this state of things, apart from all questions of corruption, it will at once be perceived that the authority of *man* is paramount, and that the Church is viewed, practically, as one in common with the various existing institutions, which are moulded, by his plastic hand, according to the dictates of his will. But how utterly alien is this from the scriptural idea of the Church being "*buildd together for an habitation of God through the Spirit,*" where a common relationship to Christ gives the common bond of union to its several members, and where the Spirit's presence is the source, and power, and guiding energy, of its Christ-appointed ministries!

My reference to these things is with no pleasurable feelings; but they must needs be pointed out by the hand that would indicate the pathway of God's people in an evil day; because it is in the midst of these evils that their path is found.

The radical defect of both the Establishment and Dissent is the absence of the recognition of that which the New Testament emphatically calls *the Church*. I do not deny that there may be a reference to "the visible and invisible Church;" (a poor substitute for "the epistle of Christ, known and read of all men;") but I assert that there is the entire absence of the idea of what the Church is, in its essential nature as the body of Christ, and of its distinctive endowment by the presence of the Holy Ghost. And by consequence there is the absence of all practical recognition of the privileges and responsibilities of believers, as connected with that "one body and one Spirit."

But the nature of the Church and the unity of the Church must be seen, if the positive ground of a Christian in these days is to be seen; and if there is to be any true standard before the mind by which to judge what is, and what is not, consistent with the unspeakable grace of God, in which believers are set; consistent with the blessed and wondrous ends for which Christ died.

This—may God's children believe it!—is no question of expediency, to be settled according to one's views of the relative claims of different existing systems. It is not a question between Evangelicals and Puseyites; of Church and Dissent; of the appointment of ministers and their sustainment. But it is a question about the existence of the Church as the body of Christ, and of the liberty and functions of God's blessed Spirit as present in the Church, and of the authority and sufficiency of the Scriptures for the guidance of believers according to the mind of Christ as long as the Church is continued here on earth.

Here Dissent is equally at fault with the Establishment.

Dissent in general, and especially independency, apart from its political character, and increasing advocacy of worldliness, fails in even the recognition of the Church in its unity, at least as to anything to do with earth. In heaven it cannot be questioned. But there will be no need of "endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" there. The unity, however, spoken of in Eph. iv, "one body and one Spirit," a unity connected with the earth, however it may be perfected in heaven, has neither place nor consideration in the system of independency or congregationalism. It exists neither in fact nor in desire. I do not assert that individuals may not recognize and desire it; but if I look at the system, individual churches, or federations of churches, are assumed to answer every exigency of Scripture on this point.

However, in the New Testament, it is unquestionable, there is the Church in its unity, as presented in Paul's Epistles, especially in Ephesians and Colos-