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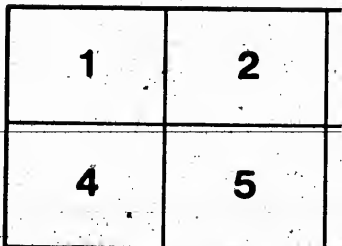
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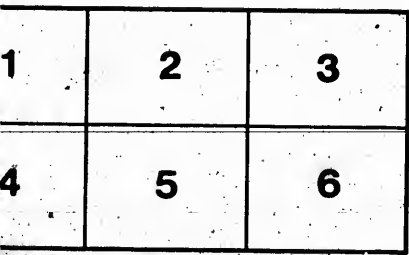
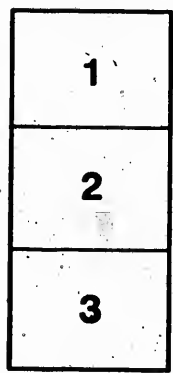
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Plain Explanations.—No. 1.

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH NOT  
ROMANIZING.

MY DEAR PARISHIONERS,

There is no question that the Book of Common Prayer, which is the mouth-piece of the English Church, does, when understood with straightforward English honesty, evidently contain many doctrines that, by a large number of Protestants, are looked upon as tending to Romanism; and hence, very naturally, those of the Clergy, who conscientiously endeavour to train their flocks in *all* the truths that it teaches, are very apt to be regarded as being themselves semi-papists; and that, alas, not only by dissenters, but by those also of their brethren who would fain explain away certain of the obvious principles of their own Church.

It is my purpose, therefore, in a few little tracts, to offer you, my friends, some "plain explanations" concerning the doctrines which are thus misunderstood. I shall, then, in this one first endeavour to show the error of imagining *that because the Church of England holds certain great truths in common with Rome, she has therefore any sympathy with her unhappy corruptions.*

Toronto: H. ROWSELL. London: TAYLOR & WILSON.  
3 cents each, or 25 cents per doz.

1st. It would be very strange if Rome and ourselves had not much in common, both in doctrine and practice, considering our common origin and common Christianity. Until between three and four hundred years ago the Western Church, comprising nearly the whole of the then civilised portion of Europe, was *one*, having come down in unbroken succession and unity from Apostolic days; and though during the latter part of that time sadly overlaid with superstition, and unrighteously oppressed by the Bishop of Rome, the promise of God had not failed; the gates of hell had not prevailed against her; she still retained all the great doctrines of the Gospel, with its Ordinances, Sacraments and Priesthood.

About the year 1534, however, the English Church asserted her Christian liberty, and refused any longer to submit to the usurpations of the Pope, or Bishop of Rome, and thence proceeded gradually to put away those errors and corruptions into which, like the rest of the great European Catholic Church, she had fallen. Still, seeing that the Church, even during her darkest days, had never lost the cardinal principles of the Gospel, it must needs be, thank God, that in reforming her much more would be retained than was put away; otherwise, in ceasing to be Papal, she would also have ceased to be Christian! The very term "Reformation," as correctly applied to the return of the Church of England and Ireland to more primitive purity and practice, shows that it was a cleansing, not a creation, and that, consequently, her fundamental doctrines and worship were the same after as before. With the Protestant communities of Scotland and the Continent of Europe it was unhappily otherwise; they were rather new

creations than reformations; as they lost the proper Apostolic succession of the three-fold ministry, and in many other important particulars departed from the faith and practice of the Primitive Church.

We thus plainly see that it is very absurd to charge the Anglican Church with having any fondness for the errors of Rome, simply because she holds many Gospel doctrines, and shares many primitive usages, in common with that Church.

2dly. The true reason why our Reformed Branch of Christ's Holy Catholic Church, as represented by her Prayer-Book, is accused of being still infected with Papal error, is undoubtedly that she retains so much of primitive faith and pious usage which has been unhappily lost, or still more unhappily repudiated, by the great body of Protestant Dissenters.

We owe eternal gratitude to the Great Head of the Church, that during the progress of the Anglican Reformation its leaders were, to a marvellous extent, preserved from the common snare of reformers, self-sufficiency and mere human conceits, by their humble and holy adherence to the Written Word as it was *understood and taught* in the purest ages of the Church; thus, whatever doctrine or practice they found existing in the English Church previous to the Reformation that agreed in principle thereto, *that* they sought to retain—content with endeavouring to free it from any abuse which the ignorance or fraud of later ages had connected with it. Happy would it have been had these holy and rational principles guided all who have at various times undertaken to oppose theological or ecclesiastical error. How many would it have saved from falling into the common weakness of flying from one extreme of error only to



rush into its opposite? Thus, at an early day in the Papal controversy, many Protestants seem to have fancied that the further they got from the Church of Rome the nearer they must necessarily be to heaven; and unfortunately they have not lacked followers, almost innumerable, to the present hour. Hence, constituting their own crude interpretations of Holy Scripture, often made in ignorance, pride, passion, or prejudice, their only guide, to the despising of those counsels of the Church, even in her purity, through which Christ chiefly promised to enlighten his people, little marvel is it that such persons should fall into greivous error, and in this their unwise self-sufficiency denounce those who, with humble distrust of themselves, cleave to the teaching and practices of that Holy Primitive Church, which must needs be the best interpreter of that Sacred Volume which she herself first selected and then handed down to us.

The Church of England mercifully escaped this Puritanic bitterness, and having no wish with Pharisaic pride unnecessarily to widen the breach between herself and her erring sister, wisely and piously contented herself with putting away those things concerning the unhallowed novelty of which the Bible and a pure Catholic antiquity left no doubt. Such were the papal supremacy,—the adoration of the blessed Virgin,—the worship of Saints,—transubstantiation,—the denial of the cup to the laity,—the doctrine of purgatory, with its natural consequence, masses for the dead,—indulgences,—works of supererogation,—justification by works, as opposed to faith,—extreme unction,—the celibacy of the clergy, &c., &c. Thus far the great body of Protestant Christians were agreed; but

when our Anglican Reformers refused to go beyond Gospel principles as understood by the Primitive Church, the rest unhappily pushed on with a carnal impetuosity that cut them off from the Catholic Church, separated those who ought to have been chief friends, brought dishonour upon the Reformed Church of Christ, and has done more to prevent the spread of "Evangelical truth and Apostolic order" than all the machinations of Rome could ever have accomplished.

Acting thus in a spirit of holy conservatism, the Church of England and Ireland did undoubtedly retain—on the sure warranty of inspiration and primitive belief—many doctrines which are also held, with more or less purity, by the Church of Rome; but which are repudiated, some by a portion, others by all, of the Protestant sects home and abroad. Thus our Prayer Book teaches us to believe in One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Visible Church,—an Apostolically-descended Three-fold Ministry,—Priestly absolution and blessing,—the real, though not corporeal or carnal presence of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Communion,—Baptismal Regeneration and Election,—Infant Baptism,—the real possibility of salvation to every one of the human race,—and the awful possibility that Christians after "God hath vouchsafed to regenerate them—by water and the Holy Ghost, and hath given unto them forgiveness of all their sins," may fall foully, yea finally, &c., &c. Now as a sort of defence of their own unbelief in these important truths, Protestant dissenters, very naturally, though not very justly, as we shall see, charge the Church with being semi-popish. While with respect to many of our Clergy themselves, candour obliges me to confess, that they first endeavor to fritter away

the plain meaning of their own Prayer Book, and then join the dissenters in accusing those of their brethren who are more faithful to its obvious teaching than themselves, of being unsound in the faith; and yet, my friends, every such clergyman, at his ordination, made a solemn vow before God and His Church, that he would teach according to the plain grammatical sense of the Book of Common Prayer.

There is, moreover, great disingenuousness in stigmatising the doctrines alluded to, as being peculiarly Romish, seeing that they are also held by the Greek Church, and the principal Christian denominations of the East. Hence, however mistakenly conscientious individuals may be, in their unhappy rejection of these very important articles of our holy religion, it is not right to charge either the Church, or any of her clergy, with having a tendency to embrace papal corruption, because they hold and teach doctrines which are received not by Rome only, but by the entire Apostolic Catholic Church, east and west, all over the world, and have been so from the beginning. It is further a "false witness," unworthy of any one bearing the name of Christ, to accuse those of being papists at heart who are ever the most prompt, according to their ordination vows, "with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's word," whether the same originate in Romanism or Calvinism—the two great dangers of our times!

As for the innocent and reverential usages, of turning to the *east* in prayer, where is placed our Altar-Table, where, as respects us, Christ dwelt, and from whence we look for His return,—of bowing at the name of Jesus, for which we have such abundant Scripture warrant,—of glorying in the cross as the token of infinite love, and the emblem of our salva-

tion, and adorning our Churches at Christmas and Easter, both acts of loving reverence common to our holy faith from the earliest ages,—let no one, I say, who would not be smiled at for his ignorance, or avoided for his duplicity, oppose them on the ground that they are peculiarly Romish, since they have been practised by the Church, all over the world, from the days of her primitive simplicity.

The unscrupulous character of the charges which are brought against those of the clergy who faithfully adhere to the teaching of the Church, even in those doctrines which she holds in common with the Church of Rome, is apparent from this, that the dissenters, with almost one consent, agree in declaring that the doctrines in question are clearly taught in the Prayer Book, and state this as the very reason of their dissent from the Church; how unfair, then, to blame the clergy for faithfully teaching what their Prayer Book so plainly sets forth? When they cease to believe, which God forbid! that the Prayer Book is a faithful exponent of the Bible, they ought as honest men to cease to serve at the Altars of the Church. But let them not be blamed so long as they remain clergymen of the Church of England, for faithfully teaching *all* that the Prayer Book teaches.

I have thus shown, my dear friends, that neither the Church of England nor those of her clergy who fearlessly follow her entire teaching, can truthfully be charged with Romanism; and now will you not join me in saying, God forbid that we should hold back one particle of gospel truth, or abate one jot of reverential treatment of holy things, because Rome has corrupted the one, and made the others the occasion of superstition?

Your faithful friend and pastor,

A. T.

N. B.—I purpose, (D. V.,)—should the sale of this warrant my continuing the series,—that the next of these “Plain explanations” shall be on the “Scriptural Character of the Anglican Doctrine of Priestly Absolution and Blessing.”

PARIS, C. W., *Whitsuntide*, 1862.



