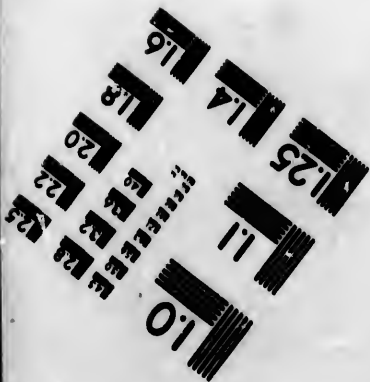
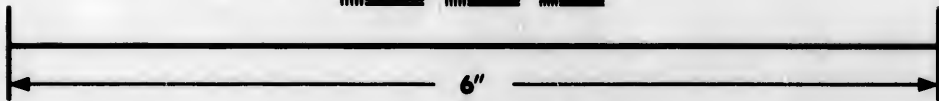
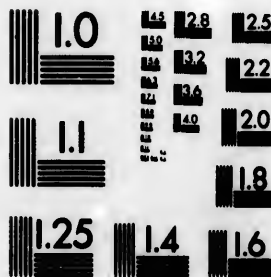


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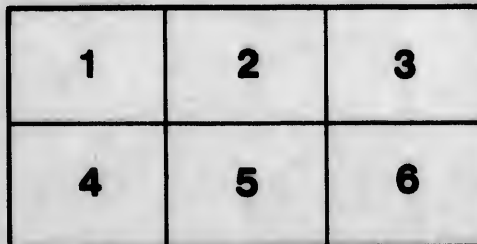
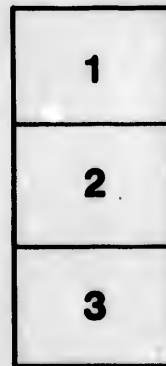
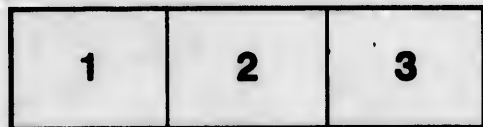
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UNPOPULARITY OF RELIGIOUS TRUTH.

BY THE

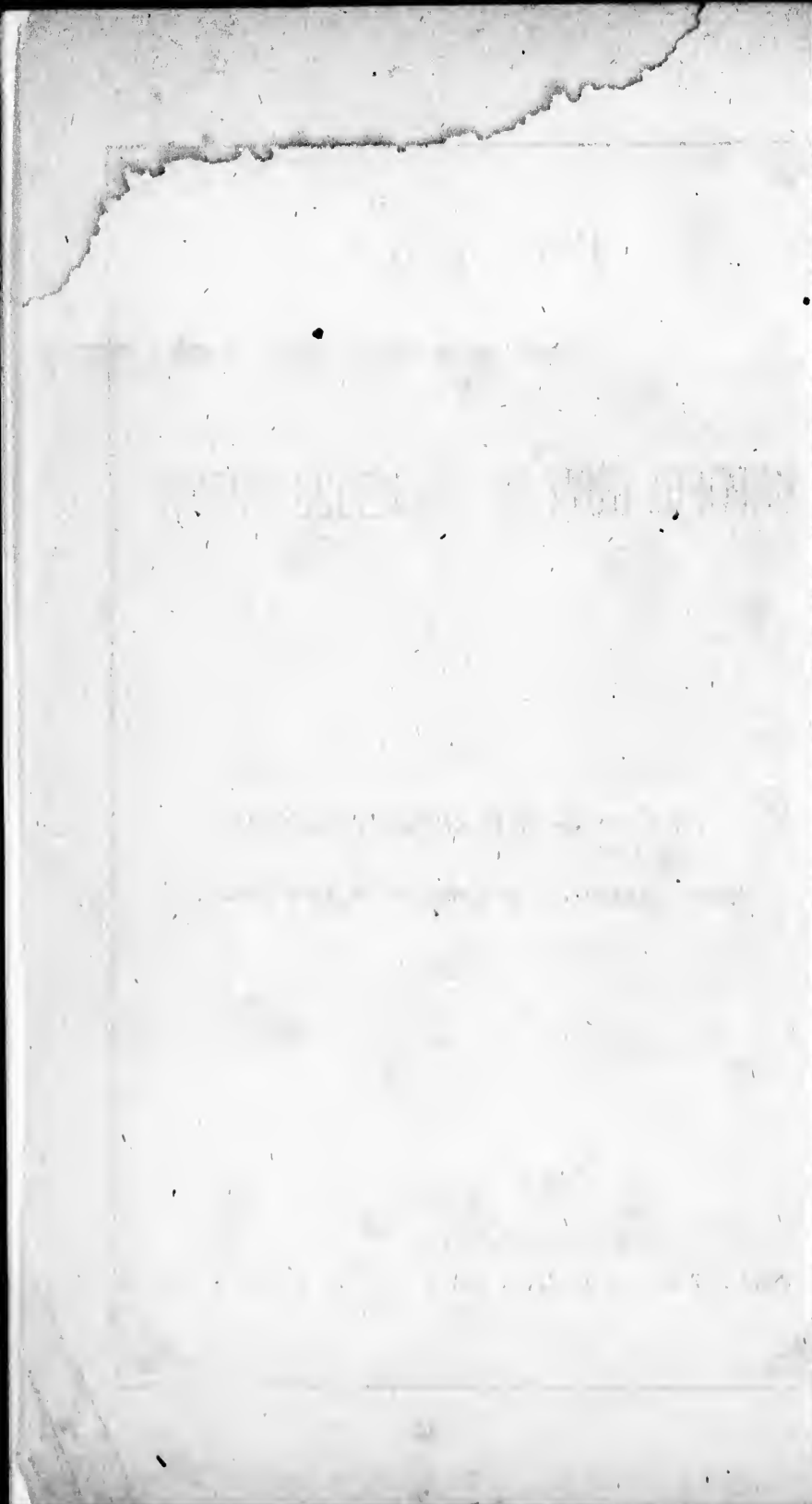
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Assistant Minister of the Church of the Holy Trinity.

TORONTO:

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1857.



PAPERS

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1857.

ERRATA.

Page 4 (Preface), fifth line from top, for *time* read *line*.

Page 40, seventh line from bottom, omit the comma after the word *commenced*.

Page 79, fifth line from bottom, for *destructive* read *distinctive*.

Page 82, seventh line from top, for *destructive* read *distinctive*.

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P R E F A C E .

THE following Papers appeared some two years ago in the editorial columns of "The Church."

They professed to be written for that paper, and notwithstanding their position they had the initials of the writer attached.

This was done for two reasons, first, because it was certain they would excite (as they did) considerable animadversion, and the writer wished the responsibility to rest on the proper shoulders; and secondly, because without this measure he might have obtained among those of his friends who would have recognized his mode of thought and expression, the reputation of being Editor of the

paper named, a reputation for which there would have been no ground, and which, therefore, he wished to avoid.

At the suggestion of several friends, and because he finds in parochial experience that the time of argument taken is often striking and effective, he has now put them into a more permanent form, hoping that in their proper place they may not be without some use in the promotion of religious truth.

W. S. D.

DIOCESE OF TORONTO,
August, 1857.

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PAPERS

ON THE

UNPOPULARITY OF RELIGIOUS TRUTH.



I.

THE OLD TESTAMENT.

CONTROVERSY and strife must ever be distasteful to the truly Christian mind, in consequence of its tendency to excite in our fallen hearts a feeling of alienation from our brethren.

Error, however, is worse than controversy, and its unhappy prevalence may make it necessary for the friends of truth to "*contend* for the Faith once delivered to the Saints."

Under such circumstances, it only remains that those who enter upon it should fulfil their duty in no harsh and unloving spirit—keeping back, indeed, no statement however severe, which they regard as true, but making it in sorrow rather than in anger, and giving, whenever possible to those who oppose themselves, that full credit for per-

fect honesty which we claim upon our own behalf. We hold those much calumniated views which are known as the distinctive principles of the Church to be the truth of God—and we claim for this conviction that credit for perfect sincerity which we are prepared to accord to those who are ready to denounce them as erroneous and corrupt.

The sincerity of this conviction leads necessarily and irresistibly to the additional conclusion, that whatever is inconsistent with those principles must therefore be false—that what is false must be pernicious—that what is pernicious must be opposed.

Hence, it is in no spirit of railing or partizanship that we enter upon the following series of papers, but for the love of what we earnestly believe to be the *truth*. The direct evidence of that truth has been brought forward in books which we firmly believe it to be unanswered and unanswerable, and it is only to an auxiliary line of argument to which we would direct our feeble efforts—a line of argument which we have no desire to exalt out of its proper place, but which we regard as being borne out by very remarkable circumstances, and which has been suggested to our mind by the undeniable fact of the unpopularity of our principles among the mass.

We purpose therefore to lay down two great and generally acknowledged principles, as criteria by which to distinguish scriptural truth from human error. We think of tracing these principles in their application to the more prominent of those occasions during the past when there has been a vehement struggle between God's truth and man's corruption; and finally, we purpose to show that when brought to bear upon the present controversy be-

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tween Church principles and their opposite, they triumphantly vindicate the truth of the views which we advocate, while they convict of error the opinions of those who, alas, although our brethren, have become our adversaries.

The two great principles of which we speak are the following:—

I. That a defective or erroneous faith, while leading necessarily to a defective or erroneous practice, is ever *popular* among the multitude.

II. That the unadulterated and unmutated truth in the things of God has always excited the bitter opposition of the human heart.

We address ourselves on the present occasion to a brief review of some of those struggles between truth and error with which we meet in the writings of the Old Testament.

Passing over many minor instances which might easily be mentioned—as Noah, who though a preacher of righteousness to the world before the flood, was rejected in that character and regarded as a dreamer; and Lot, who though he declared God's truth to the men of Sodom, seemed to them as one that mocked,—let us come to Moses, who was commissioned from on high to deliver the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage and to declare unto them the Divine will, and whose commission was authenticated by the most stupendous miracles.

Notwithstanding those miracles we find that his testimony excited the opposition not only of Pharaoh but of his *own people*. In numberless instances they disbelieved his words, and his commands were deliberately disobeyed. The most striking event of the kind was, no doubt, the rebellion of Korah and his company, and to that we will direct our attention for a few moments.

It was according to the revealed will of the God of Israel that Moses and Aaron should exclusively rule over His ancient Church. He required the members thereof to acknowledge their authority and obey their word. Now this exclusive claim was a positive unmutilated truth; and yet it had the effect which Divine truth always has—it excited the violent opposition of the people generally, and the *leaders* in that opposition consisted of a few deluded *Ministers* of the Jewish faith. They gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy every one of them, and the Lord is among them. Wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?

They flattered the laity with the idea that being holy and having the Lord dwelling among them, they were under no obligation to be ruled and instructed by Moses and Aaron, but were fully competent to be their own governors.

This idea, we *know* was an erroneous one, and we see that it had two results; it led, 1st, to erroneous, nay, sinful practice, amounting to direct rebellion against the Lord; and, 2nd, it was extremely popular among the mass of the people, almost the whole of whom were infected by this error.

Again: let us look to the case of Elijah. He was called to the prophetic office when spiritual darkness covered the land and gross darkness the people. We know positively that he came with messages of pure and unmutilated *truth* from God to his ancient, but, at that time, corrupt Church, and we know as positively that it

had the usual effect of truth—it stirred up bitter opposition—he was regarded as “a troubler of Israel,” and they sought earnestly to take away his life. As for the people themselves, they had fallen into idolatry. Their erroneous faith brought forth its usual fruit of a corrupt practice, and this erroneous faith and practice was so popular among the people, that among the many ten thousands of Israel the prophet esteemed himself the last and only worshipper of the true God, while the allsearching eye of that God Himself saw but seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.

Passing over many other instances that might be adduced, let us turn our thoughts to the great struggle which in the days of Jeremiah took place between the opposing principles of truth and error.

Notwithstanding the many provocations of His ancient Church, God was unwilling to forsake it utterly; and though in the days of this prophet it had become fearfully corrupt and idolatrous, He mercifully sent Jeremiah to call both king and priests and people to repentance, to warn them of impending judgments, and to assure them that unless they broke off their sins by righteousness, suffering, captivity and death would be the certain consequence. That this was most true we know by the result, which came to pass in exact conformity with the prophecies delivered.

Now in what manner was this certain *truth* received? We have only to turn to the Prophet's writings, to see that it produced the inevitable fruits of truth upon communities in error, viz., opposition and bitter persecution. “O Lord, I am in derision daily, every one *mocketh* me :

for since I spake, the word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me and a *derision* daily." (Jer. xx. 7, 8.) But not only had he to contend against scoffing and ridicule, but when Pashur, the *priest*, who was also chief governor over the house of the Lord, heard that Jeremiah prophesied these things, he smote him and put him in the stocks that were in the high gate of Benjamin, which was by the house of the Lord." (xx.) Now it came to pass that when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that the Lord commanded him to speak unto the people, that the *priests* and the *prophets* and *all* the people took him, saying, "thou shalt surely die:" and though he escaped death at that time, yet was he imprisoned and persecuted with much severity, throughout his whole life.

While God's solemn truth, declared (at the risk of his life) by his commissioned servant, excited this virulent opposition, the people, misled by some deluded priests, had adopted an erroneous belief, which, as a matter of course, brought forth erroneous and wicked practices—even rebellion against the Divine will—and yet these dangerous errors in belief and practice were (as is ever the case) popular among "the priests and prophets and ALL the people."

Further reference to the former dispensation is unnecessary, for St. Stephen appealing to the Jews of his own days, asks, without the possibility of reply. "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?" We trust that we have sufficiently proved, from the Old Testament that in the chief struggles between truth and error, which are there narrated, the principles which we have laid down are, in their proper place, unfailing criteria to

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enable us to judge between the divine will and human mistakes. We find the truth maintained by a few, yet opposed, scoffed at and persecuted, by the many. We observe error, taught by some deluded priests, embraced by and popular among the great majority of the people, and bringing forth in them the defective and erroneous practice which is the necessary result of a defective and erroneous faith.

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II.

THE NEW TESTAMENT.

HAVING traced the application of the principles originally laid down, to those struggles between truth and error which are narrated in the Old Testament, we now come to the consideration of those events in the New Testament from which the same unerring principles may be evolved.

The ingrained opposition of the human heart to the truth of God was never so awfully manifested as when the Eternal Word took flesh and came unto His own, and yet His own received Him not.

Although His whole character was marked by a spirit of such love and gentleness and tender sympathy as the world till then had never dreamt of—although He spoke concerning truth as *man* had never spoken—and though His holy teachings were authenticated by continual and acknowledged miracles of love and mercy—yet the scornful cry of the multitude (incited by some of the chief priests) with this. “He is a Samaritan and hath a devil: why hear ye Him.”

To trace the various and bitter persecutions of our blessed Lord, ending in an ignominious death, will of course be unnecessary, because they are undisputed; but there are two facts connected with them to which we desire to direct attention, because they appear to be frequently overlooked.

The facts to which we allude are these, first, that the persecutions and sufferings of our Lord were inflicted upon Him *by the ministers and members of the Church of God* ; and second, that the cause or reason of their *bitter opposition was owing to the circumstance that He declared the popular interpretation of Holy Scriptures, which almost universally prevailed among them, to be erroneous and corrupt.

It seems to us important that we should realize the first of these facts ; for people are frequently inclined, without sufficiently considering the difference of their position, to class the Jews and the Heathen together, as bitter and unrelenting enemies of Christ and His religion, from whom little but persecution could be expected.

At the time however when our Lord was so perseveringly persecuted, His church was not founded in that form which it was afterwards to assume. The Scribes and Pharisees sat in Moses' seat, and had therefore, according to our Saviour's express words, a divine claim to the obedience of the people. In the temple the worship which God required was constantly offered up and regularly attended by our Lord Himself. In their synagogues, the holy scriptures were read every Sabbath day, and those scriptures clearly testified of the Messiah as one who should come in lowly guise and be a man of many sorrows.

The teachers of these people gave incredible pains to the study of the scriptures ; and we should never have expected that when He, to whom those scriptures bore such striking witness, came to these, His own people, that they should not only have rejected, but have persecuted Him.

Hence it is plain that the Church of God itself may be o possessed by human error as to persecute that very truth

of which she is nevertheless (as under the Jewish dispensation) the divinely appointed "keeper."

The second fact which accounts for this persecuting spirit is also an instructive one. The Jewish church,—in her scriptures, sacrifices and worship,—*kept* the truth; but her priests and people *misinterpreted* it, because they chose to explain it according to their own tradition, which virtually made it of none effect. The scriptures spoke of the Messiah as first suffering, and then as conquering and triumphant. It was humbling to their national pride to think of His coming in low estate. It was flattering and pleasant to their self-love to think of His coming in temporal majesty, as a mighty monarch of the earth, who should subdue their enemies and exalt their nation to power and prominence. They consequently were not unwilling to forget those solemn words which foretold the Messiah's sufferings; and, looking upon the prophecies of His spiritual conquests as referring to temporal victories, they adopted a most erroneous faith upon the subject, which, while necessarily bringing forth in their lives the fruit of a most erroneous and unholy practice, was nevertheless highly *popular* among both priests and people.

While thus confident that "they knew the law," there suddenly appeared One of lowly garb and station, who, while of holy life and wielding a supernatural power, boldly asserted that the popular belief was *wrong*, and claimed to be the true expounder of those scriptures which they misunderstood.

The chief priests saw early how utterly opposed His teachings were to the views which they entertained, and consequently they ever strove to neutralise His influence.

The people, on the other hand, when they saw the miracles He did, heard Him gladly, and would have taken Him by force to make him a king : that king they were so anxiously expecting. When He rode into Jerusalem, they were certain that the glorious hour had at length arrived when this mysterious man would forsake His lowliness and take His rightful place among the mighty of the earth ; and, filled with enthusiasm, they cut down branches, and strewed them in the way and cried "Hosanna ! blessed be the *king* that cometh in the name of the Lord."

If our Lord would but have fallen in with the popular delusion of the day—if He would only have consented to be what they desired, viz., their temporal monarch—not one of all His enemies but would readily have died to defend His cause ; but because He would not do this, because He declared the opinion commonly prevailing regarding the Messiah, to be false and unscriptural—because He ran counter to *the popular idea of truth* at that time prevailing in the Church—the hosannas of the multitude were quickly turned into maledictions ; and wrath, persecution and death, were the results.

We know too well the fate of the faithful followers of Christ, to make it necessary for us to trace it in detail. They had been foretold by their Divine Master what they had to expect in this world. "In the world you shall have tribulation ;" "for if they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you." Accordingly they found it to be even as He had said. In every city, bonds and afflictions awaited them, and the solemn and blessed truths which they boldly declared were "every where spoken against." Their most determined enemies were those who had been the bitterest foes of their Master, the ministers and members of

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God's ancient church ; and the cause of their enmity was that which has been already indicated, viz., indignation at the presumption of a *few* in charging the religious opinions of the *many* with falsehood and error.

From this brief review of some of the narratives of holy scripture it is abundantly manifest that the unadulterated and un mutilated *truth* always excites the opposition of the human heart ; and that while the remote cause of the opposition is to be found in the facts of man's fallen state and consequent enmity towards God, its immediate cause arises from the circumstance that the religious views of the multitude are always to a greater or less extent *wrong* ; that this erroneous or defective faith thus prevailing, while necessarily producing an erroneous or defective practice, is nevertheless popular in a high degree ; and consequently, to expose the falsehood of these favorite views by the exhibition of opposing *truth* naturally produces that feeling of irritation in the unsanctified heart, the proper fruit of which is persecution.

In persuing this subject we have no intention of referring to the character and consequences of the great struggle which took place between christian truth and heathen error, nor of those which occurred between the Catholic Church and the opposing sects which were without. To do so would be beside our purpose, which is, to show that within the borders of the Church herself this struggle is constantly going on between the error which is brought in through man's corruption and the eternal truth which God has committed to her keeping, and to point out those abstract principles which seem, apart from other proofs, to be unfailing criteria by which to distinguish the will of God from the device of men.

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III.

THE REFORMATION.

It was our purpose to have adverted to the great struggle which took place in the Church during the Arian controversy, and to have deduced from it those principles which have been already laid down ; for never perhaps in the history of the faith were they so remarkably illustrated as when, in defence of God's eternal truth, St. Athanasius stood against the world in error.

The struggles which preceded and followed the decisions of the Deutero-Nicene Council might also be rendered available for the same purpose ; but in order to avoid prolixity, we rather select instances more recent, and consequently more generally known.

It is our purpose therefore in the present article to consider some of the features of the Reformation, and to show how clearly we can trace in that great convulsion the two principles to which we particularly refer, viz., "That unadulterated and unmutilated truth in the things of God always excites the bitter opposition of the human heart," while "A defective and erroneous faith, leading to a defective and erroneous practice, is ever popular among the multitude."

In the early part of the reign of Henry VIII. the Church of England was in a state of great and acknowledged cor-

ruption, and in utter bondage to the usurped authority of the See of Rome. Learning, both sacred and secular, was confessedly at a low ebb, and the morals both of priests and people were disgraceful to their Christian calling.

One of the first reformers of that day was undoubtedly Cardinal Wolsey, who, by the authority of his Legantine court, endeavored to restrain the evil lives of the clergy ; and by his foundation of lectures at the University of Oxford, his revisal of their statutes, and the erection of fresh colleges and schools of learning, strove to counteract the miserable philosophy which then prevailed ; and sought to rectify the ignorance which often excited his indignation.*

Whatever may be our estimate of his individual character and motives, there can be no doubt that his fall, if not chiefly occasioned, was greatly accelerated by these efforts to check the vices and overcome the ignorance of the age in which he lived.

He was one indeed who could hardly under any circumstances have won the love and acclaim of the multitude, but it is unquestionable that a large measure of the bitterness which marked the unpopularity, misrepresentation and hatred which he endured must be attributed to the fact that he was, according to his own views, a reformer.

While he thus, in a certain measure, partook of the inevitable fate of every *religious* reformer ; he also partook in the same proportion of their reward, inasmuch as after he had passed hence, his efforts brought forth (as we may venture to think must be acknowledged) a certain amount of good.

* See life of Wolsey, by Galt.

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We say so because we think it impossible to reflect on the immense influence which he exerted without coming to the conclusion that it was in some degree owing to the efforts which have already adverted to, that the wretched scholastic system of the day fell afterwards into a certain measure of discredit—that many of the *younger* men at the universities, wearied with the fruitless disputations of philosophy and the barren subtilties of the schoolmen, turned their thoughts and studied to the works of the primitive fathers and the decrees of the early councils, thus forming a class or school which was soon after known as “the men of the new learning.”

This “new learning,” which was in truth *old*, was that which so especially fitted them for the performance of that work of reformation which in the providence of God they were called upon to direct—a work which they wisely began, and which they would have as wisely completed but for the obstructions offered by the laity who now in certain quarters are lauded as the most conservative element in the church, and the truest bulwark of her *doctrines*—it is to the obstructions of the LAITY, arising from the unprincipled rapacity of the court and the superstitious ignorance of the multitude, that the defects of that mighty deliverance are to be ascribed.

Still, few who read these words will doubt that it *was* a deliverance fraught with blessings far outweighing its defects, whatever we esteem them to be, and the more intimately we become acquainted with all the dangers and difficulties of those trying and troublous days, the more grateful must we be to Almighty God who raised up fitting instruments for the fulfilment of his own work.

We are all more or less acquainted with the various steps by which the work of the Reformation advanced. To trace those steps would be unnecessary and beside our purpose, for no good churchman but thankfully acknowledges that the "men of the new learning" who at every hazard urged the reformatory movement onward upon its course were doing a good and holy work, well pleasing to God and full of blessing to man. It is not then to the progress of the Reformation, but to the manner in which a work so confessedly *good* and doctrines in which we glory as so emphatically *true*, were received by the bulk of the people *at the time*, to which we would seek to draw attention as illustrative of the principles which we have laid down.

We find by referring to the history of that period, that from the first "the men of the new learning" were objects of suspicion, dislike and calumny to the great majority of all classes. The favor which they met with at the hands of the king arose from no conviction upon his part of the doctrinal corruptions which then prevailed, nor any love for the truth which they were endeavouring to restore, but simply because their views upon the independence of the English Church of the See of Rome fell in with his wishes upon the subject of the divorce. That independence having been achieved, it was necessary that it should be maintained, and in order to its maintenance the power of the mendicant orders, who were devoted to Rome, had to be, if possible, destroyed. Hence the dissolution of the smaller monasteries. At this period, and indeed at the time of the destruction of the larger abbeys which so rapidly followed, no step had been gained in the work of Reformation beyond the repudiation of the Pope's supremacy. It was

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the destruction of those establishments, and the unwise as well as sacrilegious bestowal of their lands and revenues upon the needy or unprincipled members of the nobility that bound that powerful class to the cause of "the men of the new learning." For the most part they had no sympathy with the holy teachings of the Reformers; they still held, as the vast bulk of the population did, the corrupt faith which the Church of England as a Church had not yet repudiated, and many of them on their death-beds professed repentance for their denial of the authority of "the apostolic see," and declared that they died in communion with Rome. Such men looked with no loving eye upon the Reformers, and when the day of trial came many of them showed what manner of spirit they were of.

While the cause of "the new learning" had little hold upon the laity of the higher classes beyond that afforded by their own interests, it (together with its advocates) were held by the bulk of the nation, especially in the rural parts, in a degree of abhorrence which it is not easy to express. As it is now, so it was then. It was a few of the *clergy*—more learned than the bulk of their brethren, and not only greater in sacred knowledge but in holy zeal—who were the means of originating and carrying forward the Reformation. It was the mass of the *laity* who opposed and obstructed it, but bitterness and violence was added to their opposition in consequence of the inflammatory teachings of that large portion of the clergy who were the advocates of the former corruptions and superstitions. "The men of the new learning" were discredited as being *young**—they were contemned as heretics, innovators, corrupters

* Blunt's Sketch of Ref., 107, 108.

of the old accustomed ways—the introducers of novelties both in doctrines and worship, which being, as they thought, *new*, must consequently be false.

They pointed to them as the authors of that desecration of holy things which then prevailed, and appealing to the churches and monasteries in ruins; and the consequent want and misery that befell the people, they denounced them as at once the foes of God and the enemies of man.

So violently were the feelings of the bulk of the population excited by these considerations that they led throughout the country to proceedings of the most violent character and to open rebellion against the existing laws.

The proof of these statements is so abundant in almost every history of Reformation that it would argue on our part a very mean opinion of the information of our readers to trespass at any length upon their patience with quotations upon the subject. A few brief references will suffice.

There can be no stronger proof that the nobility, as a body, had no *doctrinal* sympathies with “the men of the new learning,” than the fact that, in 1539 (two years subsequent to the dissolution of the smaller monasteries, and after the surrender of the abbeys), when the rigorous statute of the Six Articles was passed, which required, under pain of death, conformity to some of the worst features of Romanism, “the *temporal Peers*, with the exception of Cromwell—if he could then be called a Peer—were *unanimous* against the reforming Prelates.”†

In support of the above statements we find a good illustration in the words addressed by the Duke of Northumberland to the people when brought to the scaffold for his

† Carwithen, chap. vi. vol. 1. p. 186, 187.

share in the attempt to place Lady Jane Grey upon the throne. Throughout the reign of Edward VI he had uniformly favoured the cause of the Reformation, "but on the scaffold he unequivocally professed his sincere belief in the Roman Catholic faith. He exhorted the people to be firm in the religion of their forefathers and to reject the 'new teaching.' *Innovations in religion* had caused all the miseries of the last thirty years, and therefore he conjured the people, if they would avoid a recurrence of such calamities, to drive out of the nation these trumpets of sedition, the new preachers," *

As for the plainer sort, especially in the country parts, we find that under the influence of some of the clergy their abhorrence of "the new fangled ways" was so great that, as was observed above, over the larger part of England they broke out into open rebellion. After a violent outbreak in Lincolnshire that serious insurrection occurred in the north which is known as "the Pilgrimage of Grace," Forty thousand men assembled in arms, led by priests bearing a crucifix before them. They wore on their sleeves an emblem of the five wounds of the Saviour with the name of Jesus wrought in the middle. They all took an oath that they had entered into the pilgrimage of grace from no other motive than their love to God, their love to the king's person, their desire of purifying the nobility, *restoring the Church, and suppressing heresy.*" †

Fifteen years after the rupture with Rome, the spirit of insurrection strongly pervaded many of the counties, and the religious grievance afforded by the Reformation was

* Carwithen, Vol. I. c. xi. p. 307.

† Hume, xxxi. ; Carwithen, c. v.

ever prominent in their remonstrances. The Commonalty of Devonshire rose in 1549 and formed a regular army, amounting to 10,000 men; "their demands were that the *Mass* should be *restored*, half the Abbey lands resumed, the law of the Six Articles *executed*, holy water and holy bread respected, and all other particular grievances redressed."* Later still we are told that the *people* continued *clamorous* for the use of the old altars instead of tables—for candles at Candlemas—ashes on Ash-Wednesday, and the like;† and after the accession of Mary, although the cause of the Reformation had a certain measure of popularity in London, "still in the country the cause of the Pope *was far more popular*; custom pleaded for it, and its pageants were agreeable to the taste of the million."‡ The result of this state of feeling was that Mary and her counsellors were enabled to deluge the land with the blood of those, who for the sake of God's truth, disregarded the power of the Court as boldly as they had disregarded the clamors of the people.

Here, then, we have a remarkable proof that the Laity, as a body, are indeed *conservative* of the religious opinions which happen popularly to prevail in their own day and those immediately preceding; but since *popular* opinions on the subject of religion are always in a greater or less degree erroneous, their conservatism necessarily becomes in the like proportion a conservatism of error. It is so now, as we hope to shew; it was confessedly so at the time of

* Hume, c. xxxv.

† Blunt p. 240.

‡ Ib. p. 257.

the Reformation. The faith of the Church, as well as of the people, was defective and erroneous, and it brought forth, as cannot be denied, most defective and erroneous practice ; and yet (as we think we have conclusively proved) this defective and erroneous faith was highly *popular*. When learned and holy men arose and denounced that faith as corrupt, and displayed in contrast the unadulterated truth, it excited, as it has ever done, the bitterest opposition ; and those who maintained it met with the universal fate of religious reformers—they were everywhere spoken against, ridiculed, and persecuted.

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IV.

PURITANISM.

It is impossible to read history with anything like attention without observing what may almost be termed "the law of oscillation" which marks the popular mind in matters of religious opinion.

The tendency of this law is ever towards extremes, and hence it comes to pass that those who act under its influence perpetually miss the truth which is ever to be found in the *via media*.

At the period which last engaged our attention we found the great mass of the people violently upholding all those errors and defects which in England had degraded the *Catholic* into the *Romish* faith. A hundred years elapsed, and the great pendulum of popular feeling had swung to the opposite extreme, and the ancient doctrine and discipline of the Church, which in the one age had been denounced as *new*, the succeeding age opposed and endeavored to destroy because it was *old*. What the men of one generation had stigmatized as "*Protestant*," the men of the generation succeeding denounced as "*Popish*,"—that which in 1540 was scoffed at as being cold and bald in worship, in 1640 excited indignation as being superstitions in ceremonial. Those who (as a class) had during the former period invested their spiritual pastors with almost

the attributes of the Deity, enjoyed nothing, during the latter period, so much as the sport of "parsonbaiting." Those who scarcely dreamed of any power as lawful either in Church or State beyond the king's prerogative, at a later day practised rebellion as a duty, and well nigh worshipped "the blessed Parliament" as the one infallible authority in matters ecclesiastical as well as civil.

From the day of the return of the Marian exiles the unholy leaven of Puritanism began its work of corruption within the Church. They had learned to sympathize so deeply with the founders of the reformed communions abroad, that it became their chief ambition to conform the Church at home to the model which they established. Those men whose proceedings were the object of their admiration had unhappily been led to destroy, as far as their influence extended, the divinely appointed organization of the Church, and in its room they erected a human platform, which, being destitute of any promise of God's presence, has, like every work of man, fallen in its due time into hopeless and irretrievable decay. Blind to this unfortunate, but (perhaps) in the circumstances, unavoidable feature of the foreign reformation, the exiles on their return actually endeavored to discard that divine system which the leaders of the religious movement on the continent had themselves been unwilling to lose.

The utter license of private judgment in which, as a party, they indulged, rendered them proud, self-sufficient and—inconsistent as it may seem—intolerant in the highest degree. The profound conviction they generally entertained of their own "godliness" and their individual infallibility made them impatient of all constituted autho-

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rity, and led them resolutely to do that which was right in their own eyes, however contrary it might be to the legitimate requirements whether of Church or State. Every ecclesiastical vestment, however seemly and scriptural, was denounced as popish. Every sacred rite, however solemn and consecrated by the use of ages, was scoffed at as superstitious; the Word of God itself was held of no profit unless explained and applied by a "godly minister," which always meant one of themselves. Every insignificant trifle was made a cause of controversy and disobedience—to the great dishonor of God, the rending of His Church, and the injury and loss of the souls of men.

The mode of conducting Divine service in 1559 was pointed out in the Book of Common Prayer, which was then substantially the same as it is at present, and the observation of that mode was enforced by the authority of the Act of Uniformity.

It would seem to most men that the course of all clergymen was thus made exceedingly clear—honest principles would have induced them either to obey the law or to leave the Church; but Puritan principles were the reverse of honest, and consequently we find that those who entertained them while clinging to their preferments, systematically broke the law, obedience to which was the condition on which they held them. For a proof of all this we have only to refer to the account of this great practical evil which was submitted by Cecil to Queen Elizabeth in 1564—five years after the return of the exiles, the revision of the Prayer Book, and the passing of the Act of Uniformity. "Some perform Divine service and prayers in the chancel, others in the body of the church; some in the pulpit with

their faces to the people ; some keep precisely to the order of the book, others intermix psalms in metre ; some officiate with a surplice, others without it. In some places the table stands in the body of the church, in others it stands in the chancel. In some places it stands altarwise, distant from the wall a yard, in others it stands in the middle of the chancel north and south ; in some places the table is joined, in others it stands upon tressels ; in some places the table has a carpet, in others none. Some administer the communion with surplice and cap, some with a surplice alone, some with neither ; some with a chalice, others with a communion cup ; some with unleavened bread, some with leavened ; some receive kneeling, some standing ; some baptize in a font, others in a basin ; some sign with a sign of a cross, others make no sign ; some administer in a surplice, others without ; some with a round cap, some with a button cap, some with a hat ; some in scholar's clothes, some in others."*

Such was the miserable spectacle of diversity caused by the bitter strife of these men about trifles such as those enumerated above. But whatever measure of allowance we might be disposed to make for the "*tenderness*" of those consciences which were grievously wounded by the shape of a cap or the colour of a vestment, yet permitted their owners to violate the laws of the Church whose preferments they nevertheless retained, that allowance must be withdrawn when we find that these scruples, contemptible as they were, had hardly the solitary recommendation of being *honest*—that the secret cause of their endless and

* Strype's *Life of Parker* and Neale's *Hist. Pur.*, quoted by Carwithen, vol. i., chap. 17.

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factious opposition was less a conscientious objection to the ceremonies of the Church than a deeply rooted though unacknowledged aversion to the whole institution of episcopacy.

This of course became abundantly evident as the real principles of Puritanism received their true and fearful development in the following century; but even as early as 1566 some of the deprived nonconformists formed themselves into a separate body, adopted the Genevan discipline and service book, and manifested their real opinions by the formal objections which they brought against the Church, the very first of which was "that bishops *affected* to be a superior order to presbyters, claiming the sole right of ordaining;" while four years later we find Cartwright at Cambridge declaring from the chair of the Margaret Professorship that "the names and functions of archbishops and bishops ought to be suppressed as having no foundation in Scripture."

In order to check the progress of Puritanical opinion various penal statutes were enacted, of which we are neither the admirers nor the apologists. It may be observed, however, that they were in strict accordance with the convictions of an age in which neither party understood the principles of religious toleration. Through the influence of the enactments alluded to the Puritans were excluded from all offices of public instruction, but they were still received into the houses of the upper classes as chaplains and tutors. The important duty of instructing the young thus to a great extent fell into their hands, and they took advantage of the opportunity to sow widely and diligently that seed which in another generation brought forth so

fearful a crop of false doctrine, heresy and schism in the Church, and rebellion, desolation and regicide in the State.

This natural tendency of Puritanic principles had long been foreseen, and when, in the days of Charles the First, that tendency received its full development, there wanted not a band of faithful men, both clerical and lay, who bore fearless testimony for God's truth in the midst of a rebellious generation. The whole body of the loyal clergy, headed by the Laudian divines, threw themselves devotedly into the wild torrent of popular phrenzy, and nobly sought to stem it in its course; and though it is true they were themselves swept away, and in many cases lost life, or all that renders life desirable, yet the principles they advocated had in them the greatness of eternal truth, and consequently they eventually prevailed. They were the reformers of the age, and they met with the universal fate of all religious reformers, viz., calumny, hatred and persecution. The prevailing faith was essentially defective and erroneous, and it brought forth necessarily a most defective and erroneous practice, as a reference to the intolerable wickedness of those times would abundantly prove; but yet this defective and erroneous faith was *popular* beyond expression—religion was the universal subject of profession, controversy and discussion, and any views contrary to the popular opinion were denounced as popish, superstitious, or malignant.

“The oyster women lock'd their fish up,
And trudged away to cry No bishop.”

Apprentice boys sat in judgment upon the teaching of the most learned doctors of divinity, and if displeased therewith complained of them forthwith to “the blessed Parliament,”

who joyfully received the accusation, and at once proceeded to pronounce them unfit for the ministry and to sequester and seize upon their preferments†—"godly soldiers" in buff and bandolier dragged orthodox divines from their pulpits, and then taking their place, preached the wildest dogmas of fanaticism and rebellion, to the great comfort and edification of "the saints."

Under these circumstances, whoever was bold enough to endeavour to stay "the madness of the people" by the declaration of the un mutilated truth, necessarily partook in no stinted measure of the bitter enmity which Divine truth has always excited in man's fallen heart. Accordingly we find that between 7,000 and 8,000 of the clergy, beside a large number of the laity, were subject to the bitterest persecution; long-continued imprisonment in noisome jails and in the holds of ships, loss of all worldly goods, and death from hardship and starvation, was the bitter lot of multitudes who were content to forego all things but the truth. We had purposed, in proof of these statements, to bring forward some of the many grievous cases of relentless and iniquitous persecution mentioned in Walker's *Sufferings of the Clergy*, but being precluded from doing so by want of space, we must content ourselves by referring to the work itself, as well for abundant proof of the point in question as for the triumphant establishment of the fact, that those who were called to suffer as "scandalous ministers" were, in the vast majority of cases, men of deep learning, steadfast principle and exemplary life.

In this great struggle between truth and error, nothing (as it seems to us) can stand forth more clearly than the

†Walker's *Sufferings of the Clergy*, *passim*.

principles which were originally laid down as the criteria between the two. The great mass of the laity, led by a portion of the clergy, adopted, as usual, a defective and erroneous faith, which necessarily bringing forth a most defective and erroneous practice, was nevertheless so highly popular that when the unmutilated and unadulterated truth was proclaimed, it excited, as it ever does in the fallen heart, an enmity so bitter that advocates met with the certain fate of religious reformers, viz., persecution and calumny, which even to this day continues in certain quarters to load their memory.

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V.

WESLEYANISM.

In tracing the consequences resulting from the full development of the principles of puritanism, as they were manifested in the Great Rebellion, we are immediately struck with that "oscillatory" character which has been already referred to as marking the religious movements of the popular mind.

The direction, however, of those oscillations which followed that great convulsion, was evidently threefold. Many rebounded towards Rome, more towards open infidelity, while the great mass of the nation swung from the galvanic and convulsive earnestness and the overstrained pretensions to sanctity of the one period to the deadly indifference and open profligacy of the period that succeeded. We hear much of the flood of iniquity which overwhelmed the country subsequent to the Restoration of the *Church* and Monarchy, and it is difficult to exaggerate the general corruption of morals which prevailed. That the guilt of this state of things rested to a very great extent upon those principles of puritanism that had so long been popular, can hardly be denied by any one who observes how invariably the human mind, when overstrained in one direction, ultimately springs back to the opposite extreme.

Struck with horror at what they ignorantly supposed to be the legitimate fruits of the Reformation, one class of minds rushed back for refuge from puritan excesses to popish superstition.

Disgusted with the hypocrisy that had so frequently cloaked the blackest crimes with the loudest professions of spirituality, another large class were led to deny the reality and truth of Revelation, and hence it came to pass that during that unhappy period there prevailed a degree of infidelity which had been until then unknown.

Wearied with the endless disputes upon the subject of religion, which had prevailed in those high and palmy days of the unlimited exercise of private judgment, the bulk of the people felt it a relief to cast the subject from their minds, and came at last to treat with indifference what had once excited them to fury. Thus did the irreverence of puritanism, by the inevitable law of reaction, produce superstition—its hypocrisy led to unbelief, its excitement ended in apathy, and superstition, unbelief and apathy necessarily and unavoidably brought forth the natural fruit of ignorance and vice.

Such was the state of things with which the Church was called upon to contend, at a time when she was as little capable of doing so as can be well supposed. That capability, however, was still further crippled by the Revolution of 1688. Because the non-juring Bishops were unable to offer their allegiance to one whom they regarded as having no legitimate right to the Crown, they were deprived, and William III. naturally placed in their sees men who were favorable to the existing state of things. These men were themselves by no means insensible to their

false position. They were in many cases destitute of those qualifications which were calculated to give them influence over the inferior clergy, many—perhaps the majority—of whom questioned their right to the powers which they exercised, inasmuch as they were inclined to regard them as intruders into sees, which, as long as the non-juring Bishops lived, they could hardly regard as vacant. Hence arose a want of confidence and co-operation between the Bishops and the lower clergy, producing contentions and bickerings between them, the inevitable consequence of which was to cripple still more sadly the Church's power to perform her work. To those who are in any degree conversant with the lives of the Bishops previous to the Revolution, and who mark the wonderful extent of their power over both clergy and laity arising from constant intercourse and the weight of personal character—it will appear evident that the circumstances, necessarily binding the Bishops to the court and alienating them from the people, has tended to produce that wide and most injurious gap between them and their clergy which has since existed, and has made the Episcopate so often “stink in the nostrils of the people.” All these influences, whether arising from the re-actionary influences of puritanism, or from those political events which were the means of bringing the Church into that state of bondage from which she is now struggling to get free, tended to deepen more and more the awful state of spiritual apathy which marked the religious condition of the eighteenth century.

To describe that condition would occupy too much time and space, and is the less necessary, inasmuch as the spiritual darkness of those unhappy days is very generally acknowledged.

The University of Oxford, together with its sister institution, have ever been, from the days of Wicliffe to the present hour, the fountain-heads of every reformatory movement in the English Church. Accordingly we find that amidst the spiritual ignorance and indifference of the last century, a little knot of earnest-hearted *clergymen* arose at Oxford, consisting of the two Wesleys, Whitfield and their associates. These men were bent not only upon securing their own salvation, but were led eventually to make a brave, and in some measure successful effort, to arouse the church and nation from the deadly slumber into which they had fallen.

They declared many of those doctrines, which, though prominently set forth in the Liturgy, were almost universally forgotten or denied in the pulpit—and by the holiness of their lives, and by their self-denying efforts for the good of others, they proved the powerful influence which those doctrines exerted upon their hearts.

It is impossible, as consistent Churchmen, to deny that these zealous men fell into those errors to which the very earnestness of those who are religious Reformers renders them liable; but, however deplorable the consequence have been of breaking away from the unity of the Church, which is the divinely constituted guardian of the Truth, and forming a sect which has already commenced, that downward course which is the inevitable and unvarying destiny of every schismatic body, yet we must freely admit that the guilt of those errors does by no means rest exclusively with them.

For how were the efforts and teachings of these clergymen, who beyond all question were the reformers of their

day—how were they received generally by the church and nation? The answer, alas! is too easily given. They were everywhere frowned upon, sneered at, denounced and persecuted, and when the greatness of the movement which they originated led them into irregular ways, discountenanced by the Church, those irregularities—into which, however, they were almost forced by the damming up of the legitimate channels—were made the means of discrediting their teachings.

Calumny of every description was heaped upon them, and, strangely as it may sound in the present day, few charges were more frequently brought against them, and their followers than that of being "papists." So generally was this the case that upon one occasion we are told by Mr. Watson that "Mr. Wesley remained in London, (from whence, in 1741, all papists had been commanded by proclamation to depart,) a week longer than he intended, that he might not seem to plead guilty to the charge."* The violence with which they were treated by the *populace* would be scarcely credible, were it not that in our own days we remember the riots at St. Sidwell's Exeter, and the threatened destruction of St. Barnabas, Pimlico, by an infuriated mob. Mr. Charles Wesley, who had been himself in imminent danger from the people, thus notices a meeting with his brother at Nottingham after he had undergone a similar assault. "My brother came, " says he," delivered out of the mouth of the lion; his clothes were torn to tatters; he looked like a soldier of Christ. The mob of Wedensbury, Durlaston and Walsall were permitted to take and carry him about for several hours, with a full

* Life of John Wesley.

intent to murder him ; but his work was not yet finished, or he had now been with the souls under the altar."* Here then we find that these men met with the universal fate of religious reformers, for such, whatever we may think of some of their teachings and practices, they unquestionably were. Their case affords the most convincing proof of the truth of those principles which were originally laid down as tending to indicate—apart from other proof—the distinction between truth and error. In the first place, it is plain that in that day a most erroneous and defective *faith* brought forth in the mass of the people a most erroneous and defective *practice*. Yet so popular was this defective faith that when a few of the *clergy* discovered its imperfection and boldly declared the truth, it is in the second place equally evident that this proceeding excited the most violent and bitter opposition on the part of the *laity*, led on by some of the most worldly-minded and least worthy of their ministers.

The circumstances which tended to neutralize the direct influence of this reformatory movement will be adverted to in the next paper.

* Journal.

VI.

WESLEYANISM.—(CONTINUED.)

WE proceed, in accordance with the intimation contained in our last paper to advert briefly to some of those causes which tended to neutralize the salutary influence of that reformatory movement in the church originated by the two Wesleys and their associates,—causes which gradually soothed the opposition by which it was at first assailed and eventually secured for it that popular applause which is almost universally a symptom of an erroneous or defective faith.

The first of those causes unquestionably was the formation of an organized society bound together by ties other than the unity of the church, subject to new rules of discipline, and distinguishing itself by the name of an individual presbyter.

Although this society continued for a time to maintain unity with the church in sacraments, yet it had almost from the first, the proper features of a sect and early manifested its subjection to that unvarying law which impels all such bodies, to eventual separation. The influence of this cause in neutralizing the reformation began by the Wesleys is exceedingly plain. The better and more thoughtful among the clergy who felt how much room there was for improvement in the spiritual condition of the nation, were withheld

from countenancing the movement by its evident tendency to run into schism and develop itself into a multitude of sects, an anticipation which has already been fulfilled to a very melancholy extent. The more worldly-minded and vicious both among the clergy and laity found in the same fact an excuse, of which they gladly availed themselves, to shut their ears to the earnest counsels of those who would have awakened them to a conviction of their spiritual danger—and thus a feeling of antagonism—apart from mere individual sentiment—sprang up between the society of Mr. Wesley—as such—and the church in her collective character. The addition to the numbers of Mr. Wesley's followers came to be regarded not as the increase of true religion and piety in the church, but as the extension of a sect, altogether adverse to her spirit, her teaching and her laws. He who became a Wesleyan was regarded by churchmen as a traitor to the church; he who refused to do so was regarded by Wesleyans as a foe to the interests of true religion. Thus, in consequence of the unhappy step which has been referred to, the reformation which was begun by these earnest-minded clergymen of the church was to a great extent checked and neutralized—its influence for good was rendered indirect—and the chief result has been the formation of a number of differing sects, which, though containing many excellent *individuals*, are nevertheless—as *sects*—rapidly pursuing that downward path of deterioration, which is the doom of all schismatic bodies.

Another cause which, while helping to neutralize the influence of the movement of the Wesleys, helped also to soothe the opposition of the multitude and eventually to make it popular among the mass, was the strong tempta-

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tion it held out to gratify—under the garb of religious earnestness—the sinful inclination of our nature which would lead us to free ourselves from the restraint of lawful authority, and to submit to that only which originates with ourselves and has the sanction of our own approval.

Previously to the founding of Mr. Wesley's societies there were whole districts of the kingdom, where to have denied the authority of the parish priest, and to have refused to hold communion with him would have amounted to absolute excommunication, but when "the people called Methodists" began to arrange themselves into organized communities, and at last arrogated to themselves the right of administering the sacraments, the case became widely different.

The populace no longer supposed themselves under the necessity of doing that which is ever galling to the unsanctified heart—the necessity of rendering obedience to those who had been placed in authority over them. A rival claim to their spiritual allegiance had arisen almost from among themselves, and thus were they placed in the position—most flattering to man's selflove—of judging as to the correctness of opposing systems and of giving their patronizing support to that which was stamped with the imprimatur of their generally most incompetent approval.

Hence, it has come to pass that when a parishioner is irritated by the faithfulness of his clergyman, no less than when offended by his neglect, or scandalized by his evil life, he at once repudiates his authority, and is received with open arms, flattered, and rendered of importance in a religious community whose spiritual privileges he (from want of knowledge) supposes to be equal in authority and superior

in sanctity to those of the Church Catholic, which owing to passion, prejudice or want of information, he is betrayed into the sin of leaving. A system therefore, which by helping to free men from obedience to lawful authority and to exalt the most incompetent into the position of judges of religious controversy, gratified some of the strongest inclinations of unsanctified humanity, could not long be unpopular. It was unquestionably by the influence of this circumstance in no small degree, that the violence with which the masses assaulted Wesleyanism in its early and purer days, was gradually mitigated, and that by degrees it attained that popularity which it has since possessed.

There are other two causes which, while tending to neutralize the reformatory movement of Wesley, were at the same time extremely powerful in securing for it that popular applause which ought to be to all who are the objects of it, a ground of fear and self-suspicion.

These causes arise—one, from (what may be called) the ecclesiastical,—the other from the religious system of Wesleyanism.

The mode of organisation adopted by “the people called Methodists” permits persons to teach in their congregations and to pray publicly, who have never undergone that ceremony which (from want of proper investigation of the subject) they suppose to be ordination.

This of course necessarily gives prominence and importance to a vast number of individuals who under the ecclesiastical system of the Church would be unknown. A man (or indeed a woman either), however small may be the amount of his religious knowledge or principle, who happens to possess the “gift” of a fluent tongue, becomes noted

throughout his neighborhood for his wonderful ability in telling his experience or in "making a prayer," and along with fame comes a considerable measure of influence and respect. The man under the Church system would remain in the undistinguished mass of private christians. There is of course no comparison in the mind of such an individual as to the comparative merits of two systems,—one of which exalts *him* into importance, the other of which would abase him to a common level of obscurity. To shrink from fame and influence—to be willing to be abased and humble and unknown is too high an attainment in the divine life for it or anything that tends to produce it to be popular. This feature therefore of Wesleyan organization while doing much to neutralize its real influence for good, has rendered it highly popular among a large and influential class.

The remaining cause adverted to is the fact that the movement of Mr. Wesley in its religious aspect has resulted in a system which— as popularly received—must be acknowledged to be a religion rather of *feeling* than of *practice*.

No one at all acquainted with the writings or the life of Mr. Wesley, can doubt the earnestness with which he followed after holiness in his own case, or the zeal and energy with which he enforced it upon others; neither may we question the purity of heart and life and the undoubted excellence of multitudes of the individuals who have embraced the system which he originated.

It is however equally impossible for any one who has had much opportunity of observing the practical working of Wesleyanism among the populace, to shut his eyes to the fact of its tendency to substitute vivid feeling for holy acts. That this tendency (which very early, and very unmis-

takeably, manifested itself) should have a powerful influence in neutralizing the good effects of Mr. Wesley's movement can require no arguments to prove, for nothing perhaps is so effectual in setting the worldly-minded against true religion as the inconsistencies of those who loudly profess to act upon its principles. That the same circumstance should help to secure for the system that popularity which we have seen to be so constantly the token of an erroneous or defective faith, is also very apparent. Strong and exalted religious feeling is a *privilege*, the enjoyment of which, most men earnestly covet. Rigid, unvarying obedience to whatever God commands—irrespective of the passing emotions of the hour—is a *duty* from the performance of which most men naturally shrink. Excitement of a very earthly kind, indeed, often serves to produce that religious *feeling* which is a luxury that men love. It is a true faith only that can lead to that unwavering *obedience*, which is a trial that—left to ourselves—we hate.

A system therefore which tended to magnify the importance of religious feeling, which among the uninstructed is by no means difficult to excite,—which led its followers to believe that the vividness of that feeling was the best test of their spiritual state, and which depreciated all quiet unpretending obedience as mere heartless formality; a system thus understood could hardly fail to attain that popularity which, as a matter of fact, Wesleyanism has long enjoyed among a very large class in the community. The causes thus enumerated appear sufficient to account for the fact, that the earnest-hearted movement towards reformation originated at Oxford by Mr. Wesley and his associates, ended in the formation of a variety of sects, instead of the

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thorough arousing of the Church and nation to the energy of spiritual life. The influence of his efforts on this behalf were turned aside and rendered indirect by the unhappy step of organising a distinct society, which same step has produced those further neutralizing causes which have been adverted to. We must, however, confess with deep humiliation that whatever may have been the irregularities and errors of judgment into which Mr. Wesley was by his zeal betrayed, the guilt and sin of the separation which has taken place between his followers and the Church does not rest undividedly upon himself.

The movement of Mr. Wesley having been thus neutralized and rendered indirect in its influence upon the Church, some further efforts were required to awaken her from the lethargy into which she had been thrown by the reactionary influence of Puritan stimulants and the deadening power of King William's political anodynes.

Through the mercy of that long suffering Lord who is her Head, she was not cut off, nor her candlestick finally removed; and in the bosom of her other university, He prepared the instruments of His holy will, whose efforts as the reformers of their day, we propose in our next paper to consider.

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VII.

EVANGELICALISM (SO-CALLED.)

THE reformatory movements of the Wesleys having been turned aside, and, to a great extent, neutralized and rendered indirect in its influence upon the Church, by those causes to which we adverted, it was still urgently necessary that the spirit of true religion should be revived within her borders, and that her members should be taught to comprehend more clearly the great doctrines of the Faith.

In the time of this great need, He who is the Church's Head showed that He had not forsaken her, notwithstanding all her provocations; for by the influence of His blessed Spirit He quickened into earnestness the souls of those men who are claimed as the fathers of what is now known as "the Evangelical School."

It is impossible to consider dispassionately the state of the Church in those days without feeling acutely how urgently she needed to be awakened from spiritual slumber, and this must be conceded, although we may be disposed to contend that the number of worthy and excellent clergymen to be found among "old-fashioned High Churchmen" was even then greater than is popularly supposed.

The common impression certainly is, that, with the exception of the Evangelical party, the whole body of the clergy were in spiritual darkness. But it is easy to see

how this impression became general. Such men as Romain and Venn, Scott and Newton, Simeon and the Milners, adopted a system of theology, the *tendency* of which has ever been to dispose those who hold it to doubt very seriously whether their brethren can be true Christians unless they can pronounce their peculiar Shibboleth.

When therefore, they observed diligence and excellence among the ranks of the old High Church party, they were led by the very earnestness which marked their character as reformers to give way to the tendencies of the theological system which they had adopted, and set down as "legality" and formalism what may in many cases have been the fruit of sound, though perhaps not very fervent, faith—a very remarkable instance of which may be found in the second chapter of Simeon's life. Hence, although perhaps there were (so to speak) seven thousand in Israel who had, no more than themselves, bowed the knee to the image of Baal, yet these men, with perfectly good conscience, declared themselves to be the only advocates of the truth; and the multitude have taken that declaration upon trust.

If all this, however, were fully and freely conceded, it does not alter the fact, that at the time when these men arose, the Church greatly needed reformation. The movement of the Wesleys had resulted in the throwing off of a numerous and energetic sect, leaving the body from which it separated very much as it was before, as to anything like a general and hearty acknowledgment and reception among *individuals* of the great doctrines of grace and the duties of a holy life.

While the need of reformation is thus a fact confessed, another fact which must be as readily conceded is, that the

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men now alluded to were the Reformers of their day. They were led by various means to deep views of the spiritual feebleness and corruption of man's nature—to sincere self abasement for their own personal sins and shortcomings—to humble and undivided reliance upon the all-sufficient merits and atonement of our blessed Lord—to earnest waiting in the use of divine ordinances for the influences of that Holy Spirit who out of weakness can make us strong. In this renunciation of themselves and of their own righteousness, and this simple looking to the Cross, they found a goodly portion of rest and blessing for their souls, and a measure of strange and hitherto unknown strength against the power of inbred sin and the force of outward temptation.

Aroused into earnestness themselves—awakened thoroughly from spiritual slumber, and animated with love to the souls of men through love to Him who had redeemed them with His own most precious blood, these men went forth, and—after their manner,—declared these blessed truths, and to a people in deep spiritual poverty they preached the unsearchable riches of Christ.

And what was the consequence? It was what under similar circumstances it ever has been. The great mass of the laity (who are now in certain quarters regarded as the bulwarks of the truth), under the leading of such of the clergy as were favorable to the erroneous faith and the defective practice which then prevailed, were violent in their opposition against those who were scoffingly spoken of as "new lights." They were regarded as enthusiasts—madmen—methodists. Their teachings were derided; their words and actions misrepresented; their motives

maligned, and themselves treated often with rudeness, and occasionally with something very nearly allied to persecution.

To prove all this we have only to refer to the memoirs of these men, which are to be found in almost any library, where we shall meet with an account in detail of the various trials which they had to encounter from the spirit of opposition which prevailed around them.

We are told, for instance, by Mr. Simeon himself, that on his appointment to Trinity Church, Cambridge, "the people almost universally put locks upon their pews, and would neither come to church themselves nor suffer others to do so. . . . I put in then a number of forms, and erected in vacant places, at my own expense, some open seats, but the churchwardens pulled them down and cast them out of the church. To visit the parishioners in their own houses was impracticable, for *THEY were so embittered against me* that there was *scarcely one* who would admit me into his house. In this state of things I saw no remedy but faith and patience." A little farther on he says. "The opposition thus formed continued for many years. . . . I determined to establish an evening lecture, but scarcely had I established it before the churchwardens shut the church doors against me. On one occasion the congregation was assembled, and it was found that the churchwarden had gone away with the key in his pocket. I therefore got a smith to open the doors for that time, but did not think it expedient to persist under such circumstances."* The result was, that he was on the week days excluded from his own church, and in order to find an opportunity of instructing

* Life of Simeon by Carus, Am. Ed. p. 26.

those who were disposed to attend his ministry, he had to hire a small room in his parish and meet them there.

We find that after thirty years labor in the parish of which he was incumbent, he was still exposed to bitter and unfounded complaints which were laid by a considerable number of *laymen* before a bishop who appears to have been only too well disposed to second their malignant intentions—and we find at the same period, a strong disposition on the part of “the Heads of the Houses” at Cambridge, to fall in with both bishop and parishioners, in the endeavour to thwart his efforts for good.†

The history of the Venns—both father and son—shows very clearly that they were in a greater or less degree exposed to the same trials; and we all remember how the most intimate friends of Joseph Milner at Hull became so embittered against him, when he began to preach distinctly the doctrines of repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, that when they met him in public, they would cross the street in order to avoid him, or refuse to return his ordinary salutation.

Before Scott was himself awakened to real earnestness, we find in his sentiments and conduct towards his neighbor John Newton at Olney, a very remarkable indication of the feeling that prevailed against the reformers of that day, even among the clergy and the ranks of the better informed classes (see his life). He looked upon him as a broacher of *novelties*—an enthusiast and a bigot, who, though too contemptible to be crushed by logic, was nevertheless, too excellent to be withered by scorn.

† Simeon's Life, pp. 186-189.

Here, then, we submit, is abundant evidence of the soundness of those principles which we seek to establish as (in their appropriate place) criteria of truth. At the time when the leaders of the so called evangelical school arose, the faith which *popularly* prevailed in the church was most erroneous and defective. It consisted for the most part in a strong conviction that if a man paid some attention to public worship—partook three times a year in the Holy Communion—and was guilty of no very great and scandalous offences, he was safe for eternity. Miserably erroneous and defective as such views unquestionably were, they were nevertheless in great favour with the multitude; and when the Reformers of that day arose and, with earnest spirits and unanswerable arguments proved the utter groundlessness of such opinions, showing that without a true repentance and a lively faith, leading to holiness of life, men could have no hope of salvation, they immediately experienced the inevitable fate of religious reformers—viz., misrepresentation, calumny and persecution; and thus they found that unadulterated truth in the things of God excites the bitterest enmity of the human heart.

In our next paper we propose to consider some of those leading causes which rendered the (so called) Evangelical movement less satisfactory in its results than could have been desired. And, since the Church is an organized body instinct with life, the very law of vitality impels her constantly to strive to throw off whatever is dead and evil; and hence the failure, or at all events the incompleteness, of that earnest-hearted movement entailed upon her the sad necessity of yet further reformation—not in her own teachings, but in our appreciation of them, and in that holy practice which is the only legitimate fruit of sound opinion.

VIII.

EVANGELICALISM (SO CALLED.)—*Continued.*

WE proceed, according to the intimation contained in our last paper to dwell briefly upon some of the peculiar features which marked the teachings of the (so called) evangelical school, and to advert to a few of the unfortunate results which appear to many amongst us to have sprung from those peculiarities, and to have rendered the great reformatory movement originated by its founders incomplete, and, as a whole, unsatisfactory.

At the time when these brave and earnest-hearted reformers arose, the great mass of the nation were in lamentable ignorance as to the grounds of the faith which they professed to hold "concerning Christ and the Church." With reference to the Church, indeed, many clung to her with a dull tenacity. It was what they were accustomed to; it was respectable and according to law, there was no "methodism" about her; and owing to the general apathy which prevailed, she allowed men to slumber on in the ways of decent worldliness. Hence the general ignorance concerning the Church; and her scriptural and catholic claims to their submission and attachment did not at that period produce in the popular mind any strong tendency to undervalue her authority or to separate from her communion. But the ignorance which existed concerning

Christ led the multitude *practically* to reject the doctrine of repentance towards God, and of our justification through faith in that all-sufficient atonement which was offered upon the cross for us. As this melancholy state of things presented itself to the minds of those of the clergy who, one after another, were awakened into earnestness, they were thrown into the deepest concern for the imminent danger to which the souls of the people were exposed; and in this prevailing ignorance of the great plan of human redemption through the Incarnation and blood-shedding of Christ, and the destructive consequence resulting from it, they found that one absorbing master-thought which is necessary to the character of a religious reformer.

Without some such overpowering consideration men naturally shrink from the religious reformer's fate, which has ever been what it will ever be—calumny, misrepresentation, and, as far as circumstances will permit, persecution. It is no pleasing task to cast one-self into the eddying and turbulent tide of popular opinion; not merely to breast it bravely for one-self, but to seek to turn it from its course. It was this which the founders of the (so called) evangelical school sought to do; and they *did* it, impelled as they were by a true earnestness, and by the one overmastering consideration of men's ignorance of the work of the Redeemer.

1. It was this one thought which gave its color and tone to all their acts and teachings, and to remedy it, was the one object of their lives. Hence they took up the salient points of the scheme of our salvation, and spoke so constantly and so exclusively concerning Christ, that men forgot that there were any words in Holy Scripture "concerning

the Church ;" and though they still profess (each time they repeat the creed) to believe in Her existence as an article of faith, yet, in consequence of this defective teaching, there are multitudes who have not a single definite idea of the true meaning of that article of their belief. Hence the inability of the popular mind to realize not the guilt only, but almost the possibility of such a sin as schism.

2. In their deep anxiety for the extension of what were now distinctively termed "Evangelical opinions," the founders of this school hailed as fellow-laborers in the good cause, all who professed to "love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." As long as they held the great doctrines of repentance and faith, all other things were considered "non-essentials,"—candidates for the ministry, although preferring "the establishment" on the ground of influence and respectability, had no sort of misgivings as to the validity of Dissenting Ordination (so called). The whole School would have been shocked by the idea of its being wrong to co-operate with non-conformists in religious works and services, and they recognised little difference between themselves and their "separated brethren" beyond those arising from the legal sanctions which the Church possessed. Simeon and others, on their visits to Scotland, seem to have altogether avoided the Episcopalians of that country, and constantly occupied the pulpits of Presbyterian teachers, and "fenced tables" at Presbyterian Sacraments.

The necessary and unavoidable result of this mode of proceeding evidently was to destroy utterly in the minds of the people all idea of the ministerial commission; and it has led to that almost hopeless and most injurious confusion, which is distressingly evident in popular opinion, between

the *authority* which a valid commission conveys and the *qualifications* which are necessary to its proper and effective exercise.

3. In consequence of the apathy and ignorance which in those days generally prevailed upon the subject of religion, very few were taught from their earliest childhood to conduct themselves in a manner worthy of that regenerate life which in Holy Baptism had been conferred upon them. They fell from those pure and unworldly ways in which they were pledged to walk, and followed in darkness of soul the paths of indifference and sin. Hence, in consequence of thus sinning against the grace of Regeneration, arose the general necessity for *conversion*. The urgency of this need presented itself strongly to the minds of the founders of the school in question, and they dwelt upon it so earnestly and continuously, pointing out the marks and tokens of what must ever be, to a greater or less extent, a sensible operation of the mind, that they obscured the doctrine of the invisible working of the blessed Sacraments, and have led the masses to suppose that though they are to be observed as significant rites and instituted memorials, they are not to be regarded as effectual channels of grace. By thus depreciating their value they lessened their importance, and by diminishing their importance they still farther destroyed the idea of any special and divine authority being required for their administration, for no great authority could be required to perform rites which, upon their theory, were of little moment.

4. Teachings which in the popular mind thus tended to destroy the very idea of "the Church" as an outward and visible organization,—which utterly confused all idea of

ministerial authority, and obscured and denied the doctrines of the Sacraments—naturally and inevitably produce another result—viz., a violent tendency towards schism. If a few earnest and godly people could constitute themselves into a church, why should they continue in “the Establishment,” where, according to their views, there were many things which were distasteful?

If personal piety and the power to preach were the chief points in the ministerial character, why should they not select one from among themselves to act as their pastor, who in these respects was perhaps far superior to the parson of the parish. If the Sacraments were only empty signs, conveying no direct gifts of grace to the worthy receiver, except in as far as the outward symbol affected and aroused the inward feeling, why should they trouble themselves about the authority requisite to administer them? The outward representation of the truths, which the Sacraments are intended to commemorate, would be equally effectual upon the mind of the devout recipient by whomsoever administered. This mode of reasoning, logically and unavoidably resulting from the principles propagated by these men, did, as a matter of fact, almost at once present itself to the minds of their followers. If we open the life of that most excellent man, the elder of the Venns, we see how strongly this tendency manifested itself at Huddersfield. The same fact is abundantly visible in the record of Mr. Simeon’s unwearied labors at Cambridge, as well as in the memoirs of all the leading men of that day. We know as a certainty, which no one attempts to deny, that the movement of reform which they originated, induced multitudes to forsake the Church and fling them-

selves into the ranks of Dissent, although it did not, as in the case of Mr. Wesley's efforts in the same direction, result in the formation of a positive and distinct sect.

5. Again—By thus strengthening the hands of dissent, they were in no small measure indirectly instrumental in adding to the violence and strength of that tempest of political and religious hatred by which, in 1830–32, the church was assaulted, and which, even in the minds of her most hopeful children, seemed for a time to render her destruction, as *an establishment*, all but certain.

6. Once more—the defective system introduced by these men must be confessed, when judged by its *practical* results, (as compared with the consequences of the Truth set forth in its completeness) to have been to a great extent inoperative upon the Church as a whole. No one, indeed, can with truth deny that it led to many noble efforts for the temporal and spiritual good of mankind—worthy of all respect and reverence in the motives by which they were prompted—if in many cases unsatisfactory in the consequences which they have produced: but when weighed in the balance of comparison with the more recent movement of church reform which has marked the concluding years of the last halfcentury, it must be pronounced *wanting*.

As this is a subject to which we shall ere long return, we content ourselves with merely indicating it at present; and in our next paper we propose to advert to those causes which have rendered *popular* a system which at its commencement was so violently opposed.

IX.

EVANGELICALISM (SO CALLED.)—*Continued.*

EVERY system which is human in its character, must, from that very fact, be inevitably subject to the law of development.

Hence, that human system which Rome has engrafted on a system that is divine, has in the course of centuries developed itself into a fearful mass of unheard of novelties, and most dangerous corruptions.

All *sects*, being systems entirely human, very rapidly manifest their subjection to the same law—they possess no power of maintaining their identity for any length of time—they never continue what they originally were. The sin of schism which at the beginning constituted them sects, becomes developed—first, into fresh separations—subsequently, into heresy—eventually into death—the inevitable doom, not necessarily of the individuals belonging to them—but of all sects and systems which are diverse and cut off from the one Catholic Church, which being the mystical body of our Lord, alone partakes in His immortality.

The *system* which was adopted by the earnest-hearted founders of the (so called) “Evangelical School,” in order to bring men to the knowledge of the truth, was unhappily, to great extent, a human system. It consequently admitted of development, and in that development it is easy to discover the secret of the popularity which it now so largely enjoys

By denying the divine system of sacramental grace they "humanized" (so to speak) the scriptural doctrine of conversion, because they were forced to put it out of that place which it was intended to occupy in the economy of the gospel, and to invest it with features which are other than those which are assigned to it in Holy Scripture.

Although they endeavored to guard against the evil of such a course, yet their teachings upon the great subject of "a change of heart," have as a matter of fact become developed into a system, the *practical* effect of which is, that before this mysterious vicissitude of feeling is experienced, men do nothing for the salvation of their souls, because according to their theory, it is in vain; and after it is experienced they still do nothing, because then it is unnecessary. We are of course very far from asserting that any such ideas were either held or taught by the founders of this school; on the contrary, we repeat that they used all the means which their views permitted, to prevent this inevitable tendency of the human system which they had adopted. What we do assert is this, that those means have proved unavailing and that the *practical* effect upon the mind of the multitude has been what we have stated it to be. No one who is thrown into close contact with the masses in relation to their spiritual state can deny that there are thousands who consider themselves almost entirely free from the obligations of Christianity, "because they are *not* converted," and that there are thousands more, who, though living in gross neglect and inconsistency, look back with comfort and complacency to some period of awakened feeling, when they experienced what they regard as a "change of heart."

A system which has *practically* developed itself in this way, could not be long unpopular. For the difficulties of godly practice, it substituted the ease of godly profession; for the sternness of regular and unvarying obedience, it substituted the luxury of religious feeling. Every day develops more and more its utter hollowness and unreality; but this very fact renders it popular among the multitude, who have ever loved to say "Lord, Lord," though they care not to do the things which the Lord commands.

Again, the founders of this School were constantly warning the people not to depend upon the mere outward attendance upon the means of grace, and that prayer, fasting and alms-deeds are vain, unless they spring from motives acceptable to God.

No one, of course, would question the abstract truth of such statements; and no one who is acquainted with the lives of these men can doubt that their own *practice* with reference to these duties was much better than their precepts. We know how fervent and frequent they were in devotion. We remember how regularly some among them observed the Fasts, especially the Friday Fast, and spoke of it as full of blessings to their souls.* We must gratefully confess how abundant many of them were in alms-giving. But their teachings on these points were to a great degree after the manner of men; and hence those teachings have in the hands of their followers become developed into a system which keeps the gates of the house of Prayer shut for six days out of seven—which teaches that religious fasting is mere popery and superstition, and allows men to suppose that liberal and systematic alms-deeds are not among the

* See especially the Life of Venn.

obligations of the Christian Covenant. Such a development as this inevitably tended to the perverting of the system. People were not unwilling to be taught that the strict rule of the Church for spending each day *in bonis operibus* was nothing but formalism and "legality;" that, therefore, they were free from the obligation of a law that was not binding upon them beyond their own will; and that 'believers' were at liberty, in spiritual things, to do that which to themselves, seemed good.

While the followers of the great men who originated the (so called) "Evangelical School," have thus developed the godly practice of its founders into unreality; they have also in no small degree departed from their teachings—defective as we hold those teachings to have been.

Proofs that this is no mere assertion might be abundantly brought forward; but none of them can be more striking than the following language of Simeon, when compared with that of many who regard themselves as his followers in the present day. Speaking of the Baptismal controversy, he says:—

"The only question is, not whether a baptised person can be saved by that ordinance, without sanctification; but whether God does always accompany the sign with the thing signified? Here is certainly room for difference of opinion, but it cannot be positively decided in the negative, because we cannot know or even judge respecting it in any instance whatever, except by the fruits that follow, and therefore, in all fairness it may be considered a doubtful point, and if we appeal as we ought to do to Holy Scriptures, they certainly do in a very remarkable way accord with the expressions in our Liturgy. St. Paul says: "By one Spirit are we *all* baptised into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been *all* made to drink into one Spirit." And this he says of all the *visible*

members of Christ's body. Again, speaking of the whole nation of Israel, infants as well as adults, he says : They were *all* baptised unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and did *all* eat the same *spiritual* meat, and did also drink the same *spiritual* drink, for they drank of that *spiritual* rock that followed them, and that *rock was Christ.*" Yet behold in the very next verse, he tells us that "with many of them God was not well pleased, and overthrew them in the wilderness." In another place he speaks yet more strongly still. "As many of you," says he, "as are baptised into Christ, have put on Christ." Here we see what is meant by the expression "baptised into Christ." It is precisely the same expression as that before mentioned, of the Israelites being "baptized unto Moses" (the preposition *eis* is used in both places). It includes all that had been initiated into his religion by the rite of baptism, and of them universally does the apostle say "they have put on Christ." Now I ask, Have not the persons who scruple the use of that prayer in the baptismal service equal reason to scruple the use of those different expressions ?

"Again, St. Peter says, "Repent and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins," and in another place, "Baptism doth now save us : " and—speaking elsewhere of baptized persons who were unfaithful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ—he says, "He hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins ? Does not this very strongly countenance the idea which the Reformers entertained, that the remission of our sins, as well as the regeneration of our souls is an attendant on the baptismal rite ! Perhaps it will be said that inspired writers speak of persons who had been baptized at an adult age. But if they did so in some places, they certainly did not in others, and where they did not they must be understood as comprehending all, whether infants or adults, and therefore the language of the Liturgy is not a whit stronger than theirs."

The italics are those of Mr. Simeon, and the comparison between his statements on this subject, as quoted above, and those of many who now glory in his name, is instructive. HE SAYS that what is called baptismal regeneration

is at most a "doubtful point." THOSE who in the present day profess to think with him, declare that it is nothing less than "a soul-destroying error." HE SAYS that the Holy Scripture "very strongly countenance the idea that the remission of our sins, as well as the regeneration of our souls, *is an attendant on the baptismal rite.*" THEY MAINTAIN that it is almost impossible to imagine an idea more violently anti-scriptural. HE EXPRESSLY DECLARES that the above idea, which was so "very strongly countenanced" by the Holy Scripture, was "the idea which the Reformers entertained." THEY most strenuously DENY the correctness of this declaration; and to prove it, they determined, through the agency of the Parker Society, to publish the writings of the Reformers, and when they had done so they found that Mr. Simeon was *right*.*

Such is a small specimen of the system of development which has been going on among the (so called) Evangelical School; and we cannot shut our eyes to the fact, that in proportion as its views of truth have become more and more defective, its loving-earnestness, its holy self-denial its burning zeal have passed away, and have given place to a cold, unkindly spirit towards all who fail to pronounce its shibboleth; to a self-seeking that contradicts its professions, and to a want of zealous effort that holds back from labor, apparently on the principle that the less that is done by man, the greater will be the glory that will be given to God.

* How Mr. Simeon reconciles these expressions with the views he taught, and the position he assumed may be left to his friends to explain.

These are strong expressions ; but they are written sorrowfully, and only because of a deep conviction of their *truth*. They refer, as will be understood, only to the school regarded as a whole. There are, we rejoice to think, still many noble exceptions among the individuals composing it—men who, in spite of their system, are earnest and gentle-hearted, and full of all good deeds for the love of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. For *them* we give thanks to God ; while in the history of their *party* we see another confirmation of the unchanging principle, that an erroneous or defective faith will bring forth an erroneous or defective practice, and at the same time will be popular among the mass, whose bitterest enmity is ever reserved for the *Truth*.

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ANGLO CATHOLICISM.

THE practical unreality of the (so called) Evangelical movement towards reform having rendered it to a very great extent ineffectual, there still existed the necessity for further efforts to restore the Church to that state of efficiency which would enable her to fulfil the work committed to her by her Head, of doing good unto all men, especially unto them which were of the Household of Faith.

In one of her darkest hours of peril, God of His own free mercy raised up His chosen instruments for this work in one of those great seats of Christian learning, whence all the great reformatory movements among us have taken their rise—the University of Oxford.

They were earnest thoughtful men of learning and leisure, who looked out upon the surging waves of popular strife with an eye unclouded by excitement and minds unwarped by prejudice.

They clearly discovered the source of the Church's weakness, as well as the secret of her adversaries' power. They saw that she was contending with the weapons of human expediency instead of the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God ;—that, while she made high claims to the loyal allegiance of the people, she failed to rest those true but lofty claims upon that high and questionless au-

thority by which alone they could be sustained;—that she had forsaken the vantage ground, which was hers alone, and had gone down to the common level of those who sought her destruction.

Hence they saw that she strove at disadvantage, and that the struggle which otherwise had been brief, was thus rendered doubtful and protracted. They felt well assured that if they could but render these things manifest and plain, and leading the Church back to her true position, could induce her to contend with those divinely-tempered weapons given her from on high, the truth was certain to prevail.

Hence they calmly and clearly pointed out the claims of the Church to the dutiful obedience of Christian men, not on the miserable ground of her establishment by the State, but on the scriptural ground that she was a portion of Christ's true body—deriving her authority from Him, and His appointed instrument and organization for the salvation of their souls.

They shewed that the Holy Bible was the "book of the Church," growing out of her necessities, and bestowed upon her, long after her organization, as the code of laws by which she was to be governed;—that it came down to us through her to whom alone it was given, and that she therefore was its keeper, the witness and interpreter of its truth, and that without her, its elementary requirements could not be obeyed. In short, they boldly declared her to be the work of God,—instinct with the life of His own Blessed Spirit—and that man can no more make "a Church" than he could create a world.

They appealed in all the confidence of truth to the word and to the testimony, and from it, they established their

position. They showed that the views they promulgated were those entertained by the Church herself in every age, and that the idea of her being a mere aggregation of individuals held together by a voluntary compact, was a notion as new as it was unfounded.

These doctrines took the contending parties by surprise. The great mass of Churchmen themselves had never dreamt of them, and at first they were so startled by them, that they refused credence to their truth. But when one after another they came to examine these points, they seemed reasonable in themselves, and in very striking analogy with the Divine dealings, as well as worthy of, and almost necessarily springing from, the attributes of the Divine character.

Finally, when they brought them to the test of Holy Scriptures, and compared them with the teachings of those who had in the early and undivided church been conversant with the holy Apostles and Apostolic men, they were forced to confess how entire and striking was the agreement existing between them.

That this is not over-stating the case, is evident from the results that followed. Thousands of the Clergy and of the educated, earnest and thoughtful Laity, rapidly adopted these views, from an intelligent and conscientious conviction of their incontrovertible truth. They saw that the opinions advocated by these men, instead of being, as was supposed, novelties and innovations involved simply a return to first principles, and restored to harmony and order many of those scriptural precepts which were difficult and indeed impossible to reconcile with the conflicting and disorganized character which popular Christianity presented.

When the truth of these distinctive principles was once clearly understood, they were warmly and earnestly embraced, and immediately led to energetic action.—Hence the results already flowing from the great movement in question, are perhaps without a parallel, since the Gospel was first proclaimed in Britain.

This doubtless arises from the greater completeness of this, as compared with the previous movements towards reform.—Evangelic truth is strongly enforced, in its due connexion with Apostolic order.—Christ is constantly spoken of as our only hope of glory ; while the Church is set forth as the *Divinely* appointed means by which men are led to Him, and trained to meetness for His presence.

Hence, the greater and more simple the reliance upon our Lord, who is the Head, the more earnest became their love towards the Church, because they believed it to be *His* body ; the deeper the anxiety for the souls of men, the more fervent their desire to extend her ministrations, because they believed that she was organized by the Redeemer Himself to be the instrument of applying to them the blessings of His Salvation.

This it is that has led to efforts in the cause of Christ and His Church, which even now are fruitful in blessing both to the souls and bodies of men.

In the early part of the present century (years, however, after the beginning of the so called Evangelical movement), the total number of Churches built and endowed in England and Wales was *three annually*. At the present time, there are nearly as many erected every *week*, for they are rising over all the land, in a richness and beauty in some degree worthy of their object, at the rate of *one hundred and four* in the course of the year.

During the most prosperous days of the evangelical (?) party the total number of colonial bishops was, we believe, some five or six—at the present day, we have five or six *times* that number, each with a proportionate staff of inferior clergy.

During the dominancy of evangelical (?) opinions the importance of christian education was naturally overlooked. Indeed, it could hardly be otherwise, for persons holding those opinions must have seemed to themselves to have nothing to work upon—as they have in truth little to teach. Believing that children, unless “elect,” are destitute of divine grace, christian instruction could be of little avail where there was no spiritual life; and since it was subsequent conversion that was to convey that life, they might as well be left to themselves until they received it. That they must have reasoned practically, if not in words, in some such manner, is evident from their *acts*; for until the church movement of later days, the work of education was fearfully neglected. On the other hand, those who have been led to more scriptural views have most earnestly taken up this question—and just in proportion as a man realizes the truth that the Church is the body of Christ, and that little children are members of that body, so in the same proportion will he labour in his schools.

However we may be disposed to view the theories entertained by these respective parties, there is no disputing the *fact* that while the former neglected the young, the latter have followed the example of our Lord, and have received the little children of the church, and are blessing them by training them up in the ways of truth and holiness. To prove these points we need no other testimony than that

of the present Archbishop of Canterbury in his speech at the meeting of the National Society, held on the 31st of May last.* He says, "I was led by one of these tables to form some estimate of the progress of education in the two counties with which I am more particularly acquainted within the last twenty years, and I find that whereas in the twenty years from 1811 to 1831" (*i. e.*, during the reign of 'Evangelicalism') "there were in the county of Chester 36 parish schools established, in the next two decades, from 1831 to 1851 (*i. e.*, since the beginning of the Church movement), the number of such schools established was no fewer than 217. This must be considered a most remarkable rate of progress. So far for the north. Then going on to the county with which it is now my happiness to be associated, I find that in the county of Kent, the circumstances are the same. In the twenty years from 1811 to 1831 the number of schools established in that county was 84, whereas in the succeeding twenty years from 1831 to 1851 the number was 284. No one can look at these tables without being astonished at the great *change* which has taken place in the interests of education."

Time would fail to tell of the numberless enterprises of christian benevolence that have arisen under the influence of the late reformatory movement. The constant offering of prayer—the deeper reverence for holy things—the restoration of a kindlier feeling and a closer intercourse between the rich and poor—the hospitals and alms-houses for the destitute and diseased—the places of refuge and

* *i. e.*, May, 1854.

recovery for the friendless and the fallen, the abundant offerings for all good works—the noble denial of self, even among high-born and delicate women, in order to minister to Christ in the persons of the poor, the suffering and degraded. These things are finding their way to the nation's heart and forcing thousands to feel that whatever may be the doctrines of those who do these things, their works are the works of CHRIST.

Notwithstanding this, however, the views and proceedings of the Anglo-catholics are violently *unpopular* among the multitude, who, however little they know or care about the subject of religion generally, are ever ready to join in the outcry that is made against any unfortunate clergyman who is stigmatized as "a Puseyite" or "Tractarian." Such men are the reformers of the day ; but, like religious reformers in all ages, they are everywhere spoken against—and the onslaught that is made against their principles and practice is led now, as it has always been, by some of the clergy, who, unconscious of the erroneous or defective character of the faith to which they are wedded, regard it as all that can be desired, notwithstanding the fact that it brings forth a defective or erroneous practice.

We have seen that from the beginning those religious systems which have been erroneous or defective in faith and practice, have been always *popular*, and that in every attempt made to reform them the persons who led that attempt have been violently attacked and have had to contend against suspicion, calumny and persecution.

In the existing controversy between "evangelicalism" (so-called) and the true principles of Holy scripture and the church, we know to which side the *popular* acclaim is.

given ; and surely we can have read the history of the past to little profit, if it does not give us comfort for the present, under the bitter attacks and ceaseless misrepresentation to which those who urge onward the present movement towards reform, are subjected from every quarter.

One word more. Truth, which has always been opposed, has nevertheless always prevailed. Hence, the extraordinary victories which are made by the true principles of the church. No one with any power of thought ever sincerely investigates the subject and fails to be brought over to their adoption. The great bulk of the clergy, and almost the entire body of candidates for the ministry, are everywhere receiving them. The young, whenever they have these principles clearly explained to them, warmly and heartily embrace them. Their march is ever onward and irresistible—another twenty years, and they will triumph—conquering the young by their truth and beauty—and the aged by their results.

ROMANIZING TENDENCIES.

By a rapid glance at the history of the past we have proved (as we humbly venture to think) the constant unpopularity of religious truth, and have shown the application of the principles we have laid down to the state of things at present existing among ourselves.

We are, however, prepared to hear exceptions taken to the justice of that application. We know that men without pausing to reflect that they are denying a law, which, since the fall, has been invariable in its operation, will boldly denounce, if not the truth of the principles which we advocate, yet certainly the soundness of the position which we assume.

We know too beforehand that the ground upon which that denial will be rested, will be the assumed "Romanizing" tendency of the Church movement, and the fact that many both of the clergy and the laity have been led to adopt that corrupt form of christianity in consequence, as is erroneously supposed, of receiving as true, what are termed "the destructive principles of the Church."

The fact of a considerable number of perversions to Romish error is admitted. The inference that such perversions are the legitimate results of the principles in question is denied. It requires no very deep reflection on

the nature of the human mind to see that in so great and remarkable a revolution of religious opinion as has marked the last quarter of a century, some of its most earnest advocates would be almost sure to run into extremes. When the strain in one direction has been excessive, we must be wanting in the commonest observation, if we do not *expect* its rebound in the direction which is opposite to be proportionably violent.

Arguing too, *a priori*, from the peculiar character of those who alone are fitted for the office of religious reformers, and from the difficulties and trials by which they are necessarily assailed, we must be *prepared* to mourn over excess where we should have hoped for moderation, and to sorrow over those who in striving after perfection, have overrun their mark and fallen into error. The philosophy of the question, however, has been well argued by much abler writers, and since our investigation has thus far been historical in its nature,—we shall address ourselves to the task of glancing briefly at the past, and endeavour to show in a few words that every effort which has been made towards reformation in religion has invariably been accompanied by excesses both in opinion and act.

The state of God's ancient Church was we know most corrupt, at the period of our Lord's advent. He came to work the most blessed reformation which the world has ever seen, and most earnestly did His followers labor to spread the knowledge of His saving name; but even concerning these men it was said by the word of inspiration, "of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them." Accordingly

in the very first century of the Christian Era we find multitudes led away from the true Faith by the *Docetæ*, who denied the humanity of Christ, and by the *Ebionites* whose opinions were destructive of His Divinity. It would, however, be a most inconclusive style of argument to maintain, that the principles of the Gospel favored those delusions because some who had at one time embraced and propagated the truth subsequently labored to extend the influence of error.

Again, the principles for which our Reformers strove, and suffered, and died, are admitted by all faithful churchmen to be true principles, but can we forget the terrible excesses into which vast multitudes of all classes fell at that eventful period ?

It was not a few here and there who forsook the Church, and adopted as truth some figment of their own imagination, but both in England and abroad, the shoal of heresies that arose in direct consequence of that great movement, though in direct contradiction to its true principles, (at least as held in the Church of England) is almost appalling to contemplate.

The Anabaptists, the Mennonites, the Socinians, the Family of Love, the Schwenkfeldians, the Brownists, embraced a mass of persons whose number it would be difficult to estimate. These men went with the Reformers as long as their proceedings accorded with their own fanatic or dreamy fancies, but when the Reformers stopped, they were ready to denounce them because they refused to run to the same excess of spiritual riot with themselves.

Are we therefore to condemn the Reformation because it was accompanied by many lamentable abuses, or be-

cause multitudes over-ran the limits of sound doctrine and Scriptural conduct? No! We can no more believe the Romanist when he would endeavor to convince us that the excesses of the Anabaptists, or the heresies of the Socinians, are the legitimate results of the principles of the Reformation, than we can believe the unreasoning and uninformed assertion of the present day, that the destructive principles of the Church which have been so prominently brought forward in the great Reformation movement which is now going on, must lead in their ultimate development to subjection to Rome.

Again, the earnest and much needed effort at reform which was originated by Mr. Wesley and his associates, was commenced within the Church, and was intended by its leaders to be regulated by her principles, and yet there has never been a movement since the Reformation which has led such vast multitudes to forsake the Church of their fathers, and to adopt a system which is yearly become more and more diverse from its original idea. What movement towards reform we would ask ever lost the Church, as was the case in the Wesleyan movement, from fifty to seventy-five thousand of her people often in the course of a single year.

Once more, the (so called) "Evangelical" Reformation was accompanied by the alienation of multitudes from the Church to various forms of error. The process by which this took place is generally apparent in the biographies of the leaders of that movement. The result of Mr. Venn's labors at Huddersfield, for example, was the erection of one or more dissenting chapels, erected and frequented by his "own more peculiar people" who on his removal to another sphere of duty regarded his successor with dislike.

That a very large number were perverted from the Church in consequence of (so called) Evangelical teaching cannot be denied for the proof of it is overwhelming. The justness, however, of comparing these perversions with those which have taken place under the present Church movement will be denied, probably on two grounds, first because it will be said that their perversion from the Church was not a perversion from the Faith, and next that those who were so perverted belonged mostly to the humbler classes, whereas those who, under the present movement have forsaken us pertain in an unprecedentedly large proportion to the ranks of the clergy.

With regard to the first objection we may observe that the teaching miscalled "Evangelical" being itself to a great extent defective and in many points positively erroneous, naturally paved the way for the adoption of principles to a yet greater degree contrary to the Faith once for all delivered to the Saints. We know the downward tendency of that dissent, into which "Evangelicalism" led such great multitudes, and we see the legitimate result of its principles in the fate of the meeting houses of the old (so called) orthodox dissenters, which have almost universally fallen under Socinian influence.

Little as we sympathize with what we sincerely believe to be the unscriptural novelties and corruptions of Rome, we would far rather that a man should become a devout adherent of the Pope than, that he should sink step by step into the horrors of Socinianism.

As for the second point, it would seem that the Church movement even when abused tends at all events to produce an honesty of purpose which has too often been wanting in other cases.

There have been Romanizers who continuing in the Church have endeavored to teach Romish doctrine, but have found ere long that the strong language of the Prayer Book protesting against that form of error forbids the possibility of doing so with a clear conscience. They have consequently been forced by their regard for honesty to leave the Church often at the sacrifice of every earthly prospect, and unite themselves with that community which publicly avowed the doctrines which they believed to be true, hence the number of clergymen who in recent years have gone over to Rome.

The number of Evangelical clergy who have held and taught dissenting doctrine has been immeasurably larger than that of those who entertained Romish views, but they seem to have been wanting in the honesty of those who erred like themselves, but erred on the side of Rome.

The latter have generally gone to their proper home, the Church of the Seven hills—the former while adopting and teaching a system in manifest antagonism to that of the Church have preferred to retain their emoluments and position within her pale. A fact which readily accounts for the smaller number of clerical perverts under the “Evangelical” movement as compared with that under the Church movement which is at present going on.

We could not expect that the present Church movement, being an earnest effort towards a much needed reform; could escape the operation of that law which has ever manifested itself in all such attempts among fallen men, by the force of which a certain number of its advocates and adherents are ever impelled into extremes.

But we claim on its behalf that as a reformation it is *more complete in itself*—that it has been marked by fewer

excesses, and that those excesses have been fallen into by a smaller number of its adherents than any similar attempts of the like extent and effectiveness with which we are acquainted.

The number of perversions to Rome both among clergy and laity has been estimated at a thousand,* but what comparison is there between this number and the multitudes who in this great Reformation forsook the truth, or the masses who in consequence of the Wesleyan and "Evangelical" movements were induced to leave the Church.

Let us then be thankful that Almighty God is, by His good Spirit, stirring up the hearts of His faithful people to an earnestness in His service that has been long unknown, and let us banish all unreasoning fears of popery as long as those who minister to us cling closely to the letter of the Prayer Book, which is our great security against all Romish error.

We have brought our task to a close. We have written plainly and strongly—holding back nothing which we regard as true, and shrinking from no consequence which that truth involves. We have sought, however, to make our statements in a kindly and candid spirit, and shall grieve if in our advocacy of the truth we have sinned by so much as a single word against that christian temper which alone is worthy of it.

* See Newland's admirable Lectures on Tractarianism.

