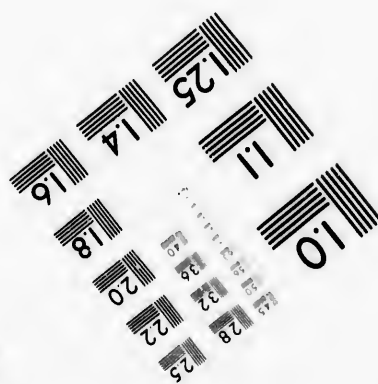
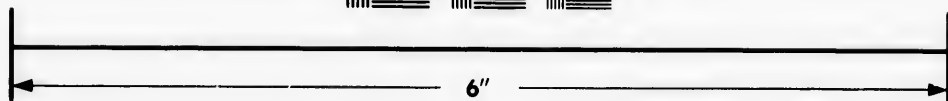
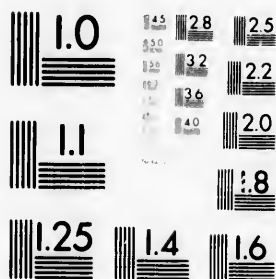


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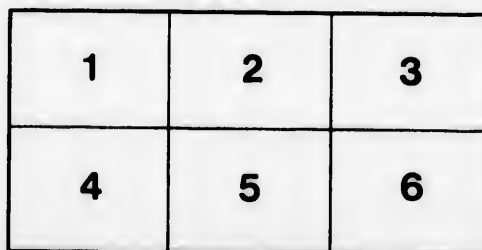
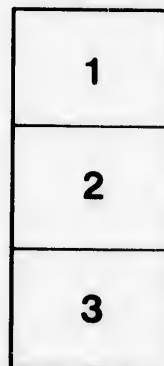
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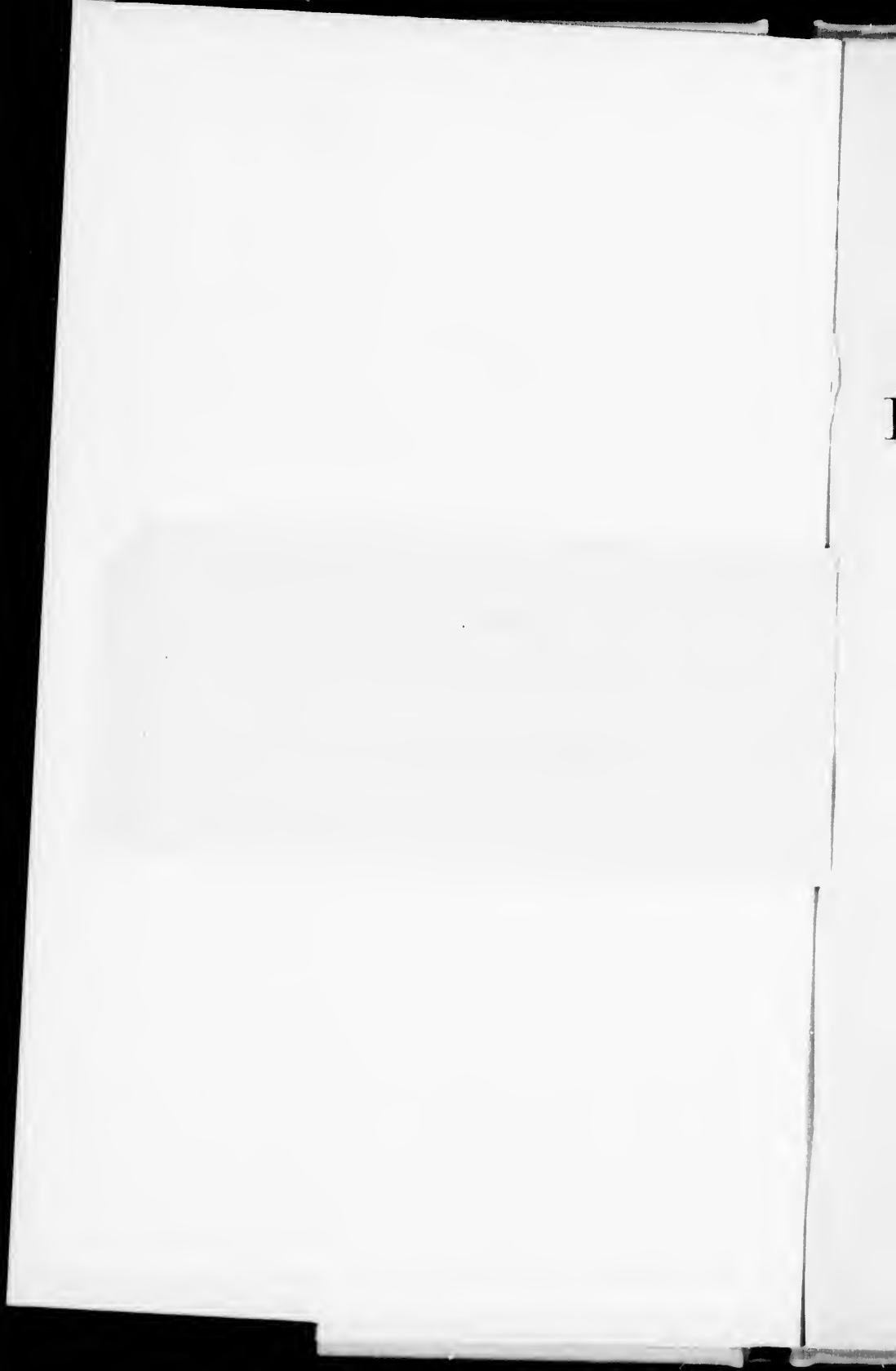
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ON

RECENT PROCEEDINGS

IN

EPISCOPAL SYNODS,

IN RELATION TO

RELIGIOUS TRUTH AND FREEDOM.

BY

JOHN G. MARSHALL,

(Retired Judge, &c.)



HALIFAX, N. S. :

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On Proceedings in Episcopal Synods, &c.

THE proceedings of the Episcopal Assembly lately held in England, called the Lambeth Conference, have unavoidably attracted very general attention, and drawn forth a variety of opinions as to their true character, and probable tendencies and effects. Many have thought that such an Assembly was altogether needless,—believing that the Articles, Canons, and other laws and regulations, composing what may be called the Standards of the English Episcopal Church, were either quite sufficient as to the faith and practice of its clergy and laity;—or if any alterations were really required, they ought to be made by some legally constituted authority. Others have viewed those proceedings rather with indifference as to their consequences, by reason of the Assembly not having been of any constitutionally authorized character, but merely of a voluntary description. Some others,—even a large number, are of opinion,—not without good reasons,—that although it was of that voluntary nature, some of its measures when carried into operation, will have compulsor, and binding effects, and produce injurious consequences to that Section of the Christian Church; and to truly evangelical religion generally. This last opinion seems to be the best founded, as will be shown by the facts and remarks which will be set forth in the course of this Essay.

The Conference was convened by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Primate of the established Church, and was composed of a majority of the Bishops of that Church, and of the Bishops of the Churches of Scotland, the Colonies, and the States of the American Union. Those of the two last named countries formed the large majority of the Assembly. The Archbishop of

York, and several others of the English Episcopacy, refrained from attending the Conference.

During its sittings numerous resolutions and other acts were passed, and measures suggested or recommended for consideration and adoption, by the Episcopal Churches generally, but especially by those in the Colonies of the Empire. It is not intended to attempt, here, any review, or comments on the whole, or even any large portion of the proceedings of that dignified Assembly; but some of its acts are of such descriptions, as justly to warrant on behalf of *really orthodox christianity*, some plain and even censurable strictures. One part of its objectionable and alarming proceedings,—and which has chiefly produced this publication,—consists, in having passed and recommended for adoption by the churches, a measure of an unauthorized and improperly restrictive character, and which in carrying it into effect, will to a certainty, be attended with oppressive and otherwise injurious consequences, as regards the due freedom and purity of the English Ministry and Church, more especially; and also the interests of sound christianity generally. I allude to a declaration required to be made by candidates for admission into the Ministry of that Church, and in certain other specified cases. In the last meeting of the Synod of this Diocese, that Declaration was adopted and established for observance.

Before setting it forth, *verbatim*, and offering remarks concerning it, I will avail myself of the freedom obviously afforded, of expressing some thoughts which have arisen, from a consideration of the character of that Lambeth or Pan Anglican Conference, and some other parts of its published proceedings. It would seem that it was designed to supply some supposed defect of ecclesiastical power, or raise some further barrier for the Church, in relation to its connection with the State. It is well known, that there are very opposite opinions regarding this connection, not only in the establishment itself, but to some extent, in the various dissenting bodies. The latter, however, very generally condemn that connection. Like nearly all other human institutions, there are in that English connection, both evils and advantages; and therefore, it is not at all surprising, that there is such a difference of opinion, as to which of those opposite qualities predominates in that establishment. History, through all ages, has testified, that the

secular and ecclesiastical powers have, *separately*, and also when *combined*, persecuted,—often with the most horrid cruelties,—not only for the *profession*, but frequently for the *suspicion* of certain *veritable doctrines* and *observances*, condemned by one, or both of those powers. The *ecclesiastical* has, on the whole, equalled, if not exceeded, the *secular* authority, in that species of atrocious wickedness. Happily, in the present day, any such sanguinary cruelties, as were committed in former ages, cannot be perpetrated in civilized countries. But still there are dangers and injuries to the interests and the progress of true religion constantly existing, and from time to time increasing, by reason of some or many forms of error, as to doctrines, modes of worship, or on other points. These evils arise from the encroachment, or other improper proceedings of either the secular or the ecclesiastical power, and at times from both.

At present, in the secular or State authority, in the English establishment, there is, doubtless, a large measure of corrupting and ruinous leaven, called *crastianism*, or *rationalism*, as regards true religion. It may, indeed, be more properly termed *semi*, if not *entire infidelity*, as to the obligatory force of scriptural truth and authority. In connection with this great and destructive evil, there is another, and one of its natural consequences, in the same secular quarter,—that of,—a laxity, or careless indifference as to the *purity*, and all the other vital interests of scriptural christianity. On the other hand, in the ecclesiastical portion of the establishment, although there is much that is excellent, both in doctrine and practice, there have been for many late years, several most pernicious defections, and forms of evil, both as to doctrines and modes of worship, and other external observances. It may seem, therefore, rather difficult to determine, which class, or combination of evils,—those in the *secular*, or those in the *ecclesiastical* part of that establishment,—are the most dangerous and injurious, as regards true scriptural religion. The State does not now persecute, as formerly, for religious opinions or observances; and could not do it, if so disposed; nor does it seem at all inclined to interfere in any theological or religious controversies, unless almost compelled to do it, by the imperative authority of existing law. It seems probable, that this indifference and inactivity of the State power,

has been one of the reasons for the calling, and for some of the proceedings of the late Lambeth Conference. The histories of nearly all Councils, Synods, and other ecclesiastical Assemblies, have shown, that all their movements and measures should be very carefully observed and scrutinized, as to doctrines, and, indeed, on all other points, by both clergy and laity, who hold the true faith in divine revelation. Ecclesiastical records, through all ages, have shown the truth of what a clerical dignitary of Bristol declared, on a public occasion, several years ago, that nearly every heresy, false doctrine, and erroneous ceremony and observance, which has afflicted the Church, was originated and introduced by members of the clerical order. This has been true from the early heresies of Arius, Paul of Samosaba, the Apollonaria, Celestius, Nestors, — a Patriarch, — Eutyches, Socinus, and many other heretical systems and doctrines, of lesser prevalence and influence. The same has also been the case, as regards a variety of corrupt and superstitious doctrines, ceremonies, and practices, introduced during what are called the middle and dark ages, and even down to the present century. Nearly all of them have been introduced by dignified ecclesiastical characters, and into more than one of the various Churches.

These facts have been referred to, and the foregoing remarks suggested, from a perusal of the letter of the Archbishop of Canterbury, on behalf of that late Pan Angelican conference, addressed to the Patriarchs, and other dignitaries and priesthood of "the Greek Church of Russia." The address to them at the head of the letter, is in the following words:—"To the Patriarchs, Metropolitans, Archbishops, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, and other beloved brethren of the *Eastern Orthodox Church*. Charles Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of the United Church of England and Ireland, &c.; sendeth greeting."

After mentioning in the commencement, the calling of the Conference, the letter says;—"We notify to you, *brethren in the Lord*, what has lately taken place among us, that you may rejoice with us in our oneness of mind."

Now, to show that the terms here employed;—"beloved brethren," and "*brethren in the Lord*," were Scripturally unwarranted, and altogether inappropriate, as applied to those ecclesiastical characters in that eastern church, it will be requisite to advert to

what, for very many ages, have been, and still are, the principal doctrines, ceremonies, and observances of that church.

Milner, in his comprehensive and accurate Church History, has written concerning it, at different periods, in the following terms: "The vices which tarnished the west, were superstition, polemical subtilty, and monasticism. These same vices, meeting with little or no check from the revival which took place in Africa, and spread a benign influence through the Latin Churches,—prevailed in the East, almost universally," (Mil. 2 V. 518). This is given as to the *fifth* century, and before its final separation from the western church. In writing on that eastern church, in the *eighth* century, and just after that separation, he relates, that an image of the Saviour having been placed on a cross erected in Constantinople, the Emperor ordered an officer to take it down, who, while endeavouring to do so, was murdered by several women. Some persons who had been concerned in the murder, were tried and executed, and Milner says:—"Such was the triumph of idolatry, at length, that the murderers are honored as martyrs by the Greek Church *to this day.*" And again he says;—"the reigning powers, both in the East and West, were overgrown with false worship," (3 v. pp. 157—170). Of the churches in the *ninth* century, he writes:—"Both the east and the west were indeed full of idolatry, and darkness, and seemed to vie with each other in supporting the kingdom of Satan." (3 v. p. 226). Writing of the *twelfth* century he says:—"Of the Greek Church, hardly anything occurs, which properly falls within the design of this history. Superstition, idolatry, frivolous contentions, and metaphysical niceties, attended with a lamentable want of true piety and virtue, from almost the whole of the religious phenomena in the east." (3 v. 417). Of the *fourteenth* century, as to the East, he writes;—"No christian records are come down to us of *anything like the primitive gospel.*" (4 v. p. 65).

That Greek church has ever since continued to be of the same heterodox and corrupt character. The fifteenth edition of "A sketch of the Denominations of the Christian World," by Dr. John Evans, gives the following descriptions and particulars, relating to the Greek Church in Russia:—"It differs from the reformed church in the number of the sacraments, in using pictures, in admitting the invocation of the Saints, in transubstantiation, or rather con-

substantiation, and of course, the adoration of the host; and though it rejects purgatory, it has something that may be said to resemble it; and it admits masses and services for the dead.”

“The Greek Church equals the Romish Church, in the number of ceremonies, and superstitious customs; some of which are thus described in Chanbren’s travels, into Russia:—“ At the beginning of the year,—the King’s day,—is a singular festival, which they call the *Benediction of Waters!* On the Neva, then frozen, there is raised for the ceremony a kind of temple, of an octagonal figure, on the top of which there is a St. John the Baptist, and the inside is decorated with pictures, representing the baptism of Jesus, his transfiguration, and some other parts of his life. There, your attention is drawn to an enormous Holy Ghost, appearing to descend from heaven; a decoration common in the Greek Church, which introduces the Holy Ghost everywhere. In the middle of the Sanctuary, is a square place, where the broken ice leaves a communication with the waters running below, and the rest is ornamented with rich tapestry. Around this temple there is erected a kind of gallery, which communicates with one of the windows of the Imperial palace, at which the Empress with her family come out, to attend the ceremony, which begins as soon as the regiment of the guards have taken post on the river. Then the Archbishop, at the sound of the bells, and of the artillery of the fortress, comes out of the palace, and walks in procession with all his clergy, to the little temple we have just mentioned. When arrived at the place where the ice is broken, he descends by means of a ladder, to the side of the water. *There* he dips his cross three or four times, afterwards says some prayers, an orison to the great St. Nicholas, and the waters are then thought blessed. The prelate sprinkles the water on the company around him, and on the colours of all the regiments that happen to be at St. Petersburg. After this benediction, the Archbishop retires. Then the people crowd towards the hole by which this prelate has blessed the waters. They drink of them with holy avidity. Notwithstanding the cold, the mothers plunge their infants, and the old men their heads, into them. Everybody makes it a duty to carry away some for the purification of their houses, and curing certain distempers, against which the good Russians pretend this holy water is a powerful specific.”

“The administration of baptism by the Greek Church, is truly curious, and worthy of attention.” “*Exorcism* is used on the occasion. When the child is baptised, the priest immediately proceeds to anoint it with the *holy chrism*; for this, though reckoned a distinct mystery, is inseparable from baptism. Previous to baptism, the child was anointed with oil, which was likewise used in the consecration of the baptismal water; but this *chrism* is very different from it, and consists of various oils, and other precious ingredients, which, in different proportions, are all boiled together, and afterwards solemnly consecrated by a bishop. It can be prepared *only* by a bishop, and *only* on Maunday Thursday, that is, Thursday in Passion week. This anointing, the Greeks call ‘the seal of the gift of the Holy Ghost,’ which words the priest repeats, while he applies the *chrism*, or holy oil, to the forehead, eyes, nostrils, mouth, ears, breast, hands, and feet of the child. Immediately after, or some days after, as ordered, the child is again brought to the church, when the priest, after praying for it, unties its girdle and linen clothes, and taking a new sponge, moistened with clear water, he washes its face, breast, &c., saying,—‘thou hast been *baptized, enlightened, anointed, sanctified, and washed* in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, now and forever, even unto ages of ages, amen!’” “There is now in the church of St. Nicholas, at Petersborough, a picture of an *old man, holding a globe*, and surrounded with angels, on which *God the Father* is inscribed.”

Such as described in the foregoing extracts from those valid authorities, has been, and still is, the heterodox and corrupt character of that Eastern Church, to which that Epistle of the Pan Anglican Synod was addressed, styling it an *orthodox church*, and calling its ecclesiastical heads and rulers,—“beloved brethren” and “brethren in the Lord;” and to which Church in Russia, was directed to be conveyed, a resolution of the Synod, expressing sympathy with it, in the loss it has sustained, by the death of the metropolitan of Moscow. It would be a most indecorous and humiliating imputation on the dignified and learned members of that Synod, to suppose that they were ignorant of the tenets and religious ceremonies and observances of that Greek or Eastern Church in Russia. Such ignorance could, indeed, be the only excuse for the appellation,

orthodox and for those *fraternal expressions* in that Synodical Epistle, and for the passing and transmission of that resolution of sympathy. A letter in the like terms, might with equal consistency and propriety have been addressed from that Synod, to similar dignitaries in the Roman Church,—to many of the important doctrines and observances of which Church, the members who composed that Synod, are, by their professed principles, so directly opposed. It would also have been scarcely more inconsistent, to have passed a similar resolution, relating to the death of the head of the Roman Church, or of one of its Cardinals, or other dignitaries. It is not at all suprising, that the really orthodox and faithful portion of both clergy and laity of the English establishment, are so dissatisfied with those proceedings, and other Acts of that Lambeth Synod. Its measures have afforded sufficient grounds for very serious regret and alarm;—*regret* that such a dignified and influential body, should have given any countenance, or signified and held any religious fellowship, with persons at the head of a Church,—if it may be named,—holding such doctrinal errors, and practising such anti-christian and superstitious observances; and of *alarm* as to the consequences of those measures, in reference to the scriptural and pure character of the faith and worship in that English branch of the Christian Church. A further cause for that regret and alarm has arisen from the following Resolution of the lower House of Convocation of the Province of Canterbury at its sittings in July last:—“*Resolved*,—That this House humbly prays His Grace the President, that he will be pleased in conjunction with his brethren of the Episcopal Order to take steps towards opening direct negotiations with the Eastern Patriarchs and Metropolitans with a view to establish such relations between the two communions as shall enable the clergy and laity of either to join in the Sacraments and offices of the other without forfeiting the communion of their own Church.”

Of the Clergy who concurred in that resolution nothing need here be specially remarked in the way of censure. As they must be supposed to have known the doctrines and observances of that Eastern Church, their misguided conduct speaks for itself. Do those members of that House who passed that erroneous and dangerous resolution really wish to have the unscriptural and false

doctrines and superstitious and absurd observances of that Church which have just been set forth, introduced into the English establishment and thereby make a great and grievous addition to the evils and dissensions with which it is now so greatly distracted and afflicted? Such will inevitably be the consequences to some extent should that resolution be carried into effect.

Those proceedings of the Synod and those of Convocation relative to the Greek Church, seem quite irreconcilable with the Scripture injunction, to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints;" to "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness;" and are also inconsistent with the inspired command of the Apostle John—"If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed, for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds." It is related of this loving and beloved Apostle that entering a bath, and seeing Cerinthus the heretic in it, he hastily left, saying, "let us flee, lest the bath should fall, while Cerinthus an enemy of the truth is within it." This relation is given by Milner, who mentions the testimonies as to its verity. What a contrast is also exhibited between those proceedings of that Lambeth Synod, and in the Convocation towards that Anti Christian Russian Church, and the conduct of the holy and zealous Polycarp, who when Marcion the heretic called out to him, in public,—“Own us Polycarp,” he answered, “I do own thee to be the first-born of Satan.”

An œcumenical council, composed of dignitaries of the Roman Catholic Church, is shortly to be held at Rome; at which, as stated in a public religious journal, “the Bishops of the Greek Church have been invited to attend, and to unite in discussions but not in voting;” and it is mentioned, that great numbers of them, from eastern countries named, will accordingly proceed to Rome. This affords an additional proof of the extreme inconsistency and error of that Lambeth Conference, and the House of convocation, desiring and seeking, any intercommunion or fraternization between the Greek Church, and that of the English establishment. The article in the paper, giving the account, declares, that, “in Russia, Erastianism, pure and simple, is the order of the day.”

Agreeably to the intimation on a previous page, I will now

offer some remarks on the very exceptionable character of the Declaration there alluded to, which was framed and recommended by the Lambeth Conference, and has lately been adopted by a Resolution of the Synod of this Diocese—relating to admission into the Sacred Ministry, and on other points; and will mention some injurious consequences, as certain to result from that Declaration. It is set forth in the following words:—“Declaration to be made, (in addition to any declaration required by the rules of the province, or diocese, as to doctrine and worship) by persons to be admitted to holy orders, and by clergymen to be admitted to the cure of souls, or to any other office of trust in the Church:—I, A. B. do declare, that I consent to be bound by all the rules and regulations which have heretofore been made, or which may from time to time be made, by the Synod of the Diocese of————— and the Provincial Synod of—————, or either of them, [and in consideration of being appointed —— I hereby undertake, immediately to resign the said appointment, together with all the rights and emoluments appertaining thereto, if sentence requiring such resignation, should at any time be passed upon me, after due examination had, by the tribunal appointed by the Synods of the aforesaid province and diocese, for the trial of a clergyman; saving all rights of appeal allowed by the said Synod.”]

(The part in brackets to be omitted, when there is no appointment to a cure of souls, or office of trust.)

On this Declaration, I remark first, that it will not ^{only} be in the power of the Bishop, but probably he will consider it *imperative* on him, to require every person presented, or applying to him for ordination into the ministry, to make this Declaration; and if he declines to make it, the Bishop it is almost certain will refuse to ordain him. Now, neither these Synods, nor any such Declaration, previously existed in the Established Church. They are both new and unauthorized measures, as regards both Church and State legal authorities; and the Declaration, therefore, may well be considered as an arbitrary and unlawful addition to the established laws and requisitions, relative to ordination, and admission into the ministry of that Church, and as regards the appointments referred to in that Declaration. As to its consequences, let us consider first, how it will operate as to ordination. Suppose an individual applying for

it, is a truly converted and spiritual person, of unblemished reputation, possessed of fair educational acquirements, and of quite sufficient knowledge of theological subjects; and is so well acquainted with, and so fully assents to, all the articles, canons, rubrics, and other laws and regulations of the Church, as to be fully qualified for admission into the ministry; but he finds some of the existing rules and decisions of the Synod, such as he cannot assent to, with a satisfied judgment and conscience. Or suppose he does assent to all Synodical Acts *then in force*, but is so purely and properly *conscientious*, that he cannot, as the Declaration requires, consent to observe and obey, "all the rules and regulations, which may from time to time be made by the Synod of the diocese, and by the provincial Synod." Now, unless he can and will, in the words of the Declaration, avow that he consents to be bound by all the rules and regulations of those Synods, *then existing*, and also all such as they may *thereafter make*,—which no truly conscientious person could consent to do,—the Bishop, it is nearly certain, *will* deny him ordination. Let it be further supposed, that according to the extreme ritualistic, *novel* and *sensuous* tendencies of the present day, in public religious services, the Synod should establish rules, or sanction, or the Bishop permit, that in such services, some or all, of the following, observances and ceremonies, shall be used and performed;—lighted candles, in the communion place in the day-time,—incense freely used in the various parts of the service,—processions of clergy and attendants, through the aisles of the Church,—crosses adorned with flowers in certain situations in the Church,—an altar table covered with a sumptuous and decorated cloth of fabric and colour specially prescribed,—and that the clergyman, or *priest*, as he is improperly called, be required to array himself, for the performance of certain portions of the service, in vestments of different kinds and colours, not until recently known or used, in the Church; and that in the celebration of the Sacraments he shall at a part of the ceremony, elevate the emblems, at the same time bow repeatedly with his face directed towards a certain quarter; and further that the services shall, far more than at present, be of a *choral, semi-choral, or intoned* description; and that instead of *preaching the prayers*, as has been said, they shall be made in a *choral or intoned* manner. Suppose, I say, that all or

some of these and other anti-christian and superstitious novelties, now observed in several churches in England,—and which, with good reason, are offensive to all the Scripturally pious and devoted members of the Church,—should by a Synod at any time hereafter be ordered for observance, or be sanctioned or permitted by a Bishop within this diocese; such a conscientious or prudent person as has been described, desiring ordination, could not obtain it, because he would not consent to be bound to a compliance with such novel and improper acts and superstitious observances.

The phrase just mentioned, “preaching the prayers,” I have seen, for the first time, in the *Church Chronicle* for July last; and it is there used in *contradistinction* to a *choral*, or *intoning* manner of uttering the prayers; and a preference seems to be there given to this latter mode of performance. To all ordinary and uninitiated persons, it will be very difficult to ascertain or understand, what is meant by this obscure and lately invented phrase, “preaching the prayers.” We all know the meaning of the ordinary terms,—reading the prayers,—saying prayers,—offering up prayers; but the “preaching” them, is quite a novel and enigmatical appellation. We read in Scripture, of “presenting prayer,” “making prayer and supplication,” with other similar expressions; but nowhere, in those inspired oracles, do we find a word or hint, about either *preaching*, or *singing*, or *intoning* the prayers. Our blessed Lord has given us this instruction, “when ye pray,—say ye” &c., and of his petitions in the garden, it is said, “He prayed, *saying* the same words.” He sang a hymn with his disciples, before going to the mount of agony, but his prayers *there*, were in ordinary speech. The *choral* or *singing* method of prayer, if indeed it can properly be called prayer, is not only disagreeably novel, but unscriptural, and may well be considered, to fall within the scripture prohibition against praying and speaking in public worship, in an “unknown tongue.” It is quite possible that a Synod may make some additions to the *choral* manner of offering the public prayers, to which, as to some or all of the other innovations mentioned, a candidate for the Ministry could not conscientiously agree; and consequently, according to the terms of the previously required Declaration, he would be refused ordination.

That Declaration forms a grievance, and an infringement on re-

religious freedom, which affects not merely the members of the Episcopal Church, but all other religious bodies. Members of *these*, will have sons qualified for the Sacred Ministry, as before described, and who would rather enter it in that Church, than in any other denomination. There are now, in this Province, several instances of Clergymen of that Church, whose parents belong to other religious bodies.

Were the respectable lay gentlemen, members of the Synod, who moved and seconded the adoption of that Declaration, aware of the great probability, or rather certainty, that such instances and results as have been described, relating to ordination, would occasionally, or even frequently occur? I am well convinced they had no such apprehensions, or thoughts, or they would not have proposed or agreed to the measure. It is said, that a son of one of those gentlemen, is now preparing for the ministry in the Episcopal Church. It is rather surprising, that a majority of either the Clerical or lay members of the Synod, especially the latter, could and did assent to a measure of such an exclusive and obligatory description. It will inevitably have one injurious effect to the Episcopal Church, that of inducing all such conscientious and judicious persons as have been described, to prefer, and seek admission, into the ministry of some of the *dissenting Churches*.

In addition to the fact, that all Councils, Synods, and other Assemblies of ruling powers, in Churches, have been either altogether, or in the great majority of their members, composed of persons of the clerical order, there is another reason or cause, which as in every other religious system, has ever given that Order, undue and absolute power and influence, in every thing relating to doctrine, worship, and discipline, in the christian religion. That cause has been, the very general and culpable neglect of the laity, to search for themselves, into the sacred oracles, to become truly and accurately informed on those important subjects, and indeed on all others, relating to their christian belief and conduct. They have ever been so ardently engaged in the pursuits of worldly wealth, rank, power and pleasure,—in seeking the gratification of “the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes and the pride of life,”—in some, or many, of the various forms of *sensual indulgence*, that even in the most christian countries, they have greatly neglected

to search, as divinely enjoined, into those inspired records,—the only sure depositories of religious knowledge and truth, and infallible guides to duty, and for obtaining present and everlasting happiness. With those sacred oracles now so abounding, and cheaply obtained, yet the vast majority who profess christianity, still neglect, diligently to examine and study them, to ascertain the sure foundations for their faith and practice ; and to be established in their minds and hearts concerning them ; and to be able to give scriptural reasons and authority for the doctrines, and other essentials of the religion they profess. They seem content to take their religion, such as it is, at *second hand*, from hearing sermons, and occasional exhortations,—in most instances very soon forgotten,—attending other external means and observances, and thus remaining with merely “the form of godliness,” but neither knowing nor possessing the “power thereof,” which alone constitutes *real conversion*, and *true religion*. Take any number of the professed members and adherents of most, if not all, of the different Churches, and let them be questioned to give Scripture passages and testimonies, for their belief of the several doctrines of christianity which they profess to hold ; and I feel persuaded, the great majority of them would be unable to cite such authorities, or be readily, if at all, able to find them in the sacred book. And yet, they, and all others are there told, to look “to the law and to the testimony ;”—to “search the Scriptures ;” and are further commanded,—“receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls ;”—“let the word of Christ dwell in you richly ;” with many similar injunctions to all, to search and learn from those records of infallible truth. Our blessed Lord has said,—“he that receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him, the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.” There is not a word in Scripture, to show, or intimate, that any of those who possess the Scriptures, or can have access to them, will be judged, and acquitted, or condemned, merely from the words and teachings of others. The careless and neglectful persons, who have just been described, are altogether different from each of the pious laity of old, who said,—“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path ;”—“I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways ;”—“Thy word have I hid in my heart, that

"I might not sin against thee." They are unlike the thoughtful and prudent Bereans, who "searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so, therefore many of them believed." That culpable and dangerous neglect of the laity, through all the ages of our Christian dispensation, and down to the present day,—to search and learn,—through their own prayerful earnestness and diligence,—the truths of the Christianity they professed,—has been, and still is, one of the chief causes of the various heresies, unscriptural doctrines, and false and superstitious ceremonies and observances, which have from time to time been introduced into the Churches by the clerical orders, and which have so greatly defaced and so deeply injured Christianity, and hindered its more extensive diffusion and influence. That same general neglect of the Scriptures, by the laity, has prepared the way, and led to an assent and sanction, to the diabolical and cruel persecutions which, under the name and cloak of a zeal for religious truth, so dreadfully scourged and afflicted the faithful servants of God, through so many ages, and brought down such retributive judgments and punishments on those guilty nations, in which such heresies and falsities prevailed, and those atrocious cruelties were perpetrated. Whatever may be urged by way of excuse for the laity, for that carelessness and neglect, in former ages, when there was so much difficulty in obtaining the Scriptures, no excuse can be reasonably offered for such neglect, for now a long period, in modern ages, during which the Sacred Scriptures have been so readily and cheaply attainable, by all who had any desire to obtain them.

That Declaration set forth in a previous page, and adopted by the Synod of this diocese, is not only extremely objectionable and dangerous, as regards ordination into the ministry, but it is equally restrictive and binding and even more objectionable and injurious, in relation to those within the clerical order. It requires every one of these, on being "admitted to the cure of souls, or to any other office of trust in the church," to declare, that he consents to be bound, by all the rules and regulations previously made, "or which may from time to time be made," by the Synod mentioned in the Declaration; and "immediately to resign his appointment, with all the rights and emoluments appertaining thereto, if sentence requiring such resignation, should at any time be passed upon him, after

due examination had, by the tribunal appointed by the said Synods, for the trial of Clergymen; saving all right of appeal allowed by the said Synod." According to this part of the Declaration, every clergyman of a parish, or who holds an office of trust in the Church, who cannot *conscientiously*, and does not, comply with any rule or regulation, prescribed by a Synod, directing the observance of some or all of the novel and objectionable services, ceremonies, and practices, herein before described, or of any other description prescribed by the Synod, he must resign whatever appointment he received and holds under that Declaration. It is a most arbitrary measure, and is not authorized or sanctioned by any laws ecclesiastical or secular, and is contrary to religious freedom, both in the United Kingdom and these American Provinces. It is oppressive in its character and tendency, and if legally sanctioned, or allowed to remain as a rule of the Synod, will, in its operation, inevitably produce most unjust and otherwise injurious consequences, not only as regards the persons to whom it literally applies, but in relation to the purity and other interests of religion generally, within this Province, and other parts of the Diocese. If at any time, its bishop should be favourable to any or all of those novel ritualistic forms and practices, and permits them to be introduced and observed in the Churches; or if they are prescribed or sanctioned by any resolution or act of a Synod, it will, under that Declaration, be in the power of the bishop, to refuse ordination to those who are opposed to those novel and objectionable observances, and to ordain only those who approve of them. Thus, all additions to the ministry, would be only from the latter and exceptionable description, and in time, such might become the character of the whole of the clergy of the diocese.

By further proceedings of that Lambeth Conference, and adopted at the late meeting of the Synod of this diocese, clergymen are made liable to further restrictions and injuries. The following is a part of those proceedings here alluded to: "That every Clergyman removing from one Colonial or Missionary diocese, or district, into another, ought to carry with him letters testimonial, from the Colonial or Missionary bishop, whose diocese or district he is leaving." The form of the letter of recommendation, framed by that Conference, and adopted by the Synod here, is as follows:—"To

the Right Reverend the Bishop, and Reverend the Clergy, and to the faithful in Christ, of the Diocese of A. We, B., by Divine permission, Bishop of C., send greeting in the Lord. We recommend to your brotherly kindness, by these our letters, D. E., Priest [or Deacon] of our own diocese, beseeching you to receive him in the Lord, as a brother sound in the faith, of a well ordered and religious life, and worthy of all Christian fellowship, and to render him any assistance of which he may stand in need; and so we bid you farewell in Christ our Lord. Witness our hand. A., Bishop.
B., Sec'y."

Now, if a clergyman, disapproving of these novel ceremonies and observances, and refusing to comply with them, voluntarily resigned the appointment he held, according to his promise in that Declaration; or if he should be compelled to resign it, by the sentence of the tribunal mentioned therein, and should wish to remove to another diocese, or district, and obtain a cure of souls, or an appointment of trust there, he would not obtain either without that letter of recommendation. This the bishop would, of course, refuse to grant, because of that non-compliance with those ceremonies and observances established by the Synod and sanctioned by the bishop; for it must be borne in mind, that they could not have been established without his assent, as his *veto*, as in other cases, could and would have prevented it. Here, then, would be another and still greater injury, probably even utter ruin to the poor persecuted clergyman, in regard to his temporal interests.

It is but just and proper to mention, that in all the Church assemblies herein treated of, there were some wise and faithful men, who contended against the erroneous proceedings of the other and misguided members, but unhappily, the latter, for the time, formed the majorities.

The proceedings of the Lambeth Conference have been reviewed and scrutinized in a very keen and able manner, by an English writer, in a course of letters, under the signature of "an ex M. P." addressed to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the President of the Conference. In his first letter, referring to those proceedings in relation to the Colonies, he says;—"I apprehend that our Colonies carry with them, and in no small measure, the traditions and feelings which they have imbibed at home;—the dislike of arbitrary

power, the love of English freedom, the reverence for the laws passed by Parliament, and administered by Secular Judges, the dread of arbitrary power, in any shape, and not the least, when laws emanate from Priests, and are administered by Priests Does your Grace believe, that this scheme will be accepted by our Colonies, as a remedy for their difficulties ; or commend itself to the people of England, as an expedient which they can approve ?”

The same writer, in his second letter, in remarking in general terms on the proceedings of the Conference, as regards government and discipline, has written as follows :—“ This is the scheme of government, proposed by Committees of Bishops, for the Colonial Church ; and the scheme is framed, so as to inclose in its iron net, all who call themselves members of the Church of England. The Layman must not act as Churchwarden, or sit in the Synod, unless he has declared his submission to this scheme. The Government Chaplain must not act, till he has a license from the Bishop ; the Missionary must not begin his mission, until he has submitted to this absolute authority, (p. 33.) Nor can any Clergyman, hope to escape this, by flight ; he may leave the Colony, but the grasp of the Bishop follows him. He must seek a passport from his Bishop, (p. 33 ;) and without such passport, no Bishop in any diocese, throughout the wide world, can venture to receive him.”

.....“ We have murmured at our Courts Martial, as too much unrestrained by law : but these Episcopal Courts are far more free in their action, and more full in their powers. Nor is the scheme without precedents. It is borrowed from one of the wisest and most effective governments, that of the Church of Rome. Framed by the subtlest intellects, perfected by long experience, it secures what is sought,—arbitrary and irresponsible power. Your Grace may study it in full operation, now, in Italy, Ireland and France.”

The writer closed his last letter, with the following startling words :—“ If the scheme of the Lambeth Conference ever passes from a project into a fact, it will present a plan of sacerdotal government and judicature, with which the Roman States are familiar, but which is unknown in England.”

It may be tried on in English colonies ; I am sure it will not be long endured. If attempted in England, it will overthrow the Queen’s supremacy, and the constitution of our courts ; but it will

do something more, for it will upset the Church of England. And those who value the church, as the most important, I hope the most lasting of our institutions, will unite in opposing a scheme, so contrary to the laws and liberties of the realm, and to the safety both of Church and State.

By further proceedings in the late meeting of the Synod of this diocese, it appears, that it is intended to make application to the Dominion Parliament, for some legal enactment, authorizing the admission of the two dioceses of Nova Scotia and Fredericton into the present union of the dioceses of the Canadian Provinces, so as thereby to form one supreme Synod, for the whole of the Provinces. Should this design be effected, it will still further, and greatly increase Episcopal power, and final authority; and still more endanger the purity of faith and worship, and the rights and freedom of both clergy and laity. It will enlarge and consolidate the sphere of the Episcopal scheme for government, which the writer, whose remarks have just been quoted, has not unaptly styled, an "iron net." Should the before mentioned application be made to Parliament, for further powers or authority to any Synod, diocesan or Provincial, it may be hoped and expected, that the friends of religious truth and freedom, in the Parliament, will closely examine into the whole subject; and oppose any further enlargement of the sphere and powers of Synods, or of Episcopal authority; and resist every attempt which may be made, to effect measures having any tendency to endanger Scriptural truth and purity, or encroach on true religious liberty.

