

THE
POSITION
OF THE
EVANGELICAL PARTY
IN THE
EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

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BY ALBERT BARNES.

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

THE views of Episcopacy exhibited in the following pages, were first submitted to the public in an article in the "New Englander," for January, 1844. With the consent of the editor of that work, and by the advice of brethren whose opinions it is the duty and pleasure of the author of the article to respect, it is now reprinted in this form. This is done from no desire to interfere with the internal affairs of another denomination, but because the churches and the community have a right to know what is the *essential* tendency of Episcopacy, under its best forms. Entertaining the views expressed in this article, as the result of all the attention which I have been able to give the subject,—though ready to be corrected if I am in error—I have no unwillingness to be known as the author, and it no longer appears as anonymous.

ALBERT BARNES.

*Philadelphia*, Feb. 21, 1844.

# THE POSITION

OF THE

EVANGELICAL PARTY IN THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

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IT is from no desire to intermeddle with the internal affairs of another denomination of Christians, that we introduce to our readers the subject which we have placed at the head of this article. Nor is it from any wish to take advantage of the present troubles and growing dissensions of the Episcopal Church to make converts to our better faith, or to make reprisals for the accessions which they have sought to gain from the disputes and divisions of other denominations. We have listened in calmer times with proper interest to their proclamations of their own unity, while other churches have been rent into factions, or threatened with schism. We have seen a few from other churches, charmed with this proclamation of unity, and professedly won by the hope of peace, leave the connections in which they were trained, and attach themselves to Episcopacy. But they have not been men whose departure the churches have had occasion to regard as a serious calamity, or whose recovery would be worth any very serious effort. We are content that they should minister in their new connection, we hope with greater success than was promised in their former relations,

and with all the peace and comfort which it may be possible for them now to obtain.

We feel that we have a right to advert to this subject only so far as it pertains to the cause of our common Christianity. In their internal affairs; their questions of precedency and order; their family affections or alienations; their domestic difficulties, troubles or joys; their questions about the relative rights and powers of bishops, priests, deacons, or laymen;—we claim no right and have no disposition to interfere. The limits of courtesy and propriety on such matters are settled. With the domestic concerns of a neighbour—the family jars, loves, alienations, modes of living, style of dress or intercourse, we have no right to intermeddle. It is their own concern, and they have a right to manage it in their own way. We are not to be “busy-bodies in other men’s matters.” We are not to attempt to foment divisions; or to aggravate a family quarrel; or to utter the note of triumph over *their* dissensions—though it should be to meet and ward off reproaches on account of our own; nor are we to interfere with a view of encouraging a feebler party against a stronger in order to prolong the strife and rend the family asunder, nor to make needless proclamation of what we may happen to know of the family jar. We go even farther than this. We should not feel ourselves at liberty in such a domestic difficulty to lend our aid or to give our counsel to one of the parties that we regarded as indubitably right, and that held opinions in accordance with our own, in order to prolong the difficulties there or to prevent a reconciliation in any way which they might regard as proper.

But there is a sense in which this becomes a matter of common interest, and in reference to which there is common ground. If the neighbourhood is to be affected by this difference, we have a right to express our views. If there are common interests pertaining to the good order of society that are in danger of suffering, we have a right to lift up the voice in their defence. If principles are advanced by either party which may affect the welfare of the community, we are not at liberty to be silent. If the difficulty is the regular and inevitable result of certain views which both parties publicly proclaim that they hold, we have a right to say so. And if one party is aiming at an impracticable thing; endeavouring, though in the most peaceful manner, and with the purest motives, to maintain principles and to accomplish objects which are in their nature wholly at variance with those on which the family has been uniformly administered, and to which that party also has solemnly expressed its assent, we do not suppose that we are forbidden by any law of courtesy to express our convictions on these points, and to endeavour to derive from this inevitable want of harmony lessons that shall be of value to the common cause.

Such we consider to be the present condition of the Episcopal church. A crisis has occurred in that communion, such as it could have been foreseen by a moderate measure of sagacity must sooner or later occur, and which, however it may be for a time suppressed, we venture to foretell will in some form continue to break out, until "the church" is thoroughly reformed and prelacy abandoned.

In the controversy now waging there, the great interests of our common Christianity are affected.

There are momentous questions at stake in which all who love the religion of the Saviour are interested. There are points of much more importance than any which can be raised about the qualifications of Mr. Arthur Carey for the "deaconship." There are questions respecting the working of the system; its fitness to promote unity; the measures which are adopted to secure harmony; the effect of those measures in suppressing the truth, preventing free discussion, and fostering error, and above all the general effect of the system of Episcopacy on evangelical religion, which it is the duty of every man who conceives it possible--as it may be--that he or his friends should be invited to become an Episcopalian, to examine, and which the present outbreak furnishes an appropriate opportunity to examine. We have never had any sympathy for prelacy. We have never believed that it was the form of religion prescribed in the New Testament. We have always regarded it as a system adapted to cramp and crush the free spirit of the gospel. But we have had no doubt that there were many of the intelligent and the good among the followers of the Lord Jesus, who regarded it conscientiously as the system prescribed in the Bible; and we have supposed that there *were* minds so formed that they would be better edified in connection with that form of religion than under a different method of organization. We think the time now has come to examine the influence of that system on evangelical religion; and in order to make our inquiry definite, we propose to inquire into the present position of the evangelical, or as it is often called, the low church party in the Episcopal church. We shall inquire whether the objects at which they



aim can be secured in that communion, or whether they do not necessarily meet with obstructions in the organization of the Episcopal church which will certainly prevent the accomplishment of those objects; whether there are not in their forms of worship things which will inevitably cramp and crush the free spirit of religion; and whether the Episcopal church is not so organized as effectually to secure the ultimate ascendancy of the objects aimed at by the high church party. In other words the question is, whether Tractarianism is not a fair development of the system, and whether those views, if the present organization of that church should be continued, are not destined to be ultimately triumphant.

It is well known that there have been, perhaps from the commencement of its existence in this country, two parties in the Episcopal church. These parties are generally known by the names of the high and the low church—or as the latter prefer, we believe, to be called, the evangelical party. These parties have grown up, not from the nature of prelacy, or by any tendency in the Episcopal church to foster the aims sought by the evangelical party, but from the contact of Episcopacy with the spirit of our age, and with the free developments of Christianity among the other denominations with whom Episcopalians come necessarily in contact. It is possible that the germs of these parties existed in the Episcopal church in its incipient state in this country, but that which has now grown up into the evangelical party, we suppose would have been suppressed by the overshadowing of the religion of forms, if it had not been excited and kindled by the reflected influence on the Episcopal church of the views and objects of

evangelical Christians in other denominations. It has been apparent that other denominations greatly surpassed the Episcopal communion in zeal for those things specially commended in the New Testament; that they sought a more spiritual religion than had been common in the Episcopal communion; that they aimed more to convert and save the souls of men; and that they sought in methods that had the undoubted sanction of the New Testament to spread the gospel around the globe. The question arose whether these objects could not be grafted on Episcopacy, and whether without producing schism, and with the maintenance of the highest respect for prelacy and for the forms of religion, it was not possible to introduce the evangelical spirit into the bosom of the Episcopal church, and to what was regarded as the nobleness, venerableness, and authority of her ancient forms, add the life and vigour and elastic energy which reigns with such power in other denominations. If so, it seems to have been supposed, there might be urged in favour of prelacy all that is now urged from the necessity of the "apostolic succession;" all the authority of the Fathers; all its boasted power to preserve the unity of the church; and all the advantage derived from a staid and regular organization, united with all that commends evangelical religion to the hearts and consciences of men. It is not to be denied that there have been and are still in the bosom of the Episcopal church, men who strive sincerely and with a zeal not surpassed by those of other denominations, for the conversion of souls. They are men who would do honour to any cause, and whose life and labours would be a blessing to any communion. It is this

party which have endeavoured to engraft the spirit of evangelical religion on the forms of prelacy ; and it is to their holy and devoted efforts that the result has already more than once occurred that the Episcopal church has been in danger of being rent in twain. It is not that they have *aimed at* such a disruption, but it has been that kind of danger which would exist in a colossal statue of marble that a fissure would be caused by applying intense heat to one portion and not to the other. It has required all the power of numbers, influence, and prelatical authority on the part of the high church party, united with all the veneration of the low church party for the church and her forms, to prevent such a rupture. Thus far this has been successful, and in every controversy of this kind the high church party have secured the victory, and the unity of the church has been preserved. We think the history thus far furnishes an omen of most portentous character in regard to the issue of such contentions at present, and in all time to come. We have no expectation that the low church party will ever gain the ascendancy, or carry ultimately a single point. Our reasons for this opinion will be seen in the progress of our remarks.

The present position of the parties in the Episcopal church, is not determined precisely by the different views which characterize the high church and the evangelical party. There has been to some extent, a breaking up of the old lines of demarcation, and a somewhat modified arrangement. The controversy respecting Puseyism, is not precisely the same as the controversy which has hitherto prevailed. To a superficial observer it might have been anticipated,

perhaps, that the low church party would have been found, without an exception, arrayed against the doctrines of the Tractarians, and that the high church portion would have been as uniformly friendly to the Oxford theology. But this, if we correctly understand the matter, has not been precisely the case. A portion of those who have been regarded as high church, have made as strenuous opposition to the advances of this system as have been witnessed in any other quarter ; and some who have been regarded as leaders of the evangelical party, have shown a decided inclination to vindicate the most arrogant form in which the spirit of the Oxford theology could manifest itself in this free country. Those of the high church, moreover, who have resisted these aggressions, have shown no more affinity for the evangelical portion than they did before. In the possible, but not probable event of a rupture in the Episcopal church, they would undoubtedly be found ranged with the friends of the Tractarian cause—no matter what their arrogance, and no matter how near they approximate to Rome—rather than with the evangelical party. This they would do, not because they love Puseyism *more*, but because they love the low church principle *less*. We apprehend also, that if the question of a possible rupture should actually come up in the Episcopal church, it would be found that what there is of the evangelical spirit in the other party would be suppressed or crushed, rather than that matters should come to such a result. Such is the inborn horror in the mind of a genuine Episcopalian at the very word *schism*—though the whole system of Episcopacy is a schism of the worst kind from the proper sense of the unity of the church ; such the love of forms, of peace and of order ; such the

desire not to expose themselves to the possible danger of vitiating the "succession;" and such the belief, in spite of experience, that the free-born spirit of Christianity *may* live and breathe under all the incumbent pressure of those antiquated forms, and may move on to the conquest of the world, fettered and manacled as it must be, that these difficulties with Puseyism would be greatly diminished in their view, and that no one would dare to mention the word *separation*.

But our business now is not directly with Puseyism. We wish to refer to the lines which existed before the slight irregularity in the ranks of the parties, caused by the prevalence of the Tractarian theology, occurred. The characteristics of the two parties before the present difficulties arose in the Episcopal church, we shall proceed to state as we understand them.

The views of the high church party are accurately defined, and the points in which they differ from their low church brethren, as well as from all the denominations of evangelical Christians, are well understood. They have never made any secret of them, and have never propounded them as if they wished to practice any concealment, or regarded them as mysteries to be made known only to the initiated. They hold, if we understand them aright, to the necessity of an actual, uninterrupted succession from the Apostles, in order to the validity of the ministry. They hold, that the ministry of the church consists of three orders, and that the supremacy is in the bishop; that all the power of ordaining is in him, and that no one has any right to officiate as a minister of religion in any form, except in virtue of the imposition of his

hands. They hold, that to him alone appertains the right of confirmation, and that grace, quite desirable, if not essential to salvation, is conveyed by that rite. They hold, that there is no church but the Episcopal church, and that in any other body of persons there is no valid ministry, and are no valid sacraments. They hold to the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and to the efficacy of the sacraments by some kind of *opus operatum*. They hold, that those who have been baptized in a proper manner are to be brought to the bishop and confirmed, as soon as they can say the creed, the Lord's prayer, and the catechism, and are to be admitted to the church without any special inquiry into their spiritual state, or without giving any distinct evidence of a change of heart. They hold, that such is the efficacy of baptism thus administered, of confirmation, of the observance of the eucharist, and of a connection with the true apostolical church, that by this process their salvation will be secure.

They are opposed to revivals of religion, as the term is commonly employed; to prayer meetings; to "night services," and to all "voluntary" societies for the spread of the gospel. They utterly refuse, as a body, to give the Bible without the Prayer-book, and religiously abstain from all connection with any association for promoting any religious object out of connection with "*the Church*." They take no part in a Bible, Sunday school, tract, or missionary society, where persons of other denominations are concerned in the directorship, or where their appearance could be construed as an admission that other denominations appertain to the church of Christ. They are seen on no platform mingling

with other Christians in the promotion of the common cause, and neither by their contributions, their presence, nor their names, do they lend any countenance to any meeting or association which can be construed as a union of different denominations of Christians for any object whatever. As members of the church of Christ, as ministers of his religion, they hold that there can be no common ground on which they can meet others. As citizens, as neighbours, as friends of literature ; as those who may be engaged in the business of mending a road, or building a bridge, they may be connected with others, because these things can not be Episcopally done ; but they go no further. Not even in the temperance cause will they associate with others. Of this we know not exactly the reason, whether they are unfriendly to temperance principles themselves, or whether they regard temperance as a part of religion, and consider that it is not desirable to promote it except somehow through the apostolic succession. We do not recollect that they have given to the public an opportunity of forming an opinion on these points.

As a consequence of these views, they regard all other associations of men, however numerous and respectable, as left "to the uncovenanted mercies of God." They are in this respect on the same platform with the Jew and the Mussulman ; the Japanese and the Caffrarian. From the true church they are "dissenters." They are without valid ordinances, without a valid ministry, and without the promises. They meet in conventicles, not in churches ; they listen to the arguings of laymen, not to the teachings of the authorized ministers of religion. They are

sprinkled in infancy or immersed in riper years, by those who have no authority for doing either; they partake of bread and wine which in nowise differs from common bread and wine, except that they are partaken in smaller quantities and in a "meeting-house;" they are ministered unto by those who would commit sacrilege by putting on the surplice or by going into a pulpit duly consecrated; and they are buried in ground that has never been consecrated, and by those who, as they have no right to address the living in the name of Christ, have no right to officiate at the graves of the dead. They *may* indeed be saved—but who may not be? God is merciful, and they have the same chance of salvation that the better part of the heathen have—and no other. These, if we understand them, are the leading views of the high church party. We have designed not to do injustice to them, and we have the means of substantiating the correctness of this representation by the highest authorities in the Episcopal church.\*

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\* To the view here presented, that the tendency of the high church opinions is to "unchurch" all others, justice requires that we should notice one exception. It is the only one which has fallen under our observation. It is that of the Rt. Rev. H. U. Onderdonk, D. D., of the diocese of Pennsylvania. He says, (Tract on Episcopacy,) "By the present writer this consequence [that of unchurching other denominations] is not allowed." He states no reasons why it is *not* allowed, nor does he attempt to show how this admission of the fact that others are not unchurched, is consistent with certain principles which he has laid down. We have never been able to make out the consistency of the admission with the views which he defends in that "Tract," and we merely record it as a *fact* which we regard as an exception to the general views



The views of the low-church or evangelical party, are not less accurately defined. In most of those things which characterize the high church, they are united with them. They are not "a whit behind the chiefest" of that party in the belief of the apostolic succession; in glorifying the Prayer-book; in attachment to "*the Church*;" in the faith that a valid ministry is found only in connection with prelacy; and in strenuous endeavours to promote the interests of the Episcopal sect. They do no more than the highest Puseyite would do, in recognizing the ministers of another denomination as authorized to preach the gospel or to administer the sacraments. They never invite them to preach, and never appear with them in any such connection as to show that they regard them as the ministers of the Lord Jesus. They recognize their baptism no more, we believe, than they would that of laymen, and, in common with their high-church brethren, they expect that those who come among them from other churches, if private members, will submit to the rite of confirmation; if ministers, that they will abjure their former ordination, and submit to the imposition of

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of that party. We see no way of explaining it, except by ascribing it to the promptings of a benevolent heart, which shrank from the conclusion to which his reasoning was tending, and which led him to express the feeling of kindness even at the sacrifice of logic. Such an expression of feeling we will always honor wherever we find it. We only wish, as the feeling is undoubtedly right, that the logic in the Tract had been such as would have been consistent with it. Is that logic likely to be correct, which would require a man either to suppress such a feeling, or to give vent to it in the face of all his reasoning?

the hands of the prelate. We do not know that in a single instance they have ever protested against this as improper, or even hinted that they regarded the previous ordination as differing in any way from lay-ordination. While they allow one who has been ordained by Papal hands to minister at their altars without being re-ordained, and offer no remonstrance against it, we suppose that there is not a low-church minister in this land who would not be shocked if a Presbyterian minister should be admitted to the rank of a "priest," or even of a "deacon," without being re-ordained. We think too, that they are *as* zealous for the Episcopal church, and for its upbuilding, as any high-churchman can be. It is an object never lost sight of by an Episcopalian, and whatever may be the place in which he is ranked in his controversy between the high and low-church, or in the disputes respecting the Oxford theology, and whatever may be the style of his intercourse with other denominations, the obligation to remember the interests of the Episcopal church is never for a moment forgotten.

But with these views, the low churchman has endeavoured to blend certain others in which he greatly diverges from his high-church brethren, and in which he assimilates himself to other denominations. He does not believe in the efficacy of forms for justification. He does not believe in baptismal regeneration. He holds to the doctrine of regeneration by the agency of the Holy Spirit; in justification solely by faith; in sanctification, not by any *opus operatum* of the sacraments, but by the word and Spirit of God; in the necessity of spiritual religion; in the duties of a holy life; in the obligations

of steady self-denial and a separation from the world. He holds that they who come to the Lord's table should be converted as a qualification, not that they should come to be converted. He claims the right of *not* "bringing those to the bishop to be confirmed," whom he does not regard as having evidence of true conversion. He would guard the church from the admission to its ordinances of any who do not give evidence of true piety.

The low churchman is in general a Calvinist, and frequently of the highest order. He preaches the humbling doctrines of the cross, and advocates the lofty themes of divine sovereignty in the salvation of men.

The low churchman believes in the necessity of special efforts for the salvation of men. He believes that prayer meetings are adapted to promote the edification of believers, and to secure the salvation of sinners. He is no enemy of "night meetings," and is so much the friend of "protracted efforts," that he unites cheerfully in "associations" with his own brethren, and in Episcopal churches, and seeks to turn the bad and unauthorized arrangements of his own church, for the observance of saints' days and especially of Lent, into a series of protracted preaching efforts to promote revivals of religion.

The low churchman is one who is willing to act with the friends of religion, where he can meet them on common ground. He is willing to engage in the circulation of the Bible, though it have not the Prayer-book attached to it—reserving his zeal for the latter to be manifested through a society in his own church specially organized for that purpose, and reserving to himself the right to manifest as much zeal for that

as shall seem to him to be meet. He is willing to act with others in the distribution of tracts on the common topics of religion, and in the establishment of Sabbath schools, even should they not be connected with the Episcopal denomination. In the cause of temperance, of the Sabbath, of promoting the gospel among seamen, and in opposition to the arrogancy and the aggressions of the Papacy, he will meet with other Christians in the same committee-room, or on the same platform, but never *as* clergymen, or in such a way as to imply that those with whom he associates are to be regarded as authorized ministers of the gospel.

We see thus in the Episcopal church two distinct classes of men—classes that must, from the nature of the case, come into frequent collision. We propose now to examine the position of the latter class, especially in regard to their relation to their own church, and to the question whether they can ever succeed in the objects at which they aim. We regard the question as one of great interest and importance, not doubtful in our minds as to the issue, but as a struggle throwing light on the nature of religion, and as adapted to aid us in determining whether prelacy is the form of religion that is revealed in the New Testament. If the experiment should be successful, it would do something to make us less doubtful whether the ministry was organized with “the three orders;”—if it always has been and must be a failure, it is to us a clear demonstration that the church was organized on some other foundation.

We need not say, that in the main our sympathies are wholly with the low-church party. With the aim of the other party we have none; but the low-church

party, so far as they differ from their brethren in the Episcopal communion, are aiming at the same objects as all the rest of the evangelical world, and are endeavouring to promote those views of religion which we believe will ultimately triumph. The question with us is not whether the objects at which they thus aim are right, and will ultimately be somehow secured on the earth, but whether the Episcopal church can be imbued with these principles, and whether they will triumph in the controversies which inevitably arise in their own denomination. Now in reference to this question, we shall state freely some views which seem to us to put this question to rest.

The first is, that the object at which they aim has never yet been accomplished. The experience of the world has been against it. We state a position here which we think is the result of all experiments, and which we challenge the advocates of Episcopacy to refute. It is, **THAT IT HAS NEVER BEEN POSSIBLE PERMANENTLY TO CONNECT THE RELIGION OF FORMS WITH EVANGELICAL RELIGION**; or, what amounts to the same thing, that the Episcopal mode of worship has never been permanently blended with the objects at which the low churchman aims. We will first refer to a few facts sustaining this position. We shall then take occasion to show why it is so.

The attempt to unite the religion of forms with the gospel, has often been made. There have been good men connected with every form of worship. There have been in all ages of the church, men who have maintained the doctrines of grace; men who believed in all that constitutes evangelical religion; men holding to the entire depravity of men, the doctrine of regeneration by the agency of the Holy Spirit, the neces-

sity of holy living and of a close walk with God—who have endeavored to unite these things with the religion of forms. There have been, as there are now, those who have been warm friends of prayer meetings, and of revivals, and of efforts to spread the gospel around the world, who have sighed for the spirit of freedom amidst the pompous and imposing ceremonials of such a religion. They have loved sincerely the forms of religion; and they have loved, with an ardour which nothing could extinguish, the pure doctrines of grace, and the holy aspirations of Christianity. Trained in the bosom of a church prescribing pomp and splendour in public worship, they have brought to its favour all the prejudices of education; accustomed to use a Prayer-book from childhood, they love it as they do the home and the companions of their youth; sincerely believing that Episcopacy is the mode of worship prescribed in the New Testament, they have been bound to it by all the strength of conscience; or in lands where this is prescribed by statute, and where it is the religion of the state, they have felt that every thing of a temporal nature depended on adhesion to it, and have sincerely desired its perpetuity. At the same time they have loved evangelical religion. They have believed that it is the religion of the Bible. They have not doubted that it would finally prevail. They have sought, therefore, to diffuse its spirit through the bosom of the Episcopal church. What now has been the lesson which history has taught us in regard to the relation of the religion of forms to evangelical religion?

The Jewish religion, in the time of the Saviour, was a religion of forms. It had a strong resemblance

in many respects to Episcopacy, and indeed Episcopacy has avowedly borrowed much from it, and often defends itself by a reference to the divinely appointed pomp and pageantry of the temple service. There were, in the time of the Saviour, as there always had been, some pure worshipers of God in connection with that system; for Zacharias and Simeon, Anna, Elisabeth, and Mary were of that number. But the Saviour originated the evangelical system, and detached it at once, wholly and for ever, from the Jewish forms. He severed his whole church from it; required his people to come out of it; pronounced his gospel to be free, and never meant that its freedom should be cramped by the religion of forms. The rites which he appointed for his religion were as few as possible, and the most simple that can be conceived. He designated but two as permanent rites in the church, nor did he appoint any other that can with any propriety be designated as "sacraments," even if these should be. The two which he specified are Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and we venture to say that if every form of religion ever propounded among men were examined, two more simple or unostentatious rites could not be found. As the rites themselves also, are the extreme of simplicity, so he made every thing about them as plain as they possibly could be. He prescribed no baptismal font of massive gold, silver, or marble; but the water taken from a running stream, or from a fountain bursting forth in the desert, would answer all the purposes of the emblem. He ordained no splendid communion-service to contain the symbols of his body and blood; but the plainest cup and platter would suit the design. As these rites are as simple as possible, so it

was reasonable to suppose that they would be as remote as any could be from abuse. They are the last things on which it could be conceived to be possible to rear a gorgeous superstructure of spiritual pomp and power. Who could have imagined that the simple rite of water baptism could ever be magnified into the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, or could become the instrument of giving dignity and supremacy to the holy hands that were appointed to administer it, and thus of sustaining the arrogant claims of a priesthood in the religion of forms, and be so tortured by the "cunning craftiness" of men, as to be a substitute for the regenerating influences of the Holy Spirit? And what finite mind could have anticipated the history of the Lord's Supper? Who could have foreseen what the simple emblems of bread and wine would be made to become when attached to a religion of forms, and what use would be made of them in banishing evangelical religion from the world? Who could have imagined that they would become the principal support of the most extraordinary claims ever set up by a priesthood over men; that the doctrine would be gravely taught and believed, that by words of ceremony they would be changed into "the very body and blood, the soul and divinity of the Son of God;" that they would yet be borne along in gorgeous procession, and that princes and kings would prostrate themselves before them; and that the power of making this wonderful transmutation would be supposed to give to one class of men a sanctity above all others, and a mysterious connection with the Deity elsewhere unknown among mortals? If rites so simple, and so little susceptible of abuse, have been thus made the means of excluding



the agency of the Holy Spirit from the soul, and of establishing the power of the most mighty hierarchy on earth, we see one reason why Christ established no more, and why his whole arrangement was such as most effectually to detach his religion from all connection with the religion of forms. The Jewish religion, eminently a religion of forms, accomplished its object in separating that people from all others, and in adumbrating a future spiritual system. It was adapted to the age of the world during which it was designed to continue, and to the purpose of preparing for a better system, and though it is undeniable that there were holy men under that system, yet its history served among other instructive lessons to teach its own tendency to sink into heartless ceremony, and the difficulty of maintaining spiritual religion in connection with forms; and the Saviour, therefore, detached *his* religion from it for ever. As soon as possible, the Jewish altar was thrown down, the priests were disrobed of their gorgeous vestments, the smoke of incense ceased to ascend, and the temple itself was demolished to be built no more. The spirit of the gospel separated from forms then, nor was it ever to be united with the pomp and ceremonies of the ancient worship.

From the days of Constantine, Christianity became a religion of forms. But where was the spirit of the gospel? Where during the dark ages did it live? Has it ever been known in permanent connection with the Papal communion, or in the Greek, the Armenian, or the Nestorian churches? In all these churches the religion of forms has prevailed, and still prevails, and their history has been characterized by an almost entire separation from the spirit of Chris-

tianity. There has been no permanent connection, and if, under the influences of the Spirit of God, there has been at any time a reviving spirit of piety, after a few efforts to diffuse itself through the cold and slumbering church, it has either died away, or withdrawn where it could breathe the air of freedom. To see this, let a few facts be submitted to the attention of candid men.

Far back in the history of the Papal communion, there was a reviving spirit of the gospel. Some pure spirits arose imbued with the same love of Christ, and feeling the same power of religion, which prevailed in the days of the Apostles; but could they blend their religion with the prevailing religion of forms? They withdrew, and in the peaceful valleys of Piedmont the Waldenses worshiped God "in spirit and in truth," until the fires of martyrdom were lighted on all their hills and through all their vales, by the advocates of the religion of forms, and Rome succeeded in nearly exterminating them.

Again the spirit of vital piety was rekindled in the bosom of the Papal church. Simultaneously, and without concert, a heavenly influence breathed upon the souls of Zuingle, of Luther, of Melancthon, and of Farel. They were all in the bosom of the Papal church; all had been reared in connection with the religion of forms; all had every thing to lose and nothing to gain by a separation; and all by a separation exposed themselves to the thunders of the Vatican—the fearful power that could shake the thrones of princes and cause monarchs to turn pale in their palaces—and to the terrors of the civil arm. Yet, with every inducement to remain in the bosom of the Papal communion arising from education, from

their belief of the heavenly origin of the Papacy, from the love of peace, and from the dread of martyrdom, an attempt to blend the spirit of the gospel that now filled their hearts with holy fire with the cold spirit of the religion of forms, was hopeless,—and hence the Reformation. In Germany, in Switzerland, and in France, as far as the Reformation extended, there was a final separation of the two, nor was there any power of argument, or art, or interest, or arms, that could there unite them.

In England the experiment was to be tried in another manner, and with a much better prospect of success. It was the experiment that was made under Henry VIII., Edward VI., and Elizabeth. There was the genuine spirit of the Reformation in the Anglican church. It reigned not indeed either in the heart of Henry or Elizabeth, but it did in the heart of Edward, and more illustriously still in the hearts of Latimer, Ridley, Bradford and Cranmer, and with these men there was a sincere effort to blend the two together. There was every facility for making the experiment in as satisfactory a manner as possible. Every thing in the protection of the laws, in the power of talent, eloquence, learning and piety, that could be demanded for the successful prosecution of the effort, existed, nor could circumstances ever be well imagined that were more favourable to success. What was the result? It is before the world, and the world has it by heart. The Puritan spirit gradually rose and increased. It became chafed, and galled, and was impatient under the fetters of form. It sighed for freedom; and in a single day two thousand of the best men in the English church left their livings—exposed themselves to poverty, persecution,

and imprisonment, only because the spirit of the gospel could not be permanently blended with the religion of forms. Part of those men went to prison; all were subjected to privations and sorrows in their external circumstances;—but the evangelical spirit was free, and the “church” was left a cold, dead, dull, formal thing. The vital power of the Episcopal communion had withdrawn, and there were no earthly temptations that could ever again induce the Puritan to seek a union with the religion of forms. The experiment had been made under the most advantageous circumstances possible, and it was decisive.

A portion of the band of Puritans, driven from their country to Holland, and then across the ocean, found a refuge on the rock of Plymouth, and gave their religion to this great western world. Here all was free and vast. A boundless territory was spread out before them, and they laid the foundation of a religious system which they intended should be forever separated from a religion of forms. Its effect is seen in the religious activity and zeal, the intelligence and order, the revivals, and the efforts to spread the gospel abroad, which distinguish our republic among the nations of the earth.

But the history of the religion of forms in our father-land is not completed. The separating of the Puritans had left the church a dry, cold, dead thing. Again, however, God visited that church with the special influences of the Holy Spirit, and there was a reviving and quickening spirit of religion. God breathed upon the heart of the Wesleys, and of Fletcher, and of Whitefield, and fired them with as devoted a zeal as had ever warmed the bosom of a

Puritan. They were *in* the church, and were converted when connected with it. They loved it. They shrank back from the very thought of a separation. John Wesley lived, and laboured, and prayed night and day that he might *not* separate himself from the church in which he was reared, but that there might be diffused through all that communion the spirit of evangelical religion. Never was there a more honest, vigorous, or persevering effort to unite the spirit of the gospel with the religion of forms, but in vain. That vital part of the church of England which had been quickened by the Spirit of God, in spite of every effort to bind them together, drew off by itself, breathing the air of freedom and spreading the heavenly fire over continents.

Until the present time, the result of the experiment has been uniform. The religion of forms has never been permanently blended with the gospel. The experiment is again making in our land and in our father-land, with what result is a matter of great interest to the whole Christian world, but what that result will be no one can reasonably doubt. That there should be outbreaks and collisions; that the love of revivals and of prayer-meetings, and the purpose to mingle with other denominations in great efforts to spread the knowledge of the truth, should bring the patrons of these things into conflict with the high-church party, is to be expected. They are the regular results of the existing state of things in the Episcopal church, and they cannot be avoided. Such conflicts will arise, and however much they may be suppressed for a time, and however all parties may unite in singing pæans to the 'unity' of the church, yet the elements of collision, like the pent-up fires of

the volcano, rage within. To keep these elements under ; to prevent entire separation and a prostration of the whole fabric, requires all the power of authority on the one side, and all the yielding of a Christian spirit on the other, and a devout attachment to prelacy in both. It is the spirit of the gospel struggling in bonds and sighing for freedom. The present state of the Episcopal church is but the acting over again of scenes which have been played from the beginning. The spirit of truth will not be bound. It does not breathe and act freely when fettered with forms. It can not go forth freely to the conquest of the souls of men, or to the subjugation of the world. If it lives, it *will* be the spirit of the Apostles—unfettered by forms; the spirit of the Waldenses, of Wickliffe, of Luther, of Farel ; of the Puritans, of Wesley, of Whitefield. Every controversy thus far waged, where the spirit of the gospel has come in conflict with the religion of forms, has had one of two results—either the spirit of the gospel is suppressed and dies away, or the one is severed from the other never to be united again. They never have been, they never can be permanently blended. Such, it requires little sagacity to foresee, must be the result of the present controversy between the two great parties in the Episcopal church. It is just a struggle, whether the love of prelacy, and the cry of unity, and the power of numbers and of wealth, and the influence of the “bishops,” shall be sufficient to crush the rising spirit of the gospel ; or whether there will be vital energy, and independence, and the love of the pure doctrines of the gospel, enough to break away from all this, and be free. We should rejoice in the latter result—we anticipate the former

—and we fear the Episcopal church will still continue to be “*one*.”

We have thus stated one truth, as it seems to us, of great importance in regard to the position of the evangelical party in the Episcopal church, and to the probable result of their struggles. In illustrating the nature of their relative position, and the difficulties with which they have to contend, we now proceed to remark, that *they are compelled to use a liturgy which counteracts the effect of their teaching*. We have stated, that they are no less sincerely attached to the Prayer-book, and no less disposed to laud its excellence above all other uninspired productions, than the most staunch defender of high church principles. And yet, what is the effect of the perpetual use of this book on an attempt to diffuse evangelical doctrines through the Episcopal church.

We do not propose now to go into an examination of the general characteristics of the Prayer-book. We propose to look at it only with reference to the subject before us.

The prescription to use the liturgy in the worship of God, is binding religiously on all the ministers and members of the Episcopal church. The *whole* service for public worship, for marriages, for baptisms, for funerals, is prescribed. Every prayer to be offered is set down; every portion of Scripture to be read is designated, and every address, with the single exception of the sermon, is already composed. At a baptism, a marriage, or a funeral, it does not appear from the canons, that a minister is to be allowed either to offer an extemporary prayer, or to make an extemporary address. Even the form of prayer in a family is prescribed, and the “master or mistress having called together as many of the

family as can conveniently be present, is to *say as follows*—morning and evening. The directions for public worship are all positive and explicit. “The minister *shall* begin the morning prayer by reading one or more of the following portions of Scripture.” “Then the minister *shall* say;” “the people *shall* answer here.” “Then the minister *shall* kneel and say the Lord’s prayer;” “then likewise he *shall* say;” “then *shall* be said or sung the following anthem;” “then *shall* follow a portion of the Psalms;” “then *shall* be read the first lesson according to the table or calendar,” and “before every lesson the minister *shall* say, Here beginneth such a chapter or verse of such a chapter of such a book”—and so on to the end of the Prayer-book. All the discretion which is allowed, appears to be in the choice of some half a dozen “collects” of half a dozen lines each; that at the end of the Venite, Benedicite, Jubilate, Benedictus, Cantate Domino, &c., there “*may* be said or sung the Gloria Patri;” that he has a choice between two forms of the creed—a longer and a shorter form—and that he may introduce into the morning service more or less of the quite tedious communion service. With these unimportant discretionary powers, the prescriptions are absolute, and the design was undoubtedly to render the service of the church wholly uniform. There is *no* discretion given in regard to extemporary prayer. There is no permission on any occasion to go beyond what is written down. If there is any special emergency requiring a form of prayer different from any which are printed, it is proper to wait until it can be prepared in the authorized quarter and sent down to the inferior clergy. There is no per-



mission to hold prayer meetings, and the liturgy does not contemplate any such thing as a prayer meeting. There is not even permission given to the minister to select and read a portion of Scripture that shall have any relation to the subject of his discourse. If his text should be, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son," and the "lesson" for that day should happen to be that chapter of the book of Chronicles which commences thus, "Adam, Sheth, Enosh, Kenan, Mahalaleel, Jered, Henoch, Methuseleh, Lamech," all that the minister is to do, is to say, "here beginneth such a chapter," and read on.

We are aware that the low church party do sometimes hold prayer meetings, and that occasionally an extemporary prayer is offered after sermon, and we will do them the justice to say, that so far as we have heard, their prayers are models of a simple, pure, and holy worship, and are such as to prompt irresistibly to the expression of regret that they are *not* permitted by their book to pour out their souls in this manner, and that they are fettered by forms. But we believe that they themselves regard such prayers, and such prayer meetings, as a departure from the prescribed mode of worship. We know that the high church party consider them a direct violation of the prescribed rules of the church. *We* consider them as wholly unauthorized by the church. We see no permission of such things; we see no latitude of discretion in regard to such things; we believe that such a thing as a prayer meeting, where extemporary prayer should be offered, and especially by laymen, is a thing not contemplated by the canons of the Episcopal church.

What then is the inevitable tendency of the constant

use of the liturgy according to the manner prescribed? Or, which amounts to the same thing so far as the subject before us is concerned, what must be the effect of its use even as it is employed by the low church party, in regard to the preaching of evangelical doctrines? They hold, we have conceded, the great doctrines of grace. They teach the necessity of regeneration by the agency of the Holy Spirit. They insist on the doctrine of justification by faith. They are friendly to revivals of religion. Do the arrangements in the liturgy harmonize with these efforts? So far from it, we think, that their teaching and the Prayer-book come into perpetual conflict; and where the Prayer-book is to be perpetually used, the result of such a conflict cannot be doubtful.

We do not advert now to the fact, though we might do it, that *preaching* in the Episcopal church is quite a secondary thing, and that the arrangement is so made as to allow it to produce as little effect as possible. A whole hour of the service, if performed with any degree of deliberate solemnity, is occupied inevitably with the prayers and other forms of devotion. After this protracted and wearisome service, it can not be supposed that the mind will be in a very desirable state to listen to a *sermon* of any considerable length. The ordinary length of Episcopal sermons—from fifteen to twenty minutes—we regard as in entire accordance with the arrangements in the Episcopal church; a sermon of fifty minutes or an hour, becomes intolerable. In another communion—the mother of Episcopacy—the *pulpit* is placed in a corner of the church; in the Episcopal church the *sermon* is designed to occupy the same relative position.

But the difficulties encountered by the evangelical party lie deeper than this. We mean, that they are compelled perpetually to use a liturgy which counteracts all their teaching. The liturgy is opposed to the views of the low church Episcopalian, and to the whole influence of his teaching, and is a *constant* influence. To some of the views thus constantly brought before the people in the Prayer-book, opposed to the evangelical teaching, we will now advert.

There is, first, the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, a doctrine which we regard as the undoubted teaching of the Prayer-book, and which presents a constantly counteracting influence to the doctrine of the necessity of a change of heart by the agency of the Holy Spirit accompanying the truth. The doctrine of the Prayer-book is, that a child that is baptized in the proper manner, is "regenerated by the Holy Ghost." The language of the liturgy on this subject is as explicit as language can be, and we have never seen any explanation by the advocates of low church views, which seemed to us to have the least degree of plausibility. The language on this subject in respect to the public baptism of infant children, is the following. The "minister," after the baptism and making the sign of the cross, is commanded to "say"—"Seeing now, dearly beloved, that this child is regenerate, and grafted into the body of Christ's church, let us give thanks unto Almighty God for these benefits," &c.—"We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant *with thy Holy Spirit*, to receive him for thine own child by adoption, and to incorporate him into thy holy church." The same doctrine is expressed in refer-

ence to the private "baptism of children." After the baptism, and the sign of the cross, the "minister" is directed also to "say"—"this child is regenerate, and grafted into the body of Christ's church"—and in like manner to give thanks, "that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit, to receive him for thine own child by adoption, and to incorporate him into thy holy church." But this doctrine, that by baptism there is regenerating grace bestowed by the Holy Spirit, is held not only in reference to infants and children, but if possible, still more clearly in reference to "those of riper years." In the canonical directions on this subject, we find in the Prayer-book the following things. (1.) The people are told that "all men are conceived and born in sin," that "none can enter into the kingdom of God, except they be regenerate and born anew of water and of the Holy Ghost," and are exhorted to "call upon God the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ, that of his bounteous goodness he will grant to these persons that which by nature they can not have, that they may be baptized with water *and the Holy Ghost.*" (2.) The following prayers are then directed to be offered. "Mercifully look upon these thy servants; wash them, and sanctify them *with the Holy Ghost*; that they being delivered from thy wrath, may be received into the ark of Christ's church." And again: "Give thy Holy Spirit to these persons, that they may be born again, and be made heirs of everlasting salvation, through our Lord Jesus Christ." (3.) After baptism, and the sign of the cross, the minister is directed to say:—"Seeing now, dearly beloved, that these persons *are regenerate*, and grafted into the body of Christ's

church, let us give thanks unto Almighty God for these benefits." The thanksgiving then follows, and then this prayer. "Give thy Holy Spirit to these persons; that *being now born again, and made heirs of everlasting salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ*, they may *continue* thy servants," &c. Here is a regular order in the teachings, prayers, and thanksgivings, all implying the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and all implying that that regeneration is accomplished by the Holy Ghost. There is the exhortation to the people to pray for this, then the prayer actually offered for it, and then a solemn form of thanksgiving that it has been done. And that this is the true teaching of the liturgy on this subject, and that the meaning is not, as some Episcopalians have endeavored to show, that the word "regeneration" here means a mere "change of state," or a transition from the world into the church, seems to us to be perfectly clear—for, (1.) Such is not the meaning of the Scripture terms, "regeneration," and "being born again," employed in this service. In the Bible they can not be understood to have this meaning, and there is no evidence that the framers of the liturgy meant to depart from the Scripture usage. (2.) The regeneration here spoken of, is not a mere "change of state or relation." It is a change of regeneration *by the Holy Ghost*. This is what is prayed for, what is taught as having been accomplished, and that for which "heartly thanks" are given when the form of baptism is passed through. Now regeneration by the agency of the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures, means a definite thing. It is not a transition from heathenism to nominal Christianity ;

it is not a mere profession of religion ; it is a work on the heart itself, by which *that* is changed, and by which the soul begins to live anew unto God. (3.) This *can not* be the meaning in the liturgy. Is it possible to believe that sensible men should gravely intreat a whole congregation to offer fervent prayers, that certain persons then present might be enabled to *join a church* ? Is it necessary for all this parade and ceremony, and all this solemn invocation of the special aid of God's Holy Spirit, that they might be enabled to *change their relation* ? Is this a work so difficult to be performed, as to need the special interposition of heaven in the case ; a work which no one could hope to be able to do without the particular influences of the Spirit of God ? And is religion in the Episcopal church such a solemn trifling as this representation would imply ? We do not believe it ; and despite all the efforts of the low church Episcopalians to explain this, we believe that the high church and the Puseyites have the fair interpretation of this part of the liturgy, that it is intended to teach the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and that this will be the impression ever made on the great mass of those who use the Prayer-book.

Now these prayers, teachings, and thanksgivings, occur constantly. Whenever an infant or an adult is to be baptized, the low churchman as well as the high churchman, is compelled to publish this doctrine. He has no discretion. The whole service from beginning to end is to be read through, and no matter what may be his public teaching as a preacher, or his private views, here he is under a necessity of teaching the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. He gives public thanks in referrence to every child, as

well as every adult, that is baptized and sealed with the sign of the cross, that he is regenerated by the Holy Ghost and made an heir of everlasting life. What will be then the force of his preaching on the subject of the new birth, or a change of heart in the proper sense of the term? What impression will be made on those already "regenerated by the Holy Ghost" in baptism, in regard to this? Can such preaching be intended for them? Can it be applicable to any but the heathen and the unbaptized; to pagans, scoffers, and "dissenters?" Are not all others already born again?

A second difficulty of a similar kind derived from the liturgy, with which the evangelical churchman is obliged to contend, relates to the doctrine of "confirmation." If we understand the views of low churchmen, they accord with our own in regard to the necessity of a change of heart, and of evidence of personal piety, as qualifications for communion. They do not suppose that regenerating grace is conferred either by confirmation or the "eucharist," nor do they hold that persons should be admitted to either, without evidence of personal religion. We believe that they are sincerely aiming to guard the Lord's table from the approach of all who do not give evidence that they are truly "born again"—not by baptism, but by the Holy Spirit of God.

They are undoubtedly right in these views, but are these the views of their liturgy? Does the Prayer-book contemplate this? Have they, as Episcopalians, a right to insist on this, and to exclude from "confirmation" and the Lord's supper, all who do not give *them* evidence that they are truly converted, or are truly pious? We think they have not; and

that in their efforts on this subject they are not only departing from their own standards, but are in the very matter compelled to use a liturgy, the tendency of which is to counteract and render nugatory all their own instructions and efforts. We believe that the Prayer-book does not contemplate, in order to confirmation, any other regeneration than that of water-baptism, or any other qualification than that of following out the arrangement at baptism. In support of this, we turn at once to the Prayer-book itself, and find the arrangements there contemplated in reference to "confirmation" and the Lord's supper, to be the following. The minister is directed to say, not to the parents of the child, but to the "godfathers and godmothers," after baptism is administered, "Ye are to take care that this child be brought to the bishop to be confirmed by him, so soon as he can say the creed, the Lord's prayer, and the ten commandments, and is sufficiently instructed in the other parts of the church catechism set forth for that purpose." We observe here no requirement of any change of heart, or of any evidence of piety whatever. We do not believe that an acquaintance with the creed, the Lord's prayer, the ten commandments, and the church catechism, necessarily infers the possession of renewing and saving grace, and as these are all that are specified, we do not see what right any churchman has to add thereto. To us, the only question which it would seem to be proper to propound to a candidate for confirmation would be, whether he could "say the creed, the Lord's prayer, the ten commandments," and the "parts of the church catechism set forth for that purpose." Why has the minister a right to *require* any thing more?



Why is he any more at liberty to demand evidence of what *he* regards as a change of heart, than he has to insist that the candidate shall be familiar with the Westminster Confession or the Saybrook Platform? As these are all the requirements specified, we naturally turn to "the other parts of the church catechism set forth" with reference to the rite of confirmation, to inquire whether *that* contemplates a change of heart as a qualification for that rite.

The church catechism has the following title in the Prayer-book, "A catechism; that is to say, An *Instruction*, to be learned by every person before he is brought to the Bishop to be confirmed by the Bishop." The qualification which is here specified, in accordance with that which is stated at the baptism as necessary in order to confirmation, is not that there shall be evidence of a change of heart, or any vital transformation of character after baptism, but that this catechism has been *learned*, that is, committed to memory, before he is brought to the bishop.

This catechism contains the creed, the ten commandments, the Lord's prayer, and a few questions and answers growing out of each, and on the nature of the sacraments. The question is, with what qualifications and character one would "be brought to the bishop" who should have strictly complied with the directions in the Prayer-book? Would it be necessary that he should furnish evidence of a change of heart, or would it be right to reject his application for the communion, if he could "*say* the creed, the Lord's prayer, and the ten commandments, and had learned the other parts of the church catechism set forth for that purpose?" These

qualifications may be learned from a few of the questions directed to be proposed to the candidate, and the answers which he is required to give. The first thing which we meet with is the odious doctrine of baptismal regeneration—the elementary idea of Episcopacy as it is in the Prayer-book, and a doctrine on which all that is required to be said by the candidate is based. “*Question.* What is your name? *Ans.* N. or M. *Quest.* Who gave you this name? *Ans.* My sponsors in baptism; *wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.*” Here we would propound a “question” to those Episcopalians who endeavour to show that regeneration in the Prayer-book does not mean a change of heart, but a change of state. It is this. What more can there be in the new birth, or in regeneration as effected by the Spirit of God, than to be made “a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven?” Yet all this the candidate is to affirm was secured to him in baptism. The same doctrine we have, affirmed again, if possible, in still stronger terms in this same catechism which is to be “learned.” “*Quest.* What is the outward visible sign or form in baptism? *Ans.* Water; wherein the person is baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Quest.* What is the inward and spiritual grace? *Ans.* A death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness: For being by nature born unto sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace.” That all this is supposed to be conferred by baptism, is apparent from the previous answers on the nature of the sacraments. “*Quest.*

How many sacraments hath Christ ordained in his church? *Ans.* Two only, as generally necessary unto salvation; that is to say, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. *Quest.* What meanest thou by this word *Sacrament*? *Ans.* I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, given unto us, ordained by Christ himself; *as a means whereby we RECEIVE the same, and a PLEDGE to assure us thereof.*" The necessity of grace is not indeed any where denied, but it is affirmed here, as it is implied every where in the Prayer-book, that the grace is imparted at baptism, and that the "invisible sign" and the "inward grace" go together.

With these views, and having "learned" to say these things, the candidate is to be brought to the bishop to be confirmed. We are ready to acknowledge, that many or most of the questions directed to be propounded to the candidate are solemn and pertinent. On the supposition that they were propounded to one who had been *truly* converted, they are such questions as ought to be proposed to all who make a profession of religion. But what is their weight, or power, or pertinency, when addressed to one who is taught to say that by infant baptism he was "made a child of God, a member of Christ, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven," and that his sponsors made certain promises for him in baptism which he has come now to relieve them from, by ratifying them himself?

Now what will be the effect of this standing and stereotyped system of instruction on the preaching of the evangelical part of the Episcopal church? They aim to teach a different thing from this. They strive to teach, and they really believe, that water

baptism, however administered, does *not* impart all the grace which is needful to the salvation of the soul. But here stands this catechism which they are to teach, and which conveys lessons so plain that it is supposed a child may understand them, and alas, so plain that we fear they *are* understood and believed by the great mass of those who are “brought to the bishop to be confirmed.” We can easily imagine what the effect would be, if in a Congregational or Presbyterian church, all the children were to be taught that regeneration was imparted by baptism properly administered, and that all they had to do in order to be qualified for the communion, was to “learn to *say* this.” Where would be our revivals of religion?

We are aware that the evangelical party in the Episcopal church endeavour to evade this. We know that many of them insist that the candidates for confirmation shall give evidence to them that they are truly converted, and that by the exercise of what they seem to regard as their right, they restrain those from confirmation whom *they* do not judge to be qualified for the communion. Aware of the obvious and dangerous tendency of the system as set down in the Prayer-book, they claim the right of *not* presenting to the bishop for confirmation those whom they do not regard as qualified for it. We have no doubt that in doing this they are acting in accordance with the New Testament, which plainly teaches that repentance and faith are indispensable qualifications for the Lord’s table. But is this Episcopacy? Have they this right according to the canons of their own church? We think not. We are willing to allow that there must be some discre-

tion allowed to the officiating minister or rector of a parish in regard to those who are to be presented, as the fair rules of interpretation seem to demand that he shall not be required to present those who are open infidels, or who are grossly immoral. But has he a right to put his own interpretation on what constitutes a proper qualification ; to say that baptism does *not* mean regeneration ; that the child that was baptized was *not* “ made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven ;” that it has *not* “ pleased God to regenerate him with his Holy Spirit” when he was baptized : but that another kind of regeneration is necessary, and to withhold him from confirmation until he has himself the evidence that he is born again ? Has he a right to set his own views thus against the teaching of the church, and to insist that his views shall be complied with contrary to the obvious meaning of the canons, and to the almost unbroken custom of the church ? We think not. We think that by becoming an Episcopal minister, he binds himself to act in accordance with the obvious meaning of the liturgy in this respect, and that however his soul may revolt at it, and however contrary all this may be to his convictions of what is taught in the New Testament, as long as he chooses to remain in the church, he has no discretion. He is the servant of the church. He has received this Prayer-book as his guide, and it is his to carry out its views. If he is dissatisfied with them, the way is clear. It is to leave the communion ; it is not to introduce and defend practices contrary to the elementary conceptions of Episcopacy.

There is another thought. The church may be

regarded as making a sort of compact with every child that is duly baptized, that if he will comply with her regulations, he shall be entitled at the proper time to whatever advantage there may be in her full fellowship and favour. There is a pledge given, through the sponsors at baptism, that if the course of life which is then recommended is pursued, the child as soon as he can say the creed, the ten commandments, and has been suitably instructed in the other parts of the catechism, shall be entitled to the privilege of confirmation. We believe that he may forfeit this by an unholy and wicked life, but not by any interpretation which his pastor may choose to put on the terms of the compact implying that he was *not* made a member of Christ and a child of God. On this subject, we think, the case is wholly parallel with that of one who becomes a "candidate for orders" in the Episcopal church; and as such a candidate, if he complies with the canons in the case, has a *right* to ordination in the church, so has a youth who has been baptized, and who has learned to say what is taught him, a right to confirmation. The right in the one case is as clear as in the other. On this subject, and with reference to this principle, we shall here submit the views of a gentleman who deservedly occupies a very prominent position, not only in the Evangelical portion of the Episcopal church, but in the ministry of this country, in regard to the ordination of Mr. Arthur Carey. The reasoning, *mutatis mutandis*, applies as well to the case before us as to the ordination of Mr. Carey.

"It becomes, therefore, a very important question to consider, what are the rights of a candidate for

orders. In doing this, I shall not deem it necessary to refer to particular canons, which are well known, but to consider the course through which a candidate is led by the authority and the appointment of the church. Our canons lay open this path with great distinctness. They also guard it, and limit it, with very marked and peculiar restraints. The question is, does a perfect compliance with all these directions and restraints give, from the church to the candidate, a right to expect and to claim his orders at the last, nothing appearing in any legal way to vitiate this performance of his required cause? A young man is invited to become a candidate for orders, for the plan laid out for him amounts to an invitation. He obtains his certificates of personal character, and is regularly received and recorded by the bishop as a candidate. He pursues his prescribed course of studies under the direction of his bishop. He passes satisfactorily to the bishop and presbyters his required examination. He presents his regular certificates for ordination. He subscribes the required declaration of conformity. He has thus finished and completed his prescribed course of education to the satisfaction of the authorities under which he has been placed. Now has he acquired a right upon the faith of the church, with whose prescription he has fully complied, to the ordination which he seeks? It must be granted, of course, that if his qualifications, mental or moral, are ultimately found insufficient, he may be justly rejected. If his examining bishop and presbyters are dissatisfied with the one, they have certainly the right to reject him there. If any persons are acquainted with moral crimes, which, if known, would actually overturn all the worth and

influence of his certificates of character, they may declare them at the very last moment, and he may be arrested there. But if his examinations have been satisfactory to the persons appointed to direct them, and his character is unstained with moral crime, has he not a right secured to him to the ordination, for which he has fulfilled his appointed preparation? Or is it to be considered by him, and for him, utterly uncertain, to the very last moment, whether he shall be allowed to gain the object of his wish? May he finish his curriculum of study, and fulfil every requisition of the church under whose care he is placed, receive the approbation of the chief ministers appointed over him, gain all the required certificates of unspotted character, and be admitted to record his name in the bishop's register, to the constitutional promise of conformity to the doctrine and discipline of the church, and thus have his acceptance to orders as it were acknowledged to him, and his mind authorized to rest in peaceful expectation of his ordination, and yet may he be exposed to be arrested, in the very attainment of his desire, by the possible judgment of two persons in the assembled congregation, that he is deficient or erroneous in religious doctrine, or theological training? I confess this amounts in my view to extreme oppression. What young man of honourable and ingenuous feelings would be willing to expose himself to this possible disgrace, and this entire uncertainty of prospect? Or what Christian parent would be willing, in the face of such a hazard, to commit his son to the faith and guardianship of a church, whose system of law was so insecure, and so destitute of all protection to his character or prospects? Yet if



the principle that a final protest, founded upon the personal suspicion or conviction of any persons, that the theological attainments and preparation of the candidate are insufficient or unsound, is to be of necessity regarded, and acted upon by the bishop ordaining, to what other result than this shall we be brought? Will it not completely unsettle our whole church, in thus undermining the just prospects and rights of the ministry at the very commencement of their course? Will not the secret reservation of such arbitrary and irresponsible power, amount to a complete exclusion of desirable candidates from our ministry? I am necessarily led, therefore, from these considerations to the conviction, that there are rights secured to the candidate, upon the implied faith of the church. The connection seems to me to have the aspect of a mutual contract. The candidate voluntarily yields himself to restraints and laws, to which he was not before subject, to gain advantages and benefits, which are thus promised and secured to him. The church therefore comes under an obligation to bestow upon him, on the fulfilment of his part of the contract, the advantages of a ministry, to which it has encouraged him to look; and he in consequence, has a right to the result of his labours, which can not be justly withheld from him?" \*

Now with these principles, we do not see how a minister of the Episcopal church can refuse to present

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\* Letter of the Rev. Stephen H. Tyng, D. D., in relation to the ordination of Mr. Arthur Carey, published in the Episcopal Recorder, October, 1843. This letter was understood at the time of the publication to have been written by Dr. Tyng, and in a subsequent number of the Recorder this is admitted.

a candidate for confirmation who has complied with the directions in the rubric, even though he should not give him evidence that his heart was changed. One of the difficulties, then, with which the evangelical party has to contend, is, that the grand, the leading object of an evangelical ministry every where—the conversion of the soul to God by the truth, the quickening of a spirit dead in sin by the preached gospel, the conversion and salvation of the lost by the mighty power of the Holy Spirit—meets with this counteracting, this all-pervading influence in the Prayer-book; and that despite his private convictions and all his sense of what is right and true, he is under the high obligation of his ministerial vows to act *as if* a baptized child were made “regenerate with the Holy Ghost,” and was “a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.”

Our next remark in regard to the position of the evangelical party, is, that there are no arrangements or provisions in the liturgy for promoting their peculiar and distinctive efforts, or which contemplate such efforts. In looking over the Prayer-book which the low-churchman, in common with all other Episcopalians, is under an obligation constantly to use, the question at once occurs whether those things at which he distinctively aims are contemplated there? Do they fall in with the design of the Prayer-book? Was it the intention of the authors of the Prayer-book to promote them, and have they made arrangements for them? Or are the peculiar things which constitute the characteristics of the low-church party, and which they are endeavouring so zealously, and with so much of the spirit of the gospel, to promote, things which they have superinduced upon the

liturgy, and which they are compelled to carry forward by a system of independent arrangements? We are constrained to believe that the latter is the case, for the following reasons.

1. We think that Christian missions to the heathen are not contemplated by the Prayer-book. They were not regarded as distinct objects of Christian effort at the time when the Prayer-book was made, and it has not been, and we presume could not now so be moulded, as to adapt it to the present views of protestant Christians in their efforts to spread the gospel around the world. To say nothing of the cumbrous and unwieldy nature of the forms of Episcopacy in reference to missions—of the perplexities which must meet a missionary who should attempt to go through the liturgy in a heathen community—of the changes of vestments and postures which it contemplates, the alternations from prayer to praise, from reading now by the priest and now by the people—of the difficulties arising from the contemplated necessity of responses on the part of the people, there are other things which lead us to think that the Prayer-book was not designed to be adapted to missionary operations. There are no references to such efforts; no prayers directed to be offered for the success of missions; no allusions to churches gathered among the heathen; no petitions that the people may be imbued with the missionary spirit; no supplications that the missionary in heathen lands may be sustained in his trials, and encouraged in his work. We believe that a congregation of Episcopalians might use the Prayer-book any given time, and strictly conform to all the prescriptions of the rubric, and never have the missionary spirit excited

in the least conceivable degree, and never dream, from any use of that book, that it is the duty of the Christian church to spread the gospel around the world. We have reflected with some care on the forms of prayer there prescribed, and we have been able to recall in all the petitions and all the collects only the following that has any bearing on this subject—unless the incessant repetition of the Lord's Prayer, morning, mid-day and evening, and at all times, be an exception—a repetition amounting, as far as the use of that beautiful form can be made to, to the *βαπτολογια* so pointedly condemned by the Saviour, (Matt. 6, 7)—a repetition which seems to be intended to be a substitute for all sorts of petitions that ought to be offered. We find the following petitions, and those only, bearing on missions. The first occurs in the "Prayer for all Conditions of Men." "O God, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, we humbly beseech thee for all sorts and conditions of men, that thou wouldst be pleased to make thy ways known unto them, thy saving health unto all nations." This occurs again in the evening prayer, and this, besides the petition in the Lord's prayer, is the solitary petition which is regularly offered by the whole Episcopal church from Sabbath to Sabbath, for the universal spread of the gospel of Christ. Beside this, in one of the "collects," for Good Friday, designed to be used but once in the year, we find the following petition:—"O merciful God, who hast made all men, and hatest nothing that thou hast made, nor desirest the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live; have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, infidels and heretics, and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and con-

tempt of thy word, and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to thy flock, that they may be saved among the remnants of the true Israelites," &c. The fact here adverted to is the more remarkable, because in the numerous instances in which "collects" are appointed to be said, occasions are constantly occurring where it would seem almost unavoidable to make *some* allusion, and to offer *some* petition, for the spread of the gospel among the heathen, and for the success of Christian missions. Thus in the collect for "The Epiphany, or the Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles," we have this prayer: "O God, who by the leading of a star didst manifest thy only begotten Son to the Gentiles, mercifully grant that *we*, who know thee now by faith, may after this life have the fruition of thy glorious Godhead, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Thus in the collect on the "Conversion of St. Paul:" "O God, who through the preaching of the blessed Apostle Saint Paul, has caused the light of the gospel to shine throughout the world, grant, we beseech thee, that *we*, having his wonderful conversion in remembrance, may show forth our thankfulness unto thee for the same, by following the holy doctrines which he taught, through Jesus Christ our Lord." So on "St. Peter's Day," and "St. James the Apostle," and "St. Bartholomew the Apostle," and "St. Matthew the Apostle," "St. Michael and all Angels," "St. Simon and St. Jude, Apostles," and "All Saints Day," we have the same utter want of allusion to the Christian duty of spreading the gospel—as if none of these Apostles had ever done any thing in such a cause, or as if "St. Michael" and "All the Saints" had no interest in the universal diffusion of Christianity. It is re-

markable, we think, that so many "collects" *could* have been made by Christian men, without a recollection that the "Saints" whose virtues are thus commended, were distinguished more than for any thing else in spreading the gospel among the heathen, and that the thing in which the church ought specifically to imitate them is their fidelity in obeying the Redeemer's last command. A missionary society, or a missionary effort, whether in connection with other Christians or by themselves, is a thing we believe unknown to the constitution of the Episcopal church. That constitution contemplates a regularly organized congregation, and all the efforts which are made by that church in behalf of missions are efforts not contemplated by her liturgy.

2. Revivals of religion are not contemplated by the Prayer-book. We believe that this would be adverted to by the high-church party as an evidence of the excellence of the book itself, if not as a proof of its semi-inspiration. But the evangelical party have different views of the desirableness of such works of grace. We believe that they as sincerely rejoice as others do when the Spirit of God descends with power on a people, and when many are brought simultaneously to embrace the Saviour. In the proper measures for promoting such a work, they sympathize with their brethren of other churches. They would dwell on the same topics in preaching; urge with the same ardour the doctrines of depravity, of justification by faith, and of the necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit, and give substantially the same counsel to an inquiring sinner. They admit the efficacy of protracted services, or as they choose to call them, "associations;" and in addition to such

services of a "voluntary" character, they propose to avail themselves of what would otherwise be the cold and benumbing influence of the long season of fasting in "Lent." But what is the relation of the Prayer-book to such efforts? What aid could be derived from that book in a work of grace? What would be the effect of the sole use of that book in endeavouring to promote a revival of religion, or in conducting it? There is nothing in that book that is adapted to promote what is commonly termed a revival of religion; and there is nothing in the book that is fitted to the thrilling scenes of such a work. There are no prayers that careless sinners may be awakened; none that inquirers may be guided to Christ; none that would express the desires of a church in behalf of those who are asking what they must do to be saved. If these things are made the object of petition in an Episcopal church, it must be by the appointment of "prayer meetings"—assemblages that are not contemplated, as we have already seen, by the Episcopal constitution. We have heard it said that a Presbyterian minister once went into an inquiry meeting, and commenced the services of the evening by this question: "Can you tell me, how doth Christ execute the office of a priest?" The Episcopal Prayer-book is not as well adapted to the state of things in a revival of religion, as the use of the Assembly's Shorter Catechism would be if propounded through and through to those composing such a meeting. There is not a feature of the book that is adapted to such a work of grace. Whether this is not an advantage in favour of the book, we are aware is a point on which many Episcopalians would differ materially from us. We say only that

if there are to be revivals of religion in the church, they must be conducted in some other way than by the use of the Prayer-book.

3. The efforts for the promotion of religion among the young as a distinct class, is a thing unknown to the constitution of the Episcopal church, and all attempts to promote Sabbath Schools, whether in the bosom of the church as a sectarian matter, or on a more general scale in union with other denominations, is a departure from the teachings and the designs of the liturgy. The Sabbath School is an institution which has grown up some two hundred years since the Prayer-book was arranged for the use of the Anglican church, and it has never been modified in the least degree to adapt it to the grand enterprise of teaching the Bible to the young, though more than fifty years have elapsed since God began to set the undoubted seal of his blessing to the efforts of Robert Raikes. The Prayer-book, as we now have it, is the "petrified wisdom of the age of Elizabeth," and it does not adapt itself even to the undoubted Christian institutions of an advanced period of the world. The only arrangements in the Prayer-book which contemplate the instruction of the young at all, are found in the catechism. The amount of instruction contemplated there is, the Lord's Prayer, the creed, and the ten commandments, and a careful initiation into the mystery of baptismal regeneration, and the expression of a settled belief on the part of the child, that by baptism he was made "a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." This great defect of the Episcopal church; this fact that there is an utter forgetfulness in her forms of the young, and an utter want



of adaptedness in her institutions to them, is thus candidly admitted by Archbishop Whately. He observes, "the liturgy is evidently neither adapted nor designed for children, even those of such an age as to be fully capable of joining in congregational worship, were there a service suitably composed on purpose for them. To frame and introduce such a service would not, I think, be regarded as a trifling improvement, if we could but thoroughly get rid of the *principle* of the Romish lip-service."—*Essays on Romanism*, ch. i. 5. This is a candid confession; but we do not believe that it *is* possible for the Episcopal church, so long as her forms are used, to "get rid of the Romish principle of lip-service."

4. Prayer meetings are not contemplated by the Episcopal service. There is no arrangement in the Prayer-book for such meetings, nor so far as we have been able to examine, is it once intimated that they would be desirable or proper. If they are ever held, they are a departure from the system, or an attempt to engraft on the system that which is no part of Episcopacy. Nothing would be more unfitted for what is ordinarily designed by a prayer meeting, than the use of the forms of the Episcopal church. We believe that those ministers of that persuasion who patronize such meetings, never think of using the liturgy on such occasions, unless it may be to save appearances, and we are certain that the high church party are consistent and Episcopally right in their opposition to such assemblages.

5. All union on religious subjects with other denominations, we regard as in like manner at variance with the spirit of Episcopacy. There is in the Prayer-book no recognition of any other churches as such,

of any other ministers than those who are Episcopally ordained, or of any organization for the promotion of religious objects except "*the church,*" with her "bishops, priests and deacons." In the Prayer-book, we find no admission even that others are or can be Christians. We think there is but one allusion in the forms of prayer to any Christians other than those of the Episcopal sect, and that occurs in these words: "We pray for thy holy church universal, that it may be guided and governed by thy good Spirit; that all who *profess* and *call themselves* Christians may be led in the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life." There is no prayer offered for ministers of other denominations—no allusion whatever to them. The prayers for ministers of the gospel are always in the forms following: "Send down upon *our* bishops and other clergy, and upon the congregations committed to their charge, the healthful spirit of thy grace." "Make, we beseech thee, all bishops and pastors diligently to preach thy holy word, and the people obediently to follow the same." The recognition of another church than the Episcopal, or of other ministers of the gospel than the Episcopal, is a thing unknown to the Prayer-book. It contemplates no union with others, alludes to no common action with them, and evidently supposes that the great interests of religion in the world will not be carried forward by voluntary associations, or by union with others, but by the organization under the "three orders." We have felt grateful for the aid which some eloquent and zealous Episcopalians have rendered in the distribution of the Bible, and of Tracts, and in the support of the Sun-

day-school cause in connection with others ; but we have never had but one feeling in regard to the consistency of this with Episcopacy. We have regarded it as a departure from the constitution of their church, and whatever independent zeal a few may show for a time in these catholic movements, we anticipate that the period is not far distant when the voice of an Episcopalian will no longer be heard at the anniversaries of our national institutions, and that the only aid which Episcopacy will render to the cause of diffusing Christianity, will be under her own distinctive organization. There is now far less disposition to unite with others, than there was a dozen years ago ;—successive years will show it to be less and less.

Our next thought in regard to the efforts of low-churchmen, is, that as far as we understand the subject, those efforts are all at variance with the doctrinal views of the church. We allude now to the opposition to Puseyism, or the Oxford theology. We speak here on the presumption that those who are low-churchmen will be in the main opposed to that system of belief. On that controversy we have looked from the commencement with great interest, not with reference to the question, whether Puseyism is in accordance with the Bible—for in regard to that we see not how a question can be raised—but with reference to the question whether it is not the true spirit of Episcopacy, and is not in accordance with the views prevailing at the time when the Prayer-book was arranged, and those expressed by the standard writers of the Episcopal church. We do not propose now to go into an examination of these questions, but it may be of some

interest to those who are in the Episcopal church to know how these things appear to those who are without. We regard, then, the Puseyites as entirely in the right in this controversy, so far as Episcopacy is concerned; wholly wrong so far as it relates to the Bible. We think that those who are opposed to the Oxford theology are engaged in the most hopeless of all controversies ever waged, so long as they make their appeal to their own Prayer-book, or the early standard writers of the Episcopal denomination. We have no doubt that if the views of Dr. Pusey and Mr. Newman were to prevail in the Episcopal church, the church would be substantially in the same position in which it was in the days of Elizabeth. It was but half reformed. It retained then a large part of the offensive features of Romanism, and those views were embodied in the Prayer-book. The doctrine of baptismal regeneration, of the *opus operatum* of the sacraments, of the real presence, and of the intermediate state; the veneration of saints, the appointment of festival days in commemoration of their virtues, the pomp and pageantry of worship, the sign of the cross, bowing at the name of Jesus, the holiness of the church and the altar, and the sacredness of the consecrated burying-place, all, with numerous similar things, are part and parcel of Romanism, and not of the religion of the New Testament. To bring back the Episcopal church to the views entertained on these subjects in the time of Elizabeth, which we understand to be the declared aim of Dr. Pusey, would be to establish the sentiments advanced in the Tractarian theology. The views of Dr. Pusey in his celebrated sermon on the eucharist, which was the occasion of his suspension, we think are abun-

dantly sustained by the quotations which he has made from the standard writers of the Episcopal church; and unless our evangelical brethren in that church will change their mode of argument, and appeal solely to the Bible, we are morally certain that they are destined to inevitable defeat. The Prayer-book and the Fathers of the Episcopal church, will sustain their adversaries. An honest appeal to the Bible, however, in the case, would be fatal to Episcopacy, and if persevered in must rend the Episcopal church in twain.

There is but one other thought which we propose to submit in reference to the present position of the evangelical party in the Episcopal church. It relates to their own consistency in their efforts to mingle with Christians and Christian ministers of other denominations. We have already intimated that the *principles* on which this is done are well defined and understood. They never associate with the ministers of other denominations *as* Christian ministers. They never invite them to preach for them, but uniformly say when the question comes before them, that they can not reciprocate an act of ministerial courtesy of this kind. They never recognize the right of non-Episcopal ministers to administer the sacraments of the church. They never recognize their ordination as an ordination to the Christian ministry, and never suppose that a minister from another denomination, *except the Papal*, can be suffered to officiate in an Episcopal church without renouncing his former ordination, and perchance his baptism too, and submit to the imposition of the hands of the prelate. These and kindred acts on their part, force us almost inevitably to the conclu-

sion that, in common with their high-church brethren, they regard the Episcopal as the only Christian church, and consider all others, ministers and people, as left to the "uncovenanted mercies of God."

Yet there is much that we can not reconcile with this. There is a zeal for the truth which looks as if they regarded the vital doctrines of Christianity as of more importance than its forms. There is an honest effort to promote the great objects contemplated by the gospel, which seems to rise above all the narrow confinement of sectarian efforts. There is, in some things, such a hearty mingling with other Christians, and such a zeal in promoting the common objects of our religion, as to lead us for a time to forget the subject of Episcopacy, and to rejoice in them as co-workers with all others in the glorious efforts to spread the gospel. There is such impatience of restraint, and such a declared purpose *not* to be fettered by forms and *not* to be limited to the narrow views of a "sect," that we begin to ask with concern, whether, in our apprehensions of their attachment to Episcopacy, we have not done them essential injustice. There are occasionally such solemn declarations made in such public places, that they "*will* not be confined within the narrow walls of a sect, nor be prevented from looking out on the broad Christian world, and sympathizing with other Christians," that we are constrained to ask, whether we have rightly understood the true interpretation of the other positions which they have taken, or whether—a conclusion which we will avoid if possible—all this is said for the purpose of effect, and is designed ultimately more and more to give Episcopacy favour in the sight of the community.

Now so antagonist and irreconcilable are these positions of the evangelical party in the Episcopal church, that we should be glad to propound to some of the leaders of that party a few questions, and we take the liberty of submitting them here, with the hope, that through their papers they will furnish to the community an answer.

The first would be this. Do the evangelical party regard the ministers of other denominations as in any sense authorized ministers of the gospel, and their churches as true churches? If they *do*—(which we do not believe to be the case)—then we ask of them, why they are never in any proper way so recognized? Why do they not come out and openly say so? Why do they never admit them to their pulpits? Why do they never protest against their being re-ordained when one of their number leaves the church of his fathers, and enters the service of the Episcopal denomination? Why do they submit to the gross public indignity offered to the Protestant churches by the uniform acts of the Episcopal church, admitting a Catholic priest at once to officiate at her altars without re-ordination; demanding that every other minister shall be ordained?

If in reply to these questions they should say, that *they* regard the ministers of other denominations as having a right to preach and administer the sacraments, and consider the ordinances administered by them as valid, but that the “canons” of their church will not allow them to express this belief by any public act, or to reciprocate any act of ministerial fellowship, then we would ask of them as independent Christian men, how they can suffer their consciences and their hearts to be fettered and trammelled by

such canons? How can they consent to remain in a position where they can not express in any proper way the honest convictions of their minds, and act as freemen? How can they peacefully minister in a communion where the very nature of the institutions is a well understood exclusion of all other churches as having no valid ministry and no valid sacraments? How can they, by their conduct, hold up all other churches as left to the "uncovenanted mercies of God?" The Episcopal sect, as such, is a small part of the Christian world. In this land it is, and it will continue to be, among the "smallest of the tribes of Israel." Its communicants are few in comparison with those of other denominations. Its ministers are also comparatively few, and in point of talent, learning, piety, and moral worth, are not eminent above all others. If it be so, that other churches are true churches, and other ministers are true ministers, then they have the common right of all Christians, to be recognized as such by all their Christian brethren. That is no desirable position for a man to place himself in, who believes that these are true churches, but who is habitually constrained to speak and act *as if* they were not, and so to act as to leave the impression that he regards them as on the same platform in regard to salvation, as the Jew, the Turk, and the infidel. And yet this is the fair interpretation of the conduct of the Episcopalian. Almost the smallest denomination in our country habitually acts, as if the great body of Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists, had no claim to the character of a church, and were to be treated as those on whom the light of Christianity has never risen. The most eminent ministers of the land, living



and dead, are to be regarded as preaching without authority, and as intruders in the sacred office. Of the departed, Eliot, and Edwards, and Bellamy, and Dwight, are never to be spoken of as true ministers of the gospel; of the living, that honoured appellation should not be given to Beecher, Alexander, Woods, Stuart, or Nott. Hall, in our father-land, was no true minister; Wesley was one only because he had been touched by Episcopal hands; Summerfield had neither there nor here a right to preach, and nine-tenths of the effective ministry of our country are to be regarded in no other light than intruders and imposters. Now do the evangelical party in the Episcopal church believe this? If they do not, we call upon them by every sentiment of honour and religion, *to say so*. If they can not do this and remain in the bosom of Episcopacy, then we call upon them to act the man and the Christian, and to seek a connexion where they *can* say this, and can act out the honest conviction of their souls. We do not understand the constitution of that man who can quietly remain in a connexion where, by a fair interpretation, his conduct will do an enormous wrong habitually to the great mass of his Christian brethren, and where this interpretation of his conduct will express a constant falsehood in regard to his own opinions.

But if the evangelical Episcopalian should say, that he does *not* regard the ministers of other denominations as having a right to preach and to administer the sacraments, then we have another question to propose. Why is not this honestly avowed? Why is there not on his part always a course of conduct entirely consistent with this? Why is there

ever any such mingling with other denominations, as to leave any doubt in regard to this matter? His high-church brethren never act in such a way as to leave room for an ambiguous interpretation of their views, and we honour them for their consistency. We know where to find them. It is always *in* the Episcopal church, and they never so far forget themselves as to convey the impression that they have ever heard that there is any other church. If the low-churchman holds the same views in regard to the church and the ministry, then what means all the declamation which we hear about his own catholic and liberal views, and his determination *not* to be fettered and manacled?

We take our stand here. If the evangelical Episcopalian regards other churches as true churches, and other ministers as true ministers, we have a right to know it. If he does not, then the community has a right to know what Episcopacy is. If it is essentially narrow, and exclusive; if it recognizes no other communion as a true church, and regards all others as left to the uncovenanted mercies of God, then it is a *right* which the community has, to understand this. Episcopalians are every where endeavouring to win the young from the churches of their fathers. Let us understand fully what the system is, and let not the youth of the land, won by great professions of catholicity and zeal for the common cause, be drawn blindfold into a communion that is essentially exclusive of all others, and where the first act of faith must be the expression of a belief, that a father and mother worship in a conventicle, and are baptized and buried under the ministry of laymen.

We have spoken freely, but not in anger. It is

not because we believe that those brethren who are endeavouring to infuse the evangelical principle into the Episcopal church, are not good men, that we have made these remarks. We consider it an honour that we are permitted to number some among them as our personal friends, and there are many among them at whose feet we would regard it as a privilege to sit down. Among the living of this class, we doubt not there are some as holy men as the church embosoms, and among the dead, there are those whose memory will be cherished as long as piety, eloquence, and moral worth, are honoured on the earth. The name of Bedell will not be, and should not be, forgotten. This land has known few men who have done more honour to the ministry than he did. His silvery tones, his placid manner, his clear enunciation, his unshrinking fidelity, his indefatigable toils, his meek, pure, unobtrusive Christian spirit, his large-hearted liberality toward all who love our Lord Jesus Christ, can not be forgotten by the multitudes who hung on his lips as a preacher, and who loved him as a man.

But we regard these brethren as labouring in an impracticable work, and in a work which it would not be desirable to accomplish if it could be done—an attempt to blend the spirit of the gospel with the religion of forms. The experiment has now been fairly made. It can not be hoped that it will be made under better auspices, and we regard it as destined to inevitable failure. As we love pure evangelical religion, therefore, we think it right to state what we think must be the result of the experiment, and to set before the churches the principles which are involved in the controversy.

We think, also, that there has been an error in other denominations of Christians in this matter. There has been a feeling, the correctness of which no one seemed to regard it as proper to doubt, that the Episcopal sect was to be numbered in the family of evangelical churches, and that other churches should lend their influence to infuse the evangelical spirit more and more into that communion. Under the influence of that desire, pious and devoted young men have been advised to throw themselves into that communion, with the hope, that they might do more to promote the great cause, by attempting to diffuse the spirit of Christ through the religion of forms, than by ministering in connexion with the church of their fathers. This, we now think, was unwise counsel. It was both *unkind* to Episcopacy, and it was morally certain that it would be a failure. It was *as* unkind as if the Methodist church, pressed with great concern for the Presbyterian denomination, should scatter its ardent sons through all the presbyteries of the land, avowedly for the purpose of changing its policy, and diffusing the tactics of Wesley through the Presbyterian ranks; and it was an experiment which, from the nature of the case, *must* fail. There *is* a way of effectually neutralizing all such influence that comes in from other denominations. Episcopacy has the means of infusing its own principles, with singular vigour, into the heart of a neophyte from another church. Let the mitre once touch the head of a low-churchman, and a new light shines on his mind in regard to the apostolic succession, and on all the pomp and paraphernalia of prelacy; and as a New England man becomes the most cruel of all slave-drivers, if he can be made so far to

forget himself as to become a slave-driver at all, so a man from an evangelical denomination becomes the most furious for prelacy, if he can be made so far to forget himself as to become a prelate at all. We think it time for the evangelical young men of our country to understand, that if they wish to advance the cause of the gospel, it is not to be in connexion with the religion of forms. The gospel of Christ has elements of moral power in itself which are only hindered by gorgeous external rites—as the keenness of a Damascus blade is rendered useless if buried within a gorgeous scabbard.

We regard the prevailing spirit of Episcopacy, in all aspects, high and low, as at variance with the spirit of this age and of this land. This is an age of freedom, and men *will* be free. The religion of forms is the stereotyped wisdom or folly of the past, and does not adapt itself to the free movements, the enlarged views, the varying plans of this age. The spirit of this age demands that there shall be freedom in religion; that it shall not be fettered or suppressed; that it shall go forth to the conquest of the world. It is opposed to all bigotry and uncharitableness; to all attempts to “unchurch” others; to teaching that they worship in conventicles, that they are dissenters, or that they are left to the uncovenanted mercies of God. All such language did better in the days of Laud and Bonner, than now. It might be appropriate in lands where religion is united in the state

—“like beauty to old age  
For interest’s sake, the living to the dead,”

but it does not suit our times, or country. It makes a jar on American feelings. It will not be tolerated

by this community. The spirit of this land is, that the church of Christ is not under the Episcopal form, the Baptist, the Methodist, the Presbyterian, or the Congregational form exclusively; all are, to all intents and purposes, to be recognized as parts of the one holy catholic church, with no distinction of prerogative, with no right to the assumption of exclusive names, with no self-complacent expression of feeling that *their* form brings them nearer to heaven than others. There is a spirit in this land which requires that the gospel shall depend for its success not on solemn processions and imposing rites, not on the idea of superior sanctity in the priesthood in virtue of their office, not on genuflections and ablutions, not on any virtue conveyed by the imposition of holy hands, and not on union with any particular church, but on solemn appeals to the reason, the conscience, the immortal hopes and fears of men, attended by the holy influences of the Spirit of God; and which demands that the devotion which from age to age is to be breathed forth on our hills and along our valleys, should be that pure worship which proceeds from the heart, worshiping God in spirit and in truth.

THE END.

