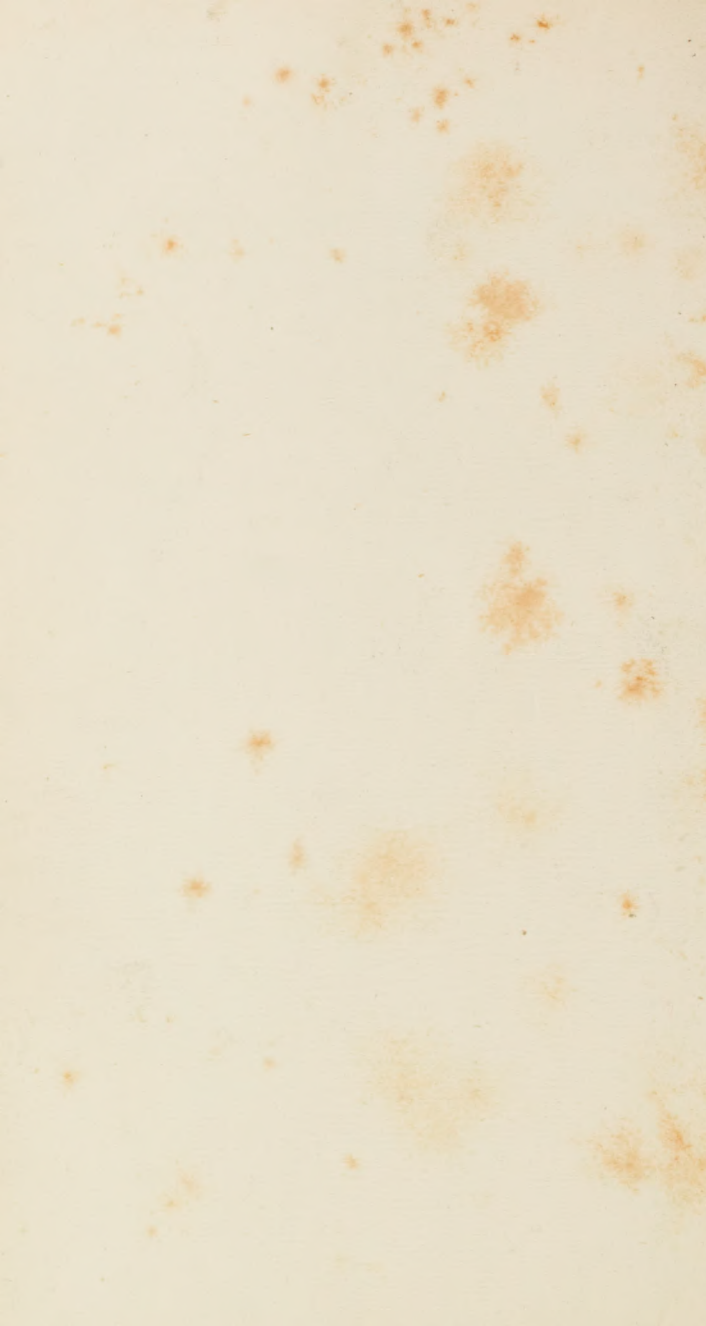


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ANSWER

TO THE

RIGHT REV. F. R. NIXON, D.D.,

LORD BISHOP OF TASMANIA:

BEING A VINDICATION OF THE CLERGY CONDEMNED FOR
ASSERTING THE RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT.

BY

HENRY PHIBBS FRY, D.D.,

MINISTER OF ST. GEORGE'S PARISH, HOBART TOWN.

Q.—To what Church do you belong?

A.—I thank God I am a Protestant!

Q.—What do you mean by a Protestant?

A.—One who protests against the errors of Popery, and admits
no Rule of Faith and Practice but the Holy Scriptures.

[PROTESTANT CATECHISM, published by the Society
for Promoting Christian Knowledge.]

Tasmania:

PUBLISHED BY J. WALCH AND SONS,

HOBART TOWN.

MDCCLIII.

50. 1850



PRINTED AT THE ADVERTISER OFFICE,
HQBART TOWN.



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TO THE LORD BISHOP OF TASMANIA.

MY LORD,—

A YEAR has elapsed since the publication of your "Reply to the Deputation," appointed by the members of the Church of England to submit three requests to your Lordship. You were earnestly besought to withdraw your sentence of condemnation passed upon the ministers for asserting the right of private judgment. 2nd. To retract your repudiation of the decision of the Privy Council, and your expressed resolution to exclude Evangelical ministers; and 3rd. To prohibit the use of "Theophilus Anglicanus" at the College. To each of these requests you gave a positive refusal; assigning the reasons on which you formed your resolution.

I do not believe that a single individual of those who had maintained the Protestant principles has been induced by your "Reply" to change his sentiments: but all of us were deeply distressed and disappointed at your Lordship's avowed resolution to carry out your measures by the whole weight of your Episcopal authority, and by ecclesiastical censures and penalties upon those who would not receive the principles which you enforced.

Remonstrance and petition had been exhausted; and the measures to be adopted in a cause of such deep importance required mature and long deliberation. If submission were compatible with the indispensable obligation of maintaining the sacred truths of religion, it would have been our duty to submit. If patient attendance upon the course of events presented a hope of your Lordship's remitting the measures we regarded as subversive of the principles of our Protestant Church, we should have continued to endure our present evils. The hope was still entertained that calm consideration, the judgment of the Primate of our Church, and the influence of events in England, might have induced you to modify or relinquish your resolutions.

In your "Reply" you frequently departed from the consideration of the general questions to make personal allusions to myself. Many also both of the clergy and laity called upon me to vindicate

the principles which we had professed, and which you had so strongly condemned; but several considerations rendered me reluctant to undertake a duty of such deep responsibility, until the alternative had arrived of either doing so, or suffering under the consciousness of abandoning the principles and rights of the clergy and laity of the Church.

The past year has shown your Lordship's determination to carry out inflexibly in practice your expressed resolutions. The vacant chaplaincies have been filled with ministers who uphold the principles of "Theophilus Anglicanus" and "The Steps." The most extreme advocates and disseminators of these books have been promoted to the most important livings. You have in no case relaxed your condemnation and censures on the ministers who asserted the right of private judgment. Every means has been tried to induce them to recant. You have refused to countersign their testimonials when leaving the Colony, or to permit them to exchange their chaplaincies. Six hundred inhabitants of a parish in this city petitioned you to license, as curate to a dying clergyman, a minister whom he anxiously desired as his assistant; and although the minister applied for was actually officiating with your own licence, at a government establishment in the same parish, as sole minister to a large congregation for the last ten

years, you refused to change his licence unless he retracted his subscription to the right of private judgment.

The conviction forced upon us by these proceedings is, that we must abandon the Colony or recant our principles: that we must adopt some effective measures to preserve what we believe to be the Protestant principles and character of our Church, or see them gradually and certainly extinguished.

While these events were taking place, your Archdeacon proposed to me an arrangement of the divisions in the Church; and, on being pressed to communicate the terms of accommodation which he proposed, he said *if I was willing to make a public apology, and retract the declaration of the right of private judgment*, he would intercede to make peace. He had previously stated that your "Reply to the Deputation" was a complete refutation of our "Solemn Declaration."

It was impossible any longer to refrain from the vindication of our principles. I felt, indeed, that I could neither afford the time, nor possessed the books requisite for the adequate fulfilment of such a work; but every consideration tended to convince me that the duty was laid upon me, and that I should have to answer for its omission.

Whatever may be the consequences to myself

personally, I must give a reason for our faith and hope,—I must show to the people committed to our care that the principles for which we are called in question are the assured truths of Scripture and doctrines of our Church. Of this our conviction is immoveable : neither authority nor expulsion can compel us to renounce or change it. We must deliver the faith which God's word has taught us : at our ordination the Gospel was put into our hands, and we vowed before its divine Author that we would preach its pure word. You threaten *to put a stop to our ministrations* if we continue to teach that every Christian may hold his own convictions of the truths of Scripture even should they be opposed to the teaching of his Church. It may, indeed, be permitted to you to *eject us from our churches* ; but, my Lord, you cannot put a stop to our ministrations. We will never cease to preach that the written word of God is the sole rule of faith, and that every Christian possesses the right of private judgment ; nor shall we abandon our people till assured that our doing so is the will of God.

And here I must allude to one or two statements in your Lordship's "Reply" respecting the clergy and yourself, which are unnoticed in the following work, as not affecting the general subjects on which it treats.

Your Lordship frequently asks, "Are you

alone to be deprived of the right of private judgment?" as if to remonstrate against your compelling us to receive your principles were to interfere with your right to entertain your own private opinions. Such a complaint will only weigh with those who are incapable of perceiving this plain distinction.

Your Lordship reduces the number of the twenty clergymen who first signed the "Solemn Declaration," and the three who afterwards attached their signatures, to seven or eight, by the following calculations. You say that of the twenty-three only twelve signed the explanation of the original declaration adopted at Campbell Town; and you take for granted that all the rest recanted their principles, although they never made any statement to that effect: of these twelve three or four resigned, and you infer that all the clergy, save seven or eight, approve of your Lordship's sentiments. Can you really entertain such an opinion? Do you think that there is one of them who would not readily declare his concurrence with your Lordship, if his conscience allowed him? Most certainly they would! Why, if such be their sentiments, do they not come forward, as they are bound to do, and support their Bishop by a public declaration, that they agree with him in declaring "The Steps," &c., to be the true teaching of the Church,—in repudiating the Privy Council

and condemning the ministers who asserted the right of private judgment? If they are not opposed to your Lordship, why are they so forgetful of their duty and interest as not to do this? Why do not your Lordship and your Archdeacons send for their signatures a simple declaration to this effect, with a notification that by signing it or not will be known who are "the Bishop's friends," in place of *the double meaning documents* which they have subscribed, and from which all notice of the *questions at issue is excluded*.

The Rev. Mr. Cox, who at the request of the other disseminators of "The Steps to the Altar" wrote a vindication of it approved by your Lordship, and who edits the "Church Chronicle," your Lordship's official channel of communication,—even he in a recent article on Private Judgment entirely concurred with the principle of the "Solemn Declaration" for which you have condemned the clergy. The same minister recently signed the testimonial of a clergyman leaving the Colony which you refused to countersign, because the minister to whom it referred had subscribed the declaration of the right of private judgment. Thus Mr. Cox signs a certificate, from his personal knowledge that nothing contrary to the principles of the Church of England was taught by a minister whom you condemn as unsound, and to punish whom

you refuse to countersign the testimonial that Mr. Cox and the other two who subscribed with him are parochial ministers worthy of credit.

My Lord, will not this fact convince you that you are almost alone in the principles you enforce upon us? Look at the correspondence with Archdeacon Davies, and see how he refuses to intimate that he concurs with your Lordship. Does not Mr. Cox, in certifying that a minister who signed the "Solemn Declaration" wrote nothing contrary to the principles of the Church of England, place himself in direct contradiction to your sentence? If your Lordship would learn the true sentiments of the clergy, let the three questions I have mentioned be submitted to them: and, although all possible inducements concur to lead them to approve your principles and measures, I am persuaded but few would be found to do so.

Your Lordship says, "it is really presuming too far upon the supposed ignorance or credulity of the public, to denounce your act (in condemning the clergy) as excommunication." (P. 8.) And you say, "excommunication is a censure duly passed by ecclesiastical judges, after legal enquiry, whereby the person condemned is cast out of communion of the Church." It will be deemed that your act of excommunication deserves that name even by your own explanation, except that, in place of being duly passed after legal

inquiry, it has been unduly and illegally passed without any trial. Has not your Lordship, by a public document, denounced to our congregations and the whole world, that we are so unsound in our religious belief that we are incapable of testifying to the soundness of another? Have you not rejected our testimonials, and condemned us by your public declaration never to give any of us a licence to another chaplaincy; and have you not, as far as in you lies, carried your sentence even to the length of preventing our obtaining a ministerial charge in another country, by your resolution not to countersign the ordinary testimonial to ministers leaving a diocese, although your counter-signature is only to the fact that the three ministers who subscribe the testimonial are worthy of credit? And after these, and several other measures of condemnation, who will say that in calling your act an excommunication we have deceived the public?

Your Lordship, in your "Reply," affirms that the ministers whom you condemn acted "discreditably and illegally" in appealing to the public, and not to the Metropolitan. Of the illegality of our proceeding you offer no proof; it may, indeed, be legal to appeal to the Metropolitan, but it is an incorrect inference that it is therefore illegal to submit the case to the people. The discredit or disgrace of the proceeding we are altogether unconscious of. Your Lordship

publicly and by a public act denounced us to our congregations as altogether unsound in our religious belief. It may have been inconvenient, but nothing could be more reasonable than that we should call for the judgment and sympathy of our people. Your Lordship proclaimed to the public your accusation and your sentence; and it surely is not just that you should call it illegal and discreditable in us to explain our conduct and answer your imputation.

Your Lordship speaks of the incompetency of the public to form a correct judgment on the question; but if the people could comprehend your reasons for condemning us and our "Declaration on Private Judgment," as unsound, why could they not comprehend our proofs that it is scriptural and sound? Are they not the same people to whom your Lordship delivered your Charges, &c, with the intricate reasoning to prove the "Baptismal heresy," and the evils of private judgment? It might be supposed that they are only incompetent when their judgment is adverse to your Lordship's opinions; but, when otherwise, most commended discerners of Church principles.

In the same manner your Lordship asserts the incompetency of the lay members of the Church to judge the principles of "Theophilus Anglicanus;" but your Lordship forgets that copies were given away by yourself and others

to persons whom you thus declare to be incapable of understanding them. It is strange, indeed, if an English book cannot be understood by those who are ignorant of Greek, because a few Greek words are to be found in the notes, and only in the notes. Your Lordship forgets that the title of the book is, "*Theophilus Anglicanus, or instruction for the Young Student concerning the Church.*" Dr. Wordsworth, whom you declare to be *one of the soundest theologians*, must therefore have failed wholly in his design if his manual for the young student is thus beyond the understanding of the grown up members of the Church!

Can your Lordship be insensible to the deplorable condition of the Diocese,—to the fatal effects of your condemning the clergy for principles never before called in question, and of your enforcing upon them your own opinions in a manner never practised by any other Bishop,—repudiating the law of the Church received in every other Colonial and English Diocese, and excluding Evangelical ministers? Have you never considered the ruinous confusion which would convulse the Church if every Bishop carried out the same principle, and, regarding himself as the "authorised exponent of the Church's principles," should make his private opinions the rule of faith to his clergy?

Look, my Lord, at the alienation of the body

of the people caused by the principles and measures which you inculcate. It may have appeared, indeed, a deep and clever design "to act upon the Colonies, and through them to react upon the Church of England:" but the framers of it were ignorant of the Protestant spirit inherent in colonists; and with the divine blessing the result will be the precise opposite of their expectations. Your Lordship has seen Archdeacon Marriott, the avowed leader in diffusing the principles of "Theophilus" and "The Steps," and in introducing into the Colony ministers of his own opinions, after residing for several years in a populous parish, depart for England, having reduced the congregation to a dozen persons, leaving his school shut up for want of scholars, and causing most of the people to become Wesleyans. A similar result has taken place in every parish having a minister of the same party, save in one or two instances, where the clergyman carefully avoids preaching his "*Church principles*," and affects to be Protestant, acting upon the judicious system of inculcating his views so as to avoid opposition, and in proportion as the individuals are prepared to receive them.

Look, my Lord, at the Colonial Missionary, and Branch Christian Knowledge Societies over which you preside—the former is nearly if not entirely extinct. The recent public meeting of

the latter was justly termed by the press a disgrace to any Christian body. Its annual receipts were greater in its first years in an infant Colony than at present, when they are less than the charitable collections at the single Church of St. George's. A greater amount is collected annually by one or two Evangelical ministers and sent home to the Church and Jewish Missionary Societies respectively. While every other institution, religious or civil, prospers, and is upheld by public interest, the Church languishes under the baneful influence of what its members almost unanimously regard as the spirit and principles of Romanism.

In Melbourne and other dioceses where the vigorous spirit of Protestantism with the vitality of the Bible animates the Church, how different is its aspect. Peace, energy, and the divine blessing mark its progress among a people who receive it without suspicion, and welcome it as the principle of liberty and advancement no less than of spiritual blessedness. Such is the condition of churches under the principles which your Lordship has condemned, and endeavours to extinguish.

It may be vain to induce your Lordship to regard and feel your resolutions and measures as they affect us; but I would solicit you to consider what might be your feelings and position should you, as a clergyman holding your present

principles, find in your Bishop an ultra-Protestant, who should pronounce you to be unsound—condemn your rule of faith—deny you a licence or testimonial unless you retracted it—refuse to admit any minister who believed in your doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration—teach the “Solemn Declaration” at the College—and, as the authorised exponent of the Church’s teaching, regard and censure you as violating your ordination vows if you opposed his measures? I am persuaded your Lordship would have shown, in defending your principles, a zeal and boldness in comparison with which our proceedings are tame and submissive.

Your Lordship has stated, and no doubt you consider, that, holding religious principles condemned by the Bishop, we should join “the Dissenters,” or at least leave the Diocese; but I am sure, were your Lordship in our position, you would fulfil your resolution “*to maintain the teaching of the Church at all hazards.*” We are condemned for holding what we regard to be the fundamental principle of the Protestant Reformation, by which all Protestant Churches are distinguished from that of Rome; and we are required to accept as the true teaching of our Church doctrines and practices which we are assured are, and which the Primate has declared to be, Romish.

These convictions we are bound to sustain

and justify. The public will determine how far this has been done in the following pages.

I have adduced a great number of arguments and clear proofs from Holy Scripture demonstrating the right of private judgment, which is shown to be the admitted principle of the Church of England, by explicit declarations of the Homilies, the confession of the Church, the Reformers, and above *twenty* of her most learned and eminent prelates and authors.

The opposite principle of a supposed right in the Church to prescribe her interpretations of Holy Scripture is shown to have been that of all the Romish controversialists, while the arguments by which they maintained it are precisely those used by your Lordship in opposing the Protestant principle.

It is shown that the right of private judgment, as declared in the "Solemn Declaration," is essential to human liberty, and that those who deny it subvert Protestantism, and are bound to turn Romanists if they follow out their principles.

Your Lordship's protest against the Privy Council, and exclusion of ministers who do not hold that all baptized infants are regenerate, is shown to be opposed to Scripture and the formularies of the Church,—to be inconsistent with your own teaching and measures,—that it violates the law of the Church,—rejects the Queen's

trial; but honesty and a good conscience are only to be maintained by a stedfast adherence to principle and conviction. The minister of religion who can look on in silence when such questions are at issue exhibits, no less than he who maintains what he disbelieves, a *disposition* to betray the truth, aggravated by a mean and unworthy fear to express his principles, which as a preacher of the Gospel he is bound not to withhold from his people. He who acts thus has either no principles to uphold, or no honesty to avow them; he compromises both himself, his ministry, and the truth; thus the ministers who have refrained from protesting against the Romanizing books, and from asserting the Protestant principles, are held forth by the Bishop as approving the books, and concurring in his condemnation of their brethren.

The Lord has committed to us the preaching and inculcation of the Gospel—not to keep back any one of its truths and principles. If “The Steps to the Altar” and “Theophilus Anglicanus” are the true teaching of the Church—if the Privy Council should be repudiated, and the clergy condemned for signing “The Solemn Declaration”—if to assert the right of private judgment is to be unsound in the faith, then are the clergy bound to join decisively with your Lordship: but if the contrary be true, then are they no less under a sacred obligation

to take part with their oppressed brethren in vindicating the rights and principles of our religion, and of our Church.

I remain,

Your Lordship's faithful servant,

HENRY PHIBBS FRY.

30th June, 1853.



INTRODUCTION.

THE following statements of Bishop Nixon and other writers are referred to in the following work :—

DENIAL OF THE RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT
IN “THEOPHILUS ANGLICANUS,” page 53.
Ed. 1845.

“Am I then to make my own mind the judge whether they” (authorized expositors) “are in error ; and if not, to what tests of doctrine am I to appeal ?”

“It is *not* our own private judgment ; but, first, Holy Scriptures as received, guarded, and interpreted by the Catholic Church from the beginning, ‘according to the proportion of faith ;’ and next, the consent of the Church herself, speaking in her public expositions, Creeds, Councils, Liturgies, Confessions, and writings of her early Fathers, Bishops, and Doctors is the rule of faith to which the teaching of individuals is to be referred.”

BISHOP NIXON'S RULE OF FAITH.

"The rule by which I desire to be guided is Holy Scripture, interpreted by the Catholic Church."—*Reply*, p. 46.

ROMISH RULE OF FAITH.

"I also admit the Holy Scriptures, according to that sense which the Church has held to which it belongs to judge the true interpretation of the Scriptures."—*Pope Pius's Catechism*.

"Let no one venture to interpret or explain the divine writings contrary to the tradition of the Fathers, or differently from the sense of the Catholic Church."—*Gregory XVI. Bull 1844, condemning the Bible Society*.

THE RULE OF FAITH AND RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT STATED IN THE "SOLEMN DECLARATION OF TWENTY COLONIAL MINISTERS"

"That the Holy Scripture is the sole rule of faith; and that every individual has the right to read and interpret the word of God by his own private judgment; with the aid of the Holy Spirit. Denying the authority of Tradition, or the right of any Church or minister to prescribe to individuals in matters of religion, in opposition to their own judgment."—*Sol. Dec.*, p. 20.

"The second article of the "Declaration" does not contradict the *right* of the Church of England to frame articles of religion, and to decree rites, and (the same not being contrary to God's word) which its members are bound to receive and observe as long as they continue members of the Church of England. The article in the "Declaration" only asserts that every Christian may interpret the word of God by his own private judgment, with the aid of the Holy Spirit; and declares that no individual is bound to receive, on the authority of any Church or minister, doctrines which the private judgment of such individual may convince him to be contrary to Holy Scripture."—*Explanation of Sol. Dec. signed by Col. Ministers*.

BISHOP NIXON'S CONDEMNATION OF THE PRECEDING DECLARATION OF THE RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT, AND RULE OF FAITH.

"These two propositions appear to me to make but little of either heresy or schism, as *sins*."

"If this 'Declaration,' to which I so strongly object, be indeed a principle of the Church of England, then it follows, as a necessary consequence, that every member of the Church may reject all belief in the Godhead of our Blessed Lord, if his own study of Scripture should lead him to prefer the interpretation of the Socinian to that recorded in the teaching of the Church."

"It seems to me to be rather the leading principle of dissent."

"If this be truth, the Church has only, according to Dr. Fry's view, 'authority to teach, guide, direct, or influence, but none to prescribe; none to speak with authority; so as to over-rule private judgment.'"

"Such liberty, or rather such license, would speedily bring about a state of things similar to that which St. Peter describes, when he tells us, that, in his days, 'the unlearned and unstable' wrested St. Paul's epistles, as they did also 'the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction.'"

"Were each man to be his own interpreter, in matters where the Church has recorded her judgment, and to be at liberty to set up his individual opinion against that judgment,—either because his own dwarfed intelligence could not, or his own rebellious spirit could not, receive it,—it requires no great stretch of the imagination to forecast the consequence."

"Two centuries ago what are called Protestant principles had their full sway. . . . *Every man expounded the Bible for himself*, then episcopacy was abolished, ceremonies were abolished, &c."—*Reply to the Deputation*.

BISHOP NIXON'S OPINION OF THE DEPENDENCE TO BE PLACED UPON "THE AID OF THE HOLY SPIRIT" IN UNDERSTANDING SCRIPTURE.

"We cannot be so uncharitable as to suppose, that they who

wrested the Holy Scriptures to their own destruction, abjured all prayer to the Holy Spirit, to be guided aright in their search of Scripture. Wherefore, then, did their study of God's Holy Word lead to such an awful result?"—*Reply, &c.*

BISHOP NIXON'S REPUDIATION OF THE DECISION OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL.

"Am I wrong in regarding what they (the Privy Council) have implied, only as an opinion delivered by five lawyers."

"In distinctly refusing, then, to suffer the judgment of the Privy Council, in the smallest degree, to fetter or guide my discretion, as to the admission of Candidates for Holy Orders, &c."

"As God gives me grace, I shall protest against it (the decision of the Privy Council) to my dying day."

"I must needs grieve when there is rejoicing, that the Primate has thought good, or felt himself compelled, so to set aside the conscientious scruples of the Bishop of Exeter as to institute a clerk whom that Bishop had proved to entertain *heretical notions* on one of the two sacraments of Christ; if, indeed, in these days, learning, argument, documents, and the testimony of centuries be allowed to prove any thing."—*Reply to the Disputation.*

"The true nature of Mr. Gorham's heresy (as I venture to regard it)."—Charge, 1851.

SOLEMN DECLARATION OF MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN VAN DIEMEN'S LAND, ON THE PRESENT CONDITION OF THE CHURCH IN THAT COLONY.

INASMUCH as, by our office as ministers of the Church of England, we have solemnly engaged, "with all faithful diligence, to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's word;" and inasmuch as a book, called "STEPS TO THE ALTAR," has been given by the Rev. S. B. Windsor, Warden of Christ's College, by the Rev. W. Tancred,

and the Rev. F. H. Cox, ministers of the Church of England in this city for the purpose of religious instruction, and in several instances as a preparation for Confirmation : and as a book termed "SPIRITUAL COMMUNION" has been disseminated by the Venerable F. A. Marriott, Archdeacon of Hobart Town; and a book called "THEOPHILUS ANGLICANUS" is taught to the students at Christ's College in this Colony, and has been prescribed for the instruction and examination of candidates for Holy Orders in this Diocese.

We being deeply convinced that each of these books inculcates principles of a Romanizing tendency feel called upon to set forth passages which we consider as calculated to undermine the evangelical truths of religion.—*Sol. Dec.*, p. 1.

William Bedford, D.D., St. David's Church, Hobart Town, Senior Chaplain.

James Norman, Chaplain of Sorell.

William Bedford, Jun., B.A., Chaplain of Campbell Town.

Philip Palmer, M.A., Chaplain of the Parish of the Holy Trinity, Hobart Town.

Edward Freeman, M.A., Chaplain of Brown's River.

Henry Phibbs Fry, D.D., Chaplain of St. George's, Hobart Town.

John Burrows, B.A., Chaplain of Pontville.

William Richardson, B.A., Chaplain of Avoca.

Edward P. Durham, B.A., Chaplain of Hobart Town Hospital.

Wickham W. Hesketh, M.A., Chaplain of St. Mary's, Macquarie Plains.

J. G. Medland, Chaplain of the Male Penitentiary, Hobart Town.

W. R. Bennett, Chaplain of O'Brien's Bridge.

Charles M. Bardin, A.B., Chaplain of Bothwell.

Alfred Stackhouse, M.A., Chaplain of Perth.

George Wilkinson, A.B., Chaplain of Evandale.

John Bishton, M.A., Chaplain of Westbury.

R. Gurney, Chaplain of Cascades.

J. Fereday, M.A., Chaplain of George Town.

R. R. Grange, M.A.

T. N. Grigg, A.B., Circular Head.

J. Mayson, Chaplain Swan Port.

Hobart Town,

July 1st, 1851.

BISHOP NIXON'S APPROBATION OF "THE STEPS
TO THE ALTAR," &C.

Bishopstowe, July 14th, 1851.

MY DEAR DR. BEDFORD,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your note of this day's date, accompanied by a protest, signed by yourself, and twelve other clergymen of the Diocese, against the doctrines of the following books, viz.—

"Steps to the Altar,"

"Spiritual Communion,"

"Theophilus Anglicanus."

The clergy will not, I trust, consider me as unmindful of the respect with which I desire to regard the free expression of their opinions upon such subjects, if, in this instance, *I differ widely from their estimate of the "pernicious tendency of the doctrines inculcated in 'Steps to the Altar' and 'Theophilus Anglicanus.'*"

The former little work is used in my own family, and I see no reason why it should be discarded.

"Theophilus Anglicanus," when carefully studied, and rightly understood, appears to me to be one of the *most valuable* of the many works published by my esteemed friend, Dr. Christopher Wordsworth, to whom the Church of England is, perhaps, more indebted than to any living writer, for a steadfast and uncompromising advocacy of her real principles, in contradistinction to the tenets and claims of the Church of Rome.

With the work entitled "Spiritual Communion," I am unacquainted. If, however, the objections raised against it are of the same character as those which have been advanced against "Steps to the Altar," and which have been so *conclusively re-*

futed by Mr. Tancred, I do not suppose that I should discover anything seriously to object to it on the score of doctrine.

There are, probably, few compositions to whose every word any one of us would desire to give in an unqualified adhesion. But I cannot join in your condemnation of works, which, if I mistake not, would have been regarded in the days of Hooker, Bull, Jeremy Taylor, and the like, as identified with the true teaching of the Church.

I remain,
My dear Dr. Bedford,
Faithfully yours,
(Signed) F. R. TASMANIA.

ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY'S LETTER ON RECEIPT OF "THE SOLEMN DECLARATION," &C.

Lambeth, Feb. 19th, 1852.

REVEREND SIR,—I have received through the hands of Dr. Armstrong an Address, bearing date Sept. 10, signed by twenty-five members of the Committee of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge in Hobart Town.

The subjects treated of in the Address are of a delicate nature; and it will be enough for me to say that I sympathize with the difficulties of which the memorialists complain, and fully agree with the opinion expressed in the "Declaration," *that there is much in the books to which it particularly refers which is far more in accordance with the principles of the Church of Rome than of the Church of England.*

If it shall happen, as is expected, that the Colonial Churches should be brought at an early period under the consideration of the Legislature. I will bear in mind the wishes and the rights of the memorialists, and endeavour to maintain them; and certainly I will use whatever influence I may possess to secure the connexion of the Colonial Churches with the Church of England.

I remain, Reyerend Sir,
Your faithful servant,
Rev. Dr. Fry. J. B. CANTUAR.

STEPS TO THE ALTAR.
 CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION.

STEPS TO THE ALTAR, p. 120.—“ Having made choice of such a Confessor, who is every way qualified, that you may trust your soul with him, you are advised plainly and sincerely to open your heart to him; and that, laying aside all consideration of any personal weakness in him, you are to look upon him only as he is a trustee from God, and commissioned by Him as His ministerial deputy, to hear, and judge, and absolve you.”

Steps, &c., p. 113.—“ I suppose you are to choose only such a person as will faithfully keep any secret you shall commit to him, and so it can be no public shame you can fear.”

“ That the manner of your confession be in an humble posture on your knees, as being made to God rather than man. And for the matter of it, let it be severe and serious.”

QUESTIONS FOR SELF-EXAMINATION.

Steps, &c., p. 24.—“ 1. Have you committed any act of uncleanness; used any unchaste words; indulged any impure thoughts and fancies? If so, how often?”

“ 2. Have you looked at dangerous pictures, or read wicked books; entered into amusements, or gone into company that might give rise to temptation? How often?”

“ Have you indulged your flesh by eating or drinking more than was necessary; by laziness and too much sleep? If so, how often?”

“ Do you make much of you body, dressing gaily and expensively, &c.? Are you vain of your appearance? Has this ever led to any greater evil? How often?”

Steps, &c., p. 15.—“ You will also do well to write down on paper the sins, or at least the chief sins, of which you become conscious, that they may not pass away from your memory.”

Steps, &c. p. 120.—“ Before you are to receive the holy Sacrament, or when you are visited by any dangerous sickness, if you find any one particular sin, or more, that lies heavy upon

you you are to disburden yourself of it into the bosom of your Confessor, who not only stands between God and you, to pray for you, but hath the power of the keys committed to him, upon your true repentance, to absolve you in Christ's name from those sins which you have confessed to him."

Steps, &c. p. 121.—“*The benefit of Absolution.*—If we would choose to believe rather than dispute, it would be a powerful cordial to every troubled spirit by a particular officer from the kingdom of heaven to be thus saluted; and *he that cannot value this absolution from the Priest, can no other way receive satisfaction to his doubts and fears, unless he expect to be assured of his remission by an immediate revelation* or can be content to stay till the day of judgment for the resolution of this great inquiry. Let it therefore cheer your hearts, ye contrite ones, to hear this blessing from your spiritual father; for, behold it contains all that you do need or can desire. *Are you miserable? Here is mercy. Are you sinful? Here is pardon. Are you liable to punishment? Here is deliverance. Are you desirous, but unable to do good? Here is strength and confirmation. Are you fearful of death and hell? Here is heaven and everlasting life.* And all this is asked of God by one that He hath commissioned to make this prayer; so that your only care is, that your repentance be such as your Minister believes it to be and then this absolution shall *certainly be confirmed in the high court of heaven, and not one word thereof shall fall to the ground.*”

THEOPH. ANG., the text book at the Bishop's College, teaches the same doctrine.

THEOPH. ANG., p. 108.—“When God has appointed certain means for dispensing His grace, *our salvation is tied to the use of them.* He remits the punishment of original sin by means of the Sacrament of Baptism; and in the case of *actual sin*, He confers the grace of His own pardon by means of priestly absolution, ordinarily and where it may be had, and whenever justly pronounced and duly received; and thus He makes repentance available to the true penitent, through the declaration and pronouncement of pardon by the Minister of

Christ, acting by His authority, at His command, and by His power. Absolution does not give repentance, but makes it effectual, as the loosing of Lazarus did not give him life, but the full and free use of it.

PROPIITIATORY SACRIFICE IN THE LORD'S
SUPPER: PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD, AND
FOR THE INTERCESSION OF SAINTS.

Steps, &c., p. 69.—‘ When the spiritual Sacrifice, the service without blood has been completed, upon that Sacrifice of propitiation, we entreat God for the peace of all the Churches, for the good estate of the world; in behalf of kings, of soldiers, of the sick and afflicted; and, in a word, we all pray and offer up this sacrifice for all who stand in need of help.’

Steps, &c., p. 64.—“ And together with us, remember, O God, for good, the whole mystical body of Thy Son; that such as are yet alive may finish their course with joy, and that all such as are dead in the Lord may rest in hope and rise in glory.”

Steps, &c., p. 69.—“ Give unto us all, O God a portion of all the good prayers in heaven and earth, the intercession of our Lord and the supplications of all Thy servants.”

“ *Spiritual Communion*,” p. 31.—“ Remember, O God, for good, the whole mystical body of Thy Son, that such as are yet alive may finish their course with joy; and that we, with all such as are dead in the Lord, may rest in hope and rise in glory.”

Steps, &c., p. 83.—“ I have humbly offered unto Thee, O Lord, the sacrifice of a troubled spirit, in union with the Sacrifice and Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Thy Son, my Saviour.”

Steps, &c., p. 107.—“ *The definition of a proper sacrifice.*—Sacrifice is, 1. Some material thing, either animate or inanimate, offered to God. 2. For the acknowledging the dominion and other attributes of God, or for procuring divine blessings, especially remission of sin. 3. Upon a proper altar (which yet is rather necessary for the external decorum than the internal

perfection of the sacrifice). 4. By a proper officer, and with agreeable rites. 6. And consumed, or otherwise disposed of, in such a manner as the Author of the sacrifice has appointed."

Steps, &c., p. 110.—"At, and in the Eucharist, we offer up to God three sacrifices. One by the Priest only; that is the commemorative Sacrifice of Christ's death represented in bread broken, and wine poured out."

Steps, &c., p. 114.—"The *water* in Baptism, with the blessing and grace of God, *has power in it* to cleanse us from our sins. And the *bread* in the Lord's Supper, being set apart and blessed, becomes the bread that nourisheth to eternal life."

Steps, &c., p. 66.—"The primitive custom was to receive in the hollow palm of the right hand, which was supported by the left crossed under it."

Steps, &c., p. 38.—"It is an ancient and good custom for those who are about to receive this Sacrament, not to take any food in the morning before they communicate."

Spirit Com., p. 14.—"And so be more fitted for the real reception of the body and blood of their Lord, when offered to him at the altar by the Pastor through whom the ministry of reconciliation is specially addressed to him."

Steps, &c., p. 62.—"Send Thy Holy Spirit upon this Sacrifice, that He may make this bread and this wine the body and blood of Thy Christ."

Spirit. Com., p. 10.—"Reverence is proved rather by bowing the mind and body in adoration of a present God, than by reasoning on the possibility and manner of his presence."

RECOGNITION OF THE CHURCH OF ROME.

Spiritual Communion, p. 12.—"It is sufficient to mention Bishops Patrick, Taylor, and Wilson, in the English Church, and such *spiritual writers as Challoner* and the author of the '*Spiritual Combat*' in another branch of the Church."

Spirit. Com., p. xiv.—"That most holy saint, *Saint Francis de Sales*, Bishop of Geneva."

Theoph. Ang., p. 6.—"The Church of Rome is a part of the Catholic Church, as the Church of Greece and the Church of

England is" &c.—P. 5. ‘The Catholic Church comprehends those of all nations who are *in the main points of religion one and the same*. In respect of faith and practice, *as teaching all truth*; as requiring obedience from all; and as ministering by God’s appointment all His means of spiritual grace.”

Theoph. Ang., p. 183.—‘The Church of England did not separate herself from the Church of Rome.’

SCHISM.—ENGLISH PROTESTANTS NOT OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH ARE DECLARED TO BE SCHISMATICS.—*Theoph. Ang.*, p. 32, &c.

“Schism is a carnal work, and excludes from heaven.”—*Ibid.* page 33.

“There is no schism which does not tend to generate for itself some heresy.”—*Ibid.* page 32.

“We may not say that schismatics are in the invisible Church.” “They are subjects of Christ, but rebellious ones.”—*Ibid.* p. 35.

“The graces which schismatics may have, *inveniunt iis, sed non iis prosunt, verum etiam obsunt*, they are in them, but not for them, but they are even against them, as long as they continue schismatics.”—*Ibid.* p. 245.

“Preaching in schism is sinful.”—*Ibid.* p. 247.

“Salvation is only in the Church. There may not be more than one Church in which salvation is offered.”—*Ibid.* p. 29.

“*Nemo potest habere Deum Patrem, qui non habet Ecclesiam Matrem.*”—*Ibid.* p. 32.

“It is a work of *charity to schismatics* to declare wilful schism to be *mortal sin*, for such God declares it to be.”—*Ibid.* p. 244.

In the “Steps to the Altar,” page 20, the following question is proposed for self-examination on the Second Commandment, “*the worship of God*. Have you encouraged heresy or schism, by attending the meetings of those who dissent from the *Church of Christ*; by buying, reading, or lending their books, or in any other way?”



STATEMENT OF FACTS, SHOWING
THE CONDITION OF THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND IN THIS ISLAND.

I—*Romish Books taught and prescribed.*

1st. "The Steps to the Altar," with other similar books, was distributed among the people as a manual of devotion: it was given by several ministers to the young men and women to prepare them for Confirmation, and teach them the rules of a religious life.

2nd. Above twenty ministers, mostly old Colonial chaplains, warned the people, and sent their protest to the Bishop against these books, in a tract called "The Solemn Declaration." The Bishop answered them, *that there was nothing seriously to object to in these books on the score of doctrine,—that they were identified with the true teaching of the Church,—and that one of them, "The Steps to the Altar," was used*

in his own family, and he saw no reason why it should be discarded.

3rd. The clergyman who principally disseminated "The Steps to the Altar," and who was compelled by the general disapprobation to relinquish his cure, published a defence of the book, the principles of which he avowed and justified. The Bishop wrote that his defence was completely satisfactory, and that he would appoint him to the first vacant chaplaincy. He was accordingly so appointed, and has since been promoted to one of the most important parishes in the island.

4th. The Romanizing principles and proceedings of Dr. Philpotts, Bishop of Exeter, may be judged from his conduct in the trial of Mr. Prynne. The Bishop of Tasmania, in his reply to the deputation, highly commended Bishop Philpotts, and called him a noble defender of the rights and principles of the Church of England. In the *Church Chronicle*, published under the directions of the Bishop, the proceedings and principles of Dr. Philpotts, as well as those of *Mr. Bennett* and *Miss Sellon*, have been eulogized.

II.—*Condemnation of the Right of Private Judgment.*

5th. A book called *Theophilus Anglicanus* is taught at Christ's College to the divinity stu-

dents, and has been prescribed for instruction and examination of candidates for holy orders in this diocese. This book teaches, that it is to be believed that general councils have not erred in their deliberate and received decisions; and that, though the Church may err, it does not follow that she is not to be obeyed,—and that in controversial points we must stand by the determination of the Church, for the preservation of her peace and unity is of the very essence of Christianity. It also teaches that our own minds are not the judge to determine whether expositors of Scripture are in error; but that the interpretations of Scripture, which the Church gives in her councils, creeds, liturgies, and writings of her early Fathers, Bishops, and doctors is the rule of faith. Believing that this statement teaches it to be a duty to submit to the Church even when teaching false doctrine, and that it sets the authority of the Church above Scripture and destroys the right of private judgment, the Ministers, in the “Solemn Declaration,” submitted to the people as a Protestant principle the following statement:—

“That the Holy Scripture is the sole rule
“ of faith; and that every individual has
“ the right to read and interpret the
“ Word of God by his own private judg-
“ ment with the aid of the Holy Spirit.
“ Denying the authority of tradition or

“ the right of any church or minister to
 “ prescribe to individuals in matters of
 “ religion in opposition to their own
 “ judgment.”

The following explanation was subsequently given by the subscribers to the Solemn Declaration :—

“ The second article of the “ Declaration”
 “ does not contradict the right of the
 “ Church of England to frame Articles
 “ of Religion, and to decree rites and
 “ ceremonies (the same not being con-
 “ trary to God’s Word), which its mem-
 “ bers are bound to receive and to ob-
 “ serve as long as they continue members
 “ of the Church of England. The Arti-
 “ cle in the Declaration only asserts that
 “ every Christian may interpret “ the
 “ Word of God by his own private judg-
 “ ment with the aid of the Holy Spirit ;
 “ and declares that no individual is bound
 “ to receive, on the authority of any
 “ church or minister, doctrines which the
 “ private judgment of such individual
 “ may convince him to be contrary to
 “ Holy Scripture.”

The usual testimonial having been given to a candidate for holy orders by two clergymen who had signed the “ Solemn Declaration,” the

Bishop rejected the candidate and refused the testimonial, stating that the ministers who had signed it were so unsound in their opinion on the authority of the Church that they could not satisfactorily vouch for the soundness of another. The Bishop subsequently declared his resolution not to grant a licence or testimonial to any of the ministers who had signed the "Declaration" until they retracted the article on private judgment,—thereby prohibiting them from any exchange of chaplaincies, or from receiving employment in another diocese.

In his Reply to the Deputation, calling upon him to withdraw his condemnation, the Bishop strongly re-affirmed it; *condemning the explanation as well as the article*, and asserting the doctrine of *Theophilus Anglicanus*, "that we are bound to receive the teaching of the Church though in opposition to what we are convinced by our own judgment is the positive doctrine of Scripture."

8th. The sanction given to the book called *Theophilus Anglicanus*, setting it up as a standard of the Church's teaching, and a direction in doctrine for ministers, called forth general remonstrance. It was alleged against the book, (1st), That in the following passages it gave a dangerous authority and recognition to the Church of Rome:—

"The Catholic Church *teaches all truth*,

“ requires obedience from all, and ministers by God’s appointment *all his means* of spiritual grace.”

“ Salvation is only in the Church—salvation is offered only in it. There may not be more than one Church in which the means of grace and salvation, remission of sins, and the Sacrament of the Eucharist can be had. The graces of the Spirit and the Word of God pure and incorrupt, can only be received in the Church. *Nulla salus nisi in Ecclesiâ. Nemo potest habere Deum Patrem qui non habet Ecclesiam Matrem.*”

“ Being members of the Church of Christ, the members of the Church of Rome are Catholics. *The Church of Rome is a part of the Catholic Church, as the Church of Greece and the Church of England is.*”

“ The Church of England *did not* separate from that of Rome;” “ she did not herself sever from the Church of Rome.”

(2). It was alleged that, while this work thus acknowledged the Romish Church as Catholic and Apostolic, teaching all truth, ministering all the means of grace, and having a divine authority over all persons where it is established, it passes the following dreadful sentence

upon all foreign Protestant Churches, and all Christian communions in Great Britain save the Established Church :—

“ We may not say that schismatics are in the invisible Church.” “ They are subjects of Christ, but rebellious ones.” “ Schism is a carnal work, and excludes from heaven.” “ *The graces which schismatics may have are in them but are of no profit to them, they even are against them.*” “ It is a work of charity to schismatics to declare wilful schism to be mortal sin.” “ *Preaching in schism is sinful.*”

7th. The passages quoted affirm that our salvation is *tied* to the use of means, and that *the grace of God's own pardon of actual sin is tied to priestly absolution*; and also that it is a religious duty to obey the Church even when we are assured she teaches error: and that the rule of faith is *not* Holy Scripture interpreted by our private judgment with the aid of the Holy Spirit; but that the Church speaking in her Creeds, Councils, Fathers, Doctors, &c. is the rule of faith to which the teaching of individuals is to be referred. This doctrine the members of our Church protested against as Romanizing, and, by deputation, requested the Bishop to discontinue the use of *Theophilus Anglicanus* at the College. The Bishop had previously re-

plied to the protest of the ministers, that *Theophilus Anglicanus* “appeared to him to be *one of the most valuable* of the many works published by his esteemed friend Dr. Christopher Wordsworth.” In his Reply to the Deputation, the Bishop stated that, in his belief, it contained no doctrines hostile to the faith of the Church of England,—that he would not prohibit its use at the College,—that if he had a hundred copies he would give them all away as he had done,—and that unless the Deputation had mastered the Greek and Latin quotations they were incompetent to form a judgment of the book.

9th. The declaration of the Colonial ministers against the Romanizing character of “*The Steps to the Altar*,” “*Theophilus Anglicanus*,” and “*Spiritual Communion*,” having been submitted to the Archbishop of Canterbury, His Grace thus wrote his judgment:—

“ I FULLY AGREE *with the opinion expressed in the Declaration, that there is much in the books to which it particularly refers which IS FAR MORE in accordance with the principles of the Church of Rome than of the Church of England.*”

III.—*Protest against the Privy Council.*

10th. Dr. Philpotts, Bishop of Exeter, three years ago, refused to institute the Rev. Mr.

Gorham to a living which had been conferred upon him by the patron, because he did not believe that infants are, by baptism invariably regenerated. Mr. Gorham appealed to the Privy Council, the highest court of appeal in ecclesiastical cases. The Privy Council almost unanimously decided that the opinions of Mr. Gorham were not contrary to the principles of the Church of England; and he was accordingly instituted to the living *by law* in opposition to the will of the Bishop of Exeter. The decision of the Privy Council was publicly approved by the two English archbishops, and by an address from above three thousand clergymen. It was received by all the Bishops, except Dr. Philpotts, and by the whole Church of England and of Ireland. By the law of the Church, therefore, a clergyman in England cannot be refused a living for denying the doctrine of absolute baptismal regeneration.

11th. The Bishop of Tasmania, in his last Charge, condemns and repudiates the decision of the Privy Council, and calls the Rev. Mr. Gorham "*a heretic clerk*," thereby implying that the law in the Church of England sanctions heresy: he also declares his resolution not to receive into this Colony any minister holding what are known as the evangelical opinions respecting baptism, or who does not profess to believe the doctrine of invariable regeneration in baptism.

12th. Several remonstrances and protests from meetings of clergymen and laymen having been presented against this resolution of the Bishop, His Lordship, in May last, declared to a deputation, that "as God gives him grace he shall protest against it (the decision of the Privy Council) to his dying day." And he repeated his determination not to allow any clergyman to receive a chaplaincy who does not hold the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration!

IV.—*Absolute Power of the Bishop.*

13th. As far as the clergy were affected, the colonial chaplaincies were parochial livings up to the arrival of the Bishop. They differed from those in England only in the mode of payment, which was not by tithes, but by an annual stipend from the Colonial Treasury. The parishes were severally marked out, and a clergyman was appointed to each to exercise his office as a parochial minister under the Diocesan. His appointment was permanent to the full charge of the parish, and to exercise all the offices of the ministry. No intimation was ever made to him that he was liable to be changed or displaced; nor was any change ever made save at the wish of the incumbents. Shortly after his appointment, Bishop Nixon declared that the *Colonial Parochial Clergy were Curates*, so that the Diocese consisted of fifty curates without parochial rectors, or with the Bishop as sole rector of

fifty parishes. In addition to this extensive charge, the Bishop is the sole patron of the livings, appointing all the ministers by permission of the Secretary for the Colonies. He is also the sole judge of the clergy, as well as the sole rector and patron. There is no appeal from his judgment; for he claims the right of sentencing even to deprivation, without affording to the accused a public trial, or even an account of the charges against him. As this statement will be regarded as scarcely credible the following examples are adduced.

The Rev T. Wigmore a clergyman of twenty-six standing, against whom no charge affecting his moral character, or of neglect of duty, was ever alleged, was deprived of his licence without trial; and his application to be informed of the accusations preferred against him was refused by the Bishop. Mr. Wigmore went to England to appeal; but he had no documents on which to ground his application; and if he had; there was no jurisdiction to receive it. He left in this Island a large family destitute: his high spirit broken by dishonour and distress soon found rest in the grave.

The licences from the Bishop of Australia, which the Colonial clergymen received when the deeply lamented Archdeacon Hutchins presided over this Diocese, were in the usual form granted to the parochial clergy in England. Bishop

Nixon, without the consent of the clergy, introduced into those issued by him clauses stating, either that he reserved to himself power to withdraw such licences whenever he should see fit, or summarily and without process; and that he would send such clergymen as he should think proper to officiate whenever he saw fit in the church of the minister to whom he granted such licence.

14th. A clergyman, who has officiated for several years at the Penitentiary Church in this City, was recently nominated by the parochial minister to be his curate. *Six hundred of the parishioners*, with the churchwardens, presented an Address to the Bishop praying for his appointment. The bishop acknowledged his ministerial usefulness and irreproachable character, but refused him a licence to act as curate in the parish in which, at the very time of the refusal, he was officiating to a large congregation as the sole minister, and *holding the bishop's licence*. The refusal was in consequence of the bishop's expressed resolution not to give a licence to any clergyman who had signed the declaration of the right of private judgment *unless he withdrew his signature*.

A clergyman leaving the Colony applied to the Bishop to countersign the ordinary testimonial of three clergymen, but was refused, as his

name was attached to the Declaration of ministers against the Romanizing works.

15th. Within a short period several of the oldest parochial ministers have died, or relinquished their chaplaincies, and been succeeded by clergymen appointed by the Bishop, holding his views, and prepared to aid in enforcing his measures.

TO THE PROTESTANTS OF VAN
DIEMEN'S LAND.

DEAR BRETHREN—

Opposition, even to error fraught with practical evil, is an ungrateful duty to the lover of truth; and he who would awaken others to the sacred obligation of resistance must encounter reluctance and suspicion. If the preceding statement of the condition of the Church has not convinced every Protestant mind that silence and submission in a minister is now a betrayal of religious truth, it will be in vain to justify this Address. We cannot any longer indulge the hope that proceedings equally hostile to the principles of the Church, and to the rights of its members, will be silently relinquished. But we long thought it impossible that any minister could insist on principles so evidently Romish, so decidedly con-



demned by the Primate, and repudiated by the people.

But arbitrary power is judicially blind and obstinate; selfish subservience it mistakes for honest support, while sustained by interested flattery in oppressing truth and justice. Threats and sentences so opposed to reason, that they could only be attributed to the inconsiderateness of absolute power offended by opposition, have been rigorously enforced upon the clergy; and we are reduced to the sad alternative of witnessing and acquiescing in the gradual extinction of the Protestant character of our Church, or of resolutely adopting decisive measures for its preservation.

Those ministers who have protested against Romanism are being rapidly decreased by death, by departure caused by vexatious persecution, and by coerced recantation. We suffer as under a sentence of excommunication the various evils entailed by the disfavour of the Bishop; and are told that the only terms on which our pardon will be interceded for are the recantation of our principles—principles which the whole Church have publicly asserted to be the foundation of the Protestant Religion.

With the seriousness becoming men whose faith and hope of life eternal rest on Evangelic truth, let us consider the condition of our Church,—the obligation in the sight of God in which

it involves us,—“The Reply to the Deputation” given by the Bishop,—and the measures by which the evils we suffer, and those still greater by which we are threatened, may be withstood and remedied.

The public journals of Great Britain have spread through the whole population the startling intelligence of the Romish confessional established in the diocese of Exeter, under the sanction, if not direction, of the Bishop. The account of the examination is submitted to you, that you may compare it with the instructions given in “The Steps to the Altar.” You will judge whether it be not exactly carrying into practice the rules and directions of that most insidious and seductive book, prescribed to us as the true teaching of the Church.

We may almost conclude that Mr. Prynne himself acted under direction of “The Steps;” since we find him using its very language when he directs the girl “to examine herself of her “sins during the past day, and take a sheet of “paper and write down whatever sins she had “committed, and go for confession every month “to the vestry of his church.”

The abominable and corrupting questions which Mr. Prynne asked are those which the Steps enjoins for self-examination, and to be

written down. Mr. Prynne nor Dr. Wiseman could not desire nor even conceive a higher exaltation of the office and authority of the Confessor than that given in "The Steps; there he is clothed in the attributes of God himself—*To hear, to judge, to absolve—to have confessions made to him as to God—to be regarded by the deluded being kneeling before him as God's deputy, holding "the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven."*

It was not by "The Steps" alone that your children were thus to be Romanized. "Theophilus Anglicanus" distinctly teaches that *the pardon of original sin is tied to Baptism—the pardon of actual sin is tied to Priestly Absolution.*

What becomes of the Gospel? The teaching of the Church is no longer that "*we are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ BY FAITH, and that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine.*" (Art. XI.) Its true teaching *now* is that our souls are freed from sin by the Absolution of a Priest; but the Priest must be of the Catholic Church,—if he be a Protestant schismatic, his washings and absolutions are vain and impious, nay his preaching is sinful, the grace of the Holy Spirit in him does him harm.

Is it under ignorance or misapprehension that

these execrable books are prescribed? Not so;—they were protested against by a body of clergy,—they were set forth before the eyes of all men,—large assemblies besought the Bishop not to prescribe them,—and the Primate unequivocally condemned them as being so far from the Church's teaching that they are in accordance with the principles of Popery.

Our forefathers were burned for rejecting Romish doctrine, and were honoured as men of God raised up to reform the Church and seal the evangelical truth by their blood:—now we are told that the Church whose ritual and doctrines these men organized never separated itself from Rome, with which it “*is one and the same in all the main points of religion.*” They on their own private interpretation of Scripture boldly rejected their Church's teaching as false, and set up their own convictions of Gospel truth against the doctors, councils, creeds, fathers, &c., of a Church to which all bowed obedience save themselves,—a few who knew no principle above that of following God rather than man. We are told that these men inculcated and transmitted as their teaching, that to differ from the Church is mortal sin; and that our own minds are not *the judge of Scriptural truth or error, but that the Church's voice, speaking by the Fathers, Councils, &c., is the true rule of faith.*

Heavy is the judgment on a reformed Church

that tolerates such anti-Christian principles,—but its light is threatened with extinction when they are enforced upon ministers as her teaching.

These books are still on episcopal authority sanctioned and prescribed—what can be higher attestation to the truth and utility of a book than that the Bishop uses it for the instruction of his own children: certainly his private practice would not be here noticed, had he not himself publicly communicated it to the Diocese, and thereby in the strongest manner accredited and recommended the book to the use of parents.

Theophilus Anglicanus is still retained in use at the College,—nor can it be discarded after his declaration as Visitor, that it is a most valuable work of one of the soundest Theologians of the present day, and is identified with the true teaching of the Church.

If these books are not now generally given by ministers as manuals to the people, it must be from forced compliance with the popular will. The approbation given by the Bishop to the books has not been withdrawn. The ministers who disseminated and vindicated them have not retracted their opinions;—they have been commended and promoted, and as men of principle and conscience they must submit with reluctance to any obstacle to their teaching what they believe to be the doctrines of the Church. A minister who holds the principles of “The Steps,”

that he is God's deputy to absolve, &c., can never rest quiet in conscience until he exercises his function. If he believe that the pardon of the sins of his people is tied to his absolution, his charity to their souls must impel him to urge them to confess and be absolved.

True it is, the protest of some ministers, and the indignation of the public, have repressed their Romanizing proceedings. Their policy is changed; they found that the members of the Church were not yet sufficiently imbued with what they term "Church Principles," they were not ripe for "The Steps." A more judicious course is being adopted; the gates of the Church are sealed against ministers holding Evangelical or Protestant views,—those still in the Diocese are subjected to a course of injury and vexation which would drive them from the Colony were they not withheld by the duty of not abandoning the people to Romanism.

This policy is not without effect,—the credulous and unstable are gradually won over. Worldly influence, the favour and even notice of rank and dignity, draw away many from the truth. An invitation and favorable reception in the society of the great has dissuaded some from continuing an unprofitable resistance against influence and power. The ministers who have not retracted are held forth assiduously as being the authors and continuers of division. The propa-

gators of "The Steps" complain loudly that the peace of the Church is disturbed by those who protest against their principles. Obnoxious teaching is now only cautiously and ambiguously delivered in sermons affecting Protestantism and the Evangelic doctrine. Gregory and Clement are no longer lauded as saints in sermons for which the preacher was publicly thanked. The Primate is no longer vituperated as *a supporter of heresy*, nor his tract on Justification excluded from the Propagation of the Gospel Society as Lutheran and unsound. The sin and danger of the exercise of private judgment as the cause of every error and rebellion, and the duty of excluding the heretic unbelievers in baptismal regeneration, are preached with less frequency and vehemence.

To what is this change to be attributed? Undoubtedly to "The Solemn Declaration" exposing Romanism in the Colony. And is this a reason that those who have any regard for Protestant truth should undervalue and withdraw from the ministers who maintained it? Is it because their protest checked the outward progress of Romanism, and compelled its advocates to wear more carefully and more closely the disguise of Protestantism, that the members of the Church who receive the benefit should detach themselves from its authors. What single sentiment in the Romish books have they recanted?

What toleration of a Protestant principle or minister have they displayed? None; their faces are set like brass against every man who has thwarted their designs in disseminating Romish Books and principles. The decree is passed and sternly enforced; condemned, excommunicated, the only hope proposed to us of pardon,—of being relieved from the evils of the episcopal sentence—is to recant publicly, to recant without conviction, to sell our consciences, and to give ourselves up to eternal dishonour. These are their terms of peace.

Contemning the lay members of the Church, deriding with contumely the pretence of a layman ignorant of Greek understanding the principles of an English book, their opposition is treated with scorn. A little outward compliance, a profusion of complimentary speeches, blandishments, and lamentation,—some popular projects to divert attention, and they are confident that the influence of the people's judgment, the object of their scorn, will be turned aside and dissipated. Impressed with the notion that they are God's deputies to hear and judge mankind, they dream of restoring the priestly rule of ages when their principles lived in the darkened minds of a Popish people. They see the impossibility of at once repressing the tide of light and liberty, but, with Jesuit perseverance and *adaptation*, they instil and disseminate their

principles. From hymns for infants to devotions for the dying—from tales for the nursery to their philosophy of meritorious ignorance and subjugation of reason, they assail the human mind with a proselyting assiduity worthy of the Pharisees of old.

In the field of free discussion their principles are unfolded only to be exposed and refuted; the Light of the Gospel is now, by divine grace, too strong for Romish error to escape detection: but the imminent danger in this Diocese is caused by the exclusion of Protestant ministers, and the filling every pulpit with men who will preach the principles of “The Steps” as the teaching of the Church. *There is not a single clergyman possessing honesty or sincerity who gave away and approved of “The Steps,” who would not, IF HE DARE, act in his parish as Mr. Prynne did at Plymouth.*

Their hearts are longing for the establishment of, what they call, the Catholic system, of which convents and the confessional are the chief attractions—the great principles of priestly domination. Their first bold attempt was repressed, but not relinquished; they are silent, but they have renounced nothing; they have confessed nothing. They devote all their arts to calming opposition, to silencing suspicion; they try to destroy confidence in those who have exposed them, to drive from the Diocese the Protestant

clergy, that, when secure of silence and submission, they may renew their open attempts to Romanize the people.

It is, indeed, true that their strength will be found weakness, their wisdom folly ; but incalculable mischief may be done if they are allowed to prosecute their designs. In their College they possess a training school for disciples of "Theophilus," the English "Loyola;" they have all the revenues and pulpits of the Church at their disposal ; they can employ official power and official representations, names, numbers, rank, and money to support their party, their principles, and designs. Against them is the undying Bible, and those who have learned in it the religion which honours and exalts Christ rather than the priesthood, which looks for divine grace through faith in him, not through a priest's absolution. May God grant to every one who knows the Gospel courage to stand up for its truth now in the day of trial !

Condemnation of the right of Private Judgment, and of the Ministers who asserted it.

The public denunciation of the ministers for signing the declaration of the right of private judgment is the boldest attack upon Protestantism which even this Romanizing age has witnessed. The preceding statement of facts makes it evident that it is the very foundation of the

Reformation which is assailed. The Bishop admits that we allow to the Church “ authority to
 “ draw up rules of discipline and articles of faith,
 “ which her members are bound to receive while
 “ they continue in her communion ; and that she
 “ has authority to teach, guide, direct, and influ-
 “ ence:”—but this, he says, is not sufficient ; and
 he condemns and deprives us of the exercise of our
 right as ministers, because we deny that any
 man is bound to receive the teaching of the
 Church when he is convinced in his own judg-
 ment that her teaching is unscriptural.

The Bishop’s words are—“ *Those who have*
 “ *put forth this ‘ Declaration’ are individual*
 “ *members, as well as ministers, of the Church*
 “ *of England. In accordance, then, with their*
 “ *own claim to the plenary right of private*
 “ *judgment for others, they must, of course,*
 “ *possess it themselves ; as individuals, they*
 “ *must be* AT PERFECT LIBERTY TO REJECT ANY
 “ DOCTRINE WHICH THEIR PRIVATE JUDGMENT
 “ MAY CONVINCe THEM IS CONTRARY TO SCRIP-
 “ TURE.

“ *If this be truth, they must needs, in teach-*
 “ *ing their flocks, tell them (learned or un-*
 “ *learned, stable or unstable, it matters not),*
 “ *that if they interpret the Word of God by*
 “ *their own private judgment with the aid of*
 “ *the Holy Spirit, in a sense totally different*

“from that in which the Catholic Church of
 “Christ has interpreted it,—they are at per-
 “fect liberty to do so: the Church allows it,
 “it can, therefore, be no sin; the Church dis-
 “claims all right to fetter their free opinion:
 “she has only, according to Dr. Fry’s view,
 “‘authority to teach, guide, direct, or influ-
 “‘ence,’ but none to prescribe; none to speak
 “with authority; so as to over-rule private
 “judgment. No man is bound to receive its
 “teaching in opposition to his own judgment.

“Such liberty, or rather such licence, would
 “speedily bring about a state of things similar
 “to that which St. Peter describes, when he
 “tells us, that, in his days, ‘the unlearned and
 “unstable’ wrested St. Paul’s epistles, as they
 “did also ‘the other Scriptures, unto their
 “‘own destruction.’ We cannot be so unchari-
 “table as to suppose, that they who did thus
 “much (wrest the Holy Scriptures) abjured
 “all prayer to the Holy Spirit to be guided
 “aright in their search of Scripture. Where-
 “fore, then, did their study of God’s Holy
 “Word lead to such an awful result?”—Bishop
 of Tasmania’s Reply to Deputation, page 13,
 printed by himself.

This passage from Dr. Nixon’s defence of his
 condemnation of the ministers will satisfy the
 reader,—

1st. That there is no misapprehension ;—that the Bishop does really compel us to believe that the Church has authority to over-rule our own judgments ; that individuals have *no right* to reject doctrines which their private judgment may convince them are contrary to Scripture.

2nd. That evils and errors would be the result of such a liberty. The Bishop says :—

“ Were each man to be his own interpreter, in matters where the Church has recorded her judgment, and to be at liberty to set up his individual opinion against that,—either because his dwarfed intelligence could not, or his own rebellious spirit would not, receive it, —it requires no great stretch of imagination to forecast the consequence.”

Dr. Pusey and Mr. Newman, when asserting this Romish doctrine, used equivocal language. Bishop Nixon puts it forth as explicitly as the Church of Rome, whose Priests are required to assent to it thus in the Creed of Pope Pius the Fourth :—

“ I ALSO ADMIT THE HOLY SCRIPTURE ACCORDING TO THAT SENSE WHICH OUR HOLY MOTHER THE CHURCH HAS HELD, AND DOES HOLD, TO WHICH IT BELONGS TO JUDGE OF THE TRUE SENSE AND INTERPRETATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.”

Whether it be true or whether it be false, the

principle which the Bishop enjoins is this identical doctrine of the Church of Rome. We asserted that the opposite to it is the Protestant principle. Bishop Nixon condemns us for so doing, and will have his to be Protestant: every reader sees that it is Romish: if he be correct, it follows that *the Protestant and Romish Churches have the same rule of faith.*

I believe a more shocking passage cannot be found in any Christian writer than that in which Dr. Nixon derides the guiding influence of the Holy Spirit. We said, that "every Christian may interpret the Word of God by his own private judgment with the aid of the Holy Spirit." Dr. Nixon replies that St. Peter tells us the ignorant and unstable wrested the Holy Scripture, and we must not be so uncharitable as to suppose that they did not pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Alas! is then Divine direction to be denied or undervalued because perverse persons wrested Scripture without, as we conjecture, abjuring the guidance of the Holy Spirit? It is truly dreadful to contemplate such a declaration. Let it be condemned by the Church, speaking in her first homily:—

*“ In reading of God’s Word, he not always
 “ most profiteth that is most ready in turning
 “ of the Book, or in saying of it without the
 “ Book; but he that is most turned into it,*

“that is, MOST INSPIRED WITH THE HOLY
 “GHOST.” “Read it humbly, with a meek
 “and lowly heart, to the intent you may glo-
 “rify God, and not yourself, with the know-
 “ledge of it: and read it NOT WITHOUT DAILY
 “PRAYING TO GOD, THAT HE WOULD DIRECT
 “YOUR READING TO GOOD EFFECT.” “The
 “humble man may search any truth boldly in
 “the Scripture, WITHOUT ANY DANGER OF
 “ERROR; and if he be ignorant, he ought the
 “more to read, and to search Holy Scripture,
 “to bring him out of ignorance.” . . . God him-
 “self from above will give light unto our minds,
 “and teach us those things which are necessary
 “for us. St. Chrysostom saith, “that man’s
 “human and worldly wisdom or science is not
 “needful to the understanding of Scripture, but
 “the revelation of the Holy Ghost, who in-
 “spireth the true meaning unto them that with
 “humility and diligence do search therefor.
 “He that asketh shall have, and he that seeketh
 “shall find, and he that knocketh shall have the
 “door opened.”—*Hom. on Holy Scrip.*, p. 6.
 These truly Evangelical sentiments will, it is to
 be hoped, carry conviction even to the mind of
 him by whom they have unhappily been denied.

If there be a doctrine essential to the soul’s
 comfort, it is the assurance that the Lord will
 guide His people to the saving truths of His

Gospel, and, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, turn them away from error as from sin. Without this there were no assurance—no safety for the believer. Destroy the Christian's confidence in the illumination and direction of the Holy Spirit, and he is cast helpless and hopeless upon a sea of darkness and error. Alas! that a Protestant minister should undermine the Christian's hope, by suggesting that those who had lost their souls through perverting the Gospel had sought the Spirit's guidance, and had as much reason as the true believer to confide in its direction! This deplorable objection is not that of a Christian, but of an unbeliever attempting to overthrow the Gospel, by objecting that the guiding influence of the Holy Spirit is not to be depended upon, because in some cases it is supposed to have proved ineffectual. Popish advocates have frequently alleged it against Protestantism, as will be seen in the conclusive answer of Bishop Stillingfleet. But by divine goodness the promises and graces of God are not thus made vain; they are too plain, too substantial and encouraging, to be rendered lifeless by the mistrust or objections of man.

The heathen Pharaoh knew that the minds of the pious were enlightened by the Spirit of God, to which he at once attributed the wisdom of Joseph. "*Can we find such an one as this is*

“*a man in whom the Spirit of God is?*” Gen. xli. 38. “God alone,” says Daniel, ii. 21, “*giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding.*” The Psalmist besought God “*to renew a right spirit within him.*” Psal. li. 10. The prophets, Joel ii. 28, and Jeremiah xxxi. 33, predict the new Covenant of Gospel grace. “But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord.” So also, Ezekiel xi. 19, and xxxvi. 27, “I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them.”

PROMISES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

“If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly father give *the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?*” Luke xi. 13. Jesus said, If thou knewest the gift of God, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He

“ would have given thee living water.” John
 “ iv. 10. “ If any man thirst, let him come
 “ unto me and drink. He that believeth on me,
 “ as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly
 “ shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake
 “ he of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him
 “ should receive.” John vii. 38. “ And I will
 “ pray the Father, and He shall give you another
 “ Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever :
 “ even the Spirit of Truth.” John xiv. 17. “ If
 “ any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God,
 “ that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth
 “ not, and it shall be given him.” Jam. i. 5.

EVERY BELIEVING CHRISTIAN IS—1. RENEWED,—2. SANCTIFIED,—3. ENLIGHTENED AND GUIDED IN THE TRUTH BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.

1. “ Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His. If Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin ; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.” “ As many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God.” Rom. viii. 9. 11. 14.

“ Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God.” “ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” John iii. 3, 6. “ Which

were born not of blood, but of God." John i. 13. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." 1 John v. 1. "The inward man is renewed day by day." 2 Cor. iv. 16.

2. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience." 1 Pet. i. 2. "Ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit." 1 Pet. i. 22.—"Ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body." Rom. viii. 13. "Being sanctified by the Holy Ghost." Rom. xv. 16.—"Ye are sanctified.. by the Spirit of our God." 1 Cor. vii. 11.—"Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." Eph. iv. 7.—"Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost." 1 Cor. vi. 19.—"The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Rom. v. 5.—"Ye have received the Spirit of Adoption." Rom. viii. 15.—"Praying always with all prayer in the Spirit." Eph. vi. 18. "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." 1 Cor. vi. 17.—"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest." 1 John iii. 9. "The spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you." 1 Pet. iv. 14.

3. "If we live in the Spirit, let us walk in the Spirit." Gal. v. 25.—"Live according to God in the Spirit." 1 Pet. iv. 6.—"In every thing ye are enriched by him in all utterance and in all knowledge."—1 Cor. i. 5.

"God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God."—"So the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." "*He that is spiritual judgeth all things.*" 1 Cor. ii. 10, &c.—"That God may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, &c." Eph. i. 18.—"The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom: to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit." 1 Cor. xii. 8. "Ye have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created Him," Col. iii. 10.—"The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us." Rom. viii. 26.

The root of spiritual religion is dependence upon divine grace. These passages of Scripture will, I trust, counteract the objection against con-

riding upon the direction of the Holy Spirit. It is vain to look for proofs of any doctrine if these do not impress a positive conviction that our Lord will assuredly enable us to understand His Word aright, when we seek his grace with the prayer of faith.

We do not say that the Bible is a rule of faith sufficient to teach all necessary truth to *every* reader, but only to *those who read it with becoming reverence as the Word of God and not of man, and who seek for the illumination of the Holy Spirit to reveal and impress its truths upon the heart.* Scripture itself teaches us that “the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.” Heb. iv. 3. The Apostle declares “that without faith it is impossible to please God.” Heb. xi. 6.—And requires us “to receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save our souls.” James i. 21.—“If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God.” John vii. 17.—“For if any man be a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass, &c.” James i. 23.—The seed is only fruitful when sown into a good heart.

To object the example of unbelievers or Socinians who have perverted the Word of God, is a very false attempt to discredit the sufficiency

of the Scriptures ; for it is plain that *faith was not mixed with their reading*,—they could not have sought for the grace of the Holy Spirit which they disbelieved. Such persons do not show that the Protestant rule of faith is insufficient ; for they did not possess that necessary part of it, “the aid of the Holy Spirit,” without which the letter of Scripture profiteth not. Such examples should not weaken the reliance of any Christian on God’s Word, and the direction of the Holy Spirit ; for to mistrust their sufficiency is to make God a liar, and to deny the Redeemer’s grace and promise. The Apostle “tells us that “Scripture is profitable for doctrine “and instruction in righteousness” so completely “as to make us “perfect, throughly furnished to every good work.” Is it not plainly opposing his instruction to weaken our reliance upon Scripture and divine guidance, by telling us of those who are supposed to have read the Scripture with the invoked aid of the Holy Spirit, and found in place of divine truth their own destruction ?

The only plausible objection against the Protestant rule of faith, or the right of private judgment, is that alleged by Dr. Nixon, that Protestants are divided into many sects, each of which interprets the Bible as its rule of faith, and that many heretics have perverted Scripture. The following answers may be given :—

1st. The misuse of Holy Scripture is no proof of its insufficiency for the end designed by God. Our dispensation is one of faith and moral trial. All God's gifts and means of grace are, like the Holy Scripture, profitable only when received in faith.

It might as well be said that the Lord's Supper is insufficient or unavailing, because there are some who receive it to their own condemnation, without faith and devotion.

So prayer might be deemed unavailing, because, though it is certain whosoever asketh aright receiveth, yet many ask amiss and are not heard.

Reason is often misapplied through prejudice and forms erroneous conclusions :—are we therefore to discard it, and adopt some other means of distinguishing truth from falshood ?

It cannot be proved that any individual who used his reason aright was ever led into error, or prayed in faith and was not heard, or read the Scripture with faith and prayer and did not attain a knowledge of the Gospel.

2nd. In reality there is no other rule of faith ; for any authority attributed to a Church resolves itself into that of Scripture interpreted by individual private judgment. What are the opinions of Doctors and Fathers but their private interpretation of Scripture ? What are the decrees

of Councils but the opinions of their members? Each individual must interpret Scripture in order to ascertain the true Church whose teaching and constitution must be Scriptural: so that, though the Church's teaching interpreted by private judgment be the rule of faith as to doctrine, Scripture interpreted by private judgment must be the rule in determining the true Church, and that her doctrines are Scriptural. He therefore who alleges the Church as his rule of faith is required to interpret Scripture by his private judgment, and to rely upon his interpretation no less than the Protestant.

3rd. In the Apostolic and early ages of the Church, schisms, heresies, and sects prevailed as much as at present. If the teaching of the Church was the rule of faith then, it was unable to prevent divisions, and was liable to the same objection which is now alleged against Holy Scripture. The Arians especially asserted that their opinions were the true teaching of the Church.

4th. The Church of Christ consists of those who believe in Him, and through faith serve Him in righteousness and true holiness. By profession of a creed, or name, or form of worship, an ungodly man cannot be made a Christian. The unity of Christ's Church consists in its members having the same living faith which

works by love, and the same Spirit renewing their hearts; they are taught of God by His Word, and they worship Him in various forms but in the same spirit and truth. Amid the divisions of the combined Protestant Church it will be found that no one is regarded as a true member who is not thus distinguished. The uniformity of belief derived from Holy Scripture is visible in the "*Harmony of Confessions of the Protestant Churches*," which exhibit the same doctrine—the same religious principles.

Submission to the authority of a Church may produce an outward unity of form and profession, without the inward unity of faith, love, and devotion. Submission to the teaching of Holy Scripture may indeed allow outward differences, but produces the inward unity of a people whose faith has come from hearing, and whose hearing or instruction is from the Word of God.

The whole system of the Gospel is founded upon individual judgment and interpretation of Scripture. "*Every man is to prove all things, and hold fast the truth.*" "*To try the Spirits,* or teaching of the prophets or preachers." "*He that is spiritual judgeth all things,*"—for his mind, enlightened and directed by the Holy Spirit, rejects error and receives the Gospel truths, "which are spiritually discerned." Indeed the Gospel teaches that neither Church nor any

human ministration can impress the heart with divine truth unless it be enlightened by the Holy Spirit. “*The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*” It is a great mistake to suppose that the most precise teaching of any Church *must* impress a true faith,—a knowledge of the Gospel: that is the office of the Holy Spirit, which can render the ignorant and imperfectly instructed true believers, while Doctors and Bishops wander in spiritual darkness. A true faith is divine wisdom “*which descendeth from above,*”—that wisdom which the Church cannot give, *but which “God giveth to all men liberally.”* He who has this wisdom needs no other guide than God’s Word,—he cannot err therein. The ministers of Satan, though appearing like angels, may not mislead him. The Apostle confidently appeals to us to estimate teachers and doctrines by our private judgment. “*If an angel from heaven preach any other Gospel than that which you have received, let him be accursed.*”

“*To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.*”

It is conclusive evidence against the Romish

or Tractarian error, of the right of the Church to prescribe its teaching to individuals in opposition to their own judgments, that no mention of such a doctrine is found in Scripture: if it were the will of our Lord to establish such a visible tribunal, he would certainly not have left us in the dark concerning it. He would have told us its constitution, and pointed out the means of distinguishing it. But in opposition to this, where the traditions, or authoritative interpretations, or explanations of Scripture by the Jewish Church are alluded to by our Lord, it is always to condemn them, to warn his disciples against being misled by them, and to inculcate the duty upon every individual of ascertaining the true meaning of Scripture for himself, and of rejecting the interpretations of the elders or traditions of the Church. See Mark vii. 1—10; Matt. xxii. 29.

Our Lord always refers individuals to Holy Scripture, that by their own judgment, independently of the decisions or teaching of the Jewish Church, they might discover its meaning. To the lawyer, who asked Him what he should do to inherit eternal life, He replied, "What is written in the Law? How readest thou?" (Luke x. 26.) In the parable the same direction is given as to the way to discover divine truth. "They have Moses and the Pro-

phets, let them hear them.” (Luke xvi. 29.) Our Lord always appeals to Scripture in proof of the truth of his doctrine, thereby calling upon his hearers to use their own judgments in interpreting it. “Search the Scriptures—they are they which testify of me.” (John v. 39.) “Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures.” (Matt. xxii. 29.)

The Bereans are praised for ascertaining the meaning of Scripture by their private judgment. (Acts xvii. 11.) The controversy of St. Paul with the Jews was always on the Scripture alone, submitted to the judgment of individuals without reference to the authority of the Church. The sufficiency of Scripture is most fully declared by St. Paul to Timothy. (2 Tim. iii. 14.) “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” If St. Paul had any knowledge of the necessity of a Church to interpret Scripture to individuals by its Fathers, Councils, &c., he must have misled Timothy in describing thus fully the sufficiency of Scripture by itself to be the means of teaching all necessary truth to Christians.

This language is plainly designed to impress us with the most unqualified reliance upon Holy

Scripture “to make us wise unto salvation,” to enrich us in all knowledge. Timothy from a child had been taught the Scripture according to the Law of God. Deut. vi. 6.—“These words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children.”

“This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein.” Joshua i. 8.—These divine commands distinctly teach that every man is to study God’s Word for instruction and direction,—that is, as his rule of faith.

To the same effect is the assurance of St. Paul, “that whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scripture might have hope.” Rom. xv. 4. It is plain that the Apostle here designed us to believe that we could derive comfort and hope by learning the Scripture,—and if so, surely we must interpret and apply it.

The Psalmist read the Scripture that he might learn from it divine truth, and be enlightened in the knowledge of God. “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” “The entrance of thy words giveth light, it

giveth understanding unto the simple." "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple."

Blessed, said our Lord, even above her who was blessed among women, "are they who hear the word of God and do it." Luke ii. 28.

We are renewed in heart through the Scripture. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, by the word of God." 1 Pet. i. 23; James i. 18, 21. "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth." John xvii. 17.

The Apostle tells us to "let the word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom." Col. iii. 16. "To receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save our souls." James i. 21. St. Paul says, "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is the word of faith which we preach." Rom. x. 8. Our Lord teaches us that man shall live by every word of God. Luke iv. 4.

It is unreasonable to suppose that the Scriptures are thus recommended to us by our Lord and His Apostles, as conveying such great spiritual blessings to those who read them, examine them, understand them, and obey them; and yet that we are not to interpret them—that is, to put a sense upon them or understand their

meaning. Men to sustain a party will advance any absurdity ; but a greater never was put forth than that we are to study an inspired book consisting of reasonings and precepts, and yet are not to interpret or ascertain the meaning of such a book.

Faith, we are told, “comes by hearing the word of God.” Rom. x. 17. The Apostles exhort us that we should “earnestly contend for the faith.” Jude iii. 3.—“And be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us.” 1 Pet. iii. 15.

These instructions assuredly convey to us the design of the Apostle, that our faith should be the result of examination of the meaning of the Scriptures, — that it should be founded upon evidence, which we ought to be able to set before others as the reason of our faith and hope. If the Church’s teaching, or decisions of the doctrines of Scripture, were to be our rule, the Apostle’s direction would have been unmeaning ; for our answer would be always ready in some decree or dogma drawn up by the Church.

“These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God : and that, believing, ye might have life through his name.” John xx. 31.—“It seemed good to

me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed." Luke i. 4. "I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren." 1 Thess. v. 27.—"Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book." Revel. xxii. 7.

But one design can be attributed to these declarations, — that which the Apostle stated to Timothy, that Scripture is given to reprove, instruct, correct, and make us wise unto salvation. The Gospels were written, we are informed by the Evangelists themselves, that we in them might acquire a knowledge of Gospel truth, that we might believe and know the certainty of what is preached to us by ministers or taught us in our youth. A blessing is even pronounced upon him who keeps the sayings of the most obscure book in the Bible. The conclusion from this must be, that we are to seek the knowledge of religion from Scripture, by examining its statements and interpreting its meaning.

Compare these passages of Scripture with the total silence respecting any appointment of the Church to be the authoritative interpreter of Scripture, to whose teaching we must give up our judgments, and the vanity and falsehood of

such a doctrine will be apparent. The solitary text, "Hear the Church!" is adduced, and by its palpable misapplication shows how utterly destitute of Scriptural authority is the doctrine itself. "If thy brother shall *trespass* against thee, go and tell him *his fault*, &c.; and if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church." Matt. xviii. 17. It is clear that our Lord is speaking not of a doctrine or teaching of the Church, but of a fault, a trespass—some injury committed by one Christian against his brother. If the offender should refuse reparation after private admonition, his offence is to be communicated, not to the universal Church, but to the congregation of which both are members, that, if still obstinate, he may be excluded from their communion. A more direct and open perversion of Scripture can scarcely be imagined than to suppose that this text signifies that the Church has a right to prescribe to us its interpretations of Holy Scripture. If so, each *congregation* must have this divine power, and no small multiplicity of tribunals to deliver authoritative interpretations would be established.

"If the Holy Scriptures," says the metropolitan Bishop of Calcutta, "were not designed to be complete in themselves, would there not have been some intimation that they were not intended as a full and final instruction for after ages, but

that their omissions would be supplied by the authority with which the Church would be invested? Would not the Apostles have said, 'What we now write for your instruction is but a part of those saving truths which you are hereafter to receive?'

"But not a word of all this. Not a word of tradition being designed as the first teacher of the divine doctrine of salvation, and the Scripture the second; not a word of the rule of faith being the Gospel 'as determined by the consent of the Church in all ages, as men now speak.'"

—P. 6, Sermon, A.D. 1841.

If authority over the people's faith was ever conferred upon any Church, it must have been upon that of Israel. The Jewish High Priest was empowered to deliver oracles by Urim and Thummim. The Glory of the Lord appeared above the mercy seat—between the Cherubim. The line of Priests and Prophets revealed by inspiration the will of God. The people were commanded "to come to the Priests for judgment in matters of controversy, to do all that they should inform them according to the sentence of the law; and the man who should do presumptuously, and not hearken to the Priest, should be put to death." Deut. xvii. 11.—They were directed "to ask the Priests concerning the law." Haggai ii. 11.—"For the Priest's

lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts." Mal. ii. 7.

Notwithstanding this high authority, and the many exclusive privileges of the Aaronic priesthood, the people were not to give up their judgment to the teaching of the Priests;—but were to beware of their false doctrine, lest being blind guides they might lead their followers into the pit. They made void the law of God by their traditions; and, far from being commissioned as an infallible guide to the people, their Church itself frequently abandoned the faith and worship of the Lord.

Ezekiel, ch. vii., describes the seventy elders, the Sanhedrim or supreme council of the Church, and nation worshipping idols—even the forms of creeping things. He tells of an image set up in the Temple itself, of the priests worshipping the sun, and women weeping for Thammuz or Adonis. The Prophets are said to have prophesied falsely, and the Priests to have ruled by their means. Jer. v. 31.—“The Priests committed murder by consent.” Hos. vi. 9.—“They shed the blood of the just, and wandered as blind men.” Lam. iv. 13.—“They departed out of the way, *they caused many to stumble at the law, they corrupted the covenant of Levi.*” Mal. ii. 8. Which of the Prophets did they not

persecute, until at last the High Priest and majority of the Sanhedrim embraced the infidelity of the Sadducees, and crucified the Lord of Glory?

Can it be said that this Church and its Priests possessed a divine right to prescribe to the people? If so, the people were not only justified in following them, but bound to obey them in idolatry, impiety, and rejection of the Saviour. Since notwithstanding the sacred character and high authority of the priesthood, and the weaker light of the Old Testament, the people were to rely on their own judgments of Scripture truth in opposition to their Church, it follows that, under the spiritual religion of the Gospel, the people are infinitely more bound to trust their souls to no guidance but that of the pure Word of God.

Faith is an assent which the mind gives to a proposition or statement as being true; and is satisfactory in proportion to its assurance of the truth of what it believes, or in proportion to the amount of evidence on which it relies. Faith varies not only in the degree of confidence with which it believes, but in the nature or character of the assent which it gives to what it believes. When founded upon examination of evidence—it is rational belief; but when resting on authority,—when believing because others believe,—it is mere submission.

The man before whose mind is all the evidence of our Lord's resurrection, afforded by Scripture and historical testimony, receives this truth with a rational faith. The believer in the Holy Coat of Trêves, or in the absolution of a Priest, or in the Mass sacrifice for departed souls, because his Church tells him these fables are true, receives them with a mental feeling and conviction entirely different from those of the former.

The Church faith is submission and credulity:—the Bible faith is conviction and intellectual judgment. The one is accompanied with a sense of dependence upon man, and is weak and humiliating:—the other is firm, self-dependent, and resting upon discernment of truth. The former is the feeling of a blind man knowing objects through the description of his guide:—the latter, that of one who examines and judges for himself.

The Church rule of faith bids its disciples believe because the Priests believe,—their fathers believe,—and all of their Church believe; and this is found in practice sufficient to persuade the ignorant, the unintellectual, and unenlightened. The Bible rule bids us search the Scriptures to become wise unto salvation, and try every word by the law and the testimony.

Experience is the verification of principles.—

History tells of one, and but one Christian nation having abandoned the Gospel, and execrated religion as enslaving and degrading the mind : that nation knew only the Church rule of belief and practice. The world is governed by these two principles,—where the Bible prevails, there is progression of intellect, development of the principles of truth, amelioration of laws and manners, increased knowledge and observance of the rights and liberties of man, and greater regard to the benevolent feelings and usages of humanity. Where the Church rule prevails, as in Portugal, Spain, Ireland, Italy, and South America, man in his moral and intellectual nature stagnates, depressed and degraded by the principle of servile submission. A slave in religion, he is robbed of half his mental liberty in every thing else :—in his high capacity as a religious being, he exhibits either superstition or infidelity, as the invariable results of the Church rule of religious belief.

Are we to suppose that man's intelligence was given him to fathom the heights and depths of human inquiry, and yet be unable to understand the truth revealed of God for his salvation?—Can we suppose him capable of unravelling truth from the confusion of human prejudices and indistinct conceptions, and yet unable to comprehend the inspired volume *designed* to make him wise unto salvation ?

In admitting this doctrine we dethrone reason, condemn our understanding as a false guide, and unsettle every principle of morals and religion. If incapable of comprehending the precepts and reasoning of inspired Apostles, we must distrust our conclusions on every moral subject, and abandon ourselves to universal Pyrrhonism.

Persuade us that we cannot understand the Scripture by our private judgment, —deter us from its sacred page by holding before our alarmed imaginations those who have wrested it to their destruction,—and we may indeed be terrified into implicit submission to the Church or the Priest: but no bodily bondage can parallel the servitude of the mind which gives up its convictions,—which dreads to exercise its judgment, and, violating its own nature, assents without inquiry, and believes without evidence.

The object of reason is truth: all our faculties or powers are given us to attain by their exercise some good. Destitute of judgment, propositions would float through our minds without our distinguishing the true from the false, the good from the evil. Religion is divine truth revealed by God in Holy Scripture; and to deny the sufficiency of reason to understand the teaching of God, is equally derogatory to the Creator, and to the human mind.

The very idea that God's Word addressed to man stands in need of intermediate human explanation,—that it must be reconstructed and systematized in order to be understood, is intolerable impiety and presumption. That can never be true which thus violates the moral sense:—that must be false which asserts insufficiency or imperfection in any work or design of God. It is therefore morally impossible that God's Word can be so liable to mislead,—so incapable of teaching divine truth as to require human interpretation to render it intelligible.

Holy Scripture is a great instrument of God's spiritual Providence: not a perishing human hair is unnumbered by infinite intelligence,—far less is there one sentence or one word of that inspired volume, of which one tittle shall not fail, that is not replete with divine energy, under the application of an all-directing Providence, to effect the will of God to each human soul according to its capacity for instruction. Is man to step in between the Word of the Almighty and the soul of His creature and say, that his interpretation is necessary to give efficiency to the divine teaching by rendering it safer and more intelligible?

The Church cannot exercise a conjoined authority with the Bible as the rule of belief. The teaching which we are bound to receive must be

the rule of faith to us : if we must believe what the Church prescribes, the safest way is to receive its teaching without inquiry. To what end should we search the Scriptures when inquiry would engender doubt ? To examine in order to ascertain whether the teaching of Scripture agreed with that of the Church, would be presumptuous as well as dangerous : for if we cannot interpret God's Word for our instruction in divine truth, it is quite beyond our capacity to interpret it as judges of the Church's teaching. To study the meaning of Scripture would be needlessly to incur the hazard of having to silence doubts, and to force our convictions into conformity with the Church's doctrines. It is therefore with good reason that the Romanists discountenance the reading of God's Word, as being, to those under the Church's rule of faith, generally dangerous and injurious. Those who are conversant with the modern Oxford School must have observed how the use and necessity of Holy Scripture are depreciated, and formal manuals substituted for the divine Word.

Every doctrine of religion implies our responsibility to God for the exercise of our talents or faculties, and the voice of mankind attributes honour to those by whom they have been employed to the public benefit. Nothing is more certain than that the good use of our faculties

strengthens their power, and improves and exalts our natures. It may be convenient, but it can never be allowable, to divest ourselves of a responsibility to God, by allowing to remain unexercised any faculty by which we may serve Him, or improve our own moral and intellectual being. To employ our faculties aright is to cultivate them, and fulfil a divine duty.

We may escape evil by giving up the direction of our conduct to another; but we, at the same time, resign the capacity of attaining the reward or habit of virtue, which consists in the free choice of good, and resistance to the attractions of evil. So, if we resign our private judgments in religion to a Church or Minister, we may indeed escape error, but we forfeit the reward of having chosen "the good part." Our preference of the truth proceeds from blind submission to the will of another,—not from that spiritual discernment of truth which God imparts to the humble and penitent. Christ is not honoured by such a reception of His Gospel; it is not a free-will offering, but the effect of human rules and custom.

Let no man suppose that in thus putting out the eyes of his understanding, and blinding himself to the light of truth, he acts in conformity to the divine will. Obedience free and intellectual is required by God, not slavery and blind

submission to the teaching of man. We might as well refuse to discharge the duties of life by shutting ourselves in the bondage and indolence of a cloister, as escape the responsibility of judging aright by refusing to judge at all.

The authority of the Church can only be a ground of faith for the ignorant. The least consideration will show that the true and false believer, the Mahometan, the Hindoo, the Romanist, have equally this ground of belief,—they receive what their Churches and Priests teach. Their rule of faith affords but this poor assurance and consolation,—they believe what those around them believe. As their hope of being right depends, not on knowledge, but on reception of the Church's teaching, their great concern must be not to question or dissent from her doctrines, and so *aversion to inquiry necessarily becomes a principle and habit of their minds*. They regard examination as want of faith, and doubt as departure from the truth.

To teach that we must believe what the Church prescribes even in opposition to our own convictions is to paralyze the mind, and to remove every bar to the progress of error and superstition, by inculcating the sinfulness of doubting what the Priests deliver as the Church's teaching. A people indoctrinated with this notion will swallow every fable or imposition put forth

by a priesthood interested in implicit submission to its authority. It would, in effect, enact over again the religious history of the middle ages, and transform the Gospel into a human system of spiritual bondage.

The rule of faith in the Councils, Fathers, Doctors, &c., of the Church is a mere "ignis fatuus,"—a visionary system glimmering in the countless pages of a thousand volumes of controversy. Baronius or Dupin might be dismayed at such an endless search for the faith; but to ordinary Christians the mere invitation to deduce their belief from a limitless catalogue seems so expressive of derision, that the proposal of it by such grave writers as Dr. Wordsworth and Bishop Nixon is matter of astonishment.

The learned are not, however, in a much better condition than the ignorant. Baronius, after twenty years' study of the Fathers and monuments of the Church, deduced an ultramontane faith in which the Pope was every thing. Dupin, no less learned, discovered the Gallican system, so opposed to Rome that he was put upon the Index. Petavius ascertained that the belief of the Fathers was Arianism. Jewell and Hooker found them quite Protestant; and Dr. Christopher Wordsworth seems to have extracted a mixed theology—Romish to Protestants, and Protestant to Romanists.

Not only the extent but the variations of the Fathers prevent their being confided in as a rule of faith. Numberless contradictions have been shown in their writings,—Councils have condemned Councils—Fathers have contradicted other Fathers, and even themselves; yet this mighty mass—this “*rudis indigestaque moles*,” is gravely prescribed to us as a safer, more explicit, and more intelligible rule of faith than Holy Scripture!

I do declare, in all sincerity, that I am lost in astonishment that any Protestant minister should profess an opinion which so directly condemns his religion; for the very Church to which he belongs is itself founded upon the reformers having denied and resisted such an authority, and established the Church in direct opposition to it: but that a Protestant Bishop should not only assert this authority, but should force his clergy to admit it, is an unparalleled violation of the principles and rights of the Church.

The very weakest understanding must see, that if what the Church prescribes her members are bound to receive against the convictions of their judgments, Luther, Cranmer, and all the Protestant reformers were rebels: and we are involved in their rebellion and violation of the Church's right,—for nothing is more undeniable than that they set up their own judgments of

scriptural truth against the teaching of the Church. It is true the Reformation is called “a dreadful schism” in works of the same school as “The Steps :” but are we to submit to a sentence which not only condemns us but the glorious Reformation, and by one ruinous denunciation would confound the Protestant Churches, and bring us back in bondage to the Romish yoke ?

“ Submit to the decision of the Church.— Presume not to set up your private judgment against the universal voice of Christendom,” was the constant injunction of the Romish Bishops to the persecuted Reformers. Their reply was : —“ We are convinced in our judgment that the Church’s teaching is unscriptural,—we will die rather than receive it,—we must obey God rather than men.”

How preposterous is the supposition that the Protestant Reformers could demand for the Articles and Ritual which they drew up that authority to over-rule private judgment which themselves had repudiated in the Church of Rome. Their Reformed Church was framed according to their private interpretation of Holy Scripture : and to deny the full exercise of private judgment would have been to condemn themselves, who had maintained it against a Church possessing the authority of age, of extent and general consent.

To attribute such an authority to the Church of England is to invest it with a Romish character, and prepare its members to embrace Romanism. For a while they may be flattered by the delusion of "Theophilus," that the Church of England is a sister of the Church of Rome, possessing the same authority; but the deception will yield to the least inquiry: the Romanist will mock the absurd pretension, and the believer in the right of the Church to implicit obedience will be compelled to seek it in the Church of Rome.

Establish as a principle that what the Church teaches we must receive implicitly, though to our judgment it appear as false as that the absolution of a Priest can cleanse the soul from sin against its God,—and in practice and effect the office and authority of the Bishop would be really those of the Romish Pontiff; for the mysterious mind-subduing Church to whose oracles every judgment should submit must have a voice, and whence can that voice proceed save from the Bishop's lips?

"*He will maintain the Church's teaching at all hazards.*" What appear to him to be the doctrines of the Church he *takes for granted must be her teaching.* This confusion prevails throughout "The Reply." He never professes to impose his own opinions, but only those of

the Church, while in reality the principles which he compels the clergy to receive are peculiarly his own individual views. Thus the books which he pronounces to be the true teaching of the Church were protested against by above twenty Clergymen. The decision of the Privy Council, which he repudiates, is surely more the teaching of the Church than his single opinion. The right of private judgment is undoubtedly a principle of the Reformation, yet he condemns it on his own private authority. By his own single will he entirely changed the nature of the clerical office in this Colony, by introducing into the licences of the Clergy an acknowledgment that they held their offices during his pleasure; and by his private judgment he determined that he will never admit into the Diocese an Evangelical Clergyman. In all these cases the Bishop takes for granted that his views are the teaching of the Church, and he enforces them accordingly; regarding and punishing all opposition as a violation of ordination vows, and rebellion against the authority of the Church.

His voice declares that the Church speaks by it,—that her authority is absolute—not to be questioned, examined, or disputed:—and thus, in practice, he establishes his own dominion over our souls. He does not, indeed, say that what he speaks we must implicitly believe, but

he says the same in effect; for he tells us we must implicitly hear the Church, and he determines for us what the teaching of the Church is, and moreover he compels us to receive it: thus, in reality, his is the voice to which we are to surrender our judgments! The Church is the mysterious divinity behind the curtain, whose oracles, engendered in his mind, pass through his lips, and, which is of the greatest import, whose decisions he enforces upon the clergy by practical penalties.

It is with shame—shame for the Church to which I belong—shame for the gross ignorance which renders such a discussion necessary, that I notice the humiliating attempt to chain our consciences and judgments, and the absurdities and contradictions involved in attributing to the Church a right to prescribe to individuals in opposition to their own convictions of Scriptural truth. It not only subverts the Reformation, but the Gospel. It not only condemns the Reformers, but the Saviour and his Apostles; for every reader of Scripture knows that the object of their preaching was to persuade individuals to read and judge the Old Testament for themselves, and to follow their own convictions of its teaching *in opposition to the* unanimous decisions and authority of the Jewish Church and Council. *The first Christian congregations*

were composed of Protestants against the teaching of their Church.

The unanswerable demand may be made to Bishop Nixon which is always triumphantly addressed to the Romish advocates. If the Church has this right to overrule our judgments, we must be assured that we submit to the right Church; and, in order to discover her, we must exercise our private judgments on all the most important and difficult subjects of religion. We must form convictions on her catholicity, antiquity, apostolicity, and especially *upon the truth of her doctrines*. It is absurd in the highest degree to say, that after having used and relied upon our private judgment to find out that the Church's teaching is Scriptural, we must afterwards doubt our own judgments, believe them incompetent to interpret Scripture rightly, and surrender them to the Church.

Bishop Burnet, in his exposition of the *xixth* Article, shows convincingly this contradiction, and refutes the objections which Dr. Nixon alleges against private judgment, proving most distinctly, and almost in the words of the "Solemn Declaration," the right of individuals to reject the Church's teaching when convinced that it is unscriptural. He says:—

“He who, being convinced of the errors and corruptions of a Church, departs from them, and



goes on in the purity of the Christian religion, does pursue the true effect both of his baptism and of his ordination vows.

“They of the Church of Rome allow private men to judge, and that in so great a point, as what church and what communion ought to be chosen or forsaken; and it is certain that to judge of churches and communions is a thing of that intricacy, that if private judgment is allowed here, there is no reason to deny it its full scope as to all other matters.

“God has given us rational faculties to guide and direct us; and we must make the most of these we can: we must judge with our own reason, as well as see with our own eyes. Neither can we or ought we to resign our understandings to any others, unless we are convinced that God has imposed this upon us by *making them infallible*, so that we are secured from error if we follow them.”

“All this we must examine and be well assured it, otherwise it will be a very rash, unmanly, and base thing in us to *muffle up our own understandings, and to deliver our reason and faith over to others blindfold*. Reason is God’s image in us; and the use and application of our reason, as well as of the freedom of our wills, are the highest excellencies of the rational nature; so they must always be claimed, and

ought never to be parted with by us but upon clear and certain authorities, in the name of God putting us implicitly under the dictates of others.

“ It seems clear that our understandings are left free to us, as well as our wills ; and if we observe the style and method of the Scriptures, we shall find in them, all over, *a constant appeal to a man’s reason, and to his intellectual faculties.*

“ If the mere dictates of the Church, or of infallible men, had been the resolution or foundation of faith, there had been no need of such a long thread of reasoning and discourse, as both our Saviour used while on earth, and as the Apostles used in their writings. *We see the way of authority is not taken,* but explanations are offered, proofs and illustrations are brought to convince the mind, which shows that God, in the clearest manifestation of his will, would deal with us as with reasonable creatures, who are not to believe but upon persuasion, and are to use our reason in order to obtaining that persuasion. *And therefore upon the whole matter* WE OUGHT NOT TO BELIEVE DOCTRINES TO BE TRUE BECAUSE THE CHURCH TEACHES THEM ; BUT WE OUGHT TO SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES, and then, according as we find the doctrine of any Church to be true in the funda-

mentals, we ought to believe her to be a true Church."

Nothing can be more convincing than the reasoning of Bishop Burnet. After it, who will be found to say that this right of private judgment, asserted in "The Declaration," is not the Church's teaching, or that to oppose it is not to inculcate the Romish principle? It is impossible to find words or arguments more plainly confirming the right of private judgment laid down in "The Solemn Declaration." Every word Bishop Burnet used against the Roman Catholics applies directly and forcibly to Bishop Nixon. To the same effect is the following passage from Dean Sherlock's "Discourse on the Judge of Controversy," p. 11:—

"When the question is, What is right or wrong, true or false, in what we may obey, and in what not, here *every private Christian* who will not believe without understanding, nor follow his guides blindfold, *must judge for himself*, and it is as much as his soul is worth to judge right."

The Bishop uses against us precisely the objection of the Romish advocates in all controversies with Protestants, that to reject the Church's over-ruling authority in interpreting Scripture is to incur the danger of falling into error, even that of Socinianism. It seems truly

wonderful that, in bringing forward this objection, Dr. Nixon did not *feel that he was occupying the position of all the Popish controversialists since the Reformation.* Let him receive for answer the reply made by Dean Sherlock to his Romish opponent. “We do not,” he says, “charge the Papists with denying in express words the authority of the Scripture to be a rule, but with saying that which is equivalent to it, that the sense of it is so various and uncertain that no man can be sure of the true meaning of it, in the most necessary and fundamental articles of the faith, but by *interpretation and authority of the Church*, which does effectually divest Scripture of the authority of a rule,—*for that is my rule which can and must direct me*,—which it seems is not the SCRIPTURE CONSIDERED IN ITSELF, but as interpreted by the authority of the Church, WHICH MAKES THE FAITH AND INTERPRETATION OF THE CHURCH, NOT THE SCRIPTURES, MY IMMEDIATE RULE.”

These words directly prove—1st. That the objection of Dr. Nixon is that of the Romanists against Protestants. 2nd. That the principle for which he condemns us is the acknowledged Protestant truth maintained by Dr. Sherlock. 3rd. That Dr. Nixon sets up the Church as the rule of faith, and not Holy Scripture.

Dr. Nixon says :—“ *Were each man to be his own interpreter, in matters where the Church has recorded her judgment, and to be at liberty to set up his individual opinion against that judgment, — either because his own dwarfed intelligence could not, or his own rebellious spirit would not receive it,—it requires no great stretch of imagination to forecast the consequence.*” — “ *Reply,*” p. 13. He then attributes to private judgment Socinianism and the overthrow of the Church. *Archbishop Tillotson* answered Dr. Nixon when he replied to the Romanist in the following words :—

“ *The tyranny of the Roman Church over the minds and consciences of men is not justified upon any account ; but nothing puts so plausible a colour upon it as the ill use that is too frequently made of this natural privilege of men’s judging for themselves in a matter of so infinite moment as that of their eternal happiness. But then it is to be considered, that the proper remedy in this case is not to deprive men of this privilege, but to use the best means to prevent the abuse of it. For though the inconveniences arising from the ill use of it may be very great, yet the mischief, on the other hand, may be intolerable. Religion itself is liable to be abused to very bad purpose, and frequently is so, but it is not therefore that there should be no religion. And yet this ob-*

“jection is every whit as strong against religion
 “itself as against men’s liberty of judging in
 “matters of religion. Nay, I add farther, that
 “no man can judiciously embrace the true reli-
 “gion unless he be permitted to judge whether
 “that which he embraces be the true religion or
 “not.”—*Tillotson*, Sermon. xxi.

The preceding extract shows explicitly Dr. Nixon’s doctrine. He condemns as *presumption*, or a *dwarfed intelligence*, any individual setting up his own opinion against that of the Church; and attributes to the liberty of individuals to judge for themselves in matters of religion the worst errors. The reader the least acquainted with theology will see that Dr. Nixon’s position and argument, if such it may be called, are precisely those of Harding against Jewell, Fisher against Laud—the Jesuit against Usher — White against Chillingworth — Maguire against Pope—French against Campbell, &c. &c.

Bishop Nixon’s objection to private judgment is, “*that if any individual is at liberty to reject any doctrine that does not agree with his own interpretation of Scripture he may reject all belief in the Godhead of our Blessed Lord, if his own study of Scripture should lead him to prefer the interpretation of the Socinian,*” &c.—“*Reply,*” p. 11.

To this common Romish objection, when ad-

vanced against the Church of England by Woodhead, the Popish controversialist, Archbishop Tenison thus replies :—

“ I conclude that notwithstanding the Protestants and Socinians do both of them plead Scripture as the rule of faith, yet because Protestants plead the rule rightly in the point of the divinity of the Son of God, and the Socinians very falsely, even in the opinion of the Arians and Romanists themselves, the plea of the former does not justify the plea of the latter. . . . *For the trial of the plea, we must come to dint of argument, and truth is great, and will in time prevail.*”—p. 37.

The same Popish objection was urged by the Romanists against Bishop Stillingfleet, who refutes it thus :—

“ The Church of England and the Socinians both take the same way (says the Romanist) of Scripture’s letter interpretable by private judgment, and differ in their fundamental points.” “ And what follows ? ” replies the Bishop. “ That the Scripture is no certain rule ? By no means. But that the Socinians may err, and certainly do, in interpreting this rule. But how can it be a certain rule, if men that use it may err in using it ? ” (say his Romish opponent, and Dr. Nixon.) Bishop Stillingfleet answers : “ How can reason be certain in any thing if men following reason may mistake ? How can arithmetic be a certain way of computation if men following the rules of arithmetic may mistake in casting up a sum. Doth any man question the certainty of the rule for men’s blundering in the accounts. . . . The rule of arithmetic may be nevertheless certain, although those who want skill, or care and diligence, may mistake in an accout. ”—Disc. Certainty of Faith, p. 39.

Bishop Nixon has condemned us for denying that the Church should over-rule our private judgment in interpreting Holy Scripture. He

has written much to show the evils of private judgment, but he has not told us to what Church we are to resign it; whether to the Church of England only, or, as Theophilus teaches, to the Churches of Rome, Greece, and England. We might have justly expected, when required to acknowledge such a right, that the Church to which it belongs would have been distinctly pointed out to us. It is surely very unreasonable to compel us to resign our judgment to an unknown authority. Had the Bishop distinctly said with "Theophilus" that the *three branches* of the Catholic Church have each a right to prescribe to us, it would have been necessary to state whether in Italy we are to receive as the truth of Scripture Papal infallibility, Purgatory, Transubstantiation, and Mariolatry; and in England receive, with equal submission, her instruction to regard these doctrines as entirely false and unscriptural. "Theophilus," indeed, disposes of this difficulty with great ease, for he tells us we must receive her teaching even when in error. But some Oxford training is necessary in order *to receive as true what at the same time we believe to be false.*

The Bishop has shunned this alternative: but, to whatever Church he attributes this over-ruling authority, it is plain that he has no warrant for ascribing it to the English Church; for that es-

tablishment distinctly disavows and denies any such right in herself, or in any other Church. She says (Art. XIX):—"As the Church of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch have erred, so also the Church of Rome hath erred, not only in their living and manner of ceremonies, but *also in matters of faith.*"

Bishop Mant, in his Exposition, says "that the Article takes notice of the errors in the Churches which were most famous, and advanced to the dignity of being Patriarchal Churches." The Church of England could not suppose that she was less liable to error than they; and therefore could never attribute to herself a right to overrule the private judgment of her members, and bind them to submission to an authority which she admits may err even in faith.

The Church of England declares in her Articles, "that General Councils may err, and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining unto God; wherefore things ordained by them as necessary to salvation have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared that they are taken out of Holy Scripture." There is no argument more frequently used, nor any truth plainer, than that no Church can possess any claim upon us to surrender our judgment to it, unless there be proof that her decisions are always true, that is, unless she be

infallible. The acknowledgment, therefore, that General Councils err, is a plain disavowal of any authority to over-rule private judgment in the Church of England, whose doctrines and rites were drawn up only in National Councils.

The Twentieth Article declares, that "The Church hath power to decree rites or ceremonies, and authority in controversies of faith; and yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain any thing that is contrary to God's Word written, neither may it so expound one place of Scripture that it be repugnant to another. Wherefore, although the Church be a witness and keeper of Holy Writ, yet as it ought not to decree any thing against the same, so besides the same ought it not to enforce any thing to be believed for necessity of salvation."

The Ministers who subscribed "The Solemn Declaration" stated their belief that the Church had "power to draw up articles of religion, and decree rites and ceremonies, which all persons are bound to observe while they continue in her communion." It was also declared that the Church had authority "to teach, guide, direct, and influence." The Bishop condemned them for asserting the right of individuals to reject her teaching, when convinced in their own judgment that it was contrary to God's Word.

The exposition of the Prayer Book most generally received is that of Bishop Mant, who gives the following exposition of the Article:—

"In such rules (of the Church) we ought to acquiesce. Nor can we assign any other bounds to our submission in this case,

than those which the Gospel has limited. ‘We must obey God rather than man.’—Acts v. 29. And we must, in the first place, ‘render to God the things that are God’s, and then give to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s.’ Matt. xxii. 21.—So that if either Church or State have power to make rules and laws in such matters, they must have this extent given them; *that till they break in upon the laws of God and the Gospel, we must be bound to obey them.* A mean cannot be put here; either they have no power at all, or they have a power that must go to every thing that is not forbid by *any law of God.* This is the only measure that can be given in this matter.”

The “Declaration” which Bishop Nixon has condemned exactly concurs with the exposition of Bishop Mant. The authority of the Church in both is limited by the Christian principle, “we must obey God rather than man.” Again, I cannot refrain from expressing my shame and sorrow at having to vindicate so essential a truth of the Gospel and of Protestantism, not against a Romish adversary, but against a Bishop of the Church of England!

This Article, as well as others, carefully and explicitly limits the authority of the Church to enjoining nothing contrary to God’s Word, nor any thing besides the same as necessary to salvation. This limitation undoubtedly acknowledges the right of every individual to subject her teaching to examination by Holy Scripture, and to reject it if convinced that it is contrary to divine truth. This must be so; for nothing would be more fallacious than for the Church to

tell her members that she cannot contradict God's Word, and at the same time disallow to them the right to examine whether she has not transgressed her prescribed limit. It would be absurd to suppose that any Church would, at the same time, teach unscriptural doctrine, and confess that she did so. The direction to the people that the Church may not contradict Scripture is therefore a plain invitation to them to try her teaching by God's Word—to prove it—to hold it fast if true, and reject it if opposed to the law and to the testimony. Who except Dr. Nixon will so far misjudge the Church of England as to say that she condemns as the presumption of a dwarfed intelligence the examination of her teaching by the private judgment of each Christian? She calls upon them to do so as a religious duty; and certainly in doing so she does not deride them by saying, that if the result of the inquiry should be a conviction that her teaching is unscriptural, she has a right to prescribe to them what in their judgment they believe untrue. What could be more absurd than to say, "Examine, judge; but if your convictions do not agree with mine, you must, against your judgment, submit, and receive what I teach—you must not presume to set up your convictions against mine?"

The Sixth Article declares, that "Holy Scripture contains

all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith."

In his exposition of this Article, Bishop Mant quotes from Bishop Tomline these words :

"The Papists believe that there is an infallible authority, vested by Christ in his Church, to judge of traditions, and to distinguish those which are true from those which are false. On the contrary, we of the Church of England affirm that the Scriptures contain a complete rule of faith and practice; and we reject every doctrine and precept as essential to salvation, or to be obeyed as divine, which is not supported by their authority."

The right attributed to the Church is not a negative, but a positive doctrine, of the utmost practical importance. The fact, therefore, that it is not affirmed by the Articles of the Church of England, as it is by those of Rome, affords the most conclusive evidence that the Church of England negatives the assumption of such authority.

When she speaks of Holy Scripture as the rule of faith, and that no man should be required to believe any thing not contained therein, surely, if she possessed the right of interpreting Holy Scripture authoritatively, a power of such practical importance could never have been omitted. To attribute, therefore, to her any such authority is altogether to misunderstand her character; and to enforce on others the belief of it, is a very grievous imposition of a most false and unscriptural doctrine.

A conclusive argument against the Church rule of faith is derived from the Ordination Service. The following observations are by the learned and able Dr. Whateley, Archbishop of Dublin.—*Cautions for the Times*, No. IX.

“The Tractarians intended to devise a ‘middle way’ between Romanism and Dissent; but they executed that intention BY TAKING THE PRINCIPLES OF ROMANISM. They agreed, with the Roman Catholics, in holding that the Catholic Church (meaning thereby one visible organized body of Christians, under one government) ‘was the authoritative expounder of the will of God, and was consequently THE AUTHORITY TO WHOSE DECISION ALL MEN WERE BOUND TO SUBMIT THEIR PRIVATE JUDGMENTS.’”

The Archbishop goes on to describe the Tractarian principles as taught in “The Steps and Theophilus,” that they exclude from all ordinary means of grace and from the Church all dissenters and foreign Protestant Churches,—that they teach Priestly confession and absolution,—the Sacrifice in the Lord’s Supper, &c. He observes that those who became avowed Romanists are less to be feared than those who still remain in our communion. “*They come to us in sheep’s clothing, professing to be loyal members of our Church; they are a recruiting depôt for the Church of Rome, kept up among ourselves, but loudly declaring that they are inculcating Church principles, and that all who oppose them are little better than schismatics. Their ‘Church principles’ are both*

repugnant to Scripture and to reason; they are not the principles of our Church, but, in many respects, quite opposed to its decisions." The Archbishop writes,—

"In matters of faith, our Church propounds them directly on the authority of Scripture. It does not say that the creeds should be received *as the voice and judgment of the universal Church*, or as attested by Catholic tradition; but that they ought to be received, '*for they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture.*'"—Art. VIII.

"If they had meant to teach that *private judgment must always submit to the decision of a general council* would they have said that things ordained by them as necessary to salvation have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared that they are taken out of Holy Scripture. For it would be quite childish to say this, if after all, the Council were to be the only judge whether this all important point could be 'declared,' or made evident.

"If any man, or body of men, refer us to Scripture as the sole authoritative standard, meaning that we are not called on to believe any thing as a necessary point of faith on their word, but only on *our own* conviction that it is Scriptural, then they place our faith on the basis, not of human authority, but of divine. But if they call on us, as a point of conscience, to receive whatever is proved to *their* satisfaction from Scripture, even though it may appear to us unscriptural, then, instead of releasing us from the usurped authority of man taking the place of God, they are putting upon us two burdens instead of one. Our Reformers manifestly did not require such double submission as this to Assemblies, which they expressly declare to be fallible."

"Is it credible that if our Reformers intended to make it a Church principle, that tradition, blended with Scripture, is the rule of faith, they would have expressed themselves as they have? 'Holy Scripture, they say,' (Art. VI.) 'containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever may not be

proved thereby is not to be required of any man,' &c. But they do not add, that it is equally necessary to prove the articles of faith by tradition, or that it is only by tradition that the true sense of Scripture can be determined.

"If that had been their meaning, is it credible that, not only here, but in the exhortation to persons to be ordained Priests, the Church should have been wholly silent upon the necessity, or even the importance of tradition? The candidates are admonished that they cannot hope for success in their ministry without employing doctrine and exhortation *taken out of the Holy Scriptures*, and a life agreeable thereto; they are exhorted to consider 'how studious they ought to *to be in reading and learning the Scriptures*, and in framing the manners both of themselves, and of them that specially pertain unto them, according to the rule of the same Scriptures,' and they are shown how, 'by daily reading and weighing of the Scriptures, they may wax riper and stronger for their ministry;' but not a word of solemn admonition is added on the necessity of blending tradition with those Scriptures, and trusting only to that sense of Scripture which tradition is supposed to fix."

"They are asked: '*Are you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain sufficiently all doctrine required of necessity for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ: and are you determined, out of the said Scriptures, to instruct the people committed to your charge, and to teach nothing as required of necessity to eternal salvation, but that which you shall be persuaded may be concluded and proved by Scripture?* But they are not asked whether they will submit implicitly to have their judgment of the sense of Scripture determined by the testimony of tradition.

"Now, is it credible that, if the Church intended thus to blend tradition with its rule of faith, it should have been silent upon the subject, when an occasion like this occurred, which would seem to demand some notice of it?

To these arguments of Archbishop Whateley may be added the declarations of the Liturgy

respecting Holy Scripture. We are taught to pray—

“Blessed Lord, who hast caused all Holy Scripture to be written for our learning; grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by *patience* and *comfort* of thy holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ.”

“Almighty God, who shewest to them that be in error the light of thy truth,” &c.

“God, who as at this time didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people by sending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit; grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things,” &c.

“Grant to us, Lord, we beseech thee, the Spirit to think and do always such things as be rightful.”

Nothing can be plainer than this Evangelic teaching,—that the Word of God contains all truth, and God’s grace will enlighten our understandings to attain a saving faith and knowledge. It is impossible that the men who composed these prayers believed that we could not interpret the Scripture by our private judgment, with the aid of the Holy Spirit. For, what else is reading, marking, learning, and inwardly digesting it? Who can for a moment believe that they thought that it was not our own private judgment of Scripture truth, but the decisions of the Church that were to be our rule of faith? If they entertained such an idea could they have desired us thus to study Scripture for a knowledge of religion, without the slightest reference

to the authority or decisions of the Church ?

Let the reader observe that Archbishop Whately indisputably proves, 1st, — that the Church repudiates the notion of any other rule of faith than the Bible.

2nd. That he distinctly asserts that the notion of the Church having authority to impose its interpretations of Scripture, in opposition to our judgments, is a ROMISH PRINCIPLE embraced by the Tractarians,—wolves in sheep's clothing—more dangerous than open Romanists—a recruiting depôt, &c.

Christian reader, that very Romish principle is not only taught here, but we are condemned and subjected to severe penalties because we refuse to give our assent to it. How long shall these things be ?

The Homilies are referred to in the Articles as “teaching a godly and wholesome doctrine,” and were enjoined to be read in Churches. They therefore must be regarded as an authorized explanation of the Articles. After the passage given above (page 65), the Homily on the Scripture thus teaches the sufficiency of the Word of God as the sole rule of faith :—

“Man's human and worldly wisdom or science is not needful to the understanding of Scripture, *but the revelation of the Holy Spirit, WHO INSPIRETH THE TRUE MEANING UNIO THEM THAT WITH HUMILITY AND DILIGENCE DO SEARCH THEREFOR.*” “It may be called knowledge and learning

which is gotten without the Word; but the wise man plainly testifieth, *that they all be but vain, which have not the wisdom of God.*” “We see what vanity the school doctrine (Romish doctrine) is mixed with, for that in this word *they sought not the will of God, but rather the will of reason, the trade of custom,* THE PATH OF THE FATHERS, THE PRACTICE OF THE CHURCH. Let us therefore read and revolve the Holy Scripture, both day and night; for blessed is he that hath his whole meditation therein.”

“Therefore forsaking the corrupt judgment of fleshy men which care not but for their carcase; let us reverently hear and read Holy Scripture, which is the food of the soul. Let us diligently search for the well of life in the books of the Old and New Testament and not run to the stinking puddles of men’s traditions, devised by men’s imagination, for our justification and salvation. For in Holy Scripture is fully contained, what we ought to do, and what to eschew, what to believe, what to love, and what to look for at God’s hands at length.”

These valuable extracts from the Homilies not only convincingly refute the authority ascribed to the Church to enforce its interpretations of Holy Scripture, but they show us *the spiritual religion of the Reformers—the mind of those men* who delivered to us the Gospel, redeemed by them at the price of their blood from the darkness in which Popery confines the truth and the soul. It is the very extreme of falsification to traduce them as agreeing with modern Romanizers. More honest though less politic are those Oxford writers who openly abuse the Reformation—the Protestant religion and the Reformers; who tell us Luther was a bold bad man, who broke his vows, and deserted the

Church. Cranmer, dishonest and unprincipled, and Jewel a profane disputer.

The following extracts from the public confessions of the Protestant Churches declare, as their common faith, the sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures, and the right of every Christian to interpret them as his rule of faith; and that no Church has a right to constrain any one to receive her teaching in opposition to his own sense of Scripture.

CONFESSION OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND,
A. D. 1562.

“ We receive and embrace all the canonical Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament; giving thanks to our God, who both raised up unto us that light, which we might ever have before our eyes; lest either by the subtilty of man, or by the snares of the devil, we should be carried away to errors and lies. Also we profess that these be the heavenly voices, whereby God hath opened unto us his will; and that only in them man’s heart can have settled rest; that in them be abundantly comprehended all things, whatsoever be needful for our help as Origen, Augustine, Chrysostom, and Cyril have taught; that they be the very might and strength to attain salvation, that they be the foundations of the Prophets and Apostles whereupon is built the Church of God; *that they be the very sure and infallible rule, whereby may be tried whether the Church do swerve or err, and wherunto all ecclesiastical doctrine ought to be called to account; and that against these Scriptures neither law, nor ordinance, nor any custom ought to be heard; no, though Paul himself, or an angel from heaven, should come and teach the contrary.—Gal. i. 8.*”

This confession of the English Church dis-

tinctly asserts the very principle repeated in "The Solemn Declaration." What then must be said of the minister of the Church of England by whom it is condemned? Does he not in denouncing the public confession of his own Church pronounce the most positive condemnation upon himself;—nay, more; does he not prove himself an enemy and subverter of the faith and principles of the Church, which he is under a sacred obligation to teach and maintain?"

CONFESSION OF SCOTLAND.

"As we believe and confess the Scriptures of God sufficient to instruct and make the man of God perfect; 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. So do we affirm and avow the authority of the same to be of God, and neither to depend on men nor angels. We affirm, therefore, that such as allege the Scripture to have no other authority but that which it hath received from the Church, are blasphemous against God, and injurious to the true Church; which always heareth and obeyeth the voice of her own Spouse and Pastor (John x. 27), but taketh not upon her to be mistress over the same."

CONFESSION OF HELVETIA.

"We suffer not ourselves, in controversies about religion, or matters of faith, to be pressed with the bare testimonies of Fathers or Decrees of Councils; much less with received customs, or with the multitude of men being of one judgment, or with prescription of long time. Therefore, in controversies of religion, or matters of faith, we cannot admit, any other judge than God himself, pronouncing by the Holy Scriptures, what is true, what is false, what is to be followed or what to be avoided."

CONFESSION OF BELGIA.

“We believe also that this Holy Scripture doth most perfectly contain all the will of God, and that in it all things are abundantly taught, whatsoever is necessary to be believed of man to attain salvation: therefore, seeing the whole manner of worshipping, which God requireth at the hands of the faithful, is there more exquisitely and at large set down, it is lawful for no man, although he have the authority of an Apostle, no, not for an angel sent from heaven (as St. Paul speaks, Gal. i. 8), to teach otherwise than we have long since been taught in the Holy Scriptures. For all men of their own nature are liars, and lighter than vanity itself; therefore we do utterly refuse whatsoever things agree not with this most certain rule, as we have been taught by the Apostle, when they say, ‘Try the spirits whether they be of God;’ (1 John iv. 1) and, ‘If any come unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, &c.’—2 John 10.”

CONFESSION OF WIRTEMBERG.

“It is a plain case, that all things which are needful to be known to salvation, are contained in the Prophets’ and Apostles’ writings.

“Whereas they say that the right of expounding the Scripture lieth in the power of chief bishops, it is evident that the gift of expounding the Scripture is not of man’s wisdom, but of the Holy Ghost. ‘To every man,’ saith Paul, ‘is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal: for to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, &c.’—1 Cor. xii. 7, 8. But the Holy Ghost is altogether at liberty, and is not tied to a certain sort of men, but giveth gifts to men according to his own good pleasure.

“The true meaning of the Scripture is to be sought in the Scripture itself, and among those that, being raised by the Spirit of God, expound Scripture by Scripture.”

Bishop Nixon says (page 11) that the right of

private judgment, which he condemns, is not a principle of the Protestant Reformation, but "*rather the leading principle of dissent.*" This attempt to make the Church of England differ from other Protestant communions, on the principle of private judgment, is as destitute of foundation as the condemnation passed upon the Archbishop of Canterbury's "tract on Justification" for being unsound and Lutheran, and not the doctrine of the Church of England. There are but two opinions on either of these subjects—that of the Romanists and that of the Protestants. To represent the Church of England as differing from the Protestant Churches on these doctrines is to declare her to be Roman Catholic. The preceding "Confessions" show that the right of private judgment is a *common principle* of the reformed Churches.

ARTICLES OF THE CHURCH OF IRELAND.

The following declaration of the sufficiency of Holy Scripture is taken from the first of the Articles of Religion agreed upon in the Convocation of the Irish Clergy holden 1615:—

"The ground of our religion, *and the rule of faith and all saving truth*, is the word of God contained in the Holy Scripture.

"The Scriptures ought to be translated out of the original tongues into all languages for the common use of all men; neither is any person to be discouraged from reading the Bible

in such a language as he doth understand, but seriously exhorted to read the same with great humility and reverence, as a special means to bring him to the true knowledge of God, and of his own duty.

“Although there be some hard things in the Scripture (especially such as have proper relation to the times in which they were first uttered, and prophecies of things which were afterwards to be fulfilled), yet all things necessary to be known unto everlasting salvation *are clearly delivered therein*; and nothing of that kind is spoken under dark mysteries in one place, which is not in other places spoken more familiarly and plain, to the capacity both of learned and unlearned.

“The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation, and are able to instruct sufficiently in all points of faith that *we are bound to believe*, and all good duties that we are bound to practise.”

This beautiful declaration of the Protestant rule of faith is perfectly explicit—it knows nothing of any right in the Church to prescribe a rule of faith for the people. The Irish Convocation and Church lie, then, with us under Bishop Nixon’s condemnation; they are “so unsound in the faith as to be incapable of distinguishing religious truth so as to certify to the soundness of another.”

The following testimonies from the Reformers will satisfy every reader that the declaration of the sufficiency of Holy Scripture as a rule of faith, and the right of every Christian to interpret it by his own private judgment, is no new article of faith as Bishop Nixon asserts, but is a principle of the Church.

TINDAL, MARTYR, BURNED A.D. 1536.

“All things are profoundly grounded in the Scriptures and declared with ensamples of himself, of the Fathers, and of the Prophets, that a man can here desire. Wherefore let every man, without exception, exercise himself in the Scriptures diligently, and record it night and day continually, until he be fully acquainted therewith. The last chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, is a chapter of recommendation, wherein he yet mingleth a good monition, that we should beware of the traditions and doctrine of men. *Compare, therefore, all manner of doctrine of men unto the Scripture, and see whether they agree or not*, and commit thyself whole and altogether unto Christ, and so shall he with his Holy Spirit, and with all his fulness, dwell in thy soul.”

CRANMER, MARTYR, BURNT A.D. 1556.

“In the Scriptures be fat pastures for the soul; there is no venemous meat, no unwholesome thing; they be the very dainty and pure feeding. He that is ignorant shall find there what he should learn. He that is a perverse sinner shall there find his damnation to make him to tremble for fear. He that laboureth to serve God shall find there His glory, and the promises of eternal life, exhorting him more diligently to labour. Here may all manner of persons, men, women, young, old, learned, unlearned, rich, poor, priests, laymen, lords, ladies, officers, tenants, and mean men; virgins, wives, widows, lawyers, merchants, artificers, husbandmen, and all manner of persons, of what estate or condition soever they be, *may in this book learn all things* WHAT THEY OUGHT TO BELIEVE, what they ought to do, and what they should not do, as well concerning Almighty God, as also concerning themselves and all others.”

LATIMER, MARTYR, BURNT 1555.

“All Popish things (for the most part) are man's inventions; whereas they ought to have the Holy Scripture for the *only*

rule of faith,—the things, which have not their authority of the Scriptures, may as easily be despised as allowed, saith St. Jerome. Therefore, whether it be of Christ, or of his Church, or of any other manner of thing, which belongeth to our faith and life, I will not say if *we*, saith St. Augustine, which are not worthy to be compared to him that said ‘If we;’ but that also which forthwith be added, ‘if an angel from heaven shall teach anything, besides that ye have received (in the Scriptures of the law and gospel) accursed be he.’ Our Diotrephes with his Papists are under this curse. But how are the Scriptures, say they, to be understood? St. Augustine answereth, giving this rule:—‘The circumstances of the Scriptures,’ saith he, ‘lighten the Scriptures; and so *one scripture doth expound another* to a man that is studious, well willing, and *after calling upon God in continual prayer*, who giveth His Holy Spirit to them that desire it of him.’ So that the Scripture is not of any private interpretation at any time. For such a one, though he be a *layman, fearing God*, is more fit to understand *Holy Scripture than any arrogant proud priest; yea, than the Bishop himself*, be he never so great, and glistening in all his pontificals.”

RIDLEY, MARTYR, BURNT A.D. 1555.

“For determination of all controversies in Christ’s religion, Christ himself hath left unto the Church not only Moses and the Prophets, whom *He willeth His Church in all doubts to go unto and ask counsel at*; but also the Gospels and the rest of the body of the New Testament. In the which, whatsoever is hard in Moses and the Prophets, whatsoever is necessary to be known unto salvation is revealed and opened. Christ hath commended unto us the word of faith, so that hereafter if we walk earnestly in this way, to the searching out of the truth, it is *not to be doubted* but that through the certain benefit of Christ’s spirit, which He hath promised unto His (people) we may find it, and obtain everlasting life. *Should men ask counsel of the dead for the living?* saith Isaiah. *Let them go rather to the law and to the testimony*, &c. Christ sendeth them that

be desirous to know the truth unto the Scriptures, saying, *search the Scriptures*. I remember a like thing, well, spoken by Jerome; *ignorance of the Scriptures is the mother and cause of all errors*. And in another place, as I remember in the same author, *the knowledge of the Scriptures is the food of everlasting life*. We do not read that Christ in any place hath laid so great a burden upon the members of his spouse, that he hath commanded them to go to the universal Church. Whatsoever things are written, saith St. Paul, are written for our learning."

. BISHOP JEWEL.

Bishop Jewel, whose apology for the Church of England, has ever been regarded as the most triumphant defence and explanation of its principles, and whose work was directed by authority to be kept in all the Churches in England, thus writes in his defence of "The Apology" against his Romish opponent Harding. (p. 69).

"Whereas M. Harding saith *we cannot understand the Scripture without tradition*, the ancient Father Ireneus saith, THIS is one special mark whereby we may know a heretic. These be his words: 'Heretics when they are convicted of error by the Holy Scriptures, fall to accusing the Scriptures as though either they were not well and perfect, or wanted authority, or were doubtfully uttered, or that the truth of the Scriptures can never be found out by those who are ignorant of tradition.'

"If when we have heard God Himself speaking to us in the Scriptures, and thereby know His will and pleasure, as if all this were nothing, we should after all refer the thing to a Council; which is nothing better than *to try whether God and men are both of one mind, and whether men will please to approve and enforce the laws of God by their authority.*"

"Our Lord commandeth Christians, who are desirous to settle themselves upon a sure ground of faith, that they should

go to no other thing but the Scriptures." "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, and giveth wisdom unto the simple. *This is our Rule of Faith*; without this our faith is but a fantasy, and no faith; for faith is by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. Therefore "search the Scriptures; they are they that testify of me." There shall ye find testimony of my doctrine; there shall ye know what is the will of my heavenly Father, and there shall you receive the comfort for everlasting life. "The Scriptures are the most certain and infallible rule by which the Church may be reduced (brought back), if she happen to stagger, slip or err; by which all ecclesiastical doctrines ought to be tried. No law, no tradition, no custom, is to be received or continued if it be contrary to Scripture: no, though St. Paul himself, or an angel from heaven, should come and teach otherwise."

BISHOP HOOPER.

Bishop Hooper writes thus against the Romish principle:—

"These doctors, that they speak of, have put out God's laws and brought in their own, as the Pharisees and Rabbins did in the old Church. Be not afraid of their holy name, but trust to the holiness of Scripture, then shalt thou not be deceived. They (Romanists) say, the holy Church must be heard and obeyed. True it is, but our faith is not grounded upon those that be of the Church, though they be the true ministers of God's Word; but upon the Word itself. Therefore, when the authority or testimony of the Church is alleged, man, that loveth his salvation, must search where and what the Church is," &c. "I believe that the same Word of God is of a far greater authority than the Church; the which word *only* doth sufficiently shew and teach us all those things that in any wise concern our salvation; both what we ought to do, and what to leave undone. *The same word of God is the true pattern and perfect rule, after which all faithful people ought to govern and order their lives.*"—*Bp. Hooper on the IVth Com.*, p. 340.

ARCHBISHOP USHER.

Archbishop Usher thus distinctly writes :—

“The books of Holy Scripture are so sufficient for the knowledge of Christian religion, that they do most plentifully contain all doctrine necessary to salvation. They being perfectly profitable to *instruct to salvation in them elies*, and all other imperfectly profitable thereunto, further than as they draw from them. Whence it followeth, that we need no unwritten verities, no traditions, or inventions of men; no canons of Councils, no sentences of Fathers, much less decrees of Popes, to supply any supposed defect of the written word, or for to give us a more perfect direction in the worship of God and the way of life, than is already expressed in the canonical Scriptures. Matt. xxiii. 8; John v. 39. Finally, these Holy Scriptures *are the rule and line, the square and light, whereby to try and examine all judgments and sayings of men and angels*. John xii. 41; Gal. i. 9.—*All traditions, revelations, decrees of Councils, opinions of Doctors, &c, are to be embraced so far forth as they may be proved out of the divine Scriptures, and not otherwise.*”

BISHOP REYNOLDS.

“The authority of the Church is not *autoritas jurisdictionis*, an authority of jurisdiction above the Scriptures; but only *authoritas muneris*, an authority of dispensation and of trust, to proclaim, exhibit, present the truth of God unto the people, to point to the star, which is directed unto by the finger, but is seen by the evidence of its own light. To hold forth, as a pillar, that law, and proclamation of Christ, the contents wherof he discovers out of itself. In one word, that place sheweth the duty of the Church to preserve knowledge, and to show forth the truth of sacred Scriptures out of themselves; *but not any infallibility in itself, or authority over others, to bind their consciences to assent unto such expositions of Scripture, as deriveth their evidence from the harmony and analogy of the Scriptures themselves, but only from ipse dixit*, because the Church

hath spoken it. . . . If unto any man or chair there were annexed an *infallible spirit*, enabling him to give such a clear and indubitable exposition of all Holy Scriptures, as should leave in evidence no evidence in the text, nor hesitancy in the minds of men; how comes it to pass that hitherto so many difficulties remain, wherein even our adversaries amongst themselves do give several conjections and explications, and how can that man to whom so excellent a gift of *infallibility* is bestowed, clear himself of envy, and abuse of the grace of God, who maketh not use thereof to expound the Scriptures, and to compose those differences thereabout, which do so much perplex the world?

“The office of the Church is not to bind *men's consciences* to believe these truth upon her authority, for we have not dominion over the faith of men, neither are we lords in Christ's flock; and how shall any scrupulous mind, which is desirous to sift things to the bran, be secure of the power which the Church in this case arrogates, or have any certainty that this society of men must be believed in their religion, who will allow the same honour to no society of men but themselves.

“So then the act of the Church is in matters of faith an act of introduction and guidance, but that which begetteth the infallible and unquestionable assent of faith is that spiritual taste, relish, and experience of the heavenly sweetness of divine doctrine, which, by the ministry of the Church, accompanied with the special concurrence of Almighty God therewithal, is wrought in the heart; for it is only the Spirit of God which writeth the law in men's hearts, which searcheth the things of God, and which maketh us to know them.”

BISHOP SANDERSON.

“To do God and ourselves right, it is necessary we should with our utmost strength maintain the doctrine and power of that liberty wherewith Christ has endowed his Church, without either usurping the masters over others, or subjecting ourselves to their servitude, so as to *surrender either our judgments or conscience* to be wholly disposed according to the opinions or wills

of men, though of ever so excellent piety or parts."—Sermon VII. p. 295.

ARCHBISHOP WAKE.

"Some there are, the better to maintain their usurped authority over the consciences of men, have set up another method, and told us that the Prophet is to give credit and authority to the doctrine, not the doctrine to the Prophet; and in consequence thereof, have forbidden men to examine what is delivered by them, and made them believe that it is sufficient that they have it from such hands as can neither mistake themselves nor mislead others."

The Archbishop then proves that Scripture asserts the right of private judgment, adding—

"It will follow farther, that *this right of examining* what is proposed to us in matters of religion is not *any special privilege of the pastors or governors of the Church, but is the common right and duty of all Christians whatsoever.*"—Vol. ii. p. 38.

DR. WATERLAND.

"A liberty of private judgment should be allowed to all, as being the common and undoubted right of all, whether considered as Christians or as men."

DR. LESLIE.

The learned Dr. Leslie, in controversy with a Roman Catholic on the authority of the Church, thus asserts the right of private judgment:—

"*Private judgment is all we have for the belief of and for the choice of a Church.* And then we may trust it in smaller matters; in short, we must trust to it in every thing without exception; for it is as impossible to believe any thing without our understanding, as to see without our eyes?"

ARCHBISHOP SECKER.

“If men are incapable of judging, why do you persuade them to change their judgment? Let them alone in the way they are in. . . . The Romanists themselves own that men must use their eyes to find this guide (the Church); why then must they afterwards put them out to follow it?”

“Never let any man prefer an authority before that which is the highest of all authority—the written Word of God. This therefore let us all carefully study and not doubt but that whatever things in it are necessary to be believed, are easy to be understood. This let us firmly rely on, and trust to its truth when it declares itself *able to make us wise unto salvation, perfect, and thoroughly furnished unto all good works.* . . . Let others build on Fathers and Popes, on Traditions and Councils, what they will: let us continue firm, as we are, *on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets—Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone.*”
—Sermon 98,

BISHOP STILLINGFLEET.

“God himself hath never promised to cure those who shut their eyes against the light. . . . I had said many years ago, ‘That the Scriptures being owned as containing in them *the whole will of God, so plainly revealed that no sober inquirer can miss of what is necessary for salvation, there can be no necessity supposed of an infallible society of men, either to ATTEST OR EXPLAIN these writings* among Christians, any more than there was for some ages before Jesus Christ, of such a body of men among the Jews to attest or explain to them the writings of Moses and the Prophets! And where lies the heresy or danger of this doctrine? If I said that no sober inquirer can miss of things necessary to salvation in Scripture, it is no more than St. Chrysostom, St. Augustine, Aquinas, and other schoolmen had said before me. . . . I shall now sum up my answer in these particulars:—I. Every Christian as such is bound to inquire after the true way to salvation, and hath a capacity of judging concerning it. II. Every Christian proceeding accord-

ing to the best rules of judging, hath reason to receive the Scripture as *the rule of his faith*. III. *The Scripture is so plain in all necessaries, and God hath promised such assistance to them that sincerely seek it, that none who do so shall want the knowledge of such things as are necessary to their salvation*. IV. *When any thing is offered as necessary to be believed in order to salvation, every Christian hath a right and liberty of judging whether it can be proved by the Scripture to be so necessary or not*. V. We do not allow to particular persons the same faculty of judging in doubtful points of controversy which we do as to matters that immediately concern their salvation. VI. *No pretence of infallibility or authority can take away that right of judging which was allowed them by the Apostles, whose authority was infallible*. VII. This right of judging doth not exclude the Church's due authority as to matters of faith and controversies of religion (as it is declared Art. 20 of our Church); but all that we now plead for is, not any authority as to others, but a right of judging as to themselves in matters that concern their salvation. VIII. *The certainty of faith as to them depends upon two things; —1. The clearness of Scripture about them which implies the certainty of reason. 2. The promise of divine assistance which makes their faith divine, both as to its principle, its ground, and its effect. . . . The most certain way we now have to know what doctrine the Apostles taught is by their writings since they taught and wrote the same doctrine, and we are certain we have the doctrine they wrote; but we have no other way to be certain what doctrine they taught. . . . The Scripture being our sole and ENTIRE rule of faith, all matters necessary to salvation must be supposed to be contained therein. . . . The point, then, between us is, whether the Scripture were left only to the Church to interpret it to the people in all points, or whether were it intended for the general good of the whole Church, so as thereby to direct themselves in their way to heaven, and, consequently, whether it may not be opened and understood by all persons in matters that are necessary to their salvation. . . They cannot deny that the Scripture has designed to be a certain and infallible rule of faith TO ALL*”—*Stillingfleet Disc. of Certainty of Faith*, p. 51.

BISHOP GIBSON.

“Our Church hath fixed terms of communion which are truly Catholic, and leaves every one to judge *for himself whether they be so or not, affording to every one the liberty of using all means that they can in order to the making a right judgment, and therefore of using the Scriptures, which are not only the best in themselves, but which also come within the compass of the abilities and leisure of all, more or less.* We are to use the liberty of judging for ourselves by these means, under this consideration, that we are to be accountable for it at the day of judgment.”—*Preservative against Popery*, p. 173.

Bishop Nixon, “Reply” p. 11, states as his opinion that the right of private judgment is not a principle of the Protestant Reformation, but that “*it is the leading principle of dissent.*” The following extracts show the incorrectness of this statement.

BISHOP STANLEY.

“The Church of England, a Church founded on liberty of conscience and right of private judgment.” “The principles of the Reformation, I again deliberately assert to be liberty of conscience and the right of private judgment in opposition to that Church from which it separated.”—*Memoir*, pp. 87. 96.

BISHOP WARBURTON.

“The Protestant profession was founded on the principles of free inquiry and the liberty of private judgment.”—Vol. v. p. 150.

BISHOP LOWTH.

“Our religious establishment is founded on the right of private judgment, and freely allows to others that liberty which it hath vindicated to itself.”—Vol. v. Assize Sermon.

DR. FIDDES.

“The noble claim of right which Christians have to judge for themselves was the foundation of the Reformation.”—*Life of Wolsey*, p. 342.

MR. CARDWELL.

“The encouragement which *had been given to the exercise of private judgment*, and the necessity that followed, and was readily obeyed, of appealing to THE SOLE authority of the Scripture, had swept away the foundation of Romanism, and brought into the minds of men principles and motives powerful enough to throw down the strongholds of their early associations.”—*Cardwell's Hist. of Conferences*.

After these and the other authorities adduced, I suppose no reader will doubt whether the right of private judgment be a principle of the Reformation. To prove self-evident truths is a wearisome task, rendered still more so by the sad necessity which calls for it. Well might Bishop Wilson say that the battle of the Reformation must be fought over again, when its fundamental principle is not only denied, but a body of Protestant Clergy condemned as unsound in doctrine for asserting it.

BISHOP DANIEL WILSON.

The venerable metropolitan of India has written a sermon on “The sufficiency of Holy Scripture as the Rule of Faith,” against the Romanizing error of requiring implicit obedience to the interpretations of the Church. He says :

“If *Satan* can once take men away from the inspired Scrip-

tures as the *sole and adequate* rule and standard of our religious belief, and let human tradition and *the authority of the Church be in part substituted*, a way is opened for every other corruption of faith and practice. Things are coming to such a pass that we are likely to have the whole battle of the Reformation to fight over again."

"If the Holy Scriptures, therefore, were not designed to be complete in themselves, would there not have been some intimation that they were not intended as a full and final instruction for after ages; but that their omissions would be supplied by *the authority with which the Church* would be invested. But not a word of tradition being designed as the first teacher of the divine doctrine of salvation, and the Scripture the second; not a word of *the rule of faith being the Gospel as determined by the consent of all ages of men* (Theophilus and Dr. Nixon) now speak."

"Whatever assumes to itself to determine *suo jure* the sense of Scripture, virtually corrupts the Scriptures themselves; because in each doubtful case it supersedes, by its own deteriorating decision, the inspired word."

"The attempt to set up Catholic Tradition, and the *teaching of the Church as a joint rule of faith, directly tends to bring in, what the Apostle terms another Gospel.*"

"It tends to sap the doctrine of St. Paul and of our Reformed Church as to the vital and fundamental blessing of man's justification."

"I believe our Church never was in the danger she now is, except perhaps immediately before the great rebellion. Not the high Church party of which Archbishop Laud was then the head, nor the non-jurors who condemned the glorious Revolution of 1688, carried out so many of the main principles of the Church of Rome, and professed them so formally, fully, and systematically within the Church of England as is now done."

The whole of Bishop Wilson's excellent sermon might be copied as a conclusive defence of our declaration of the right of private judgment.

He even declares that the setting up the authority of the Church to prescribe its interpretations in opposition to private judgment, or as the rule of faith, is A WORK OF SATAN.

Bishop Nixon in "The Reply" asserts with the utmost confidence that the principles which he enforces are those of the eminent writers of the Church. *Only one passage*, indeed, is adduced from any author in support of this assertion, but the *names* of several writers are enumerated as authorities in his favour.

I venture to affirm that the greater number of the authors referred to are directly opposed to the Bishop's principles, and that very few if any will be found to sanction his measures.

Be it remembered that the question is not whether the right of private judgment is allowable, but whether those who maintain it *are so unsound in faith, that the Bishop is justified by the law of the Church in publicly condemning and punishing them?* This the Bishop must prove in order to avert the most serious charge which can be alleged against a minister invested with the episcopal office.

Bishop Nixon is called upon to adduce the *writers of eminence who go this length*,—who, after adopting the distinguishing principle of the Church of Rome, justify its enforcement upon the clergy of the Church of England.

But even though the Bishop could produce

authorities to support his condemnation of private judgment, — even though every writer whose name he mentions sanctioned his principles, it *would be no justification* for his proceeding. He must prove that the ministers whom he condemns are guilty, not of contradicting a few favourite writers, but of violating a law of the Church. He is bound to show some precedent for his decision. Let him from the records of ecclesiastical judgments produce a single case in which a Clergyman was condemned, or even charged as unsound, for holding the right of private judgment. It is undeniable that many writers have asserted it,—let him show that any of them were ever legally condemned. If he cannot do this—and most certainly he cannot—then the conclusion is inevitable, that he has exercised his episcopal office in violation of the law which he is appointed to administer, and that he has inflicted a grievous wrong upon the clergymen whom he has condemned.

The Bishop of Tasmania, “Reply,” p. 36, says “that his doctrine is the same with that of *such men* as Sheldon, Cosin, Sanderson, Heylin,” &c. “And we must pardon him if he should entertain a *higher estimate of the theology of such men as these* than of the Protestant Association.”

That Heylin should be thus commended and held forth as an authority and example is suffi-

ciently distressing, but is rendered still more so by the fact, that a tract embodying his Popish instructions has been introduced into this Colony and disseminated by one of the advocates of "The Steps," &c. The book is named "The Doctrine and Discipline of the English Church, by Peter Heylin, D.D., 1847." The following extracts will show what are "the orthodox faith" and "the true doctrine of the Church of England" which we are called upon to receive:—

"Confession made upon such security (for secrecy) will be as saving to the fame of the penitent, as the absolution to his soul. In which respect it was neither untruly nor unfitly said by a learned writer; '*Heaven,*' said he, '*waits and expects the Priest's sentence here on earth; for the Priest sits judge on earth, the Lord follows the servant; and what the servant binds or looseth here on earth (the key not failing), that the Lord confirms in heaven.*'—P. 10. 'In some cases it may be said of the Priest, as the Father doth of Christ, that he is the very mouth by which we speak unto our Father which is in Heaven.'—P. 14.

He tells us, p. 17, if there had been more reading of Homilies, and less sermonizing, the people would have had no less knowledge and more obedience. He regrets that penance is not practised, and he "wonders there is no form prescribed for it in our Liturgy." In a note on page 22, we are informed that King James caused a "Book of Sports" to be published, and observed on Sundays and other festivals; but

“one of the acts of vengeance of the Puritans was to burn this book—and unfortunately a ‘modified Puritanism,’ concerning the keeping of Sunday, is the prevailing feeling in England in the present day.” Dr. Heylin tells us, p. 23, that “IMAGES *either of Christ himself, or of any of the Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, and other Godly Fathers* SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN REMOVED from the Churches, but only such pictures of false miracles as had no truth in being, and were therefore the more abused to superstition.” The Lord’s Supper is described as “The Sacrifice of the Altar.” He says, p. 40, “With the like uniform consent we find the doctrine of a *real presence* in the blessed Sacrament taught in the Church of England;” and in p. 42, “Though faith must lead the way to our justification, yet holiness of life, manifested in the works of charity, must open for us the gates of heaven.”—P. 51. Dr. Heylin states, p. 68, that “differences with Rome are NOT IRRECONCILEABLE.”

Charity would induce us to believe that Dr. Nixon in recommending Heylin as an author who teaches the true doctrine of the Church was ignorant of his Romish principles; but Heylin’s character is known to every student of divinity, and the introduction of his tract into this Diocese, and its exact agreement with “The Steps” and “Theophilus,” forbid such a belief.

The question then before us is, Must we receive as "*the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England,*" *the Sacrifice of the Altar,—the Real presence,—Penance,—the Priest the judge on earth, for whose sentence heaven waits, &c.,—Profanation of the Sabbath,—Images in the Churches,—Justification by works, &c.?* The argument is as follows:—

1st. The tract inculcating these impious and Romish principles was disseminated in this Colony, and its author is held forth by the Bishop as teaching the orthodox faith of the Church.—The principles taught in "*The Steps*" and "*Theophilus,*" which he declares to be her true teaching.

2nd. Bishop Nixon strongly condemns the notion that "*each man is to be his own interpreter in matters where the Church has recorded her judgment.*"—"Reply," p. 13.

3rd. Bishop Nixon speaks of "*the recorded principles of the Church of England with which alone he, as one of her Bishops, had to deal: and of which, in his own Diocese, HE IS THE AUTHORIZED EXPONENT should any doubt arise.*" Reply, p. 7.

Conclusion.—1. We are not to be our own interpreters of the Church's teaching. 2. The Bishop is its sole authorized exponent or interpreter. 3. The Bishop pronounces the principles of "*The Steps to the Altar,*" of "*Theophilus*

Anglicanus," and of Peter Heylin, to be the true teaching of the Church. 4. If the Bishop be correct, we are bound to receive without inquiry the preceding "doctrine and discipline of the Church of England," and the principles of "The Steps," and whatever else the Bishop may prescribe.

Such a theological system turns common sense into derision, and defies description of its absurdity and spiritual tyranny; yet is it not only gravely put forth, but actually enforced upon the members of the Church in this Colony.

The Pope is deemed subordinate to a General Council, and his decisions are deliberated upon in Consistory; but this theory renders the Bishop absolute. *It is presumption for the clergy and people to judge; he is the exponent and sole judge.* If he does not claim the title of infallibility, he certainly exercises the power which it alone can justify. He arbitrarily determines the religious faith of the people; and, forgetful that he is a man prone to error as his fellows, he imposes his own opinions as the Creed of the Church. He deprives all others of their private judgment as incompetent to interpret the teaching of Scripture, or of the Church, only to enforce upon them his own private judgment as the standard of Divine truth!

THE RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT THE
FOUNDATION OF ALL LIBERTY.

MEN of business engaged in active pursuits are apt to slight discussions even upon the most effective principles of human action. But the national character, and the habits and condition of mankind, are formed by the influence of abstract principles. Whether we are to judge for ourselves, or whether the Church is to prescribe to us our religious belief, is the great question upon which the liberty of the human mind depends. Let a people admit the Church's authority as the rule of faith, and practical servitude to the Priesthood must be, as it ever has been, the immediate consequence.

1st. When a man believes that he is bound by divine command to receive the Church's teaching, he becomes religiously submissive to the Priest, who represents to him the Church, and speaks in her name and authority *as the exponent of her doctrine*.

2nd. The Priest will become the ruler of his thoughts and director of his actions by the practice of confession, which he will assuredly enjoin as the essential instrument of his dominion, without which he cannot exercise his spiritual direction.

3rd. He will gradually become a tool in the hands of the Priest to promote his objects and

interests. His family and all his concerns will be subjected to the Priest's influence and direction. He will not so much as open a book without his license, or express an opinion without his sanction.

4th. His mind will be gradually narrowed and darkened by the growth of superstitious feelings, by being restricted from free inquiry, and by bigoted aversion to those who dissent from his Church. These are *the natural results* of the Priest's direction, and of the desire which he must feel to preserve his influence, and to counteract whatever may diminish it.

Thus the very life of freedom is involved in the right of private judgment; and the greatest enemy of the mind, the morals, the general well-being of man, is he who most effectually labours to destroy this essential principle of human nature.

The moral and social progress of nations is proportional to their exercise of the right of private judgment. The Protestant preachers who broke the chain of priestly servitude, and taught the people to judge for themselves the truths of Scripture, were the founders of England's liberties, and of the moral, civil, and intellectual advancement of her people. They were starved in dungeons, exposed in the pillory, flogged and mutilated, but they were martyrs to the great principle of spiritual freedom;

—they bequeathed the living truth—the Bible the sole and sufficient source of light to the soul of man.

As the principle of Church dominion is one of darkness, so are the means which it ever employs. Its appropriate ministers are Jesuits, its schools are the cloister, its arguments are persecution. The authority of the Church, as a moral and religious principle, contrasts with the Bible in the influence which it has exercised on the people whom it has governed. Old Spain compared with Old England,—New Spain with New England,—Portugal with Holland,—Ireland with Scotland, exemplify the two principles.

The love of power innate in man,—the natural inclination to exalt his own office and function,—the supposed sacred character and religious authority impressed upon Priests,—and still more the ready subservience of many among the people, tend to exalting the Church, and robbing the laity of their right to judge for themselves. The antagonistic principles will ever divide mankind: the deluded and servile will betray to priestly domination their mental inheritance, the charter of truth and liberty; but the true ministers of the Gospel, and the Bible-taught people, will never abandon the Sacred Volume to seek divine truth from the decisions of Church or Priest. The present attempt will

be defeated, and its authors numbered among those who would reduce the human mind to the darkness and servitude of the middle ages, when the Church was the only known rule of faith, and the Priests governed their superstitious slaves by the terror of the Inquisition.

THE CHURCH AS THE RULE OF FAITH NECESSARILY LEADS TO ROMANISM.

1st. Because the man who believes that the Church has a divine right to prescribe to him what he is to believe, easily perceives that no Protestant Church claims such a right; and as it is impossible that any Church can possess this divine office without knowing it, and exercising it, he must conclude that it belongs only to the Romish Church, by which alone it is claimed; and he therefore will esteem it a religious duty to become a member of that Church.

2nd. Because if the Church possess such a right, and men are bound, as Bishop Nixon says, to give up to her the convictions of their own judgment, the Reformers were rebels against a divine authority, and all the Protestant Churches are schismatic, and therefore to be abandoned.

3rd. Because it is undeniable that in the middle or dark ages the errors of Popery were the acknowledged teaching of the Church. If therefore the Church has a divine right to pre-

scribe what men are to believe, we are bound to receive her teaching, for it was once that of the Church.

4th. If the Church possess this right, it must be infallible; but the Church of Rome alone claims to be infallible, and therefore can be the only one to which this right belongs.

5th. The constitution of all Protestant Churches precludes the possibility of their claiming a right to prescribe their teaching in opposition to private judgment,—for they were all founded by individuals setting up their private opinions against the teaching and authority of the Church.

No consistent believer in this authority of the Church, who possesses honesty of principle sufficient to sacrifice self-interest in order to follow out his convictions, can reasonably continue a Protestant. Nothing can be plainer than this to any unprejudiced person of ordinary intelligence: and its truth is verified by the fact, for those who hold this principle either join the Romish Church, or profess to hold one and the same faith with her, endeavouring to persuade themselves that the Church of England is a branch of the Church of Rome. This deplorable fallacy they assert in opposition to common sense, affirming that systems essentially opposite agree together, and in the face of the Romanists, who justly deride the absurdity of

Protestants supposing that they are members of a sister branch of the Church of Rome, which has excommunicated them as guilty of innumerable heresies, and for belonging to a Church which only exists by rejecting the supremacy of St. Peter, and the fundamental principles of Romanism.

It is a subject of common astonishment that so many men of learning and ability should have been led to embrace Popery, deformed as it is by such palpable idolatry,—by so many plain contradictions to Scripture,—so many superstitions and corruptions; but the Apostle Paul has taught us to expect this, and has explained the reason of it. He describes the Papal apostasy (2 Thess. ii. ; 1 Tim. iv. 1) as a great falling away from Gospel truth, when *the man of sin should be revealed, exalting himself above all that is called God, showing himself that he is God.* The Anti-Christian domination of the Pope is thus described, arrogating the divine attribute of infallibility, claiming to be the Vicar of Jesus Christ, dispenser of His power, and ruler of His Church. He is to be a Christian, not a Pagan power; for he is *as God sitting in the temple of God*, and his advancement is to be by pretended miracles, imposture, and deception;—*his coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders.* No other power ever existed to which this description

is at all applicable, save that of the Papacy. St. Paul explains how men can be so blinded as to submit to this anti-Christian system ; *God shall send them a strong delusion that they should believe a lie, because they received not the love of the truth.* They were not content with the Word of God,—they depreciated it as doubtful and not sufficiently clear : they were not content with the Church of God,—the assembly of the redeemed, but wanted a humanly organized body ; and so, not having the love of the Gospel truth, they were given up to the strong delusion—they believed in a priestly God—a human infallibility—a human judge, and human rule of faith. This great principle of error once embraced, their understandings gave up their directing power ; truth and falsehood were undistinguishable ; they were under the strong delusion to believe every thing true or false emanating from that “mystery of iniquity whose coming was with lying signs and wonders.”

The natural inclinations of the Priesthood are attracted by a system which gives them the dominion of men's souls. Aristocratic pride induces many to aid the Priest in depriving the laity of the right to judge ; they sustain him in depressing the common people, for enslaved spiritually to the one they will more easily serve the other. Of the people themselves many yield to a religion which relieves them from

the responsibility of exercising their own judgments, and promises them assurance and certainty without the trouble of examination. They are taught that to honour and obey the Priest is to serve God, to whom implicit submission is the most acceptable offering; and by these principles degradation appears honourable, and mental bondage meritorious. Let the reader determine what the cause of truth calls upon him to profess and uphold. If as a Christian,—as a Protestant, he feels that a great principle of the Gospel is imperilled, let no temporal motives withhold him from the sacred duty of contending earnestly for the faith. The responsibility is great; the reward is great; let him dread and avoid the condemnation of his own conscience, added to that of God, if from worldly prudence he betray the cause of religious truth.

REPUDIATION OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL BY
BISHOP NIXON, AND EXCLUSION OF MINISTERS
WHO DO NOT HOLD THAT ALL BAPTIZED
INFANTS ARE REGENERATE.

The following Address explains the measures and declarations of the Bishop respecting the subject of Baptismal Regeneration.

Proposed by R. Q. Kermode, Esq., seconded by W. Archer, Esq., and carried with but three dissentients.



ADDRESS TO HIS GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP OF
CANTERBURY FROM THE ASSEMBLY OF LAY
REPRESENTATIVES DULY ELECTED BY THE
MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, IN
COMPLIANCE WITH THE REQUISITION OF THE
LORD BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,—

The Lay Representatives of the Members of the Church of England in the several parishes of Van Diemen's Land beg to convey to Your Grace our gratitude for proposing to receive from the members of the Church in this Colony such a scheme and such suggestions respecting the form of Church government as may remedy the evils under which we labour.

It is with the deepest pain that we are compelled to announce to Your Grace our solemn conviction of the alarming condition to which the Church in this Colony is reduced by such evils, among the most prominent of which the following may be specified:—

The Bishop of this Diocese, in his Charge to the Clergy delivered 22nd May, 1851, thus speaks:—

“I must disclaim, then, all want of dutiful respect to the laws of my native land, *if I protest against the decision given by the Privy Council as being the law of the Church; and if I decline to recognize their interpretation of her formularies as being binding upon the conscience of any one of her children.*

“The *opinion of five Laymen must not be confounded with, or taken for, the judgment of the Church, even though it should happen to be fortified by the concurrence of two of her Prelates.*

“I am the more disposed to enter somewhat at length into this unhappy subject, from the persuasion that neither the real character and necessary results of the decision itself, nor yet the true nature of *Mr. Gorham's heresy* (as I venture to regard it), have been adequately considered by many, who so cordially rejoice at the increased latitude of opinion now conceded to the Clergy of the Church of England.”

The Bishop has on frequent occasions declared his resolution not to ordain, or to admit into the Diocese, any minister holding what he terms the "Gorham heresy," or not believing in the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration.

We believe that this repudiation of the judgment and authority of the Privy Council, is—1st. A rejection of the Queen's supremacy, as head of the Church of England—2nd. That it virtually separates the Church in the Colony from the Mother Church in England—3rd. That, by the exclusion of ministers holding what is designated Evangelical doctrine respecting Baptism, the terms of communion are narrowed in violation of the law of the Church of England against a Bishop refusing institution to a clergyman for not holding baptismal regeneration does not exist in this Colony, from which there is no appeal to the Privy Council or Courts of Law; and, therefore, that it is in the power of the Bishop, as the Church is at present constituted, to carry out his declared intention of excluding Evangelical Ministers.

The principle on which the Bishop of Tasmania assumes the right of repudiating the authority of the Privy Council, and requiring all Ministers to coincide with his opinion respecting Baptism, is one which would render the clergy and Church entirely subject to his individual opinions and domination.

We receive the judgment of the Privy Council, and of Your Grace and of the Archbishop of York, in the case of Mr. Gorham as a wise and just decision, in accordance with the principles of the Church of England, and as averting a great calamity, by rendering abortive an attempt to exclude from her Communion a large body of Evangelical Ministers.

Impelled by the sacred obligation of maintaining the truths of the Gospel, and preserving the liberties, the legal constitution, and principles of the Church of England, we beg to present to Your Grace our remonstrance against this proceeding of the Bishop of this Diocese; and to communicate our determination to resist his repudiation of the judgment of the Privy Council, and to adopt such measures as may appear to us most effectual for preventing the exclusion of Evangelical Ministers, and for procuring their admission into the Diocese.

It is with deep thankfulness that, in a period of much difficulty and danger, we are enabled to address in the Primate of our Church, not only a Prelate zealous for the maintenance of Evangelical truth, but one whom we believe to be directed by Divine Grace, as the instrument of the Lord, in opposing Romish error, and in promoting the salvation of the people by rendering the Church more effective in its administration, and more Evangelical and zealous in its spiritual offices.—
June 24, 1852.

A public meeting of members of the Church of England, held at Hobart Town, 22nd April 1852, appointed a deputation to request the Bishop to withdraw his condemnation of the Clergy for holding the right of private judgment; to prohibit the use of “Theophilus Anglicanus” at the College; and *to retract his protest against the decision of the Privy Council, and his resolution to exclude Ministers not holding the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration.*

In his published “Reply to the Deputation” the Bishop says, that he refuses “*to suffer the judgment of the Privy Council in THE SMALLEST DEGREE to fetter or guide his discretion, as to the admission of Candidates for Holy Orders.*”
—P. 26.

He asserts that the decision of the Privy Council is “*only an opinion delivered by five lawyers.*”—P. 26.

“Because it fetters the free action of the Episcopate in England, he adheres to the declaration which he had more than once made, that as God gives him grace, HE SHALL PROTEST AGAINST IT TO HIS DYING DAY.”—P. 26.

He says :—

“ In refusing to license any one who holds Mr. Gorham’s opinions, he is not acting in defiance of the law of either Church or State.”—P. 26.

The Bishop states the doctrine which he requires all ministers to hold to be *“ that all children are at their baptism regenerate by water and the Holy Ghost, and have given unto them the forgiveness of all their sins ; and it is charitably presumed, that, notwithstanding the frailties and slips of their childhood, they have not totally lost what was in baptism conferred upon them.”—P. 35.*

The limits of this work preclude a full discussion of the doctrine of Baptism : it is proposed to show,—

1st. That the assertion that all children baptized with water are invariably regenerated is contrary to Scripture.

2nd. That the formularies of the Church of England do not prescribe it.

3rd. That the principle which the Bishop enforces in respect to Baptism is inconsistent with his own acts and statements.

4th. That the Bishop, in requiring all ministers to assent to his doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration before they can receive a licence, violates the law of the Church,—rejects the supremacy of the Queen, and nullifies his own appointment

as well as the authority by which he exercises his episcopal office in this Diocese.

5th. That he narrows the terms of communion in the Church of this Colony, and separates it from the Mother-Church in England, and all other Episcopal Churches.

6th. That the authority assumed by the Bishop in requiring this doctrine sets him above all law, renders the Church an exclusive sect, and gives him an arbitrary power of imposing what articles of faith he may see fit, and so entirely subverts THE CONSTITUTION of the Church.

1st. The assertion that all children baptized with water are invariably regenerated by the Holy Ghost is contrary to Scripture.

The confounding of the outward form of regeneration with its inward and spiritual grace is the effect of receiving a form of words without Scriptural examination of their truth. No one would ever deduce this opinion from the Gospel. Every reader of Holy Scripture knows that the saving power of the Redeemer is displayed in a great spiritual change wrought by the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers. This change is termed from its completeness regeneration,—a new creation or birth. The following texts are some of those descriptive of its nature.

“He saved us by the renewing of the Holy Ghost.” “Re-

newed in the spirit of your mind." "Transformed by the renewing of your mind."

"The Spirit beareth witness that we are children of God."
"We have received the spirit of adoption."

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature."

"Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God."
"Whosoever is born of God overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." "We know that whatsoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not."

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God."
"Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God."

"If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

The regenerate are distinguished in these and innumerable other passages as having their carnal nature—their old man crucified with its corrupt affections and lusts, and as having put on a new nature—a "new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." They are led by the Spirit as sons of God, the Spirit of Christ dwells in them,—they are sanctified and changed into the likeness of Christ, and they bring forth the fruits of the Spirit displaying its sanctifying graces. They are believers in Christ, being born again by the Word of God.

Bishop Nixon says of circumcision that “it was the rite by which the Israelite was taken into covenant with God, and, in its spiritual and mystical meaning, was to him much the same as baptism is to us.”—*Lect. on Cat.*, p. 595.

Circumcision in the Old Covenant was equivalent to Baptism in the New. The Apostle thus teaches us the distinction between the outward rite and inward grace which it represented. “He is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter.” So, he is not regenerate which is baptized with water, but he that is baptized with the Holy Ghost, whose regeneration is not in the letter or form, but in the heart.

It is an absolute impossibility that infants can be subjects of regeneration in the full scriptural sense of the term: they who are yet destitute of mental and moral faculties cannot undergo any change in the thoughts and feelings of their minds or hearts; regeneration must therefore as applied to them have a different signification, and the only one which it *can have* is prospective; namely, that, as the child becomes conscious,—as it begins to feel and to think, its thoughts and feelings will be those of a regenerate heart and mind. Indefinite expressions may be used interminably by those who are

satisfied with confused notions ; but the only intelligible signification of the expression “ regeneration of infants ” is, that their future feelings and thoughts will be devout and holy,—the effect of the grace or renewing influence of the Holy Spirit upon their hearts and minds.

This plain consideration settles the question at issue ; for it shows that the only sense in which any one can intelligibly or reasonably pray for or believe in the regeneration of infants is, that the grace of the Holy Spirit may be so conferred upon them as to influence their minds and hearts when they become capable of being influenced : and from this it follows that, of baptized infants, those only whose hearts are thus sanctified, and who exhibit the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit, are regenerate. The language therefore of the Church Service must be the expression of trust and hope, and cannot be that of certainty.

There never was a more unscriptural or unworthy conception than that of a dormant Holy Spirit,—of a man living in iniquity and infidelity, and yet having what is unmeaningly said *a baptismal grace of regeneration sleeping in his unconscious soul*. The Holy Spirit in Scripture is never represented as dormant ; and it is no less shocking than unscriptural to imagine divine grace dwelling in the hearts of those who are led captive by Satan. “ They that are after the

flesh do mind the things of the flesh, but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his; and if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness," &c.—Rom. viii. 5. There cannot be a greater contradiction to this plain teaching of Scripture than the notion of a baptismal grace dwelling in the carnal mind,—that the soul may be at the same time under grace and condemnation,—that a man may at once be a child of God and a child of the devil, a regenerate unbeliever and blasphemer.

In the baptism of grown up persons, Bishop Nixon and every one else must admit that the person to be baptized should previously have received the spiritual regeneration described in Scripture. He should be a believer, and therefore must "have put on Christ Jesus." He should be "sanctified by faith,"—have "the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost," and "be led by the Spirit," and therefore "be a child of God." If fit for baptism, he must have been previously regenerated spiritually: it is therefore certain that the words "Baptismal Regeneration" applied to an adult

must be to a great extent, retrospective, as they are prospective when applied to infants.

No man has ever supposed that the rite of Baptism, administered to an unbelieving blaspheming adult, would necessarily render him spiritually regenerate; and it would be contrary to common sense to apply to him that term merely because he had been baptized with water, or unless he gave evidence of a changed heart by the fruits of the Spirit in a godly life: and so in the case of infants it is unreasonable and unscriptural to assert *as certain* that they are regenerated because they have been baptized with water, or before they have given evidence of a renewed nature and religious heart.

Nothing can indeed more exalt the priesthood than the notion that a formal act of theirs must necessarily change the condition of the soul,—that, as “Theophilus” states, forgiveness of sins *is tied* to their baptism, or as others say that the Spirit of God waits upon their act; but nothing at the same time can more depreciate the moral and spiritual character of the Gospel. The great principle of Evangelical religion is, that every gift and grace of God is bestowed, not as a charm—not as tied to a human rite, but through faith in Christ. The soul must come itself to the Redeemer in order to be blessed. Give up this truth, and the *principle* of Popery is acknowledged. The Priest’s absolution may as

well necessarily pardon—his Mass may as well necessarily deliver from Purgatory, as his Baptism cleanse the heart from sin and necessarily regenerate the soul.

The notion of baptismal regeneration destroys the simplicity of the Gospel. It turns the attention from the Redeemer to the Priest, —it confuses the way and means of salvation, leading the sinner to look back to a ministerial act received in unconscious infancy, rather than to seek with single eye the regenerating grace which the Saviour will vouchsafe to his penitent believing prayers.

The statements respecting forgiveness of sins in Baptism are often misunderstood. Bishop Nixon says (p. 35), all children have given unto them in baptism “*the forgiveness of all their sins.*” While baptized infants receive this remission those dying unbaptized are, in the mystified language of Tractarians, said to be left to the uncovenanted mercies of God. If this has any meaning, it implies that the salvation of unbaptized infants is doubtful, or a subject of apprehension; a statement exhibiting the shocking conceptions which men can reconcile themselves to in advancing their own credit, their influence, or their office.

It is quite plain that infants are guilty of no actual sins; they have only what is termed original sin, or the corruption of nature inherited

from Adam; and, far from the forgiveness of this sin being uncovenanted, there is not a more positive or express promise or declaration in Scripture than that of its remission through the atonement of Christ. "*For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*"—1 Cor. xv. 22. "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men. . . . For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many." "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."—Rom. v. 12. 15. 18. 19. Scripture has thus completely removed all doubt concerning the salvation of those whose only guilt is that from inheritance and imputation of Adam's transgression: and it is a sad consideration for a minister that he has countenanced an opinion implying a doubt not only of the mercy and justice of God, but one completely removed by express declaration of Scripture.

2nd. The formularies of the Church do not teach invariable regeneration in Baptism.

Bishop Nixon, in "The Reply," sets forth various reasons for believing baptismal regeneration. I shall first observe, that were it possible

to prove the truth of this opinion, it would be no justification for his enforcing it on the Clergy, by making it an article of faith, to be assented to before ordination, or admission to the Colonial ministry. A Bishop who holds the opposite opinion as true would certainly not be deemed justified in imposing his view upon the clergy ; and Dr. Nixon, if he were one of them, would undoubtedly resist such an imposition as highly unjust. *Let him mete to others as he would have it measured to him.* If a strong conviction of the truth of the opinions imposed were to justify such coercion, the principle of persecution would be established ; for even the inquisitors were convinced of the doctrines which they forced men to believe.

Bishop Nixon adduces, as his strongest and indeed only proof, the language of the baptismal service, in which the minister says, "*Seeing now that this child is regenerate,*" and "*We give thee hearty thanks that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit.*" These words are designed to express the conviction in the minister's mind that God is disposed to regenerate the baptized, and that He will assuredly employ all that divine mercy can make use of for that end. The minister feels that the general redemption from original sin which the Lord Jesus Christ has wrought for every child of Adam is assured to the baptized infants, and

he uses these words as confident expressions of trust and hope.

That they were designed to be thus used, is proved by the fact that the same expressions are applied to baptized adults, whose regeneration from the nature of the case, and from the admission of all, is conditional, and therefore doubtful. 'The minister says of them, "seeing these persons are regenerate," when his feeling concerning them *can only be* that of trust, and cannot be that of certainty: for he knows that unless they have received the sacrament in faith and with devotion it will tend to their detriment, and not to their regeneration. If therefore the Church uses these words in the case of adults conditionally, and as expressing hope, it follows that the same words may be understood in the same sense in the service for infants. 'This argument is strongly stated in an excellent tract on Baptism by the Rev. E. Hoare, republished and recommended by the Bishop of Melbourne.

"In the case of adults, therefore, the language must be that of assumption, not assertion. But there is an exact identity between the words used for infants and adults. In this respect there is not a shade of difference between the two offices. "Now that this child is regenerate," says the one; "Now that these persons are regenerate," says the other. Is it consistent, is it logical, is it common sense, to say that one thing is meant in one passage, and another thing in another? That one is assertion, while the other is admitted to be assumption? Common sense demands, that, in the same book, the same words should

mean the same thing. The two passages are either both assumption, or both assertion. Assertion is impossible in the one, and, therefore, assumption is logically necessary in both."

It is the common and natural usage of Holy Scripture, imitated by the Prayer Book, charitably to assume that all who have received any religious ordinance have done so in faith, and received the grace of which it was the means. The members of the Churches are addressed as the sanctified, &c.: the Apostle charitably assumes that they are all living members; so the congregation of Israel is assumed to be holy, and the baptized are supposed to be regenerate, until their profession is proved by their conduct to be false.

The nature of regeneration, as described in the prayers offered for the child to be baptized, is exactly that of Scripture. "That the old Adam may be buried, and the new man may be raised up in him.—That all carnal affections may die in him, and all things belonging to the Spirit may live and grow in him.—That he may triumph against the devil, the world, and the flesh.—That he may be endued with heavenly virtues, and everlastingly rewarded." It is evident that these prayers refer to the *future condition of the child*, since in his state of infancy he naturally cannot receive their fulfilment; it follows therefore that when the minister says, "seeing this child is regenerate," he uses the

language of strong faith, assuming that the gift will be bestowed in answer to prayer and the due fulfilment of the sacrament.

The Articles of Religion are the true explanation of the Church's teaching; they are precise declarations of doctrine by which, in all reason, the meaning of expressions used in her offices should be ascertained. In the Twenty-second Article on Baptism that sacrament is not said necessarily to convey regeneration, as undoubtedly should have been stated if such were the Church's doctrine; it only says, Baptism is a *sign* of regeneration or new birth—thereby virtually declaring that they are not the same or necessarily united. It states that “the duly baptized are engrafted into the Church by baptism, and that the promises of God are sealed,—faith confirmed, and grace increased by virtue of *prayer* to God.” There is no principle of justice plainer than that, where the Church has in her declaration of faith given this explanation of Baptism, it is a shocking disregard to her institution, no less than to the faith of Christian ministers, to compel them to receive a different doctrine. The Church says Baptism is a sign of regeneration. Bishop Nixon calls this heresy, and compels the ministers to believe, or profess to believe, that Baptism is regeneration, that they are inseparable.

Bishop Nixon writes as if his doctrine of

Baptismal Regeneration were quite unquestionable,—as if no one of any character or judgment ever doubted that it was the Church's teaching; and that, in enforcing it, he was requiring her universally acknowledged doctrine. I could easily prove by numerous testimonies that a great body of pious and eminent authors, and especially that the articles of the Irish Church, drawn up in 1615, taught the opposite opinion; but every reader must be aware that the Evangelical Clergy entirely dissent from the doctrine of invariable regeneration in Baptism. The following opinion of a high Church author will be received at least as an unprejudiced testimony, proceeding from an advocate of Baptismal Regeneration, the Rev. Mr. Maskell, who writes thus:—

“As the case went on, first in the Court of Arches and afterwards before the Privy Council, it was impossible not to feel more and more that the reasons and arguments of the Evangelical party had been too lightly esteemed.” He entertained “doubts whether a Bishop is really following the intention of the Reformed Church of England, and speaking in her spirit, when he condemns as heresy the denial of the unconditional efficacy of Baptism in the case of all infant recipients. . . The real question is this, Does the Reformed Church of England teach exclusively the unconditional efficacy of infant Baptism?”

Mr. Maskell answers that she does not, and thereby affords the strongest possible evidence that Baptismal Regeneration is not a doctrine of

the Church. Mr. Maskell was Chaplain to the Bishop of Exeter, and took part in the proceedings against Mr. Gorham for not holding that doctrine; but as the trial and examination went on, he reluctantly became convinced that the Evangelical doctrine was that of the Reformers and of the Church, though his own remained unaltered. This should at least prevent those who uphold the conduct and principles of Mr. Maskell and the Bishop of Exeter from condemning the opinion of the Evangelical Clergy on Baptism as heretical.

Bishop Nixon is president of the Branch Society, in this Colony, for Promoting Christian Knowledge. The tract by Bishop Bradford, entitled "*Baptismal and Spiritual Regeneration*," is circulated by the Society in this Diocese as its only or principal work of instruction on Baptism. It is one of the Parent Society's publications, approved and recommended by the Committee. Bishop Bradford teaches the Evangelical doctrine. He says:

"The term 'Regeneration, both when it is applied to Baptism (as it generally is) and when it particularly denotes the renewing of the mind by the Divine Spirit. External Regeneration, if not accompanied with the internal, will not avail us.'—P. 7.

"We are saved by the washing of Regeneration, that is we are put into a state of salvation by Baptism, inasmuch as Baptism is appointed by our Saviour for a solemn rite of admission into his Church."—P. 9.

“I propose to show why Baptism is styled the teaching of Regeneration.

“To show that the washing of Regeneration may be separated from the renewing of the Holy Ghost.”—P. 8.

“The Jews baptized proselytes, who resembled such as were new born: they entered into a new state, were admitted to new relations, were obliged to live new lives, and govern themselves by new laws and customs. And there can be no great doubt but that our Saviour and St. Paul might use the expressions of being born again of water, and the washing of Regeneration, in the very same sense.”—P. 8.

“The washing of Regeneration (or Baptism) may be separated from the renewing of the Holy Ghost. It is the way of the Scriptures to speak of the members of the Church of Christ under such appellations as seem to imply that they are all of them truly righteous and holy persons. Thus the Apostles style those to whom they write in general saints, chosen of God, buried with Christ in Baptism, &c.; and particularly St. Paul says they were saved by the washing of regeneration, &c. The reason of which is, that they were *visibly and by profession all this*. But yet it is too evident there have been many who have enjoyed the washing of regeneration whose temper and manners have demonstrated that they were not renewed by the Holy Ghost.”—P. 26.

“Those persons who have had the washing of Regeneration, but are *not yet renewed by the Holy Ghost, may attain to this renovation.*”—P. 13.

Bishop Bradford's book was brought under Dr. Nixon's notice by me two years ago, in the vain hope of inducing him not to condemn and exclude ministers for holding the doctrine on Baptism taught in the work authorised by the Christian Knowledge Society, and circulated by his own Committee.

I do not suppose so striking a contradiction

can easily find a parallel. Dr. Nixon, the President of the Christian Knowledge Society, teaches us to believe that baptism may be separated : Dr. Nixon, Bishop of Tasmania, asserts that it is heresy to affirm that regeneration may be separated from Baptism, and that he will never admit a minister who holds such an opinion.

A member of the Church goes to the Society's depôt to obtain an authorised explanation of Baptism, and he receives Bishop Bradford's tract. He opens Bishop Nixon's Charges or Lectures, and he is dismayed to find himself a heretic ! I suppose few serious persons will regard this otherwise than as subjecting men's souls to individual caprice, and trifling with the most important truths of the Gospel. Such must ever be the result when a Priest or Bishop, under the notion of being *the authorised exponent*, presumes to determine for others the truths of Scripture or the principles of the Church, and compels them to accept his opinions which from the nature of man are subject to variation, inconsistency, and error.

Bishop Nixon is exposed to the same inconsistency on the subject of private judgment. The doctrine taught by the Christian Knowledge Society, composed of all the Bishops in England, is that which he has condemned as unsound, and excludes the ministers who receive it. It is no excuse for them that they think as

the dignitaries and high authorities of the Church for centuries thought and taught. Bishop Nixon as the authorised exponent in his own Diocese condemns as ignorant of the true teaching of the Church, Reformers, Bishops, and Societies. As an example of this, in the fifth volume of religious tracts by the P. C. K. Society, will be found Bishop "Porteus's Confutation of the Errors of the Church of Rome," "A Protestant Catechism," and an "Address on Romish Error by Archbishop Synge."

Bishop Porteus heads his chapters:—I. *Scripture the rule of faith and practice.* II. *Scripture sufficiently intelligible.* IV. *Tradition exploded.* On the last subject he thus writes:—

"Surely the Apostles were not worse writers with a divine assistance, than others commonly are without it. What they spoke and preached was plain, else they spoke to no purpose; and why should not the same things be as plain when they were written down?" "The Romanists tell us of a rule of faith which they speak of in very high terms; and that is the traditionary doctrine of what they call the Catholic Church."

"The generality of people, say the Romanists, are incapable of judging for themselves. Yet the New Testament supposes them both capable of it, and bound to it; and accordingly requires them 'to try the spirits;' to prove all things."—"The Romanists say we are in a pitiable condition; having only the dead letter of Scripture to go by, and no living guide to direct us in the interpretation of it, as they have." "They of the Church of Rome, by requiring all their doctrines to be implicitly obeyed, seem conscious that they will not bear to be fairly tried. But let no man prefer any authority before the written word of God. Let others build on Fathers, Popes, on Tradi-

tions and Councils, what they will; let us continue firm on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets."

Thus plainly does the P. C. K. Society, by Bishop Porteus' tract, teach as the doctrine of the Church the Protestant principle of the "Solemn Declaration," and refute the opinion of Dr. Nixon as being the distinguishing principle of Popery.

The Protestant Catechism of P. C. K. Society says:—

"I thank God I am a Protestant."—"A Protestant is one who protests against the errors of Popery, and admits no rule of faith and practice but the Holy Scripture."—"It was not the intention of Almighty God that there should be an infallible judge among men for if so he would certainly have been declared in Scripture; but there, on the contrary, we are commanded to examine and judge for ourselves. Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits," &c.

In the Christian Knowledge Society's tract by Archbishop Synge we are told:—

"It is not enough for a man to say, 'I believe as the Church believes, and if I am in error the Church must answer for it; the Church is my hostage and security with God. *But every man shall bear his own burthen*, and therefore let every man prove his own work (his own actions, his own worship, his own religion.')" "When any doctrine plainly appears to be delivered in the Holy Scriptures; this we must all own to be the doctrine of God: *but when the Church delivers a doctrine, we are not to receive it as a doctrine of faith, until it appears that the Church herself has so received it from God: for otherwise we should place our faith in the Church; we should believe in the Church.* This matter, I think, is as clear as noon day: you must never receive any doctrine of faith upon the authority of

the Church, until you are convinced that God has delivered it as a doctrine of faith."

Thus the P. C. K. Society condemns as the errors of Romanism the principles of Bishop Nixon as plainly as if Archbishop Synge was refuting, not Pope Pius's Catechism, but the "Reply to the Deputation." It is not according to him the mark of a dwarfed intelligence or rebellious spirit to sit in judgment on the teaching of the Church, but a Scriptural duty.—Far from the Church having a right to prescribe to us in opposition to our own judgment, this rebellious, heretical, and dwarfed tract of the Christian Knowledge Society tells us to receive no doctrine from the Church unless our own judgment shall have convinced us that it is Scriptural. These things, create amazement; the question is suggested,—Is the Church destitute of all law and fixed principle,—each diocese a lump of wax, to be moulded by the Bishop's hands according to his own fashion?

Bishop Nixon quotes as authorities men whose whole lives proved that they utterly opposed the principles which he attributes to them. Will it be credited that he brings (p. 15) the nonconformist Richard Baxter to justify his condemnation of the right of private judgment? The two authorities adduced in support of Baptismal Regeneration are no less surprising, THEY ARE JOHN WESLEY AND SIMEON, from whose

works two ambiguous passages are quoted. The reader will judge of the assertions in "The Reply" from the justice of attributing to these two eminent ministers of the pure Gospel of grace and spiritual power an opinion so repugnant to their religious belief. So far from holding Baptismal Regeneration, Simeon wrote against it as a serious error. In his comment on John iii. 5, he thus writes:—

"The nature of Regeneration.—The mistakes which very generally obtain respecting this subject being first, rectified the truth will be more clearly seen. *Many suppose it is the same with Regeneration.* In the early ages of Christianity these terms were often used as synonymous; because it was taken for granted that none but truly regenerate persons would submit to a rite which engaged them to separate themselves from an ungodly world, and exposed them to the most imminent peril of their lives. But there is a wide difference between the two; regeneration being absolutely necessary to salvation, while baptism, as in the case of the dying thief, may under some circumstances be dispensed with. Besides it was doubtless the great design of our Lord and his Apostles to regenerate and convert men: but were they so intent on administering the rite of baptism? Our Lord, we are told, 'baptized no man;' and it is said of Paul, that 'God sent him not to baptize;' yea, he himself 'thanks God that he had baptized none but Crispus and Caius;' but if he had regenerated none other, would he have thought *that* a proper ground for thanksgiving? Again, if baptism and regeneration be the same thing, we may use them altogether as synonymous terms: now it is said that "Whosoever is born of God overcometh the world," 1 John v. 4, and that 'he neither *doth* sin, nor *can* sin, because he is born of God.'—1 John iii. 9. But if we should say the same of all that are baptized, would not the worldly and sinful lives of many flatly contradict us? It appears then from the superior

importance of regeneration, from the design of Christ and his Apostles respecting it, and from the properties ascribed to it in Scripture, that it neither is, nor can be, the same with baptism. Baptism is an outward work of man upon the body; regeneration is an inward work of God upon the soul."

4th. In refusing to grant a licence or admission to any minister who does not receive his doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration, Bishop Nixon, 1st, violates the law of the church,—2nd, rejects the authority and supremacy of the Queen and nullifies his own appointment, and the authority by which he exercises his episcopal office in this Diocese.

The decision of the Privy Council was, that the doctrine of Mr. Gorham denying that *baptized children are regenerate* "is not contrary or repugnant to the declared doctrine of the Church of England," as by law established, and that the Bishop of Exeter was not justified in refusing to institute him to the living to which he had been nominated by the Patron.

Bishop Nixon says of this decision, that he will regard it ONLY AS AN OPINION OF FIVE LAWYERS; that *Mr. Gorham's doctrine is heresy*; and that as "*God gives him grace he will protest against the decision of the Privy Council to his dying day; and in refusing to license any one holding Mr. Gorham's opinions, he denies that he is acting in defiance of the law*

of either Church or State.”—Reply, pp. 26, 27.

In page 28, Bishop Nixon acknowledges that the decision of the Privy Council is a law, and was enforced as a law of the Church and State. He says, “*I grieve that the Archbishop of Canterbury has thought good, or felt himself compelled so to set aside the scruples of the Bishop of Exeter as to institute Mr. Gorham, whom the Bishop of Exeter had proved to entertain heretical notions on Baptism.*” If the decision of the Privy Council was not a declaration of the law, the Archbishop could not have instituted Mr. Gorham. Bishop Nixon’s assertion, that in protesting against the decision of the Privy Council he is not opposing law, is, therefore, as every one must see, opposed to the fact, and contrary to his own acknowledgment.

If a Bishop in England refuse to admit a minister for denying invariable regeneration in Baptism, such minister would be instituted by law against the will of the Bishop: there can be no sense therefore in saying that the judgment of the Privy Council, which is thus enforced as a legal judgment, is not a law.

To represent the decision of the Privy Council as *only an opinion of five lawyers*, is to give a very incorrect impression of its real character. A single judge determines a question of life or death; five of the most eminent judges in England, constituting the highest judicial tribunal,

after long deliberation, pronounced their judgment on the meaning and application of the declarations in the Prayer-Book respecting Baptism. They did not determine what doctrine was true, nor did they decide the doctrine which the church should profess: they only *determined the true sense of a certain number of sentences*, as they would have done if they were ascertaining the meaning of an Act of Parliament; and surely no one can deny that the most eminent legal authorities in the kingdom, being entirely unprejudiced and disinterested, was the very best imaginable tribunal to determine the meaning of the words used in the articles and services on Baptism. Bishop Nixon speaks of them in the most contemptuous terms, and as if it were utterly unreasonable to entertain a doubt that his view is that of the church. In representing the judgment as only the opinion of five lawyers, he withholds the important consideration that above three thousand clergymen publicly approved of that judgment, and that the two English Archbishops and the whole Irish Church entirely concurred in it. The following statement of Lord Langdale gives a just description of the decision—

“ In the examination of this case we have not relied upon the doctrinal opinions of any of the eminent writers by whose piety, learning, and ability the Church of England has been distinguished; but it appears that opinions, which we cannot in any important particular distinguish from those entertained by Mr. Gorham, have been propounded and maintained, without

censure or reproach, by many eminent and illustrious prelates and divines who have adorned the Church from the time when the Articles were first established. We do not affirm that the doctrines and opinions of Jewell, Hooker, Usher, Jeremy Taylor, Whitgift, Pearson, Carlton, Prideaux, and many other, can be received as evidence of the doctrine of the Church of England; but their conduct, unblamed and unquestioned as it was, proves at least the liberty which has been allowed in maintaining such doctrine. . . . We express no opinion upon the theological accuracy of these opinions, or of any of them. The writers whom we have cited are not always consistent with themselves, and other writers of great eminence and worthy of great respect have held and published very different opinions. But the mere fact that such opinions have been propounded and maintained by persons so eminent and so much respected, as well as by very many others, appears to us sufficiently to prove that the liberty which was left by the Articles and Formularies has been actually enjoyed and exercised by the members and ministers of the Church of England."

Mr. Gorham having been refused institution to a living by the Bishop of Exeter on the ground of unsoundness of belief for not holding the doctrine of invariable regeneration in the Baptism of infants, *appealed to the Queen in Council*, and the petition was by Her Majesty referred to the judicial Committee of the Privy Council, which reported to her that the Bishop was not justified in refusing to institute Mr. Gorham. "*The Queen, accordingly, by an order in Council, ordered and directed that the said report should be carried into execution.*"—Law Journal Reports, July, 1850.

The judgment of the Privy Council is that of

the Queen ; it speaks in her name, and exercises her authority ; to repudiate and protest against it, is plainly to reject her supremacy. Every one will judge how far this is justifiable in a minister of the Church of England, of which she is supreme head on earth ; but that a bishop should openly protest against the authority from which he derives his own appointment and the exercise of his office seems strange and inconsistent. Bishop Nixon's patent is to this effect :—

Victoria by the grace of God, Queen, &c. &c., to all to whom these presents shall come greeting, &c.

We do ordain the Church of St. David's, Hobart Town to be a cathedral, and the Island of Van Diemen's Land to be a Diocese, and *we name and appoint F. R. Nixon to be ordained, Bishop of Tasmania* ; and we do declare by these presents, that he may give institution to Benefices, grant licenses to ministers, and *exercise ecclesiastical jurisdiction* within the said Diocese.

Witness ourself at Westminster, the 26th day of August in the 6th year of our reign.

By the Queen herself.

Bishop Nixon cannot perform the least official act save by the power of the Queen : it is as appointed by her and using the authority which she has committed to him that he is recognised as Bishop of this Diocese, and receives his salary. How, then, can the nature of his appointment be reconciled with his repudiation of the judgment of the Queen and her Privy Council? As head of the church she has committed a portion of its

members to his charge, and there can be no doubt that while he retains her commission he is under a positive obligation not to violate her laws. When she intrusted him with ecclesiastical jurisdiction, it could only have been such legal jurisdiction as exists in the Church of England; and to protest against the laws of the mother Church is to contradict the design of his office and act in opposition to that authority by which he was made a Bishop and which gives validity or power to his acts.

In practice this contradiction is thus exemplified: the Queen appoints Dr. Nixon to be Bishop and to grant licenses to ministers; she declares by her council that the laws and constitution of the church do not justify him in rejecting ministers holding a certain opinion. Bishop Nixon accepts her appointment and grants licenses by her authority, but protests against the decision of her court, and rejects the ministers whom the law,—the Church of England,—and the Queen pronounce unobjectionable.

5th. In enforcing upon all ministers the doctrine of invariable regeneration in Baptism Bishop Nixon narrows the terms of Communion in the Church of this colony and separates it from the mother church in England and all other episcopal churches.

This is evident; for the imposition of a new article of faith must of course exclude those who

do not really, or who will not profess to hold it. Any serious Christian must lament the injury done to the cause of religion in rendering the Church more exclusive. It is doing the work of the Romanists, who are most effectually served when the evangelical clergy are excluded. It is true this Diocese is the most remote province of Great Britain; but those who value truth for its own sake, and regard the church as a great Christian embodiment of established principles, services, officers and members, will not allow her constitution to be thus altered at the will of an individual Bishop. And in this prudence concurs with justice: for if Bishop Nixon succeeds in violating the law to which the Bishop of Exeter was obliged to yield, the church in principle sustains the same injury, and the precedent will be followed in other Dioceses.

Bishop Nixon affirms that the law of the Church in Great Britain sanctions heresy, and receives into her pulpits ministers who preach it. Nay, that the Archbishops themselves confirmed this heretical decision by which the Church has endangered, if not lost her character as a branch of the Catholic Church.

It is certainly a bold proceeding of the Bishop of Tasmania thus to protest against the law of the Church, and separate his from all other dioceses. He casts a serious imputation upon every other Bishop but himself and the Bishop

of Exeter. The decision of the Privy Council, he says, sanctioned Mr. Gorham's heresy, and he as a Bishop must, unless he violate his vows and deny the true faith, protest against its judgment till his dying day. What becomes of all the other English and Colonial Bishops? They must either be so ignorant or so faithless as to receive a heretical decree, which Bishop Nixon *alone of all Bishops* has understood, has repudiated, and protested against. Are they all incapable of distinguishing heresy, or are they so destitute of conscience as to submit to it in silence? The responsibility upon Bishop Nixon is very great; should his proceeding be found less correct than that of the whole episcopal bench he will have to answer for a grievous violation of law, and for great injustice to ministers of the Church.

The highly esteemed and eminently successful Bishop of Melbourne publicly maintains the evangelical doctrine of Baptism, and has republished and recommended in his Diocese Mr. Hoare's tract on that Sacrament. He is, doubtless, as fully convinced of the truth of his views as Bishop Nixon can be of the opposite ones; and it is certain he has the same right to impose them upon his clergy that Bishop Nixon has to enforce his opinions upon the ministers of this Diocese. But if he were to do so the result would be an entire separation of the two

Churches. Bishop Nixon is therefore responsible for an act of schism in separating this from all other dioceses, by requiring from the clergy a new article of faith as he does when he asks them, before conferring a license, if they hold Mr. Gorham's heresy, and when he publishes his resolution never to license a minister who does not hold his doctrine of baptismal regeneration.

Bishop Nixon condemns as heresy the opinions of the Bishop of Melbourne, and were the latter to visit this Colony consistency would compel him to exclude from the pulpits the Bishop of an adjoining Diocese. Can intolerance and the schismatic spirit be carried beyond this?

6th. The authority assumed by the Bishop in admitting only those ministers who receive the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration sets him above all law, renders the Church an exclusive sect, and gives him an arbitrary power of imposing what articles of faith he may see fit, and thus entirely subverts the constitution of the Church.

Bishop Nixon affirms that, as "the authorised exponent of the principles of the Church," it is his office and duty to require from the clergy an acknowledgment and profession of what he regards as her true teaching.

The clergy and people protested to the Bishop against books prescribing, among other Romish principles, auricular confession of all sins of act and thought to be made kneeling to a confessor, "commissioned by God as His trustee, to hear, and judge, and absolve," and that to his absolution is tied the grace of God's pardon of actual sin, &c.

Bishop Nixon declared in his "Reply" that the principles of the books complained of were the true teaching of the Church.—See "Solemn Declaration."

Why does Bishop Nixon require the clergy to profess a belief in baptismal regeneration and not in auricular confession and absolution? He says that both are the true teaching of the Church; yet he only enforces the former, although the latter is by far the more practically important. Nothing can be plainer than that the principle upon which he enforces the one requires that he should enforce the other. In all reason he is not only justified in doing so, but bound to do so as a religious duty. If he possess authority to require the clergy to receive the doctrines which he supposes to be the Church's teaching, not only should he impose upon them the principles of "The Steps," "Theophilus," &c., but whatever other opinions he may from time to time adopt. There can be no bar or obstruction to his articles of faith. He imposes Baptismal

Regeneration, although the Queen, the Privy Council, the Archbishops, the legal courts, the clergy and laity, all regard it as a law of the Church that this doctrine shall not be enforced,—that no minister shall be excluded because he does not hold it. If Bishop Nixon in the face of all this boldly declares that he will never license, that is, allow in this Colony a minister who does not hold Baptismal Regeneration, because he himself supposes that it is the teaching of the Church, it is plain that whatever he may so regard he assumes the right of imposing against any opposition.

It is vain, under such an assumption of episcopal authority, to suppose that the Church has any fixed or definite principles,—any established constitution; for the clergy *must* receive what the Bishop esteems to be the Church's teaching. If he change, they must do the same—if he die, they must adopt the opinions of his successor,—if two bishops of adverse views exchange dioceses, their clergy, and of course the people with them, must immediately undergo an exchange, not only of the dictators of their faith, but of their religious principles.

Such is the condition to which the Church of England is *necessarily* reduced by the assumed power of prescribing to the Clergy what the Bishop may esteem to be the Church's teaching. Every man possessing intelligence and principle

would contemn with scorn a Church thus enslaved to the opinions of an individual. Those who have the interests of religion at heart—those who would redeem their Church from a state of bondage and dishonour, threatening it with speedy ruin, will at once acknowledge the necessity, and engage in the duty, of asserting and restoring the principles, the laws, and the liberties of the Church.

CONDITION OF THE CLERGY.

The colonial clergy were incumbents of parishes up to the arrival of the Bishop in the Colony. They were appointed to the charge of parishes legally marked out,—they were never moved but at their own wish, either by the Government, or the head of the Church. Bishop Nixon, shortly after his arrival, claimed the most absolute power over the clergy; and deprived two of them, the Rev. T. Wigmore and the Rev. G. Bateman, of their licences without affording them a trial.

Mr. Wigmore wrote to the Bishop to try for a statement of the charges on which his licence had been withdrawn in order that he might be enabled to appeal to the Archbishop of Canter-

bury. Bishop Nixon replied that he was not bound to furnish Mr. Wigmore with a statement of the charges for which he had condemned him, and therefore refused his request. Mr. Wigmore and Mr. Bateman went to England,—but were unable to appeal, having no official documents to show the nature of the charges, the evidence, or the sentence against them.

A strong and general feeling having been excited by these transactions Bishop Nixon called a meeting of the clergy; but was unable to render them satisfied with the proceedings against Mr. Wigmore. With the exception of the Bishop's chaplain, the whole of the ministers present signed a protest against the claim of the Bishop to dismiss the clergy without trial, stating it to be opposed to the principles of justice, the declarations of the Holy Scripture, and the laws of the Church. The reason assigned by Bishop Nixon for not affording a trial to Mr. Wigmore was, that there were legal impediments to his doing so. It appeared, however, that this objection was founded in error; for in some subsequent cases ministers have been tried under the "Church Discipline Act," by a commission of clergymen appointed by the Bishop.

The licences issued by the Bishop of Australia to the clergy of Van Diemen's Land were in the usual form granted in England. Bishop Nixon changed the form, adding two clauses—one, that

the Bishop *reserved to himself the power of revoking the licence whenever he saw fit*; the other, that he reserved the power of sending any minister, whenever he thought proper, to officiate in the church of the clergyman to whom the licence was granted. In some cases he inserted the words, “reserving to himself the power of REVOKING THE LICENCE SUMMARILY AND WITHOUT PROCESS.”

This alteration in the licence occasioning remonstrances from the laity at public meetings, the Bishop promised to restore the old form, whenever any body of the clergy, holding the new license, should make known to him their dissatisfaction and desire for such a change. It is needless to mention that such dissatisfaction and desire were never made known to him. It may have been that the clergy were unwilling to incur the indignation and censure such a request from them certainly would have called forth. Men of judgment and principle will form a decided opinion on the justice of the complaint at the alteration of the licences, and on the *bonâ fide character* of the redress offered by the Bishop.

The preceding pages exhibit evidence of the power which Bishop Nixon exercises in prescribing to the clergy the doctrines which they are to hold. Claiming to be the *authorised exponent* of the principles of the Church, he en-

forces in her name and as her teaching his own private opinions. He excludes all ministers who do not hold his doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration,—he condemns publicly as unsound those who assert the right of private judgment,—he refuses them testimonials or licences, and rejects their certificates on the ground that they are incapable of distinguishing or testifying to the truth,—and he deprives them of the privileges of ministers, marking them in every way as under his sentence of condemnation, even excluding them from the list of Lent preachers.

He holds completely in his hands the gates of admission to the Colonial ministry; he is the sole Bishop; he ordains and licenses only those who receive his opinions. He is hitherto practically and virtually the sole patron, for his nomination has always been received. The lay members of the Church assemble in frequent public meetings and adopt almost unanimously remonstrances and petitions; but their requests are treated with absolute contempt—they are reproached *with ignorance and presumption*. The clergy assembled in chapter meeting or by general address petition that the judgment of the Privy Council may not be repudiated and protested against, and they receive sharp censures in reply. The lay representatives of the Colonial parishes, assembled by the Bishop, repeat the same request, with a similar result.

A letter from the Primate of the Church of England is received, giving His Grace's judgment, that the principles of the books which Bishop Nixon declares to be the true teaching of the Church are more in accordance with the principles of the Church of Rome than with those of the Church of England : the Primate's judgment produces no effect ; Bishop Nixon says *it is the opinion of an individual, and may go for what it is worth.*

None but a minister who has experienced the evils and the inconveniences of exercising the duties of a parochial clergyman *under the condemnation* of a Bishop can tell how serious and incessant they are. No resolution, no sense of duty, will enable him for any long period to sustain the depression and obstacles of such a situation. He is an object of suspicion and aversion to those who are unwilling to incur the disfavour of him who dispenses all temporal ministerial advantages. His acts are jealously watched and misinterpreted ;—he stands alone, exposed to the opposition and petty annoyances by which the mean and self-interested recommend themselves to the Bishop. He is represented as a rebel against authority, a violator of his vows of obedience, and the author of divisions ; while those who concur with him in principle are too often deterred from affording him their co-operation and support.

The ministers who disseminated and defended "The Steps" and "Theophilus,"—preached against the "Gorham heresy," and the decision of the Privy Council, are lauded and promoted for maintaining the true principles of the Church. One of them who publicly defended the Bishop's right to alter the form of licences, and impose whatever terms, obligations, and conditions he might think proper upon the clergy, was rewarded with public commendation, and preferred over many senior ministers to one of the most advantageous livings in the Island. Thus not only the advocates of the principles which the Primate of the Church pronounces to be Romish are promoted, and the churches and people committed to their ministry and teaching; but the livings and temporal advantages of the Colonial Church are dispensed as a reward and proposed as an inducement to profess and teach principles pronounced by the Primate to be Romanizing.

A generous mind recoils from oppression of the weak; but a still more lively indignation is felt when wealth and power exert their influence to make a dependant violate his conscience. Grievous is the wrong to man's moral nature—to truth and integrity—when the necessities and dependence of a fellow being are laid hold upon to make him belie his principles. Such an act is the most fatal aggression upon a moral being—

his property he may regain, wounds and injuries he may recover from; but the soul that has been tempted to deny its religious principles, to betray what it holds to be the truth, has lost for ever its self-respect,—is condemned to perpetual degradation, and sunk in the scale of moral beings. Yet such is not only the influence of the present system of episcopal arbitrary authority, but *such is its actual effect.*

To a minister making an application for an advantage, to which he justly held himself entitled, the Bishop's answer virtually is, "I cannot comply while your name is attached to 'The Solemn Declaration.'" This is, in effect, to say "Withdraw your signature, and your reward shall be compliance with your request."

To a minister leaving the Colony, and anxious to have the ordinary testimonial which is necessary to obtain employment in another Diocese, the same reply is given, "Withdraw your signature, or depart without your testimonial." The trial in a recent instance was severe, but principle prevailed, and the minister departed without the counter-signature of the Bishop, but without the forfeiture of his conscience, and of the divine favour.

To a minister having an opportunity of preferment the same temptation was held out, "*Withdraw your signature, and your wishes may be gratified.*"—The result was the same—prin-

ciple prevailed, a great benefit was relinquished, a state of great oppression was continued, but conscience and truth were preserved.

When a man in England employs his private means to induce a voter to sell his suffrage, the law and the public moral sense condemn and punish the tempter and seducer; but the evil is greatly aggravated when the revenues and offices of the Church, entrusted and designed for the general welfare, are employed to induce dependent ministers to deny and abandon principles which they have publicly and solemnly professed.

It may be deemed that I express this statement too strongly. Those who can feel for the trials and weakness of men in the temporal condition and dependence of ministers will not think so. I have heard from a minister, who had both spoken and voted on the side of the Bishop, an expression of satisfaction that the majority *was against him!* I have heard a minister who opposed the measures I advocated confess to me that he knew I was upholding his cause as well as my own. I have been told by a minister of the Bishop's party that he would gladly have taken the opposite side but for the sake of his large family. These are examples of what every man of common sense must see is the natural effect of the Bishop's proceedings. Its influence is plainly to induce, by threats,

penalties, and losses, the ministers who have asserted the right of private judgment to withdraw their names from "The Solemn Declaration." I feel this wrong so deeply, that I must submit the dreadful comparison of *the Tempter's words* "ALL THESE WILL I GIVE THEE." The principle is the same—the influence is the same—and if those who, the Bishop tells us, have abandoned the principles they maturely professed in "The Solemn Declaration" have been induced by such influences, while I admit they are subjects of our deepest commiseration, I assert that the influence before which they have fallen merits our abhorrence.

Not only are the clergy thus coerced to violate their consciences and principles by injuries and deprivations, but they are distinctly threatened by the Bishop with dismissal if they continue to teach the right of private judgment. He speaks of his "*forbearance*" in not having already *revoked their licences and ejected them from their livings*; and says that, if they continue to teach the principle which he condemns, "it will be his duty *to put a stop to their ministrations.*"—(P. 17.) In this confident manner does he speak of his power to silence and eject the clergy at his will. The meaning of his words is, "Change or dissemble your principles, or you shall be deprived of your livings." This threat still hangs over their heads; their expulsion is

retarded only by the support of the lay members of the Church. The Bishop in this denouncement forgets or disregards his promises not to deprive any clergyman of his licence without affording him a trial. He formally engaged before a meeting of the Colonial clergy in 1852 that, after a preliminary investigation by three ministers, he would always refer the trial of an accused clergyman to an assembly of the clergy, to determine not only whether he were innocent or guilty, but the punishment which he should suffer. The Bishop received a vote of thanks from the meeting for this concession: yet he now re-asserts, and threatens to exercise, the power of silencing and ejecting ministers at his own will and pleasure.

A just and merciful master would not dismiss even an unworthy servant without a trial and conviction, nor would he refuse to give him the poor satisfaction of knowing the charges on which he had been condemned.* Not so with the ministers of the Gospel,—with the clergy of the Church of England their licence or contract of service is dismissal whenever their lord shall see fit, summarily and without process.

I ask the reader of these pages, as he is a man and a Christian, to feel for and redress the wrongs of the clergy. Who can lay claim to a spirit above the basest selfishness that is not in-

* See note at the conclusion of the work.

dignant at such moral degradation of those who should especially be upright in principle and sincere in profession? The present system, in place of Bible-taught ministers of the Saviour's Gospel, would fill the pulpits with trembling dependent slaves, preaching not the word of God, but the word of the Bishop—holding their offices on condition of compliance, and dreading expulsion at his frown.

Bishop Nixon asks, "*What subordinate officer in any other department, who demeaned himself towards his acknowledged chief as a clergyman has acted towards his Bishop, would be allowed to continue in his situation?*"—(P. 9.)

Bishop Nixon has often professed a desire to uphold the dignity of the clergy, yet he does not scruple to compare them *to clerks in a Government department!* Alas! was he not once himself a clergyman? How then can he thus degrade the office he lately held? But allowing the correctness of his statement—allowing that the clergy are as clerks, and the Bishop the head of the department, the inference entirely condemns himself. The poorest clerk would not be dismissed without a trial and conviction; nor could the head of his department eject him without the sanction and authority of the Governor, to whom he would have an appeal. He might even seek redress at the foot of the Crown. A common soldier cannot be punished

or dismissed without a fair and impartial trial : even where discipline demands arbitrary authority, the most subordinate cannot be punished without a definite offence against a prescribed duty. Are, then, the ministers of the Gospel, in their high and holy calling, to be subject implicitly to the will of an individual,—to teach only what he prescribes,—to profess what he believes, and to execute their sacred office with the hypocritical subservience ever generated by unlimited dependence upon arbitrary power ?

At his ordination the minister of the Church of England receives the Gospel *to read and preach the same in the Church of God*. He declares that—

“ He is persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain *sufficiently* all doctrine required of necessity for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ ; and that *he is determined out of the said Scriptures to instruct the people* committed to his charge, and to teach nothing as required of necessity to eternal salvation but that which HE SHALL BE PERSUADED *may be concluded and proved by the Scriptures.*” —Ordering of Priests.

This is the vow of the minister. No Church—no Bishop is to prescribe to him what he shall preach—he engages before God to teach nothing but what *he is persuaded* may be proved by Holy Scripture ; yet does Bishop Nixon come between the clergyman and his ordination vow, and threaten him with expulsion unless he preach what Dr. Nixon holds to be the teaching of the

Church. The minister is persuaded that Holy Scripture prescribes the right of private judgment,—but he must deny that principle, or be ejected from his ministry. What a mockery to make a Christian minister vow to preach nothing but what he is persuaded the Scriptures teach, and at the same time compel him to preach what the Bishop orders him to believe! Assuredly this assumption of dominion over the consciences of the clergy is repugnant to their vow of being guided in their teaching solely by Scripture. But the contradiction to the principles of the Church sinks into insignificance compared with the sinfulness and cruelty of forcing ministers to profess and teach, as religious truths and principles, what they believe to be utterly unscriptural. Every one must see that the clergy are thus robbed of honesty and sincerity; they are not allowed to have a conscience. Vile hypocrisy and lying before God are enforced upon them as obedience to the Bishop. An individual assumes the right of condemning, disgracing, ejecting, and ruining them and their families if they do not accept his private opinions of the Church's teaching, although in their judgments, and in that of the Primate, they are false and Romish.

CONCLUSION.

Two years since five hundred lay members of the Church signed a requisition for public meetings at Hobart Town and Launceston, at which resolutions were passed strongly protesting against the Synod of Bishops at Sydney, because they had promulgated a decision on Baptism, narrowing thereby the terms of communion with the Church. At these meetings the principles taught in "Theophilus Anglicanus," &c., were condemned as Romish. That declaration of the Synod on Baptism is now enforced in this Colony. No minister will be admitted who does not assent to it, and the judgment of the Privy Council itself is repudiated. The Romanizing books are declared by the Bishop to be the true



teaching of the Church; and the clergy who protested against them are condemned, punished, and threatened with expulsion.

All appeals and remonstrance have been refused with censures upon those who presented them for ignorance, presumption, and opposition to the Church's teaching.

Nearly the whole of the lay members of the Church hold Protestant and Evangelical principles, as well as a considerable body of the clergy, notwithstanding the recent great increase of advocates of "The Steps" and denouncers of the Privy Council.

For the last year the condemned ministers have suffered in silence the effects of the Bishop's sentence. Some are said to have recanted—the two oldest have died, maintaining their principles to the last,—and several have left the Colony.

The personal disadvantages and evils suffered by the condemned clergymen are, perhaps, of little moment; but the ministers are identified with the principles for which they suffer. *The lay members of the Church at public meetings pledged themselves to their support.*

The whole body of the people have a deep interest in upholding the right of private judgment against the claim set up, in the name of the Church, to subvert the rights and liberties of men to interpret Scripture for themselves; but

Protestant Christians are under the most sacred obligation to maintain it. As they love the pure faith of the Gospel,—as they esteem the religious liberty which they derive from the Reformation,—and as they value the truth and service of their Redeemer, they must continue to maintain the cause which they have already personally and by their delegates asserted.

Can they with a safe conscience look on in silence at the imposition of advocates of “The Steps” upon Protestant congregations against their will? Can they allow their brethren—their children to be taught what they feel to be, and what the Primate pronounces to be, the principles of Popery? Submission to a temporal wrong is an injury to law and to society;—submission to a religious wrong is concurrence with the evils which result from it.

That faith which brings salvation to the Christian he must not relinquish—he must not, as far as in him lies, allow to be extinguished. The highest opprobrium would be poured upon him who abandoned his civil rights to unjust assumption; and surely to betray the truth of the Gospel—the great right of the human mind to hear, and know, and judge the revealed will of God is what no Christian can for a moment entertain the thought of.

The Protestant people of this Colony have, by divine grace, been enabled to make a good

profession of their faith, and to assert firmly and confidently their principles. It is not to be supposed that they will now abandon the cause of Evangelic truth. Their principles are those of all Reformed Churches against the Romish system ;—the eyes of other Churches are upon them, and their measures and proceedings may exert an extensive influence for good.

A great work is before them ; it must be begun in faith, that God may give it the increase. It must be begun, carried on, and finished *as His work*—submitted to His direction, and designed for the promotion of His truth—the advancement of His glory.

MEASURES FOR PRESERVING AND PROMOTING
PROTESTANT PRINCIPLES.

THE extinction of Evangelical truth, and of the Protestant character of the Church of England, in this Colony, is surely and gradually effected by filling the churches with ministers holding, and as far as they safely can, preaching the Romish system laid down in "The Steps," "Theophilus," &c. The first and most urgent measure to avert this evil is by *introducing into the Colony ministers of Protestant principles.*

In a short period few, if any, of the old colonial chaplains who protested against Romanism will remain. The number and strength of those who condemned them are continually increasing. If some effective measure be not adopted, the

Evangelical clergy will be compelled to abandon either the Colony or their principles. If the Protestant people do not at once combine to protect their ministers, and procure from England Gospel preachers, they will be responsible for the extinction of the principles of the Reformation.

The Colonial Church and School Society is established to promote Evangelic religion, and counteract the Romanizing spirit in the Colonies. The Archbishop of Canterbury, to whom the Protestants of this Diocese are so deeply indebted, is a president of this association. Let us subscribe a sufficient income for the support of a certain number of ministers; and address an earnest appeal to this Society for assistance, and to send us clergymen, earnest, faithful, and zealous to aid in preaching and preserving the religious principles of our Reformed Church. They should possess all the testimonials and certificates which would entitle them legally to institution to benefices in England; and we may hope that the Bishop of Tasmania will not refuse to grant them his licence. But, should he do so without violating any law of the Church they would effect the greatest good, even by such Christian services as a layman might perform. They might preach from house to house,—they might exhort at meetings,—they might visit the sick and the schools with the incumbent's concur-

rence,—they might diffuse by their writings, their conversation, and their example, the Evangelic spirit and truth, and resist the progress of Romanism.

Objections no doubt may be advanced against this proposal; but its excuse is its necessity; and we may trust that our brother Protestants in England, commiserating our condition, will overlook any apparent informality for the great object we have in view. Let it be remembered that the law in England provides a remedy against a Bishop refusing to institute or license Evangelical ministers. The refusal of the Bishop of Exeter, who preceded Bishop Nixon, was corrected by law: but in this Colony there is no restriction upon the will of the Bishop but popular opinion, and the combined efforts of the lay members of the Church. We are in this alternative, either to resign every church in the Diocese, with the people and children, to ministers advocating the principles of “The Steps,” or we must adopt the only means afforded us of endeavouring to procure Gospel ministers.

SECOND. The members of the Church in this Colony have unanimously, earnestly, and publicly remonstrated with Bishop Nixon for repudiating and protesting against the law of the Church as declared in the judgment of the Queen by the Privy Council. Our appeals have been rejected, with the declaration that the

Bishop will continue his protest to his dying day. Is there no remedy for this? Are we to suffer all the evils resulting from this exclusion of the Evangelical clergy from the Diocese? The Queen is the legal head of the Church; it appertains to her, as affecting not only her dignity and office, but the *authority of her laws*, that they should not be publicly resisted, repudiated, and broken by one whom she has commissioned to execute them. The members of the Church in this Colony are called upon to petition the Queen that the law of the Church of England respecting the admission of ministers should be obeyed in this Diocese.

THIRD. The members of the Church in this Colony have, in a similar manner, petitioned for the right of choosing their own ministers; at the meeting of Lay Delegates from the parishes it was resolved:—

“That in the opinion of this assembly the nomination of the clergy should be vested in the members of the Church in each congregation; the Bishop exercising the same power in admitting persons so nominated as the Bishops possess upon the presentation or nomination of the parochial clergy by the patrons of livings in England.”

The election of the clergy by the people has the assured warrant of Holy Scripture. “The twelve called the *multitude* of the disciples,” and said—“Look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and of

wisdom ; and *they chose, and set seven men before the Apostles*, who, when they had prayed, *laid their hands upon them.*" (Acts vi. 5.) Thus chosen and ordained the deacons proceeded to preach the Gospel. (Acts viii. 5.) The Apostles had the gift of discerning spirits, but they left it to the multitude to *choose* men full of the Holy Ghost. Such a precedent undeniably shows the design of the Apostles to commit to the people the choice of their ministers, according to the natural principles of justice, as being entitled to elect those in whom they had the greatest interest, and should feel perfect confidence.

The principle of the Church of England is, that the right of advowson belongs to the founders or maintainers of the Church. So those whose ancestors endowed a living are the patrons of it, or have the right of choosing the minister.—*Burns Ecc. Law*, v. i. p. 4. When the people support the minister, the right to nominate him belongs to them.

"When cities were at first converted to Christianity, the Bishops *were elected by the clergy and people* : for it was then thought convenient THAT THE LAITY, AS WELL AS THE CLERGY, should be considered in the election of their bishops, and should concur in the election ; that he, who was to have the inspection of them all, might come in by a general consent."—*Burns Ecc. Law*, v. i. p. 199.

Bingham, in his "Antiquities of the Christian

Church," (book iv. sect. ii.) proves "that the power of the people was equal to that of the inferior clergy in the election of a Bishop."— (Sect. iii.) "This power not barely testimonial, but judicial and elective," (sect. vi.), shows "the manner in which the people voted at elections." Sect. x. shows that the people had the same power in the election of Presbyters as of Bishops.

Bingham also tells us book ii. sect. 3, that the Bishops in the early ages ordinarily did no public act without the advice and assistance of the clergy. Cyprian, who carried the episcopal authority very high, would not so much as ordain a subdeacon without their consent. He says it was his rule that he would do nothing without the advice of the clergy, and *consent of the people*.

That the people should claim the right to elect their ministers, and even to join with the clergy in electing their Bishop, is therefore no usurpation, but a right strictly Scriptural, and exercised by the primitive Church, as well as acknowledged by the Church of England.

The adoption of this measure would be of incalculable benefit to the Church; it would infuse a new spirit and interest among the laity,—it would cement the connexion between the congregations and their pastors,—and effectually prevent the grievance and injustice of imposing

upon a Protestant people a Romanizing minister.

The objections advanced against the election of their minister by the members of a church are chiefly against the mode of conducting the election, rather than against the principle itself. Why should a practice, directed by the Apostles, and exercised by the primitive Church, be disadvantageous at any subsequent period?

The manner in which the people anciently gave their suffrages at the election of their ministers was so accurate and regular, that the heathen Emperor Alexander Severus ordered that the forms used by the Christians should be observed in the appointment of certain civil officers. The necessary regulations for conducting the elections could be made by the general assembly of the Church.

Long continued prejudices, and private or personal interests, will not influence the Legislature of a new country, and the expression of the general desire of the members of the Church will be readily acceded to by the Government. The Churches of England and of Scotland bear exactly the same relation to the Colonial government and legislature, and a just and reasonable privilege, always exercised by the latter, would not be withheld from the members of the Church of England.

Nothing certainly has occurred to induce the members of the Church to change or relinquish

their desire to have the nomination of their own ministers. Let them, then, seriously and earnestly combine in seeking this most important benefit. In obtaining the nomination of their ministers the root of arbitrary power is severed,—the clergy are delivered from cruel bondage — from the temptations, the apprehensions, the deprivations, and threats which urge them to insincerity, faithlessness, and hypocrisy. The religion of Protestants calls every man to think, to judge, to act in all that interests him; and no right is more essential to the spirit and progress of a system, the life and principle of which is popular sympathy, than the privilege of judging for themselves in the choice of their ministers. It is a plain contradiction to assert that a people who are to judge for themselves in religion are not to judge for themselves in respect of the minister who is to teach it,—that a congregation by their own judgment may adopt Protestant principles, but must receive and be guided by a minister who may preach to them and their children sentiments which, in their convictions, are false and Romish. The members of the Church may confidently hope that a popular Legislature will relieve them from this grievance, and restore to them a right ever important and advantageous, but now absolutely necessary for the preservation of the Church.

FINIS.



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APPENDIX I.

Bishop Nixon, in his "Reply to the Deputation," took occasion to make several personal observations respecting myself, to which I have made no allusion, in order to avoid interrupting the discussion of a general subject.

The Bishop objects to my having signed the testimonial of the Rev. Mr. Batchelor,—that I was absent from the Colony during part of the time for which I certified. Mr. Batchelor was stationed at Norfolk Island, so that his testimonial could only have been signed by ministers residing in this Colony. I knew of my own personal knowledge that Mr. Batchelor's conduct and teaching *had never been objected to*,—that he had given satisfaction to the Government,

the Convict authorities, and the Bishop; and in the urgency of the case, on the eve of his departure, I had no scruple in signing his testimonial. I fully explained in the *Courier* newspaper the grounds upon which I felt justified in attaching my signature; and it is needless here to repeat circumstances entirely of a personal nature. I will only remark that the Bishop repeats the accusation, but omits all notice of the explanation. The matter is wholly immaterial to the question at issue, which is "that the Bishop refused to countersign testimonials because one of the clergymen who signed it had subscribed "The Solemn Declaration;" this the Bishop distinctly says was one of his reasons for refusing his countersignature; the deputation was therefore *not in error* in saying that he had refused on this ground.

Bishop Nixon (p. 39) quotes a long passage from a work of mine on the "Apostolic Succession," written in 1843, on the nature and authority of the episcopal office to infer inconsistency or contradiction is inferred between the views I then expressed and those which I now hold. But there is nothing in the extract which asserts the duty of implicit obedience to the Bishop; and I now, as then, am ready to teach the duty of following all his "*godly admonitions*,"—of obeying him in all things lawful and honest: but I never meant, nor said, that ministers or people were obliged to

give up their judgments and consciences, or obey man rather than God.

Holy Scripture teaches us to be subject unto the higher powers ; “ for whosoever resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God,” &c. (Rom. xiii. 1.) But no one ever supposed that this high expression of authority superseded our own judgment of the lawfulness of the commands which we are called upon to obey. To preserve the authority of an office, it is sometimes necessary to resist or restrain the abuse of it. The greatest friend of episcopal and civil authority is he who would restrain both from arbitrary rule.

Scripture in the same manner teaches, that “ as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing :” yet was it never imagined that the woman was to obey any command in opposition to her own conscience and sense of right and truth.

Within a short period after the publication of the work referred to by Dr. Nixon, I was not withheld from drawing up the protest of the clergy to the Bishop against his dismissal of the Rev. Mr. Wigmore without a trial.

Bishop Nixon spoke of that act, and of the present opposition to his repudiation of the Privy Council and other measures, as a violation of our ordination vows : but reason and all experience sufficiently show the groundlessness

of this charge—our obligation is to obey his legal injunctions. In his own consecration he “professed and promised all due reverence and obedience to the Archbishop and his successors :” but this vow does not preclude him from condemning the Archbishop’s conduct, or even from affirming that he is a sanctioner of heresy.

Bishop Nixon (p. 41) quotes another passage from the same work respecting the authority of the Church, Holy Scripture, and Tradition. I would observe—1st. That the tradition spoken of is the usages and doctrines of the prevalence of which in the ages of the Apostles we have sufficient evidence—not the erroneous notion of tradition inculcated by “Theophilus” and the Romanists as being the decisions of the Church in all ages. The authority of the former is that of historical testimony, in many cases important, but of course always entirely subordinate to Holy Scripture: the other is supposed to have a divine authority, to be received, even in opposition to our own convictions of Scripture truth.

The following passage will show the principles inculcated in the work referred to :—

HOLY SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION.

“No inference can be more certain than that the divine wisdom has omitted from the Scripture no truth of the Gospel of importance to the Church; that the complete body of God’s word ‘is able to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus,’ to impart all knowledge and wisdom, to

make perfect the people of Christ ; that it containeth all things necessary to salvation, and that there is no necessary truth of religion which may not be read therein or proved thereby. There is sufficient evidence in Holy Scripture to lead the devout and docile to the knowledge of the truths believed by the writers of the Scriptures, and by the Church for which they wrote. Upon every important truth or institution many declarations may be found, either directly asserting them, or affording sufficient ground to infer the belief and opinion of the inspired writers.”—*Apost. Succ.*, p. 118.

“ It is also plain that there can be no necessary or important doctrine or institution of religion, received by the Church from the Apostles, which is not so expressed, or referred to in the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, as to prove that it was received by the Apostles and the Church ; for it cannot be supposed that the Lord would have omitted in his written revelation, for the perpetual instruction of the Church, any necessary truth revealed verbally to it in its first age by the Apostles. Nor could the Holy Scriptures be said to be sufficient for salvation through faith in Christ, or capable of supplying all the instruction for faith in Christ sufficient for salvation, and for perfecting the saints, if any necessary truth were omitted. The records which contain the faith and institutions of the primitive Church—which records are the memorials of the traditions, or verbal instructions, by which the Apostles founded, established, and directed the Church—cannot therefore be supposed to supply any necessary doctrine, or article of faith, or institution of religion not expressed in Holy Scripture.”—*Apost. Succ.*, p. 119.

The treatise on the “ Apostolic Succession ” does not teach that the Church of Rome is a branch of the Catholic Church as the Church of England is ; being one and the same with her in all the important doctrines of religion. It affirms that she is the Apostate Church foretold by the Apostles, entirely unscriptural, and un-

catholic. Far from teaching the principles of "The Steps," it speaks thus on Confession, Absolution, &c.

PENANCE.

"By the godly discipline of open penance, the Church means the discipline observed in the primitive ages of the Church,—not the secret of auricular confession, the secret absolution, and for the most part, the secret penance practised by the Church of Rome, which are designed more for keeping the people in subjection to the clergy than as a restraint upon ungodliness, and which tend to obscure spiritual religion and sanctification by the habit of enjoining superstitious or formal acts as penitential observances in place of the public confession and exclusion of offenders from participating with the congregation in the privilege of religion, as observed in the primitive Church."
—*Apost. Succ.*, p. 248.

APPENDIX II.

THE REV. T. WIGMORE'S PETITION TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE following petition is printed in the Parliamentary papers:—

That your petitioner was Chaplain of Bothwell in the Island of Van Diemen's Land, and in the Diocese of Tasmania, regularly appointed and duly licensed from the 3rd of March, 1841, to the 24th of July, 1844.

That on the said 24th July, 1844, the Bishop of Tasmania issued a document under his hand and seal, purporting to be a revocation of the license granted to your petitioner by the Bishop of Australia, his former Diocesan; but your petitioner did not receive any notification of the intentions of the Bishop of Tasmania to issue such document.

That your petitioner, on the receipt of the above-named document, addressed a communication to the Bishop of Tasmania, *requesting to be furnished with the charges laid against*

him, in such detail as to enable your petitioner to take proper steps for his justification and redress. To this his Lordship replied, as per letter, *that it would not be compatible with a due regard to a maintainance of his authority to do so*; and that he therefore felt himself under the necessity of declining to comply with that request.

That your petitioner, by this summary mode of proceeding, has been deprived of his right of appeal to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and consequently of all redress by ecclesiastical law. This will be shown by the following extract from the opinion of an eminent civilian of the Court of Arches:—"I am of opinion that the Bishop cannot revoke the license of the Rev. Thomas Wigmore without giving him an opportunity of being heard, either *in foro domestico*, or in open court. I am of opinion that the revocation is, in this instance bad, the Rev. Thomas Wigmore not having had an opportunity of answering in any form the charge on which it proceeded.—Signed, John Haggard, Doctors' Commons, May 11th, 1846."

Petitioner further complains that by this arbitrary proceeding, whereby the Bishop of Tasmania has eluded all the wholesome restraints laid on the exercise of his Episcopal power, your petitioner has been deprived of his right of trial—a right which the constitution claims for the most guilty felon, is ruined in his reputation, expelled from the Church, of which he has been an unrebuked minister for twenty-eight years, deprived of all means of support for himself and his family, a wife and nine children, from whom he has been separated nearly two years, being compelled to leave them, in Van Diemen's Land, to the sympathy of the community for subsistence.

To meet this injustice, and to repair these grievances, your petitioner humbly prays for the merciful and speedy interposition of your honourable house.

And your petitioner, as in duty bound, will every pray.

(Signed) THOMAS WIGMORE, Clerk.

17, Ely Place, Holborn, London,

June 3rd,

MR. GLADSTONE'S OPINION OF THE
BISHOP'S POWER.

“He proposed that it should be lawful for the Bishop, the Clergy, and laymen to meet together from time to time, and by mutual consent to make all necessary relations for the better conduct of the ecclesiastical affairs. . . . The Bishop was unable to bring any matter of importance to a settlement, but he could inflict the most grievous injustice on the clergy around him. . . . There was a large power, of a most exceptionable kind in the hands of the Bishop, and it formed his only security to follow out the exercise of that power by steps of the MOST AUTOCRATICAL CHARACTER. The only thing open to the Bishop to say was, that he did those things because he thought fit.”—*Times*, May 7, 1850.

LORD JOHN RUSSELL'S OPINION OF THE DAN-
GER TO THE CHURCH FROM ROMANIZING
MINISTERS.

“There is a danger, which alarms me much more than any aggression of a foreign sovereign (the Pope).

“Clergymen of our own Church, who have subscribed the Thirty-nine Articles, have been the most forward in leading their flocks, step by step, to the very verge of the precipice (of Popery).

“What, then, is the danger to be apprehended from a foreign prince of no great power, compared to the danger within the gates from THE UNWORTHY SONS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND HERSELF.

“I have little hope that the propounders and framers of these innovations will desist from their insidious course, but I rely with confidence on the people of England, and I will not bate a jot of heart or hope so long as the glorious principles, and the immortal martyrs of the Reformation shall be held in reverence by the great mass of a nation which looks with contempt on the mummeries of superstition, and with scorn at the

laborious endeavours which are now making TO CONFINE THE INTELLECT AND ENSLAVE THE SOUL.

“I remain with great respect, &c.,

“J. RUSSELL.”

“To the Right Rev. the Bishop of Durham.

BISHOP OF ADELAIDE DECLARES THAT THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS AT SYDNEY INDICATED THAT BAPTISM SHOULD BE AN OPEN QUESTION.

Bishop Short's declaration, in his letter to Mr. Morphett, of January 31, 1851, shows that the proceeding of Bishop Nixon, in Dr. Short's opinion, is quite contrary to the intention of the Synod of Bishops. So far from *intending* to exclude ministers for not holding their view of Baptismal Regeneration, Dr. Short states that *they indicated* liberty of judgment on this subject: he says the Synod did not attempt to narrow the terms of communion, for

“The Bishops, at the Sydney Conference, by incorporating in the same Minute the statement of the Bishop of Melbourne, which appears to favour another construction of the baptismal services; THEREBY INDICATED LIBERTY OF JUDGMENT ON THIS SUBJECT.”

Bishop Nixon is thus deprived of the sole support and countenance for his requiring the clergy to profess his doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration, and for protesting against the judgment of the Privy Council as sanctioning heresy. According to Bishop Short he contradicts the

design of the Australian Synod to allow liberty of judgment on this subject; that is, of leaving it an open question, which Bishop Nixon so severely stigmatizes in his "Reply." What an amount of injury and division would Bishop Nixon have avoided occasioning, if he had adopted the same course as the Bishop of Adelaide, who writes thus:

"It has been said the introduction of the topic of Baptism was unnecessary and gratuitous. I am guiltless of this introduction beyond being able to give a reason for the faith that is in me when asked. *I have never entertained the thought of narrowing the communion of the Church, nor am I aware of any such desire or intention on the part of my Right Reverend Brethren. So long as any clergyman subscribes and keeps the three articles of the 36th Canon, I shall not study to force upon him that construction (on a point which, though important, is not essential to salvation) which I deem to be the plain, literal, and grammatical sense of the Liturgy; but I am ready to allow that same freedom of judgment I claim for myself.*"—Bishop Short's letter to Mr. Bartley 1851.

As an example of the almost inconceivable perversion of religion and history, which the Romanizing ministers in the Church of England write and inculcate, the following extracts are given from books introduced into this Colony at the desire of one of the clergymen who gave the "Steps to the Altar" to the candidates for Confirmation. The books were published by Joseph Masters, and were all of a Romish character—among them were several copies of "Neal's History of England for Young Churchmen."

MONASTERIES.—“Historians of that period (A.D. 600,) relate that miracles were wrought, the blind received sight, the dumb hearing, &c., even the dead were raised, kings and queens gave up their earthly glory, and served God in monasteries. Many are the stories that I might tell you of this good time, and the good Saint Ethelreda, who was born a king’s daughter, and gave up everything to serve God in Ely Abbey.—P. 7.

“Elfrida (after murdering King Edward,) became a true penitent, and went into a monastery which she herself had founded: so we may trust she will find mercy at the last day.—P. 13.

“King William, was a bad man, but he did some good things; he founded a monastery, where prayers were offered continually for the souls of William and Harold.”

Few persons will deny the Romanizing spirit of these passages. What must be the result of inculcating in the minds of children such sentiments respecting the monastic life, and prayers for the souls of the departed?—The same book speaks thus of Romish Bishops.

“Saint Anselm, at day break departed to glory; he is reckoned one of the doctors of the English Church.”—P. 48.

“It is not often that God chooses for his saints those who like Thomas a’Becket, are taking their fill of this world’s pleasure. Thus by a rough but glorious road St. Thomas of Canterbury went to his Crown.”—P. 64.

“Innocent the Third, an able and courageous man, and though much mistaken in some things, using his immense power, on the whole, well, and acting to the best of his judgment for the interests of the Church.”—P. 78.

“The Church did not persecute more than the Lollards would have done, had they possessed the power, nor than their descendants did; many false things have been said about these Lollards, and others, who rebelled against the authority

“of the Church, by historians who were enemies to the Church, “if not downright infidels.”—P. 127.

Thus is persecution justified, and the Lollards, or first Reformers, condemned as rebels against the Church, that is, as protesting against the corruptions and tyranny of Rome.

“There was at this time one Martin Luther, an Augustinian monk. He was enraged that the sale of indulgences was taken away from his own order.”.....“Some things he said were true; but many more that were false and unjustifiable.”
“.....He used most harsh and vile language to his superiors. He had made a vow of never marrying, as all monks had done: he wickedly broke this, and persuaded a nun to break hers also and marry him. Germany was filled with confusion.....They forsook their Bishops, and made Priests for themselves, and thus instead of reforming they left the Church; for there can be no Church where there is no Bishop.”
—P. 150.

“The name of Protestant came gradually to be applied to those who believe that every man is bound to obey the Bible according to his own interpretation of it. Churchmen believe that every man is bound to obey the Bible *according to the Church's interpretation of it*. Our Church never was, nor is, Protestant in this sense.”—P. 153.

“Cranmer was too much guided in his views by the foreign reformers; and he endeavoured by yielding to the king in all things, to keep himself in favour. Indeed, no honest man could have retained the see of Canterbury during the time he held it.”—P. 145.

“John Calvin, of Geneva, a heretic of the sixteenth century.”
—P. 186.

“All through the reign of James the Church became more Catholic; and, in consequence, old ceremonies were revived.”
—P. 195.

“At this time, A.D. 1633, the *best of the Bishops* began to

“think that the only safety for our Church would be a re-union
“with Rome.”—P. 199.

He thus speaks of the four great periods of English liberty,—Magna Charta, the reign of Charles I., the Revolution of 1688, and the Reform Bill.

“A great deal of nonsense has been written and said about
“Magna Charta.....You will hear persons in these days,
“say that all real authority comes from the people. It is not
“so; all authority in civil matters comes directly from the
“Queen, and through her from God. In the case of which we
“are speaking, the Barons had not the power to make Magna
“Charta; King John only had authority to sign it.”—P. 80.

“Finding the Commons did not do *their duty* in supplying
“his wants, King Charles resolved, as many of his predecessors
“had done, to tax the people by royal proclamation.”—P. 197.

“King William III., a son who had taken up arms against
“his father, advanced prosperously.....Finally, the House of
“Lords declared him king. This was a fatal blow to the
“English Constitution, and had nearly been the ruin of our
“Church.”—P. 197.

“The voice of the people, far from being as the proverb says,
“the voice of God, was too often the voice of the devil, and that
“measure (the Reform Bill) was quite contrary to the Constitu-
“tion.”—P. 28b.

“I am afraid King John was an infidel.....Next to
“Henry VIII. we may call him our worst king. Henry was
“the scourge of God for the sins of our cōuntry.”—P. 156.

“King James lost his eldest son, Henry. This was a blessing
“to the Church, for he was at heart a Puritan.”—P. 191.

The Gunpowder Plot he thus palliates—“The Roman Ca-
“tholics had borne patiently all the cruel sufferings heaped
“upon them, but now a few of them were tempted to revenge
“themselves.—(P. 186.) As the Plot was revealed to Garnet
“in confession, he could not disclose it.”

In a little book for a Young Churchman the following instruction is given :—

“ It would fill a larger book than this to tell you of all that was done that night —how before evening prayer all was finished, the *Candles lighted, the Altar spread for midnight Communion.*

When this was done he opened the Bible, and took very carefully, from between the leaves, a *print of the Nativity*, which had been given him by the *Priest* and after looking very earnestly at this he again knelt, and said the Collect for Christmas Day ; then he went down stairs.”

The low voices of the missionary Priests were hushed now : the fair linen was spread over the golden paten, and jewelled chalice ; containing *the most Holy Body and Blood.*

“ And should I be so unhappy as to commit any grievous sin, and not be able to quiet my own conscience, I will go to the Parish Priest and open my grief, that I may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice.”

“ And the Holy Scriptures come not unto me of themselves, but I receive them from the Holy Catholic Church.”

“ Need there is, therefore, that I understand them as the Holy Church, understands them, and not by mine own interpretation.”

The reader will judge of the influence which such books and principles must have on the young, and how far ministers of the Church of England are justified in introducing and disseminating such works.

ADVICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

“ Ten years have elapsed since I thought it necessary to warn the clergy of another Diocese against the danger of adopting principles which, when carried out tend naturally to those Ro-

mish errors, against which our forefathers protested, and which were renounced by the Anglican Church. The result has proved that this judgment was not harsh or the warning premature; on the contrary, certain of our clergy, professing to follow up those principles, have proceeded onward from one Romish practice to another.....The corruptions of the Romish Church are very congenial to the human mind. Amongst the population of our crowded towns, and our remote villages, too many, unhappily, are little able *to test the truth of any religion which is proposed to them by its only sure standand—the Bible*. These may easily become a prey to teachers so subtle, so skilful, so insinuating, as Romish emissaries are known to be. Acquaintance with the Scriptures is the sure defence against Rome. The laity must lend their aid, and supply the means of adding to the number of clergy, together with a provision for Household Visitors and Scripture Readers, without which it is impossible to make head against the ignorance and apathy of an untaught multitude.

J. B. CANTAUR.

To the Clergy of the Diocese of Canterbury,
Nov. 1850.

APPENDIX III.

THE Bishop of Tasmania asserts (Reply, p. 47) that the statements contained in a letter addressed by me to the Archbishop of Canterbury are "*wild declarations unproved and unsupported by one jot of sound evidence;*" and he has printed in the Appendix to his "Reply" the letter itself.

When the Bishop asserted that my statements were unproved he had in his hands proofs of their truth, with which I had furnished him, at his own command, five months previously.

"The Reply" was printed in July 1852. My letter to the Archbishop was written the preceding February, and the proofs of its statements sent to the Bishop in March 1852.

Can any thing be more unfair than to put

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together several disconnected expressions—to assert that they were unproved, suppressing all notice of the proofs which had been officially demanded and furnished, and to censure and print my letter without so much as mentioning that he had required from me and received a vindication of it, to which he never made any reply.

The letter itself and the vindication are now submitted to the public. I am far from approving or justifying every expression which I may have used, but I appeal confidently to the reader of the preceding pages to compare my declarations with those of Bishops Whately, Wilson, and the other authorities, and to determine whether their language, when calmly considering Romanizing principles, from which they sustained no evil, was not more severe than that of myself and brethren, upon whom these principles were enforced with the utmost severity.

LETTER FROM THE REV. DR. FRY, TO THE
ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

Hobart Town, February 20, 1852.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,—I beg permission to give you a short account of some matters of importance to the Church in this Colony, for which you were pleased to show much interest when I had the honour of an interview with you in 1850.

Your Grace is aware of the resolutions of the Bishops at Sydney, at their Conference, and of the opposition and apprehensions which their proceedings occasioned. The sentiments or judgment of your Grace and of the Archbishop of Dublin on their

Minutes have produced the most beneficial effects to these Colonies, both in repressing the designs of the Romanizing party, and in encouraging the Evangelical or Protestant Clergy and people. We feel deeply thankful to your Grace for the expression of your opinion, and, under Providence, look to you for support and advice.

I forwarded to your Grace a copy of a pamphlet signed by myself and twenty clergymen of this Diocese, [remonstrating against the dissemination of Romanizing books and opinions. Our tract was termed "A Solemn Declaration," &c. Your Grace may, perhaps, have deemed this tract over severe or injudicious, but I can assure you that the progress of Romanizing opinions,—the avowed and acted-upon intention of excluding all ministers who did not participate in them, and the denunciation of Evangelical religion, left us no other course to pursue. Your Grace will learn with satisfaction, that the result of this publication, and of other documents of the Protestant Association, has been completely to overthrow the projects of the Tractarians, to stop the circulation of Romanizing books, to encourage the advocates of Protestantism, and to excite a general and determined Protestant spirit in the community.

I had the pleasure of forwarding to your Grace an address from the Christian Knowledge Society in this city.

As my object and that of my brethren was, not to create a schism, but to maintain and promote the true principles of our Church, I ever avoided any proceeding likely to depreciate the Bishop or lead to a renunciation of his authority, which many deemed the only means of opposing the evils we desired to repress. Privately and personally I ever used any influence I could employ to lead him to a true understanding of his dangerous and false position. He is not, himself, desirous of embracing Romanism; but Archdeacon Marriott and six Oxford Clergymen whom he brought out to the colony with him, have surrounded the Bishop, and by their flatteries and exaltation of his office, have filled him with the notion of his occupying the position of an Apostle, and that his judgment is to be received as sacred, as that of the Church, involving those who do not

hold his religious sentiments in the sin of rebellion and schism.

He, at length, appeared willing to concede to an opposition which he felt to be insurmountable, and on receipt of your Grace's reply to the Minutes of the Bishops' Conference, he summoned a meeting of the Clergy to express their sentiments on the subject of a constitution for the Church. Desiring to embrace the prospect of an accommodation, I communicated with the principal clergymen of the Bishop's party, and arranged that a Petition should be adopted in the words of that previously forwarded from the Protestant Association, in which no mention was to be made of the Sydney Conference or its plan of a Constitution, and in which the only thing sought for should be the removal of any restriction upon our assembling. I forward to your Grace a copy of this petition, fearing that the authentic document may be long delayed, as it is to be transmitted through the Bishop who will send it through the Bishop of Sydney.

The hope of accommodation thus entertained was soon destroyed; a fortnight after our meeting, the Bishop received an application from a candidate for holy orders, named Smith, with the usual testimonials, signed by the Rev. Alfred Stackhouse and the Rev. George Wilkinson, two of the most respected ministers in the colony,—the former, especially, is a man eminent in his ministry. The Bishop rejected the testimonial on the ground of Messrs. S. and W. having signed the "Declaration," "*denying the right of any Church or Minister to prescribe to individuals in matters of religion in opposition to their own judgment,*" as being a repudiation of the authoritative teaching of the Church, and, therefore, he says, he "*cannot accept their testimony as satisfactorily vouching for the doctrinal soundness of another.*" Your Grace will perceive the cautious, and, indeed, undeniable proposition which the Bishop so strongly condemns as to excommunicate the majority of the Clergy who have signed it.

It is not denied that the Church has authority to teach, to guide, direct, or influence, but only that it has not authority to over-rule private judgment,—that men are not bound to receive

its teaching in opposition to their own judgments. To deny this appears to subvert the fundamental principle of Protestantism. As might be expected, this act of the Bishop has created a very strong feeling in our minds; but one not sufficient to render us regardless of the great interests of peace and unity, and of submission to constituted authority. We do not feel that we are called upon publicly to denounce this error, as we did the Romanizing teaching; for the Bishop may disgust and drive away the members of the Church by preaching against Private Judgment, but he will never make a single convert; so we do not fear the progress of this great error, and we feel that the only remedy for this and all other evils is the establishment of a Constitutional Assembly of the Clergy and lay representatives—to this we look for redress and protection against the design and unrelaxing attempts to render our Colonial Church a Tractarian sect. If we do not obtain this—one of two results will follow—either we must protest publicly, and establish a Church in opposition to the Bishop and his party; or we must submit to see the people forsake the churches, as they have done where Romanizing Clergymen have been forced upon them, and to have the parishes filled by Tractarian ministers.

Under these circumstances, I feel justified in soliciting your Grace's interference in promoting the object of the petition. It is so simple that the ministers of the Crown can easily pass it, and it exactly agrees with the opinion expressed by Sir G. Grey, that we might be permitted to manage our own affairs. It embraces the circumstances of all our colonies. Any definite form of Constitution framed at home for all the Australian Dioceses, would be fraught with difficulties, if not impracticable. The imposition of any restrictions upon us would only lead to resistance. Leave us free, and by God's blessing we will maintain our connection with the Evangelical Church of England, and promote the true end of a Christian Church. I trespass upon your Grace from a sense of the urgency of the subject, and from a knowledge that the Bishop and his party are reluctant to our obtaining a Constitution, until such a number

of Tractarian Clergymen shall be introduced as may Romanize the Church and form a majority of the assembly.

I beg your Grace to excuse the haste in which the pressure of parochial duties compels me to write.—I have the honour to remain your Grace's most faithful servant,

HENRY PHIBBS FRY.

TO THE LORD BISHOP OF TASMANIA.

March 24, 1852.

MY LORD,—Before replying directly to your inquiries respecting my letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, I think it proper to make some general observations on the object and nature of that communication.

My letter to his Grace was not designed for publication. It was the expression of very warm feelings of regret, disappointment, and apprehension at your Lordship's unexpected condemnation of myself and twenty other clergymen as unsound in our religious belief. I saw the peace of the Church broken, after it had been so recently restored: I saw myself forced into a controversy threatening the worst consequences, by a sentence, in my conviction, equally arbitrary, unjust, unnecessary, and illegal. I felt that we were again compelled to engage in a painful struggle to maintain the principles of the Reformation, and our religious rights and liberties; and under the influence of the feelings consequent on such convictions, I wrote to the Archbishop to communicate what I felt to be a most heavy grievance and calamity, and to intreat him to use his influence towards our speedily obtaining a Church constitution by which the evils of our position might be remedied.

If the circumstances under which the letter was written be considered, few will doubt that there was sufficient ground for the feeling it displays. Your Lordship summoned the Clergy to a meeting, terms of accommodation were agreed upon, the strongest expressions of satisfaction at the healing of our divisions were uttered by your Lordship and the meeting: from myself you received a vote of thanks, and at another meeting,

with your sanction, a resolution appointing you president of a society was committed to me to move; myself and brethren, at your invitation, dined with your Lordship, when the expression of satisfaction at our agreement was repeated, and yet at that very time you harboured in your mind the intention of condemning us as unsound in our religious belief, and in the course of a few days, without inquiry or examination, pronounced a sentence against us to that effect. I mention these particulars as explanatory of the feeling displayed in the letter to the Archbishop.

I was forced to publish that letter by the erroneous reports circulated concerning it. Your Lordship and Archdeacon Marriott showed, and read a copy of it to several individuals, with expressions of great indignation; this and other circumstances occasioned such an incorrect impression of its contents, that I felt it necessary to submit it to the members of the Church, to determine whether its statements were correct, and whether it was written in a spirit of sincerity and good faith for the object I have assigned.

Some persons supposing that the Archbishop of Canterbury possesses some authority over your Lordship's proceedings, regard the statements in my letter as charges preferred against your Lordship; but this view is entirely incorrect. His Grace has no jurisdiction over this Diocese—there is not even an appeal to him from your Lordship's judgments. He has not the least power over the Bishops of these Colonies. My letter was entirely a private communication, expressing my own private opinions on subjects in which I was deeply interested. I sought his Grace's intervention respecting a Church constitution, and communicated to him my views of such matters as I supposed would justify my application to him, and induce him to comply with it.

I claim, my Lord, an uncontrolled right to express my opinions on any subject affecting the interests of the Church, and on the sentiments and motives of those concerned in them. I acknowledge, indeed, that I am bound by charity not to express any unfavourable opinions unnecessarily, or without a

prospect of advantage, and that I should be heedful to make no declaration without a sufficient reason for believing it to be true. That I have not violated either of these obligations, I trust to afford satisfactory evidence.

A servile spirit, adverse to the freedom of opinion, is entertained by some, who believe that the sentiments and acts of a Bishop are to go unquestioned and unopposed, however injurious and erroneous. I repudiate this principle as adverse to religious truth, and assert that under the two above mentioned restrictions of *charity and utility*, I am as entitled to express my opinions of your proceedings, as your Lordship is to declare your judgment of mine.

While then I freely concede this right to your Lordship, I desire that in forming your judgment of my letter to his Grace, you will recollect the manner in which you have designated my conduct and opinions, and those of my brethren. I solicit you to consider if such expressions as "that wicked Dr. Fry," should not induce you to endure in turn the expression of an unfavourable opinion.

I suppose it will not be denied that if a Bishop should be guilty of arbitrary, or illegal, or persecuting conduct adverse to the principles of Protestantism, those concerned would have a right to express an opinion on the subject. If this be granted, the only question then is whether my statements were founded on such evidence as to satisfy me of their truth.

Your Lordship cannot deny this right of pronouncing a judgment on the conduct of a Bishop, for you have not hesitated to condemn the decision of the two Archbishops in the Privy Council as sanctioning heresy—nor did you express the slightest disapprobation of the conduct of Mr. Cox and of Mr. Tancred in rejecting as Lutheran and unsound the tract on justification, written by the present Primate of the Church of England—the patron of the society of which, as members of the committee, they condemned the tract.

Your Lordship desires to know the evidence of my opinion, that there was in this Diocese an avowed and acted upon intention of excluding all ministers who did not participate in

Romanizing opinion. In replying to this and your other inquiries, I do not pretend to afford all the evidence on which my opinions were founded, but such as I deem necessary for their establishment.

I formed this opinion from the facts:—

1st.—That clergymen holding opinions such as those expressed in the “Steps to the Altar,” “Theophilus Anglicanus,” &c., which I believe not only to be Romanizing, but Romish, have been promoted by your Lordship to the most important clerical stations, two of them obtained city parishes—the college was committed to two of them in succession. It is my belief that the members of the Church are persuaded that ministers holding such views enjoy your favor and support, and that when you can, you always give them appointments. If such ministers are to be placed in the parochial charges in the Colony, it is plain persons holding adverse sentiments must be excluded. I confidently submit the opinion I have expressed on this subject to the judgment of the public. If I have repeated what is generally believed—should that belief be erroneous, your Lordship is unfortunate; but I am justified in believing what is generally held to be true.

2nd.—Your Lordship has declared your intention of admitting or licensing no minister who does not believe in your views of baptismal regeneration—disobeying and repudiating the law of the Church of England, as declared by her highest court, the Privy Council; you have interrogated ministers who have presented themselves to you, whether they hold the “Gorham heresy,” though the opinions of Mr. Gorham were decided by law not to be contrary to the teaching of the Church of England, and your Lordship has lauded the Bishop of Exeter and his proceeding. In my opinion the views on Baptism which you require in the Clergy are identified with the Romanizing party in England.

3rd.—Your Lordship prescribes “Theophilus Anglicanus” to candidates for holy orders, and for instruction of divinity students at the college. This, in my judgment, is sufficient evidence of your desire and intention that all ministers entering

the Diocese should hold opinions which I regard as Romanising, and which twenty of my brethren have concurred in declaring to be so.

4th. — Your Lordship pronounced that Mr. Tancred's defence of "Steps to the Altar" was satisfactory, and condemned the opposition made to him for distributing and teaching the doctrines it inculcates. In the nature of things you cannot desire the admission into the Diocese of ministers who believe to be Romish what you declare to be identified with the true teaching of the Church. It would be an opinion entirely foreign to your character to suppose that you would tolerate one such if you could help it. You must have regarded them, as you have since pronounced them to be, unsound in religious opinions, and opposing those whom you believe to teach the true doctrines of the Church. I am quite free, therefore, from any apprehension of having erroneously attributed to you this intention.

5th. — When public condemnation of the "Steps to the Altar" compelled Mr. Tancred to resign his cure, your Lordship refused to grant the allowance which you had paid to him as curate of St. David's, out of the Church funds at your disposal, to his successor, so that the aged incumbent still remains without an assistant. This fact justifies the belief of a desire to exclude ministers not holding the views of "The Steps," or opinions generally conceived to be Romanizing.

I do not mean to declare, nor do I believe, that your Lordship is conscious that these books are Romanizing. As I said in my letter to the Archbishop, you yourself are not desirous of embracing Romanism. I only meant to declare my judgment of the true character of these principles and books. And here I cannot avoid mentioning a now unhappily notorious fact, which, if it cannot induce you to agree with me in my opinion of these principles as Romanizing, should, if facts are to be allowed any weight, at least induce you to tolerate such a judgment concerning them. Look at the long list of ministers who have seceded to Rome: is there one clergyman who held what are called Evangelical sentiments among them? Are they not,

without exception, men who entertained the opinions we regard as Romanizing? Does your Lordship recollect how the men, whose principles you held up for our admiration, such as Allies, Manning, &c., one by one have left you? Surely such facts should open your eyes, and make you distrust principles whose tendency has been so fully manifested. Imitate, my Lord, the good Dr. Hook, and before it be too late renounce a party whom the spirit of delusion has blinded to the truth. Alas, you, my Lord, who cannot see a single error in productions whose Romanizing spirit is manifest to the whole body of the Church, and which even their advocate, Mr. Cox, on the most important subject, is obliged to admit, you do not hesitate to condemn the right of private judgment, and to involve the Church in a calamitous controversy by an illegal and unnecessary sentence upon twenty of the colonial clergy. I say illegal, for it was pronounced without the slightest inquiry or pretence of legal proceeding. I say unnecessary, for there was no need of rejecting the testimonials of the ministers who recommended Mr. Smith, as, from the unsoundness of their religious principles, being incapable of testifying to the correctness of his opinions, since you might have easily satisfied yourself as to his belief by personal examination, far more conclusive than any testimonials.

Your Lordship requires to know the names of the six Oxford clergymen, who, I say, have surrounded the Bishop, and, by their flatteries, and exaltation of his office, have filled him with the notion of his occupying the position of an Apostle, and that his judgment is to be received as sacred as that of the Church, involving those who do not hold his religious sentiments in the sin of rebellion and schism.

I must be permitted to answer as much of this question as is material. The exact number of ministers to whom I referred may be six or more,—I believe it to be seven. They may not all be of the Oxford University, but they, or most of them, participate in what is termed the “Oxford theology”—the religion of “Theophilus Anglicanus,” and of the “Steps to the Altar.” The material statement is that a body of ministers brought out

by or through Archdeacon Marriott, inculcate principles of the character I describe.

This belief is founded on a number of particulars which have come to my knowledge, in a course of years, and Church affairs, not easy to specify. I will, however, mention a few facts in corroboration of my opinion:—

1st.—During the controversy respecting the introduction, by your own sole authority, of clauses into the form of licenses under which clergymen hold their appointments, by which you claimed the power of revoking the licenses summarily, and without process, or whenever you saw fit—one of the clergymen alluded to (Mr. Tancred) expressing as I have reason to believe, the sentiments of the rest, declared in a letter to the Protestant Association, that it belonged to you alone to change the form of license as you pleased, and to determine on what conditions the Clergy should be allowed to exercise their ministry. In my opinion, this was an acknowledgment of a perfectly despotic power in the Bishop, and a surrender to him of every right and privilege of the ministry,—making him lord over God's heritage. As I do not suppose that the claim set up in the alteration of the licenses would have been advanced without a party to support it, so I feel justified in attributing the claim itself, and the principles on which it is founded, to those by whom they were maintained.

2nd.—At the meeting of the Clergy called by Archdeacon Marriott, to receive the minutes of the conference of Bishops at Sydney, the Archdeacon submitted for adoption an address which commenced by declaring that we *did not feel called upon to express any opinion respecting the decisions of the conference, and then proceeded in a subsequent paragraph to say, that we received them as Godly admonitions which we hoped to be enabled to obey.* When this remarkable example of duplicity was exposed, and another address (that ultimately carried) was submitted, the ministers to whom I referred, declared in language expressing almost horror, their sense of our presumption in “sitting in judgment on the decisions of the Sydney Bishops,” though we were summoned to present an address expressive of

our opinion of their proceedings. The Archdeacon and his party laboured long to convince the meeting that they were bound to receive their suggestions as godly admonitions, though it was found convenient afterwards to represent them not as decisions, but merely as private opinions of the Bishops.

In my judgment, the conduct of these ministers in denying the right of the Clergy to express their judgment on the decisions promulgated by the Bishops, warrants my declaration of the character of the power which they attribute to a Bishop favourable to their views. I am aware when it is otherwise, as in the case of the two Archbishops, they make no scruple of denouncing them as heretical or unsound.

3rd.—On a recent occasion Archdeacon Marriott preached a sermon before your Lordship and the Clergy, some of whom represented to you that it condemned Protestantism, and favored Romanism. Your Lordship publicly thanked the Archdeacon for his sermon, and told him you were in the same boat with him, and would sink or swim together. This exemplifies the nature of the connexion to which I allude. About six years ago, your Lordship gave to a member of my congregation a copy of "Theophilus Anglicanus," I took occasion to remonstrate with you about it, pointing out passages in which the Church of Rome is acknowledged, and her claims conceded. I put it to your Lordship, if any man holding these principles, and following them out, must not become a Romanist. Your answer, as I can testify, was—"he certainly must:" you also stated that you had not read the book, which you had given on the credit of its author. To my astonishment, a few months afterwards, I saw a list of books written by Archdeacon Marriott, and sent by him to some candidates for holy orders, in which "Theophilus Anglicanus" was among the first of the works which they were directed to study as a preparation for the ministry. I called upon your Lordship with this intelligence, but found it was done with your sanction. You did not retract your opinion of the book, which I repeated to you, your observation was—"Yes, but it contains a great deal of good." You have since declared that it is identified with the true teaching of the Church. Does not this warrant me in my opinion

of the influence upon your Lordship of the Archdeacon, and those who hold his views.

4th.—That your Lordship entertains the opinion I have expressed, respecting your Episcopal power, I have been led to believe from your frequently having declared, as contrary to my ordination vows, principles, and proceedings in which I participated. and which I consider to have been a legitimate exercise of my private judgment, in advancing the interests of truth and religion. Your disobeying the decision of the Privy Council, and imposing your own views of baptismal regeneration, and your late sentence of excommunication (for it is nothing else) upon twenty Clergymen, on your own private opinion, is, in my judgment, full proof—not only of your claiming, but of your exercising the power which I have expressed my opinion of your being led to attribute to yourself.

You call upon me for satisfactory evidence that you are, in reality, reluctant to our obtaining a constitution until such a number of Tractarian Clergymen shall be introduced as shall Romanise the Church, and be a majority of the assembly.

My reason, for this opinion, is,—

1st.—The Archbishop informs us that the legislation requisite for our obtaining a Church constitution will take place on communication to the government of our wishes on that subject. You, nevertheless, lately declared to me that a constitution would not be obtained, probably, within the lives of either of us. Now it is certain that the clergy and laity desire its establishment, and that there is no obstacle to our obtaining it, at once; I conclude, therefore, that it is only by your not concurring in the general desire that it could, by possibility, be so long delayed.

2nd.—You declared that you would never allow a Church constitution to be established in this Colony, unless it were a provincial—not a diocesan—one: that is, unless the same form of constitution were adopted in all the Australian colonies. I remarked to you that such a resolution was equivalent to your refusal of our obtaining a constitution for the Church, as it could not be expected that the same form would be adopted in Churches supported by voluntary contributions, and in those

maintained by the State : in Dioceses so different in sentiments as Adelaide, Melbourne, and Sydney. You replied that you were resolved upon the subject. As, therefore, you were prepared to sacrifice our obtaining a Church constitution, unless uniformity prevailed in all the Colonies, I was induced to believe that you were, at present, not disposed for its establishment.

3rd.—Your Lordship had declared your resolution not to allow the lay representatives, in the proposed constitution, to take any part in deliberations or judgments, on matters of doctrine—a right which the people, at public meetings, unanimously and decidedly claimed; and which the clergy, by the address adopted at the chapter-meeting, declared to be just and proper. Such an important difference between your Lordship and the clergy and people, on a fundamental question respecting the constitution, contributed towards my belief of your reluctance—or even of your opposition—to its establishment, until this claim should be given up by the laity, and until a majority of clergymen, concurring with your Lordship, should be introduced into the Diocese.

I have already written respecting the exclusion of ministers not holding your Lordship's views. Reference to the list of the clergy, during the last few years, will show the increase of those who oppose what are known as Evangelical principles. Indeed, the old clergy, by whom they are generally professed, are now, by far, outnumbered by those appointed by your Lordship. It would be invidious, in me, to prove this by facts. Every clergyman will form his own judgment concerning it. One circumstance I will allude to. The only clergyman, I believe, at Adelaide, who publicly opposed the general feeling of the Church, and supported the decisions of the Conference of Bishops, leaving his Diocese, has recently been received by your Lordship. I need adduce no other evidence, to those who entertain the views of the Gospel which I profess, of the fact that the Church, in this Colony, is in process of being Romanised, than the condemnation of twenty clergymen for holding the right of private judgment, and the assertion that the rule of faith prescribed by "Theophilus Anglicanus" is identi-

fied with that of the Church of England, and the work itself made the text-book of the College, &c. Your condemnation of the clergy is equivalent to a declaration that no ministers, holding the right of private judgment, and repudiating "Theophilus Anglicanus," shall be received into this Colony, and those who think as I do, cannot feel the slightest doubt that the effect of such proceedings will be to Romanise the Church.

In conclusion, though your Lordship will, doubtless, deem it an act of presumption, I cannot refrain from warning you, not of consequences—for to them you declare you are indifferent—but of the possibility of error in your views and proceedings. Affairs are rapidly approaching a crisis, and deep will be the responsibility upon your Lordship if you are in error. Even though your opinions may be right, you may be wrong in imposing them upon the clergy by your own power: you may have exceeded your just authority; or, if within your power, such an exercise of it may be productive of prejudicial consequences more than equivalent to any benefit you can hope to receive from it. My Lord, for myself, I protest that I am unconscious of any feeling of anger, hostility, or desire of opposition, I wish only for the peace and well-being of the Church, for which I am willing to make any sacrifice or submission consistent with principle. Will you persevere in what must involve yourself and the Church in calamity? I am not desirous that you should repose any confidence in me; but in Mr. Stackhouse your Lordship is aware any trust may be placed. Let me submit to you the propriety of commissioning some clergyman to enter into communication with him before public meetings be held. He is a man, as your Lordship knows, to whom the cause of religion is all paramount—one who abhors dissension, and will make any consistent sacrifice for peace. We only require a fair exercise of the rights and liberties which the English parochial clergy enjoy. We seek no triumph, and will render to your Lordship all due respect and submission. In proof of which I refer your Lordship to the late meetings.

Let me bring to your recollection a distant fact, when myself and others protested against the deprivation of the unfortunate Mr. Wigmore, without a trial. In opposition to the judgment of

the clergy, you declared that to give him a trial was illegal, and impossible. No change in the law has taken place, yet trials are allowable and practised. Had you listened to our remonstrance—had you not persisted in an erroneous resolution, what a dreadful catastrophe would have been avoided.

Let me also remind you of the occasion when on receiving a similar remonstrance to the present, you told me that I was the only minister who had spoken to you sincerely and faithfully from the hour of your arrival in the Colony. My Lord, I have ever spoken to you faithfully, and I do so now when I earnestly advise you to adopt some means of accommodating the differences which have arisen. I repeat all we want is security; we desire to uphold, not depreciate your office, but in maintaining what we believe to be the truth of the Gospel, and the inalienable rights of Christian people, I for one, will never refrain from any just measure, nor withhold a single remark which can advance the cause I believe sacred, be the consequence what it may. —I have the honour to be, my Lord, your Lordship's faithful servant,

(Signed) H. P. FRY.



LETTER I.

FROM DR. FRY TO ARCHDEACON DAVIES.

Hampden-road, Feb. 20, 1853.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—

MR. LOCH has communicated to me your message, expressing your desire that the divisions in the Church should be healed, and proposing to confer with me for that purpose. Your proposal would expose me to the imputation of rejecting an overture for reconciliation should I disregard it; and, what is of more moment, it imposes upon me the duty of communicating to you in all sincerity my convictions of the true causes of the divisions in the Church, and of your own position in relation to those differences, as well as of the means by which you may contribute to heal them.

I feel very thankful that you are desirous to remove the causes of our disunion; and I pray that your efforts may be successful, as I have no doubt they will be, if you are directed by a single

desire to establish truth and maintain the rights of the Church. We are all under a heavy responsibility in our present condition ; and I readily confess that myself, and those with whom I act, are involved in many inconveniences and disadvantages, both personally and in our ministry. I must, however, solemnly affirm before Him of whose Gospel we are unworthy ministers, that we have reluctantly, and only from an imperative sense of duty, as being bound to bear our testimony to evangelical truth and against Romish error, protested against the books referred to in our Solemn Declaration, and afterwards maintained the Protestant principles expressed in that declaration.

Forgive my appealing to you as a brother servant of the Redeemer, and calling upon your conscience to testify if you have witnessed in all sincerity to the truths of the Gospel in the present controversy ? Is it not a sacred obligation upon us to speak plainly to our people, telling them what are the pure doctrines of the Bible, and warning them against false teaching ? If we refrain—if we keep silent, will not the Lord require us to account for it—shall we not incur a heavy judgment, and forfeit the divine blessing upon ourselves and our ministry ? I am persuaded you value spiritual evangelical religion,—but what is your position in the eyes of the Church, and of its Head ? I address you in

brotherly love,—may God forgive me if it be not as deep and earnest as it should be, but, believe me, it is sincere, and if I speak what you may deem harsh or unjust, I pray you to pardon me. I am ready, even thankfully, to receive your exhortations and reproofs, and to submit myself to your counsel as far as the maintenance of my religious principles will allow.

In the sorrowing judgment of the ministers and people who in this colony have opposed Romanism, you are regarded as one who has given unqualified concurrence and support to those who have circulated Romanizing books, and taught the people to receive their principles as the true teaching of the Church of England. *The Primate has declared that these books are Romish*, yet you have taken no notice of his decision. One party in the Church inculcate the principles of these books,—you have given your sanction to that party, and join with them in all their public declarations. Now, if these books are false and Romish, as the Primate declares them to be, surely it is a dreadful sin in a Minister even to refrain from giving his public testimony against them, much more to co-operate and support those who circulate them as being the true teaching of the Church.

Again, many of your brethren are denounced as rebels to the Bishop's authority, and are suffering under censures and various very serious

evils for protesting against these books. Is it not a most solemn subject of consideration for you, how far you are responsible for the injuries which they suffer by the support you afford to their opponents? I earnestly pray that you may be enabled to free your conscience, and stand clear before God by having strength vouchsafed to you publicly to denounce these books as we have done. Consider, dear Brother, how vain are the attempts and designs of men against the spiritual truths of religion; those who are led to resist the evangelical doctrine will assuredly bring down a judgment upon their own heads. May God, who alone can soften the proud heart of man, impress us all with a sacred dread of opposing His truth, or sanctioning errors adverse to it!

We should pray for peace, and sacrifice personal considerations to its attainment: but can we have peace within, unless our consciences tell us we have raised our voices against books taught to our people and inculcating the Romish principles and temperament of mind so unhappily prevalent in our Church? This is the great responsibility of ministers at present, and one which we must discharge without regarding the approbation of men, the success of a party, or any worldly object.

I must entreat your conscientious consideration to some other points, in which we feel that

your influence has been exercised not to promote truth or unity. We consider that as a Trustee of the College you are accountable for the religious principles inculcated into the pupils. The book called *Theophilus Anglicanus* was submitted to a public meeting at Hobart Town two years ago, and unanimously declared to be Romanizing. Since that period it has been protested against by several meetings of clergymen and laymen. Might we not have expected that some attention would have been paid to our remonstrance, even though not deemed well-founded? The book has been, notwithstanding, continued at the College, and, though declared (by the Bishop) to be sound and according to the true teaching of the Church, yet was included in the declaration of the Primate as being more in accordance with the Church of Rome than that of England. We did expect that you would have been led to join in the protest against this book: but how were we disappointed to find that you constantly joined with those who advocate its principles, and treated our remonstrance with such disregard that you declared at a late meeting that you never had read the book! Believe me, every serious person was no less astonished than shocked at an acknowledgment betraying, what many cannot but regard as, indifference to the sacredness of religious truth. If this book be Romanizing,

surely your responsibility is very great ; surely you are bound to examine its tendency and principles, lest you incur the sin of teaching to the future ministers of the Church the spirit and errors of Popery.

The twenty ministers who signed the “ Declaration ” were condemned as unsound in their religious opinions for declaring that every Christian has a right to interpret the word of God with the aid of the Holy Spirit, and hold what his own judgment convinces him are the truths of Scripture, even though his convictions should be opposed to those of his Church. I ask you, can you, before Him who will judge us by His word, contradict this declaration ? I feel assured that, far from considering it so erroneous as to prove us incapable of distinguishing Scriptural truth from falsehood, you will acknowledge it to be not only true, but an essential principle of Protestantism. The condemnation passed upon us for thus asserting the right of private judgment is the main cause of our present disunion : but, as we believe, your voice has concurred in the sentence against us, your hand has been ever heavy upon us. Let me pray you to reflect whether the extreme course which has been adopted may not, in a great degree, be attributed to dependence upon your influence and assurance of your support. I am persuaded that your example and authority have deterred many of

the clergy from raising their voices with us in protesting against proceedings and principles which in their consciences they condemned.

The decision of the Privy Council has been solemnly protested against and repudiated in this diocese, and the Bishop has declared that he will not admit any minister who does not hold what is called the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. In our undoubted conviction this decision renders our Colonial Church a sect, excluding those who by the law of the Church in England cannot be excluded. It is a grievous injury to that body of the clergy so condemned and excluded, and to those holding their opinions in this colony. It separates our Colonial Church from the Mother Church. It is a denial of the law and of the authority of the Queen as head of the Church. In principle and as a precedent it sets up the individual will of the Bishop above all law and restriction, and so subverts the whole constitution of the Church. Let me speak to you freely on this point. You have submitted to and abetted this most grievous wrong and error, and by every means in your power have upheld the Bishop in this fatal proceeding, and opposed and depressed the ministers by whom the principles and laws of the Church are asserted. How can there be peace and union in a Church in such a condition? As-

surely it can only be obtained by removing these great evils.

In conclusion, I again entreat your pardon if I have written with undue freedom. I write to discharge a sacred obligation; and with the prayer that we may be directed to the truth, and animated by a sense of the awful responsibility of bearing our testimony to it. You and I once proposed and seconded a resolution universally adopted which restored peace in the Church. Should our present disunion be healed it will afford the greatest satisfaction to myself; and I trust that no desire for reparation of any personal offences will prevent our sacrificing to that object every consideration save religious principle.

I remain, Rev. and dear Sir,

Your faithful friend and brother,

HENRY PHIBBS FRY.

Ven. R. R. DAVIES,

Archdeacon.

L E T T E R II.

FROM ARCHDEACON DAVIES TO DR. FRY.

REV. SIR,—

MY sole object in speaking to Mr. Loch was, if possible, “to set forward as much as

lieth in me quietness, peace, and love among all Christian people," especially among those who are committed to my charge. Your letter convinces me that, so far as you are concerned, this will be a most difficult, if not impracticable matter. May God give you grace to see the error of your ways, and guide your feet once more into those paths from which you have unhappily strayed!

You will excuse my entering into the various matters referred to in your letter—they have been so often refuted, especially in the Bishop's "Reply," that further notice is needless. Under any circumstances, I have too many immortal souls to look after, too much parochial work of importance to perform, ever to trifle away valuable time in useless controversy.

I remain, Rev. Sir,

Your faithful Servant,

R. R. DAVIES.

The Rev. H. P. FRY, D.D.

LETTER III.

FROM DR. FRY TO ARCHDEACON DAVIES.

Hobart Town, March 2, 1853.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—

I DEEPLY regret that you have disregarded my appeal; and feel that I am not only

justified, but bound to bring the subject to such a conclusion as the interests of truth require.

You made to me the Christian proposal of a conference in order to heal the division in the Church. Your proposal rendered it my duty to communicate to you with all sincerity the causes of our division, and the means of healing it. In place of considering the means which I submitted to you, or proposing others of your own, you reply to my letter by a declaration that you have too many immortal souls in your charge to allow you to enter into the matters to which I referred. Surely, when you proposed to confer with me, you must have known that our deliberations would occupy some time; but were this not so, I appeal to your judgment whether your reply be not unreasonable. I, also, have a parochial charge, but when addressed by you on a subject of such importance I responded to your proposition, though I had, perhaps, as little hope of your acknowledging the principles and rights of the Church as you have of my retracting them. Had I answered your proposal by saying, as you have done, that your principles have been often refuted (and, as I might have added, have been condemned by the Primate)—that your declarations show an agreement with you to be impracticable, and that I have too many immortal souls in my charge to allow me to enter into discussion with you, it

would be said by yourself and all the world that I had given you a most unchristian and unreasonable answer; yet this is precisely the reply which you give to me.

You say that the principles expressed in my letter convince you that an agreement with me is impracticable. In this statement I think you are inconsistent. There is no principle expressed in my letter that has not been invariably and publicly asserted by myself and friends as principles from which we could never depart. You knew well that we hold all these principles, —how, then, could the repetition of them in my letter create any new conviction respecting me, or justify your censure?

I feel that I am authorized, in justice and fairness, to request you to state explicitly the terms on which you considered our divisions might be healed and peace restored. In compliance with your proposal I have stated my convictions on this subject, and, in my opinion, you should communicate to me yours.

You speak generally of “the error of my ways.” Surely you will here, also, admit the obligation to specify the errors to which you allude. Have I erred in substance or in form—in principle or in expression? If in the latter, I am most willing to acknowledge and atone for it, if it shall appear to well-judging people that I have erred; but if the errors you allude

to be principles which I have maintained, they must be the three following which are those asserted in my letters :—

1. That Romish books are inculcated in this diocese as being the true teaching of our Church.

2. That the right of private judgment is repudiated, and a body of the clergy denounced and punished for asserting it.

3. That the decision of the Privy Council is protested against and repudiated in this colony.

I ask you to tell me, in Christian sincerity, are these declarations erroneous ?

Are the Steps to the Altar—*Theophilus Anglicanus*, and Spiritual Communion identified with the true teaching of our Church ?

Can you contradict the principle of private judgment as asserted in my letter ?

Do you approve and uphold the repudiation of the decision of the Privy Council ?

Believe me you are bound by every principle of justice to state explicitly wherein these declarations are erroneous. If you refuse, you expose yourself to the imputation of accusing a person of culpable error, and refusing to specify the errors you attribute to him.

Let me forget that I am treating a subject by the cold rules of reason, and once more appeal to you as a brother minister. Is it not a mon-

strous anomaly that a body of clergy should *be condemned by you as being in great error because they hold the opinions of the Primate of the Church?* Can a greater contradiction to common sense be conceived than that they should be condemned and punished for endeavouring to uphold the authority of the highest tribunal in the Church? Surely no influence or authority will be able to maintain proceedings so injurious and so unreasonable.

Will you, in the face of the Primate, assert that the books which he has condemned as Romanizing are the true teaching of the Church, and that we are in error for protesting against them? These books do not teach doubtful opinions or venial error—*they inculcate a system of religious practice and belief essentially Romish.* I cannot imagine that you think differently; and again I entreat you no longer to conceal your sentiments on subjects of such importance and responsibility.

In conclusion, I must allude to your remark that the principles maintained in my letter have been refuted by the Bishop's "Reply." In my judgment they have not in *any single point been answered or invalidated.* Many applications have been made to me to vindicate them; I have hitherto postponed a distressing duty in the hope that the effect of time, consideration, and the *Primate's decision,* would have ren-

dered it not indispensable—your letter destroys this hope, and shows the paramount necessity of this and other measures in order to prevent the extinction of the evangelical principles of our Church.

I remain, Rev. and dear Sir,

Your faithful Servant,

HENRY PHIBBS FRY.

Rev. R. R. DAVIES,

&c. &c.

LETTER IV.

ARCHDEACON DAVIES TO DR. FRY.

March 3, 1853.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—

IF you are willing to make a public apology for your letter to the Archbishop—a letter condemning three-fourths of the clergy of this diocese; and if you retract that portion of the Solemn Declaration which your Diocesan considers a denial of the authoritative teaching of the Church as enforced in her twentieth article, I shall be happy to do every thing in my power to make peace between your deeply injured Bishop, your brethren, and yourself.

I again decline all correspondence on matters of controversy.

I remain, Rev. and dear Sir,

Your faithful Servant,

R. R. DAVIES.

LETTER V.

DR. FRY TO ARCHDEACON DAVIES.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—

YOU inform me that the terms of peace are public apology and recantation—on these terms you will intercede with the Bishop for myself and brethren. I have a serious question to ask you—Why did you represent this demand for a recantation as a proposal to confer with me for arrangement of differences? Why did you describe your proposition in a manner certain to mislead and be misunderstood? Had you not thus disguised your meaning, I should not have been required to reply to your proposal; for a communication so dishonouring and unreasonable would undoubtedly never have been received from you or been delivered to me. You appeared to hold out the olive branch of peace, but in reality you menaced with the rod

of power : you adopted the character of a lover of peace, desirous by discussion to accommodate differences on the principles of truth and justice ; but had your proposal been candidly and plainly stated, you would have appeared the uncompromising minister of arbitrary authority. The terms you require were those which the Bishop had publicly demanded : it needed not, therefore, your intercession that they should be accepted :—how is this to be reconciled with your proposal ?

'The inquisitors of old, before they condemned their victims, endeavoured charitably to convince them by argument and discussion : but you call upon me to recant, while you refuse not only to discuss, but to express your own opinions. I have, with the utmost plainness, stated the three causes of the division in the Church. I have earnestly prayed you, by every appeal of reason and of conscience, to express your judgment on these three principles. You obstinately refuse to declare your own opinions, and yet you call upon me to recant mine—you require me to retract deliberate principles which I must now conclude you cannot impugn. What a spectacle is this of domination over conscience—more worthy of the thirteenth than of the nineteenth century !

What is there in my letter to the Archbishop which you require me to recant ? Is it that the

Church is in danger of Romanism from the approvers of the Steps to the Altar? Why the Archbishop himself says virtually the same, for he declares that the principles of that book are Romish. Is it where I complain to the Primate of the condemnation of the Clergy for asserting the right of private judgment? You yourself shrink from affirming that the declaration which has been condemned is erroneous; how, then, can you call upon me to retract it? These two statements are the substance of my letter to the Archbishop.

It is assiduously represented that the peace of the Church is broken by personal offences and differences. Let not the public be thus misled: the real grounds of division are the three great evils which I have so often repeated—let them be redressed, and no required submission or apology will be refused. In advocating the most important truth, even from necessity and with the purest design, the mixture of human feelings will call too strongly for self-condemnation to allow any unwillingness to atone for an alleged offence or to offer reparation for supposed injury.

You again decline any discussion,—but the reluctance which you express to engaging in controversy is no justification for the concealment of your opinions. I did not require you to enter into controversy: I asked you, as I was justified

by your proposal in doing—First, whether you concurred in the Bishop's Protest against the Privy Council? Second, whether you held with him that the "Steps to the Altar" was the true teaching of the Church? Third, whether you joined with him in condemning our declaration of the right of private judgment? These are the subjects on which you say I am in culpable error, and which you require me to retract; and yet, professing to decline controversy, you refuse to say whether you assent to or oppose the judgment of the Bishop. The latter would, indeed, forfeit his favour, the former destroy the confidence of the public: yet it surely is a scriptural duty, especially obligatory upon a minister, to give an answer to every one concerning the hope and faith which he inculcates,—and the very Church in which you minister should teach this solemn lesson, as it almost echoes still the voice of its late pastor, who for thirty years upheld the Protestant faith without regard to the favour or fear of man.

You speak of "your deeply injured Bishop." I may not characterize this sort of language further than that it implies his being injured by those who are compelled to dissent from his judgment,—but surely they are the persons injured. Have they not been condemned without trial, denounced as unsound in doctrine, refused testimonials or licenses, and punished with the

whole weight of episcopal authority? The power of the Bishop is, indeed, as Mr. Gladstone denominates it, autocratic and unrestricted save by public opinion; but many would set up his judgment as the rule of faith—the voice of the Church. Perhaps opposition to this sentiment may be deemed an injury; but we confidently appeal for our justification to the decision of the Primate and the judgment of all Protestant Christians. The Bishop has, indeed, sustained injury,—he suffers from the decision of the Archbishop, and the conviction of those who are compelled to maintain the truths, the liberties, and the highest tribunal of the Church: but, in my opinion, he has sustained irreparable injury from those whose faithfulness is lost in subservience—who, agreeing with his judgment on the three questions at issue, do not support him by confessing their concurrence, or, esteeming him in error, are unwilling to forfeit his favour by endeavouring to correct his judgment.

In conclusion, I would observe that your wish that I should return to the paths from which I have strayed reminds me of that period, before the arrival of the Bishop, when you were distinguished for Protestant, or what are called low Church views. You were earnest in opposing the Romanizing spirit of the Oxford writers; and at a time when I was carried away by their profession of hostility to the Church of Rome, and

of the design to restore the discipline and observances of the Church, and to elevate the devotion of the people, you discerned and protested against their principles. Alas! now that those principles have been so fully developed, and their influence proved by the secession to Rome of so many of their advocates, how can you even for a moment be numbered among their supporters? Are you the man to vindicate the "Steps," and oppress your Protestant brethren? A few years since, and that condemnation and episcopal punishment, which you now enforce upon us, would have been visited upon yourself with the utmost rigour. My prayer is that you may again be enabled to raise your voice in defence of that Protestant faith which you once upheld!

I remain, Rev. and dear Sir,

Your faithful Servant,

HENRY P. FRY.

Rev. R. R. DAVIES.

LETTER VI.

FROM ARCHDEACON DAVIES TO DR. FRY.

March 12, 1853.

REV. SIR,—

I HAVE this moment received your letter of the 10th inst., and with regret must decline all further correspondence on the matters referred to.

I remain, Rev. Sir,
Your faithful Servant,
R. R. DAVIES.

LETTER VII.

FROM DR. FRY TO ARCHDEACON DAVIES.

Hobart Town, March 16, 1853.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—

I AM not surprised at your desire for the discontinuance of our correspondence : but our

conference was your own proposal, and I cannot allow you to decline hearing its conclusion.

First. That the causes of the division in the Church are the *three measures* enforced by the Bishop in this diocese. These measures are—
 1st. An open violation of the law of the Church of England. 2d. They repudiate the highest ecclesiastical tribunal, and the authority of the Queen as head of the Church. 3d. They virtually separate from the mother Church the branch in this colony, narrowing its communion and rendering it a sect. 4th. They are condemned by the Archbishop of Canterbury. 5th. They are subversive of Protestant principles and tend to Romanize the Church. 6th. They destroy the rights of the clergy and laity,—setting up the individual will and opinion of the Bishop above all law. 7th. They reduce the clergy to abject submission,—*they hold out cruel temptation, or even coerce them to the sin of dissimulation.* 8th. They inflict a grievous wrong and oppression upon evangelical ministers—they shut out and condemn all but Tractarians.

Second. Though urged by the most solemn appeals, you have refused to profess explicitly your concurrence in these measures and principles of the Bishop; but you have done so indirectly with sufficient plainness, and shown your resolution to support and enforce his measures.

Third. The terms of peace which you require

are unconditional recantation of the declaration of the right of private judgment, and of the letter to the Archbishop complaining of the repudiation of the Privy Council and of the Romanizing books and proceedings.

Fourth. The division is not caused by personal offences at any expressions or declarations; for the utmost readiness is professed to withdraw and atone for any such expressions on the removal of the substantial evils protested against.

The allusions in the preceding letters to our personal obligations need no further notice. The question of public importance is, the cause of the division in the Church, and the terms on which it can be healed. I trust that our correspondence will supply conclusive information on this subject; and I entertain a still more anxious hope that, under Divine grace, it may be a means of awakening many among the clergy and laity to the sacred obligation of bearing testimony in support of the rights and principles of our Protestant Church. These letters will impress them with the sin and dishonour of looking on secure in silence while the cause of truth struggles against error enforced by influence and power. Not to confess openly what we believe to be the truth, is to deny Him who is "the Truth," and show that its love is not in us. To disregard a religious question of such importance—to decline avowing a conscientious belief from interest or

favour, inflicts a sense of deeper sin than error honestly maintained.

A few years and the writers of these letters will have gone to account for their motives and intentions; but the principles and measures which they have professed will be judged as they have contributed to promote the cause of evangelical religion. Let the reader hold in mind the single idea that truth is the divine light of the soul; and that while our most sacred duty is to diffuse its beams, so to obscure or obstruct their influence is to oppose the will of God and the good of man.

I remain, Rev. and dear Sir,

Your faithful friend and brother,

HENRY PHIBBS FRY.

Rev. R. R. DAVIES.



ROMISH CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION
PRACTISED IN THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

(From the *Morning Herald*.)

IN the long report which we felt obliged to give, in yesterday's *Herald*, of the investigation held at Plymouth on Wednesday last, before the Bishop of Exeter, the concluding words were these:—

“He (the Bishop) then thanked the audience for their behaviour, and broke up the meeting. *The whole party appeared to be as much astonished as men could be.*”

This astonishment was natural enough, and would, no doubt, have grown into absolute consternation, were it not that the hearers could in a moment remember that it is not in the power of one Bishop to ruin the Church of England, nor to change one single line, or even syllable, in her admirable formularies. Still, astonishment will not be the only feeling that will be excited or exhibited among churchmen; we shall be much surprised if the Bishop does not hear of this business in a very serious way, before many weeks are over.

The subject under investigation was the practice of Auricular Confession, as used by Mr. Prynne, one of the Bishop of

Exeter's favourite clergy in the town of Plymouth. Now, the doctrine of the Church of England on this matter is very clear. Of auricular confession, in the true and ordinary acceptation of the term, the Church knows nothing. It was one of the abominations which were cleared away at the Reformation. But the Reformers were wise and reasonable men. They abolished the mass, but they did not abolish the Lord's Supper. They swept away the millinery and perfumery of Rome, but they left the plain white surplice. They utterly negatived the duty and obligation of confession, as incumbent on all persons, or even on most persons; but they left the counsel in the exhortation to the Communion, that if any man could not quiet his own conscience by confession to God and restitution to his neighbour, he might go to "some godly minister and open his grief,"—an exhortation so simple, natural, and proper, that no Dissenter or Methodist in the whole kingdom could take exception to it. And this is all that the Church of England has retained of the corrupt and corrupting system of the Church of Rome with respect to confession. The slight modicum of truth is kept—the mountain of error is overthrown.

What, then, was the nature of the charge against Mr. Prynne? It was,—

1. That he had made a practice of receiving private confessions, enjoined on them as a religious duty, from young girls, shut up alone with him in a private room. And,
2. That in so doing he did not merely hear them, but followed the Romish system of questioning them, and went the Romish length of asking them filthy and abominable questions.

Now, nothing could be clearer than that no part of this conduct received the slightest countenance from any of the Church of England formularies. The Church, when inviting men and women to the Lord's Supper, tells them that if any man feels a burden of sin on his conscience which he is unable to throw off, he may come to some godly minister and open his grief. But not one word does the Church say of young girls being sent or brought to confession as a duty, still less of their being examined by a surpliced priest as to sensual sins, of which they had not previously even an idea!

But to the facts, which we must compress as much as possible.

Two or three witnesses were produced before the Bishop, and two or three others were offered, but were refused to be heard.

1. The following statement was put in, written by one of the girls who had been brought to Mr. Prynne to confess, and who thus wrote :—

“ Dear Sir,—I have taken your advice into consideration, to give you a short and simple statement of my examination and confession by Mr. Prynne during the time I have been at the Sisters of Mercy.

“ I have been asked several questions about uncleanness, and whether I have had improper thoughts about myself, and I did not much like answering these questions; whether I had called any bad words, whether I had been angry with my companions, whether stolen anything from my friends. What he means by uncleanness is, if I had taken He told me this to help me out when he asked, as I did not like to answer him, whether I had improper thoughts in bed, and whether I had taken pleasure in killing flies, knowing that they suffered pain.

“ Dear Sir, I cannot go on any farther, as it is such indecent questions to be asked by a minister of the Gospel.

(Signed) “ ———, aged 14 in May, 1852.

“ August 4, 1852.”

Now, this girl was brought forward, and the Bishop himself thus examined her :—

“ The Bishop—Did he then put questions in order that you might explain matters?—Yes.

“ And at this time you were twelve years of age only?—Yes.

“ Mr. Darling—Were any of the questions you complain of improper questions that he asked you at that time?—Yes, Sir.

“ The Bishop—Were all those questions asked at that time?—At different times.

“ Were the same questions asked over and over again?—Something similar, but I do not recollect.

“ And when you were twelve years old, questions were asked you whether you had committed any improper actions?—Yes.

“ Do you recollect what was put to you at your first confession? It is painful, but it is hardly possible to avoid putting these. You say he had told you you had done wrong and then he asked particulars?—Yes.”

When the examination had reached this point, it was found that the questions asked by Mr. Prynne were of so filthy a description that they could only be gone into in a private room, with no more than two or three auditors. The Bishop, therefore, retired with the girl, and with two or three other persons, and returned in about twenty minutes, and the reporter is obliged to say:—

“ The Bishop then withdrew with the other gentlemen, and were away for a short time, during which evidence was taken that was afterwards read over to us, but which was of so indecent a nature that we cannot allude to it further than to say that the girl disclosed matters on which Mr. Prynne had examined her with very great minuteness.”

2. This girl's evidence is confirmed by her mother, who also appeared before the Bishop, and was examined as follows:—

“ How long ago is it that you found out that he asked some improper questions?—About two months from the present time. The first time I heard of anything it was very bad, and would have induced me to take her away.

“ Do you think from what you have heard from the child, and from what you have seen of her, that the questions were put for any improper motive, or for the child's good?—I should not think it was for any good.

“ The Bishop—Did you understand that these questions were put by Mr. Prynne for the child's good or not?—I should think it was not for her good, but to enlighten her in wickedness.”

3. A third witness examined is designated as Elizabeth J. O.

B——. Her written statement, handed in by the Rev. T. S. Childs, contained the following passage:—

“ I was taken by Sister Bertha and left in the church with Mr. Prynne. The door was locked and he led me into the confessional room, which is the right hand tower on the ground floor—a place scarcely large enough to contain two persons. He placed me in a three-legged chair, and himself directly before me, inquiring my thoughts—namely, what my besetting sin was. I answered that my sins were so numerous I could not tell which most prevailed. He then inquired whether I had any improper thoughts when in bed. I replied, when in bed I was tired and went to sleep. He wished to know whether I had any lustful thoughts towards men. I said it was an improper inquiry of ministers of the Gospel. He repeated the question with respect to the boys in the college. I replied, the boys were too rude for any one to like them. He said, ‘ Have you ever used . . . ? ’ I said, ‘ I do not understand your question.’ He was angry, and said I was sharp enough, and would not understand. He then said, ‘ Do you ever . . . ? Do you ever do anything indecent after you are in bed ? ’ I replied, ‘ I know not what I do when I am asleep.’ ”

This witness was examined by Mr. Prynne’s counsel, and said—

“ My first confession may have taken half an hour. When I had done, Mr. Prynne gave me his blessing and absolution.

“ Did Mr. Prynne ask you if you had lustful thoughts for men?—Yes, he did.

“ When he asked you that question, had you said anything to him first?—Yes, but not on that.

“ Had you made no confession of that sort to him?—No, I thought it too disgusting for any gentleman or any female to talk about.

“ Did you tell him that it was an improper question?—I did, Sir.

“ There is one very bad question, indeed, there; did you understand what he meant when he put it?—There are several there.

“ The Bishop—I am afraid I cannot allow that. I put it to yourself whether you will put such questions.

Mr. Darling—Can you remember what you said when he put those questions ?

“ Witness—I do not think I can without reflection. He asked me whether I had any lustful desires after men when I was in bed, and I told him that I had enough to do to go to sleep.

“ Did you show by your manner that they were improper questions ?—I do not know how I could do so, except by showing him I would not answer them.”

4. Another girl, C. D— had voluntarily given a written statement to the Rev. T. C. Childs, as follows :—

“ I went to Mr. Prynne, Fridays ; on which days I told him of the faults I had committed during the past week ; on which days he gave me the following directions :—To lie on the hearthstone for ten minutes every night after family prayers, and examine myself of the sins during the past day, and take a sheet of paper and write down whatever sins I had committed, and go for confession every month in the vestry of St. Peter’s Church. Every month he asked me these questions :—If ever any impure thoughts came into my mind ? He also asked me if ever I kept company with any young men ? He also asked me if ever I ; or if they , and if ever I had any communication of impurity with them ? And often when I have done anything wrong, when I had gone for confession he has several times kept me without absolution. I have put these questions exactly as Mr. Prynne put them to me.

“ I have lived with the Sisters of Mercy four days.

“ C. D.”

But this witness was absent, having apparently been *kept away* !

5. A fifth witness, Mary M———, was present, and was ready to be examined, but the bishop *refused* to go into her case, “ because Mr. Prynne had not had sufficient notice of it.”

Now, after all this shocking exposure, who could have dreamt of a decision from the bishop to the following effect?—

“I lay my hand upon my heart, and say most solemnly that in my judgment I do acquit Mr. Prynne of anything like presumption in this case, or of holding doctrine not in accordance with the doctrine of the Church of England. Most distinctly do I say that.
I must say, from all that has been produced to-day, I entirely acquit Mr. Prynne even of indiscretion in receiving confession. No one knows how many young sinners may have been recovered from their wickedness by that means. Be that as it may, I most certainly think that Mr. Prynne stands forth—to me most undoubtedly, and I should hope to all present here this day—clear from blame.”

The Bishop, turning to Mr. Prynne, said:—

“I appoint the confirmation at St. Peter’s this day four weeks. An investigation had taken place into Mr. Prynne’s conduct on all the cases brought before him, leaving him without blame; and he should be ashamed of himself as a man, as a bishop, and, above all, as a Christian, if he committed the gross act of injustice of not holding the confirmation in his church.”

Then follows the passage which we have already quoted.

“The bishop then thanked the audience for their behaviour, and broke up the meeting. The whole party appeared to be as much astonished as men could well be.”

“Astonished,” indeed, they well might be. For the bishop here coolly takes upon him to make and propound new doctrines for the church, or rather to introduce Romish doctrine in the gross, amongst us. He decides—

That it is right and proper for a minister of the church to have young girls of twelve years old brought to him by their teachers, and taught to confess their sins, not for the purpose of being prepared to receive the Lord’s Supper, but even long before Confirmation.

And further, that it is right for such a minister to ask these

young girls questions so filthy that they cannot be repeated or printed; and thus to instil into their minds ideas of crimes which would probably never else have occurred to them.

All this the bishop decides,—and it would have been little worse had he decided that the church counsels murder, or highway robbery. All we need to do is to defy him and all his friends to produce one line from any of the church's formularies which gives the slightest countenance to any of these abominations.

Alas, for Dr. Phillpotts! Time was when he prided himself on the name of Protestant. The bishop may deceive himself with the notion that he has now set this matter at rest. We have little doubt that he will soon be undeceived on this point. It will surprise us greatly if this frightful exposure does not awaken a spirit of resistance against these corruptors of youth, compared with which all former expressions of public feeling will appear to have been quite feeble."

The preceding report published throughout England, has excited general alarm and indignation. The practical effect of Romanizing books and principles is thus at length displayed.

Let the following instructions from "The Steps to the Altar" be attentively considered; and it will be impossible not to see that they distinctly teach the same system of Priestly Absolution and Auricular Confession!

STEPS. &c., p. 120.—"Having made choice of such a Confessor, who is every way qualified, that you may trust your soul with him, you are advised plainly and sincerely to open your heart to him; and that, laying aside all consideration of any personal weakness in him, you are to look upon him only as he is a trustee from God, and commissioned by Him as His ministerial deputy, to hear, and judge,† and absolve you."

STEPS, &c., p. 118.—"I suppose you are to choose only such

a person as will faithfully keep any secret you shall commit to him, and so it can be no public shame you can fear."

"That the manner of your confession be in an humble posture on your knees,* as being made to God rather than man. And for the matter of it, let it be severe and serious."

STEPS, &c., p. 15.—"You will also do well to write down on paper the sins, or at least the chief sins, of which you become conscious, that they may not pass away from your memory."*

STEPS TO THE ALTAR, p. 24.—"1. Have you committed any act of uncleanness; used any unchaste words; indulged any impure thoughts and fancies? If so, how often?

"2. Have you looked at dangerous pictures, or read wicked books; entered into amusements, or gone into company that might give rise to temptation? How often?

"Have you indulged your flesh by eating or drinking more than was necessary; by laziness and too much sleep? If so, how often?

"4. Do you make much of your body, dressing gaily and expensively, &c.? Are you vain of your appearance? Has this ever led to any greater evil? How often?

STEPS, &c., p. 120.—"Before you are to receive the holy Sacrament, or when you are visited by any dangerous sickness, if you find any one particular sin, or more, that lies heavy upon you, you are to disburden yourself of it into the bosom of your Confessor, who not only stands between God and you, to pray for you, but hath the power of the keys committed to him, upon your true repentance, to absolve you in Christ's Name from those sins which you have confessed to him."

STEPS, &c., p. 121.—"*The benefit of Absolution.*—If we would choose to believe rather than dispute, it would be a powerful cordial to every troubled spirit by a particular officer from the kingdom of heaven to be thus saluted; and *he that cannot value this absolution from the Priest, can no other way receive satisfaction to his doubts and fears, unless he expect to be assured of his remission by an immediate revelation, or can be content to stay till the day of judgment for the resolution of this great inquiry.* Let it therefore cheer your hearts, ye contrite ones, to

hear this Blessing from your spiritual father ; for, behold it contains all that you do need or can desire. *Are you miserable? Here is mercy. Are you sinful? Here is pardon. Are you liable to punishment? Here is deliverance. Are you desirous, but unable to do good? Here is strength and confirmation. Are you fearful of death and hell? Here is heaven and everlasting life.* And all this is asked of God by one that He hath commissioned to make this prayer ; so that your only care is, that your repentance be such as your Minister believes it to be, and then this absolution shall *certainly be confirmed in the high court of heaven, and not one word thereof shall fall to the ground.*"

THEOPH. ANG., the text book at the College, teaches the same doctrine.

THEOPH. ANG., p. 108.—“ When God has appointed certain means for dispensing His grace, OUR SALVATION IS TIED TO THE USE OF THEM. He remits the punishment of *original sin* by means of the Sacrament of Baptism ; and in the case of *actual sin*, He confers the grace of His own pardon by means of priestly Absolution, ordinarily and where it may be had, and whenever justly pronounced and duly received ; and thus He makes repentance available to the true penitent, through the declaration and pronouncement of pardon by the Minister of Christ, *acting by His authority, at His command, and by His power.* Absolution does not give repentance, but makes it effectual, as the loosing of Lazarus did not give him *life*, but the full and free use of it.

Can private confession, and the absolution of a priest, be enforced and exalted more highly than by these instructions ? They are set forth as the most sacred of religious duties, and the safe way to salvation. They go beyond Romanism itself, when they teach that the only

satisfaction for doubts and fears is the priest's absolution. Every Protestant feeling must be shocked at such undisguised inculcation of this most enslaving Popish practice. There is, for once, no suppression or ambiguity;—Tractarian Romanism, with a bold front, avows itself. The imposition consists not in disguising opinions, but in the attempt to delude the unsuspecting children, by teaching them Popery under pretence of instructing them in the principles of the Church of England.

The young man or woman preparing for Confirmation is furnished *by his pastor* with "the Steps to the Altar," as a religious guide and manual: here he is supplied with a list of questions to help him to keep a written catalogue of his impurities of thought and conduct. He is directed to choose a Confessor to whom he can trust his soul, and whom he is blasphemously to regard as God's deputy to hear, to judge, and to absolve him. He is to kneel down humbly before him, and to disburthen his sin into the bosom of this Confessor, who, he is told, stands between God and him, with the power of the keys; and he is to receive his absolution as mercy, peace, pardon, strength, heaven, and everlasting life.

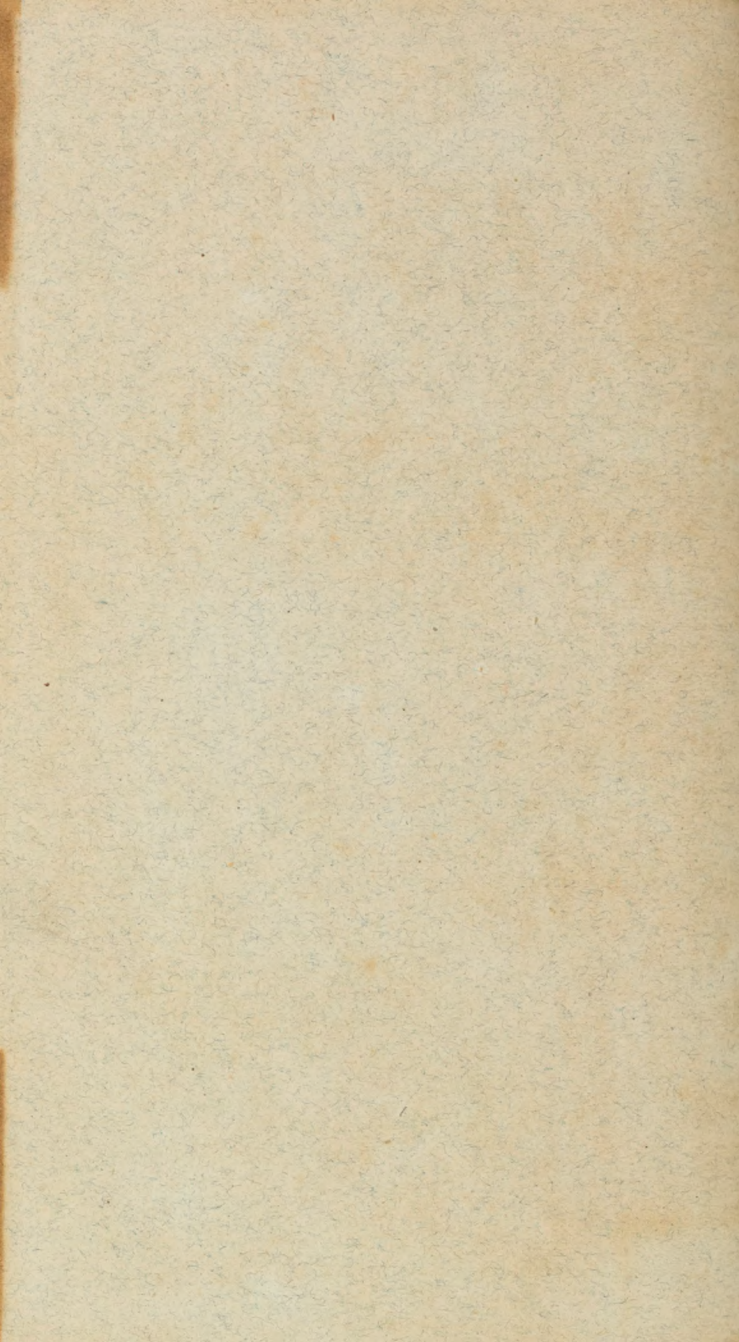
Can the Romish ritual go beyond this? It is no wonder when such barefaced Popery was taught in our Church that the Archbishop of

Canterbury felt obliged, in conscience, to interpose his judgment, in order to warn and save the people of this colony from being led away to Romanism. It is scarcely credible that Protestant ministers should inculcate such principles, or that a bishop should pronounce them to be the true teaching of the Church of England.





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