



THE POPERY  
OF  
PROTESTANTISM.

A Lecture.

BY  
HENRY CRAIK.

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*Price 6d.*



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J. NISBET, BERNERS STREET, LONDON.

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## INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

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IN committing to the press the accompanying discourse, the writer has retained the form, and almost the exact phraseology, in which it was delivered in public. His object is not to add to the already numerous publications on the subject of Popery, but rather to recall the attention of all who acknowledge the supreme authority of Holy Scripture to such a re-examination of the leading Protestant systems, as may lead to the discovery and rejection of those remains of Romanism which may still be found intermingled with the principles and practices of a purer faith. His earnest desire and prayer to God is that his readers may test what is here presented to them by the standard of Scripture, and may

be led to embrace that only, which, after prayerful and patient examination, may be found in accordance with the truth. He has no system to defend; he has no desire to gather disciples to any peculiar views of his own; but he is, at the same time, fully convinced that the leading forms of Protestantism urgently demand a second Reformation. He would solemnly suggest the enquiry whether we have not strong grounds for believing that one of the purposes of God, in permitting the recent revival of Popery in our land, may be to lead the minds of all His faithful people to self-enquiry, confession and repentance, issuing in a more entire and heart-felt subjection to the Authority of the Divine Testimonies.

5, WALTON TERRACE, BRISTOL.

*August, 1852.*

# LECTURE

ON THE

## POPERY OF PROTESTANTISM.

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THE recent aggressive movements of Popery, combined with the secessions to Romanism from among the clergy of the Establishment, have excited a salutary alarm, and called forth earnest opposition, throughout the length and breadth of England. This wide-spread opposition ought not to be identified with the no-Popery cry of an uninstructed, prejudiced, and reckless mob. It has been conducted by some of the most thoughtful, benevolent, and christian of our distinguished men, and it has secured the sympathy and support of the best portion of our people. It has effected, we trust, on the whole a beneficial result. The minds of multitudes have been *aroused* and *enlightened*

by discourses from the pulpit; by addresses from the platform; as well as by publications of every variety in size, and diversity in importance and excellence. The number of works on Popery, recently issued from the press of this country, may serve to indicate the extent of general interest taken in the subject, by a large portion of our reading population. Probably, some of these publications have obtained only a very limited circulation; many more may have found *purchasers* without having found *careful readers*; while others of them, we trust, of more marked superiority or of more attractive character, may have done good service to the cause of Scriptural Christianity.

In all such well-meant efforts it becomes us to rejoice, and to give thanks to God,—the author of all blessing,—for any measure of success that may have attended them. Popery is a *gigantic* evil, in withstanding and resisting which, there needs to be called into exertion the combined strength of all right-hearted, Protestant, Christians. In order that such resistance may be effectual, let us ever pray that,

throughout our own country, among our fellow subjects in Ireland, and throughout the Continent of Europe, the Word of the Lord may run and be glorified. Against that divine weapon, of heavenly temper, wielded by the arm of faith and fortitude, Popery never can prevail.

But the object of the present Lecture is not specially to expose the delusions of the Papacy, or to refute the arguments by which those delusions are sought to be upheld. This I leave to the many champions of Protestantism who are already in the field. The path of service on which I desire to enter is, comparatively, much less occupied, and, on that account, for some reasons, all the more inviting. In directly attacking the errors of Romanism, I should seem to myself to be engaging in an almost superfluous labour. Others, far more qualified for that work than I am, have accomplished nearly every thing that can be needful for the enlightenment of those who are willing to be enlightened. The advocates of error do not so much need that their perversions of Scripture

should be exposed, as that their hearts should be affected with "*the love of the truth.*" "They love darkness rather than light"; and no mere power of argument can displace the love for delusion and impart the desire for the truth of God. There is still, however, a wide scope for the exertion of our energies *in opposition to Romish superstition.* The present position of our country, in relation to the Papacy, ought surely to lead us to self-enquiry and self-application. Surely, we shall occupy a better position for resisting that destructive system, after we have sifted and expelled any anti-scriptural leaven that may be found cleaving to ourselves. If any germs of Romanist error be found to have mixed themselves up with the several forms of Protestantism, the sooner the process of purification takes place, the better for the cause of truth. *Allowed evil, whether in principle or in practice, is ever an element of weakness, and the forerunner of ultimate defeat.* In our zeal against the full-grown apostasy of Rome, we ought not to neglect the *lurking presence and insidious progress* of those

principles which naturally tend in the same direction, and only wait for favourable circumstances in order to their mature development.

Such being the object which I have in view, I do not feel myself called upon to propound, at any length, the characteristic doctrines of Popery. They must, in these days, one would think, be familiar to all intelligent Protestants. Let me, therefore, only very briefly, recall to your minds some of the more prominent and noticeable errors of that anti-christian system:

Popery makes void the Word of God by her traditions; inculcates the worship of created beings; denies the doctrine of justification by faith; upholds an order of *Priestly* intercessors, who claim the high prerogative of having been empowered to forgive sin; virtually denies the perfectness of the sacrifice of Christ, by upholding the necessity and virtue of the sacrifice of the mass, which she has substituted for the commemorative ordinance of the Lord's Supper; and deceives the souls of her victims by lying legends respecting Purgatory, Confession, Absolution and Extreme Unction. Popery, more-

over, maintains the headship of the Roman Pontiff, not only over the church, but over all the nations of the world; and ascribes to him the dignity of being the Vice-gerent of God upon earth. He assumes to be the High Priest, the Vicar of Christ, the Head of the body, *i. e.* of the church, &c. with other names of gross and horrible blasphemy. There is a *compactness* and *consistency* about the whole system which serves to consolidate *its terrible strength*, and indicates the presiding and pervading energy of him "who worketh in the children of disobedience." This *consistency* and *harmony* is the more remarkable, when we consider the manner in which these errors were originally introduced into the nominal church. Popery, in its full development, is the result of a series of human, or rather Satanic, inventions, which had been gradually introduced during the course of several centuries. The departure from the truth was by little and little, and thus, through the gradual intermixture of the foreign element of error, the truth became corrupted, and the apostasy reached its full

development. This departure began at a very early period; the stream, as it flowed forth from its heavenly fountain, was pure at its source, but the tributary waters that swelled its current, were full of earthliness and pollution. That which, at first, was not only wholesome, but medicinal and life-giving, became, through the lapse of ages, impure, destructive, poisonous.

Previously to the period of the Great Reformation, the evils of Romanism appeared to have reached their climax; and just as the mischief had all arisen from neglecting or refusing the guidance of Holy Scripture, so the remedy was obviously to be sought in connexion with a deferential reverting to that divine standard. In some measure there *was* a return to the Scriptures, particularly on the part of Luther, Calvin and Zuinglius, and thence the vital truth of "justification by faith" (Luther's test of a standing or a falling church) was recovered and restored to Christendom. But, while there was, in some measure, a reverting to the true standard of Christian

doctrine, many, both of the Continental and Anglican Reformers, were disposed to yield to the suggestions of a false expediency, the results of which are manifest even in our own times. It is beyond all controversy that the founders of the Anglican Establishment were disposed to retain very much of what the people had been accustomed to, although unsanctioned by Scripture, in order that the prejudices of an uninstructed populace might not be shocked by entire and radical alterations. It would have been sounder wisdom, and, ultimately, more successful policy, to have sought to test every thing by the acknowledged authority of Scripture; but still it is not for us harshly to censure those who failed to do so. Their position was most peculiarly difficult; and it becomes us rather to seek to profit by their failure, than to employ the language of severe reprehension in regard to the course of action they saw it prudent to pursue. *They*, assuredly, attempted a compromise between the requirements of the Divine Word and the traditions of men; let *us* learn, from their

failure, the folly and danger of attempting such a compromise.

Having thus distinctly stated the occasion and object of the present lecture, I purpose to treat the subject according to the following plan:

- I. I would attempt, very briefly, to sketch some of the leading features in the constitution of the Christian Church, as deduced, according to the great principle of Protestantism, from the New Testament.
- II. Endeavour to point out the *leaven* of Popery as cleaving, more or less covertly, to the position, polity and ritual of the Anglican Church.
- III. Offer some observations relative to the "Popery of Protestantism," as affecting certain other ecclesiastical bodies, not connected with the English Establishment.
- IV. Lastly, I would seek to exhibit the deteriorating influence, upon the simplicity of Gospel truth, exerted even by the most modified principles of Romanist error.

In conclusion, I would desire to apply the whole subject to the consciences and hearts of different classes of hearers.

I. The Church polity of the New Testament appears to me pre-eminently simple. It obviously is not adapted for the *mixed multitude* that make up the *general population* of a kingdom, but for a body, composed of such, as appear,—so far as man can judge, to be the *genuine disciples* of the Saviour. On the day of Pentecost the world first saw the Church of Christ fully constituted. In the closing verses of Acts ii. we have the earliest account of the blessed results of Apostolic testimony, accompanied by the presence and power of the life-giving Spirit. We there learn the answers to several fundamental enquiries, in reference to the subject we are now considering. Of whom was the earliest Church composed? By what instrumentality were its members gathered together? How were they distinguished from the mass of those around them? What were the external manifestations of their internal fellowship? What were the features of cha-

racter by which they were known? What was their relation to each other and to the world without?

The first Christian community, formed on that memorable day, was made up of such as had been guilty of sins of the deepest dye; many of them had been, more or less, directly implicated in the murder of the Saviour. This crime Peter had charged home upon their consciences; they felt the pangs of compunction, they gladly received the proclamation of divine forgiveness, and they publicly expressed, in the reception of the baptismal ordinance, their faith in Jesus of Nazareth, as their once crucified, but now risen, Saviour and Lord. This blessed result was accomplished through the instrumentality of Apostolic testimony and by the agency of the Holy Ghost. The outward tokens of their spiritual communion consisted in devout adherence to the teaching of the Apostles; in commemorating the death of Christ; in acts of mutual fellowship and brotherly affection; and in united prayer. Their hearts were loosened from the love of a

present world, and their earthly possessions were freely expended in the relieving the necessities of their poorer brethren. The world around them gazed with admiration, and a mingled feeling of reverence, surprise and awe. Now this record furnishes the specimen of a model church,—and the whole history of Scriptural Christianity is just the fuller development of what essentially existed at the beginning. As the power of truth called forth the opposition of error,—and the purity of holiness elicited the enmity of depraved nature, persecution came on. But the principles of truth naturally tend to expansion and diffusion. When persecuted in one city, the disciples of the new faith fled to another. Without waiting for human appointment (see Acts viii. 1; xi. 19) the followers of Jesus went forth to spread abroad every where the knowledge of the great salvation. As churches were gathered in various places, godly brethren,—qualified by gifts and character, were appointed to preside over the meetings of the assembly, and to exercise pastoral oversight. These were named

elders, or presbyters, bishops or overseers, and their high calling was to act as under-shepherds over the several portions of the flock of Christ. Their position evidently did not, in the least degree, interfere with the Apostolic rule (1 Peter iv. 10), "As every man hath received the gift, *even so* minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." Provision was made, under Apostolic direction, for cases of exigency, as they occurred. Was it requisite that the distribution of the general liberality should be committed to the stewardship of certain responsible individuals? The company of believers looked out, from among themselves, certain suitable brethren to whom this ministry might be happily and with confidence entrusted.

Those who, having been received into church fellowship, afterwards went back into the world, or otherwise brought a reproach on the name of Christ; were either reclaimed, or, if they continued in impenitence, were solemnly excluded from the communion of the faithful. Thus was the Christian community fully con-

stituted under Apostolic superintendence; and, after their departure, the Church was to find the rule of direction in the written word. According to the authority of that word, and by the help of the divine spirit, all difficulties were to be settled and all matters of polity and discipline to be regulated and determined. (Acts xx. 32.)

A company of professed believers—meeting together in the name of their common Lord—waiting upon Him in the ordinances of His own appointment, maintaining purity of communion by the exercise of godly discipline, ministering one to another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God; such an assembly seems to correspond to the scriptural idea of a living church. Had this *divine idea* been apprehended; had this *holy fellowship* been maintained; how much unscriptural effort, how many mischievous assumptions would have found no place within the pale of Christianity. *The Christian church polity is just the natural development and activity of the Christian life.* A few thousand believers, mixed up with the national

mass of the ungodly, and subject to the rule of a worldly government in matters of *spiritual character* and *internal order*, cannot be looked upon as constituting a living church.

Having thus endeavoured to exhibit a brief view of the constitution and polity of the Apostolic churches, I proceed—

II. To point out the leaven of Popery as cleaving, more or less covertly, to the position, polity and ritual of the Anglican Church.

The Anglican Church was not formed on the model of Scripture. In its external constitution it has retained very much of the system to which it succeeded. It has been admirably described, by the Roman Catholic poet, as, when viewed from his standing point,

“The least *deformed* because *reformed* the least.”

The lordly position of its bishops; the unrestrained worldliness of many of its ministers; the total disuse of discipline; the character of its ritual;—all savour of Rome. Diocesan episcopacy has no sanction in the New Testament. The bishops there spoken of, were equivalent to presbyters or elders. This is

evident from Tit. i. 5, 7. Instead of *one* bishop being set over *several* churches, in the Apostolic assemblies, there were *many*, or at least *several bishops* engaged in taking the oversight over *one church*. (See Acts xx. 28; Philip i. 1.) In the Scriptural sense of the terms, bishops, or elders, or presbyters, correspond to such as exercise godly oversight among a body of disciples, walking together in church capacity. There is not the slightest resemblance between the bishops referred to in Scripture, and the lordly prelates of the National Establishment.

The Prayer Book of the Church of England was, as you are aware, compiled from the liturgies of the Romish Church. While, therefore, it contains much that is excellent,—which had come down from the purer days of Christianity,—it will be found, on examination, to have retained much that will not bear the test of Scripture. The principle of compromise on which the Anglican system is based, discovers itself in the discrepancy between the services of the ritual and the generally Scriptural character of the Thirty-nine Articles. Well might one of Eng-

land's greatest patriots assert that, in the National Establishment, there were to be found "a Popish Liturgy, Calvinistic Articles, and an Arminian Clergy." The present divided, distracted condition of the establishment serves manifestly to corroborate this charge. The secessions to Rome, from among the ranks of her own clergy, are evidently most closely connected with the anti-Protestant leaven which inheres in the Liturgy. Those who, in the national system, are most distinguished for clearness of Gospel statement and right-hearted Protestantism, are the very men who dissent most widely from the plain and obvious meaning of those formulæ, which, by the very condition of their office, they are bound habitually to employ. No thoroughly consistent Protestant can, *in his heart*, approve of the phraseology employed in the Book of Common Prayer. He may submit to use it; he may assent to what it is understood to express; he may even do so, with a good conscience, as having persuaded himself that the words are susceptible of another than their obvious meaning; but,

*when hard pressed*, he will acknowledge that he considers the phraseology, in some instances, unguarded, and capable of being employed in the upholding of serious error.

In the Book of Common Prayer the Church of England designates her ministers as *priests*, to whom has been committed authority to forgive sin. This is evident from the use of the term *priest*, as explained by the ordination service, compared with the office for the visitation of the sick. *Regeneration in Baptism* is clearly taught in the Baptismal Service, as explained by the Church Catechism. The indiscriminate reading of the Service for the Dead, over all sorts of characters, enforced by legal requirement and submitted to by the clergy, is obviously calculated to harden the hearts of the ungodly, and to nullify the most solemn threatenings of Scripture against the finally impenitent. These objections to the statements of the Liturgy will not be deemed captious or censorious by any unprejudiced Christian. I have not thought it needful to scrutinize the Service Book, with the view of sifting and

exposing every objectionable statement which may be detected in its forms. The particulars I have specified do not require any *exact search*, any *sifting scrutiny* to discover them. There they stand out in their anti-Protestant, anti-Evangelical character, manifest to every intelligent reader. I say nothing respecting the needless repetitions; the sacerdotal vestments; the signing with the cross; the bowing to the east; the multitude of forms and rites and idle ceremonies utterly at variance with the godly simplicity of the New Testament. But the statements just specified, and the errors founded upon them, are exercising a widespread and deleterious influence over our nominally Protestant England; and every instructed Christian and intelligent patriot must grieve over their disastrous results. On the anti-Protestant statements and practices referred to, the Tractarian takes his stand. You may utterly expel him from the field of Scripture; you may even repulse him from the ground of the Thirty-nine Articles; but you cannot dislodge him from the position furnished by the Prayer

Book. The people are taught to believe that the parish clergyman is the divinely appointed channel through whom they are to receive the forgiveness of their sins; that the waters of the baptismal font *do avail* for the regeneration of the unconscious babe; and, as if to still the whispers of reason and the murmurings of an accusing conscience, the indiscriminate reading of the burial service comes in to cherish the delusion that, whatever may have been the character, through life or at death, the ordinances of the church, duly administered by a divinely constituted priest, have availed to secure, for those within her hallowed pale, a share in the hope of a blessed resurrection.

I need not occupy your time in any elaborate refutation of the errors so clearly sanctioned by the obvious meaning of the phraseology employed in the Prayer Book. Baptismal regeneration, for example, you are well aware, is openly denied by very many of the best men within the pale of the Established Church. The man, who derives his christianity from the New Testament, will search in the pages of that

book without being able to discover there the evidence for so extraordinary and mysterious a dogma. The authority of creeds or counsels, or ecclesiastical writers—whether Origen, Jerome, Chrysostom, or Augustine—is of no weight with a scriptural Christian, except in so far as derived from the testimony of Scripture. The more incredible and mysterious any doctrine is in itself, the more incontestible should be the evidence in its favour. But we may well challenge the advocates of this ecclesiastical invention to point out a single sentence, in the recorded sayings of our Lord or his Apostles, on which they can rest the evidence of its truth. I need hardly remind you that, in Scripture, regeneration is uniformly ascribed to the operation of the spirit of God, in connexion with the believing reception of the Gospel testimony. *To be born of God* is not a mere result of ceremonial observances, brought about without the consciousness or co-operation of the subject of so mighty a change. Every *regenerated* soul is a *saved* soul, and, by the fruits of holiness and the attractive graces of

the Divine Spirit, is the reality of the change to be manifested and proved. Such a doctrine,—as maintained by Tractarian teachers,—is at variance with the whole spirit of Scripture, and in contradiction to all fact and experience. What authority can reasonably demand our assent to so monstrous a theory. Immense multitudes of our swarming population have been baptized, in their infancy, by their parochial clergyman. We have baptized drunkards—baptized adulterers—baptized infidels—baptized murderers. All these classes of character have, according to this doctrine, been regenerated in baptism. They have all passed from death unto life. The consecrated water has been sprinkled over them. The seal of the cross has been impressed upon their foreheads. In spite of their words of blasphemy and deeds of crime, we are required to regard them as having been made, in baptism, children of God, members of Christ, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven. So, at least, says the Catechism, and, all who adhere to the standards of the Establishment, seem

bound in consistency to hold and teach accordingly.

But it may be said that this regeneration is asserted only of such, as, *by means of their godfathers and godmothers*, have publicly confessed Christ and engaged themselves unto the Lord. But by what principle of Scripture, on what ground of reason, were the sponsors warranted in assuming so weighty an obligation? Can any one sinful human being become the surety for another, in reference to that which must be a *personal* matter between each individual and God? Even in reference to the things of this life, we are assured by the wise man, "that he that hateth suretyship is sure." And here we have the most hazardous of all suretyships. The whole system of godfathers and godmothers involves a practical denial of the doctrines of grace, and exposes the ordinance with which it is most unscripturally mixed up, to the scoffs of the unbeliever. Are there any here present who have ever dared to assume so tremendous a responsibility? Have you found yourselves able to fulfil it? Have you reflected

upon the solemn mockery of "*promising* and *vowing*" to accomplish what was utterly beyond your power to effect? Confess your grievous sin before a heart-searching God, and earnestly put forth your most strenuous efforts to keep others from falling into so fearful an entanglement. There are not very many among the superstitions of the Papacy, that seem to me more manifestly opposed to the united testimony of Scripture and reason than is the whole system of Infant Baptism—as practised in the National Establishment.

When the priest at the altar mutters the words of consecration, and then avows that that which, a few moments before, was merely a wafer, has been mysteriously changed into a God—you appeal to the testimony of the senses as sufficient to establish the grossness of the lie. Transubstantiation needs only to be stated in order to be rejected. It carries its own refutation along with it. One might be led to conceive that Satan—in the concocting of that audacious fiction, had been making the experiment as to how far he might venture to go in

attempting to befool the degraded reason of his victims. The doctrine of the Church Catechism is a doctrine of the same school. It contradicts Scripture, it insults reason, it sets fact and experience at defiance. The air of mystery that surrounds the whole system, of which this dogma forms an important bulwark, may have its attraction for those who have never apprehended the essential distinction between the dreams of a fanciful theology and the *substantial verities of the Gospel*; but if, through grace, we have been enabled to receive Christ, as our only teacher, and have been taught to test every thing by the law and by the testimony; then, in true loyalty to our only Lord, shall we refuse to submit our necks to the yoke of human impositions. We shall recal to our remembrance the words of Jesus, when he said; "In vain do they worship me teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Christianity is not a system of philosophic speculations, poetic sentiments, or baseless imaginations. It contains an authentic discovery of the character and will of God. It is based on facts. It addresses

itself, primarily, to the understanding and the conscience,—to our hopes and our fears,—that it may win the heart for God. Its mystery is founded on its history. Its facts furnish the basis of all its appeals. Its records contain the narrative of events the most stupendous, memorable, and affecting that ever were enacted on the theatre of our world. Its heavenly doctrines, its enlightening precepts, its gladdening promises, its prophetic announcements are all most closely connected with the details of its history. They all derive their authority from Him who left the bosom of the Father, became a man, lived and suffered, and died and rose again, that He might accomplish the redemption of all who trust in Him. As a follower of Christ, I am not at liberty to receive any religious doctrine, precept or ordinance, except what the authority of the Great Teacher hath taught and enjoined.

But let us look a little more closely at the tendencies of Tractarian doctrine. All error comes from the father of lies. In what way does the fiction of baptismal regeneration and

the views therewith connected, subserve the interests of his kingdom? Are we to regard these views in the light of harmless, speculative errors? Have they no deeply important practical consequences? Let us see.

*First.* Such assumptions are manifestly calculated to elevate the clerical order, and to promote the designs of the Anglican priesthood, in seeking to domineer over the consciences of their fellow-men. *They* claim to be regarded as the veritable successors of the Apostles. *They* arrogate to themselves the dignity of being the only authorized teachers of Christianity in our land. This claim they substantiate, not by the Apostolic character of their doctrine, nor by the lofty purity of their lives; but, by maintaining that, through episcopal ordination having been conferred upon them, they have thence derived a mysterious virtue and been endued with divine authority.

*They may* or *they may not* be acquainted with what the Scriptures teach. *They may* or *they may not* have been visited by the illuminating energy of the divine spirit. *They may* or *they*

*may not* maintain a walk of separateness from the contaminating influence of an evil world. All these are *secondary* matters. The seal of ordination has been impressed upon them. The sublime power of forgiving sins has been conferred upon their sacred persons. It is not needful that they should be *holy*, it is enough that they be *consecrated*. There may be nothing, about them, in intellect, in heart, in character or in conduct, fitted, in anywise, to elevate them above other men. There may be no ground, in reason or in Scripture, upon which they may claim the reverence of their hearers, but an unseen glory, a supernatural dignity, of right, belongs to them. They may be ignorant triflers, the votaries of fashion, the frequenters of the ball-room,—still are they to be revered, throughout the length and breadth of Protestant England, as the only competent religious instructors of our swarming and ever-augmenting population. Amazing arrogance that such claims should be preferred! Deplorable infatuation that multitudes should submit to them! Strangest of all, that such as-

assumptions should be deferred to, on the unproved assertions of the very parties most interested in upholding them!

Only think of the spiritual condition of such of our rural districts as are under the domination of tractarian clergymen. Their only authorized instructor impresses, on the minds of his hearers, that, by means of the ordinance of baptism—rightly performed,—their babes have become the children of the living God. Who does not see what a weight of importance this figment attaches to the position of a clergyman? He may have very little else to recommend him to their affection, reverence or esteem. He may be too ignorant to teach, and too indolent to learn. But the hands of the Bishop have been laid upon his head. He can read the formulæ prescribed in the prayer-book. He can sprinkle the water on the infant's brow. He can attend to all the instituted ceremonies which the Romish Apostasy—as it declined in England—left, as a legacy, to the system which succeeded in its place. Neither in parents, or in child, in sponsor or in priest, may there be

any right knowledge of God, any true faith in Christ, any conviction of sin, any penitence on account of past transgression,—yet, in spite of all these essential deficiencies,—if we take the words of the Prayer Book in their obvious meaning, the mighty transformation has been effected. The child may grow up in ignorance and sin; but when, in after years, urged to consider the solemn declaration of the Saviour respecting the necessity of the new birth, the poor victim of priestly delusion, strong in the satisfaction of carnal security, may confidently reply that, *in and by the act of baptism*, he was born again, and that the authority of his Catechism warrants him in considering himself as already “a child of God.” And thus, more especially in our rural districts, the dark cloud of Popish superstition may gather, in thickening gloom, over the minds of our nominally Protestant people. The various evangelical bodies, outside the Establishment, may ply their unsanctioned and rejected labours. All such teachers are regarded as unwarranted and daring intruders into the rightful domain

of the clergyman. The poor people who are fearless enough to venture to listen to the zealous home-missionary, or to the unaccredited itinerant, must expect persecution as their reward. Now, surely, this is a sore, a deadly evil. Can the fact be denied that multitudes of the national clergy are the enemies of the Cross of Christ? Under their pernicious influence may not numbers pass into eternity trusting in a lie? And, while the laws of the Establishment continue as they are, if a true servant of Christ be located as clergyman of an adjacent parish, he dare not overstep the limits of his own ecclesiastical territory, in order to proclaim, among the parishioners of a tractarian teacher, the gospel of the grace of God. Such is the constitution of the Church Establishment; and yet, in the face of such unscriptural teachings and anti-Christian regulations, can even *Christian men* continue to boast of their Apostolic church, and to dread, with instinctive aversion, the stroke that would set them free. How comes it to pass that the truly enlightened ministers of the Establish-

ment submit to sanction so much that they cannot possibly approve? Do not the doctrines and practices, we have just been exposing, do violence to *their* most cherished convictions and holiest aspirations for the spread of genuine Christianity in our land? Is the Gospel of so little value in their eyes,—that, for the sake of respectability and influence, or even *for the sake of a large sphere of service*,—they lend the support of their names and the weight of their Christian character to the upholding of Romanist superstitions? Has the blood of our martyrs been shed in vain? Did numbers of our Protestant forefathers resign their liberties and their lives rather than surrender Protestant truth, and shall those who have been set for the defence of the Gospel and the promotion of evangelical purity, prefer the standing and temporalities of a national Establishment to the unfettered maintenance of a Scriptural Christianity.

I rejoice that, within her own pale, some bold men are rising up to demand a revision and amendment of the Liturgy. But there is no

human likelihood of *any* Government, conservative or liberal, acceding to such a requirement. The Anglican system *was founded* and *must be kept together* on the principle of mutual compromise. As long as the two leading ecclesiastical parties remained in a state of comparative indifference, all might go on smoothly; but, while either or both continue thoroughly in earnest, the very principles on which the establishment was originally founded necessitate internal discord, and naturally tend to produce secession or disruption. The progress of Romanism *within* the Church of England ought to be viewed with most serious alarm by every friend to Protestant truth. It becomes such to make known their request unto God, and earnestly to pray that He "who maketh the wrath of man to praise Him," and who "from seeming evil ever educeth good," would overrule the recent advances of Popery, so as to promote the extension of His Gospel. It is better that error should boldly declare itself, than that it should accomplish its ruinous results like the "pestilence that walketh in darkness." The

extravagant pretensions of Tetzal mightily helped onwards the force of Luther's indignant protestations. Darkness has ever preceded the dawning of the morning light. So was it, everywhere, at the period of the Reformation. It was so particularly in Scotland. Priesthood had filled up the measure of her abominations; the atheist and the scorner had profaned the altar; the blood of the saints had polluted the soil. But the licentiousness of monk, and abbot, and cardinal, was to defy heaven's purity no longer. A low murmuring, of fearful portent, like that which foretells the coming of the earthquake, was heard, betokening the outburst of a nation's wrath, and soon the awakened land re-echoed with the shout of an instructed and emancipated people. There might be much that was merely of an earthly character in the motives by which many, who aided the Scottish Reformation, were actuated and impelled. Human passion and selfishness mingled, it may be, very considerably in the efforts directed against the ancient hierarchy; but the past history and present condition of my native

country tell, most emphatically, how much more thorough and effective was the reformation effected there, than that which took place in the southern part of the island. The name of John Knox will be held in everlasting remembrance. His memory is blessed. His enlightened countrymen continue to regard him as, under God, the great instrument of delivering thousands from the fetters of superstition, and of leading them into the light of the Gospel. And, Oh! what an inestimable service did he thus accomplish. The dreams of superstition—like the soothing, but deleterious opiate—may lull the troubled spirit to temporary repose; but they cannot speak permanent peace to the convicted, agitated, and trembling penitent. The self-inflicted penance, and the priestly absolution operate, on the mind of the conscious sinner, like the oil cast upon the troubled sea, stilling for a brief season the restless tossing of the waters, only to give place again to the re-awakened fury of the storm. Let us dread, therefore, the prospect of our country going back to Popery.

The Reformation in England was lacking in completeness at first, and has been left unfinished even to the present day. The leaven of Romanism originally cleaving to the ritual of the establishment has been suffered to remain. Neither is there the slightest likelihood of its being purged away, inasmuch as, by the very constitution of the national system, no alteration can be made in her formulæ—not *one* objectionable expression can be corrected without the authority of an Act of Parliament.

If the magnitude of the evils, resulting from the diffusion of Tractarian opinions, be rightly felt, we shall be led to enquire how the mischief may be most successfully opposed. We answer, *in the first place*, through the instrumentality of earnest, habitual, and believing prayer; *secondly*, by consistency of Christian character; *in the third place*, by temperate but decided testimony to those truths which constitute the essentials of the Gospel.

Let us ever beware of involving, in the charge of semi-Popery, those eminent servants of our common Master who still continue in

connection with the National Church. These men of God detest Tractarian assumptions as heartily as we do. Let our prayer for them be that they may be liberated from the bondage of unscriptural formulæ. Why should the adherents of Protestant Christianity be harrassed and hampered by the domination of a demi-Popish hierarchy? Why should such men as Stowel, and Tait, and Villiers, lend the sanction of their honored names to a system which still retains some of the very dregs of Romanism? There are in connection with the establishment, men of eminent gifts, of unblemished Christian character, of tender and gracious spirit, of high and holy affections, of devoted zeal, of large and catholic charity, in whom the deadening worldliness of the system has not been permitted to overpower the energy of the divine life; but whose labours are impeded, whose success is hindered, whose best affections are thwarted, by their subjection to the control of their ecclesiastical superiors. Should the evangelical clergy secede from the establishment, the best people within the pale

of the National Church, would adhere to them in their secession. The law of toleration, and the force of public opinion, would, by the overruling providence of God, in spite of obsolete and oppressive canons, secure for them the free exercise of their ministry. The very prejudices of the multitude would secure for such labourers, a readier door of access than Nonconformist missionaries could expect to find. The national system would be drained of its very life-blood. The ceremonial formalist, the clerical gentleman, the literary man in orders, and most, perhaps, of those who occupy the places of highest dignity, would still cleave to that which they denominate their *Apostolic Church*. The self-righteous, the careless, the indifferent, and the infidel—all who belong in spirit to a Christless world—might still find, within its consecrated walls, their snug, and suited, and attractive resting place. But the life, the spirit, the earnestness, and the effort would be with the men of the secession. Once liberated from the trammels of State control, they might set at defiance the

fulminations of episcopal domination. Such a secession would bring blessings to the clergy—blessings to their hearers—blessings to the church of God at large—blessings to the world. It might serve to put to shame the scoffs of infidelity, by demonstrating that there are some who verily believe *that which they preach*. It might lead many enquiring minds to examine into the principles which had issued in so remarkable a result. Many dark places of our land would be visited by a beam of unwonted illumination. The whole country would be moved. Thoughts that have been occupying the minds of many reflecting Christians, would find vent and utterance. The days of Puritanism—the successful career of Whitfield might be enacted over again. If those servants of Christ are able, even now, with profit and power, to set forth the gospel of the grace of God, their new position would place them on a far higher vantage ground for effectually doing so. The proofs of their sincerity would be more irresistible; the unworldly character of their motives far more manifest; and the inward consciousness

of their freedom would invigorate the tone of their appeals and exhortations. In many cases, may we not expect, that the monotonous drawling of the parish clerk, and the meaningless Amen of the listless congregation, would give place to the urgency of fervent supplication, and the heartfelt exclamation, "What must we do to be saved!"

III.—I now proceed, in the third place, to offer some observations on the Popery of Protestantism, as affecting certain other Protestant bodies, not connected with the Anglican church.

*Nonconformity*, in England, may be said to have been coeval with the Reformation from Popery; but it reached its period of greatest outward development during the period of the Commonwealth. Those who had all along been dissatisfied with the semi-popish character of the established ritual, obtained, during that remarkable portion of our history, the chief power in the councils of the state. Genuine Nonconformists, such as the admirable Robinson, did not profess to have attained to a

perfect knowledge of the truth : but urged those who listened to their instruction, to test everything for themselves. "He bewailed the condition of the reformed churches, who were come to a period in religion, and would go no further than the instruments of their reformation." "He declared himself verily persuaded that the Lord had more truth yet to break forth out of His holy word ;" and exhorted his hearers, "if God should reveal any thing to them, by any other instrument, that they should be as ready to receive it as ever they had been to learn any truth by his own ministry." These were noble sentiments, and it becomes Protestant-Nonconformists of every name to seek to act in accordance with them.

When we come down to the period of the Restoration, the triumph of Nonconformity becomes far brighter than it had been, even during the day of its brief prosperity. It is now nearly 200 years ago, since 2,000 of the best men, *in the then establishment*, surrendered their benefices because they could not, conscientiously, assent "to all and everything"

contained in the Book of Common Prayer. One cannot reflect on the conduct of those noble-minded sufferers, without sentiments of gratitude and veneration. The Howes, the Baxters, the Owens, and the Henrys—those illustrious names that adorn the period we are speaking of—have turned the by-word, *Puritan*, into a term of everlasting honor. The savour of their memories has been embalmed in the record of their holy lives ; and we may, even now, hold converse with their elevated spirits, through the reading of their laborious and edifying writings. History, that record of human crime and of divine retribution, presents to us, here and there, a section of more attractive character ; and no brighter page can be found in the annals of our country, than that which narrates the toils and the sufferings, the self-denying privations, and the unbending rectitude of Puritanism. While the very names of their royal persecutors give rise to mingled sentiments of indignation and contempt, and serve to illustrate that true saying, that the Most High sometimes elevates, to the pinnacle

of royal dignity, "*the basest of men,*"—the names of the once despised and persecuted Puritans call forth, from every rightly-constituted and well-instructed mind, sentiments of the liveliest admiration. We think of them as second only to the prophets, apostles, and martyrs of an earlier era, and look forward to the time when we may be permitted to hold high and unhindered intercourse with them, in that world where the oppression of the tyrant, and the servility of the sycophant are unknown. I do not mean to imply that they were faultless. They were, like other men, the subjects of prejudice and error. There are spots in the sun. They knew and deplored their own manifold deficiencies. They clung to the cross of Christ as their only refuge. They believed, therefore they spake. They *so* believed, that, at the risk of every thing, naturally dear to them, they determined to act in the spirit of that testimony, "If it be right, in the sight of God, to hearken unto you, more than unto God, judge ye."

Now, how shall we, who occupy a position

of separation from the establishment, profit by the example of those who were ejected at the period referred to? Shall we follow their footsteps, *according to the letter*, or *according to the Spirit*? Shall we most act in accordance with their high principles, by making their opinions our standard of doctrine and discipline, or by acting according to that divine injunction, "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good?" The latter course is the only one that can secure our purity and progress. It may be imagined by some here present that, inasmuch, as they do not belong to any *established form* of Protestantism, therefore, they are not in danger of retaining any admixture of Popish error, either in discipline or in doctrine. This were a sad self-delusion. There may be a *traditional* Presbyterianism; a *traditional* Independency: a *Nonconformity* to the religion of the State which is not, therefore, a CONFORMITY to the religion of the New Testament.

The errors of Popery are the natural produce of the human heart. *Devised* by Satan, and *imposed* by priests, they were, likewise, readily

received by the people at large. They are exquisitely adapted to the taste of a sinful and sin-loving being, who desires to find peace at a distance from God, and who would gladly substitute external observances in place of that faith which purifies the heart.

The constitution of Nonconformist churches does not admit of their being made the objects of the same pointed and specific animadversion as may be legitimately directed against such a system as that of the Anglican Church ; but we may briefly hint at some of the evils to which such bodies appear more especially exposed. Popery unblushingly exalts her traditions to an equality with the authority of Scripture, and, against such an assumption, Scriptural Christians unite in lifting up their indignant protestations ; but, maintaining, as we do, that Scripture is the only standard, may we not, practically, fall far short of carrying out this fundamental principle? Are we seeking to walk as bound by no human creeds, no time-honoured observances, no distinguished names, no leading favourite teachers? Are

we making the testimony of inspired men the rule by which to try every thing we hear, and every thing we hold, as religious truth? Is *ours* merely a *hereditary faith*, or, in the most momentous of all interests, do we steadfastly refuse to admit any doctrine or requirement merely on the authority of our fallible fellow men.

Again, Popery and Tractarianism uphold a *priestly* order, manifestly derogatory to the glory of the Redeemer, as the great High Priest of our profession. We repudiate such assumptions. We regard them as the preposterous and untenable claims of an impudent imposture. But is there no such thing as *clerical assumption* anywhere to be found within the ranks of Nonconformity? Is undue dependence upon the efficacy of external ordinances confined to the adherents of Popery or Puseyism? Whatever necessarily tends to impede the varied ministry of the several members of the body of Christ; whatever leads believers to devolve *upon a separate class* such service as legitimately belongs to all Christians,

according to their several capacities, opportunities, and positions; whatever, in short, obstructs obedience to the Apostolic rule, "As every man hath received the gift *even so* minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God," contains the germ of evil.

In treating of this matter, it is needful to guard against extremes on either side. According to Scripture, we seem warranted to expect that, in every scripturally constituted body of believers—quickenened and animated by the Spirit of God—there would be found varied gifts and capacities for service. Some might, happily, take their place as public expositors of the Word of God; others might feel that *their* place, in the public assembly, was that of those who silently enjoyed the exhortations or instructions of their more gifted brethren. Some might be qualified for ruling with diligence; while others found their position to be of a more retiring character. But let the gifts and graces of God's Spirit have free course every where; and let no dim reflection of the dogma of Apostolical succession be allowed to

interfere with the simplicity of New Testament ministrations. Let character and qualifications for service only have *free scope*, and they will be sure to make their way, and to find a sphere for profitable occupation. Service among the people of God, or in the spread of the Gospel among the ungodly, needs not to be bolstered up by untenable pretensions or ceremonial observances.

Let not the servants of Christ seek influence and distinction by imitating the arrogance of a dominant establishment—by the assumption of unscriptural titles, or any thing resembling sacerdotal robes; but, by purity of doctrine, and godly consistency of conduct, let them commend themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. There is nothing to prevent those who minister, in separation from the established system, from excelling in every spiritual qualification for service. They may not equal the clergy of the Anglican Church in that which might commend them to the thoughtless worldlings, among either the upper or lower classes of society. They cannot boast of episcopal ordination; they

have no influence, it may be, among the great ones of the earth. But in love to Christ, in confidence in God, in spirituality of mind, in acquaintance with the truth, in separation from the world, and in every other fitting requisite for service, the path of advancement is as open to the meanest village pastor in the land, as it is to the dignitaries of York or Canterbury. The period is almost gone by when mere titular dignity was enough to ensure respect and veneration. Men have found out that "a *Doctor*" may be very little "*apt to teach*," and even a "*Right Reverend*" very little deserving of our reverence. An ecclesiastic may be "very venerable," according to his title, and yet possess very small claim to our veneration, on account of his acquirements or character. A wise man seeks to *be* rather than to *seem*. It is a fact, familiar to all readers of ecclesiastical history, that in proportion as true godliness diminished throughout Christendom, ecclesiastical titles were ostentatiously multiplied. These latter seem to have originated partly, in an effort to supply a formal substitute for a reality

that had departed ; and, partly in an ambitious desire for self aggrandisement on the part of the clergy. They were unknown during the purest ages of the Church ; they came in among other corruptions of the middle ages ; and no section of the Church would lose anything by laying them aside, and thus consigning them to the source from which they originally came. Such a system as the Apostasy of Rome cannot possibly flourish without them ; but they are rather an incumbrance than a help to a body of Christians constituted on the principles of the New Testament. Let the respect which is paid to those, who devote themselves to the Gospel ministry, be the genuine expression of that regard which, superiority in knowledge, in gifts, and in service, will be found to produce in the hearts of right-minded believers.

On the other hand, we advocate no system of ecclesiastical radicalism. Thankful submission to those who, intelligently and graciously, are seeking to exercise pastoral oversight, will ever be found among those who are walking in the Spirit. Where can we find a man of

God who makes manifest his fitness for spiritual service, who proclaims the truth of God, and lives in accordance with what he habitually teaches, who can complain that his services are rejected? Grace and gift ever find their proper places; and the general tendency of believers is to attach *too much* rather than *too little* importance to the service of qualified labourers.

IV.—I now come to notice the deteriorating influence upon doctrinal truth, exerted even by the most modified principles of Popery.

By far the most serious effect of Romanist error is the tendency which it has to undermine the foundation of a sinner's acceptance in the sight of a holy God. How complex, how full of uncertainty is the representation furnished by Popish theologians of the way of salvation! How exquisitely simple is the doctrine of Scripture! The testimony of God, concerning Christ, provides a foundation of confidence for every one who receives it. He tells us of a remedy adequate to our disease—of a supply suited to

our deep necessities. He presents to us a perfect righteousness, a spotless sacrifice, an ever-living High Priest, and an ever-prevalent intercessor. He has taken into his own hand the work of effecting our complete redemption. He swears by himself that all who flee for refuge to the Saviour, who trust in His all-perfect and accomplished sacrifice, shall receive the forgiveness of all their iniquities, and become heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ Jesus. This divine testimony is to be the foundation of our peace. The poor deluded Papist trusts in his penances, extreme unction, and priestly absolution. (O that their eyes were enlightened to perceive their delusion!) But may not professed Protestants also be found resting on a sandy foundation? May not some be trusting in their outward consistency of character? Some in their acts of benevolence and charity? Some in their exercises of devotion? Some in their repentance? Some in their faith? instead of putting their confidence only in that sure foundation which God hath laid in Zion.

I do not mean, for a moment, to imply that there can be true, genuine, comfort, apart from the possession of faith and holiness. Without faith, it is impossible to please God. Without faith, we cannot receive Christ for salvation. Still, it is not *our faith* which constitutes the ground of our acceptance before God. We cannot trust in our good works, for they are imperfect and defiled; we cannot trust in our gracious feelings, for they also, are, mingled with impurity; we cannot trust in our repentance, for that also needs to be repented of; we cannot trust in our faith, for, although genuine, it may be weak. We do not, perfectly and uninterruptedly, trust, with unwavering confidence, in the promises of Jehovah. The tremblings of unbelief *will* mingle themselves even with the confidence of a sincere and earnest faith. Were our faith always in perfect exercise, we should never be the subjects of a single anxious feeling. We should, every moment, be, experimentally, as ready to be shot through the heart, as to take, when hungry, our necessary food. We should never

yield to the feeling of vexation or disappointment, on account of anything happening to ourselves, or to those with whom we may be connected. Now, let us *honestly* ask our own hearts, are any of us, habitually, in such a state of spiritual attainment? If we were, still we would not glory in our faith, nor make our boast in our confidence, but in Christ, the Rock of ages.

God is ever telling us, in his word, that Christ has done all—that his sacrifice is complete—that the salvation has been accomplished. He has sent forth his servants to announce that the feast has been prepared—that the table has been furnished, and that whosoever will may come and take their welcome place at the banquet, which his own unbought grace has provided. Men would ever be seeking to *add* something to the work of Christ. Hence the false refuges provided by the teachers of Romanist superstition; hence the legality of an unscriptural Protestantism; hence the dim and misty apprehensions of many whose hearts do yet cleave to Jesus. Do not many of us find

it to be one of the chief difficulties, in the Christian life, to keep down the suggestions of our unbelieving hearts, and to hang, like little children, in confiding faith on the arm of an almighty and gracious Saviour.

In conclusion, let me remind you, my brethren, of the responsibility connected with any measure of enlightenment respecting the true character of the Church of Christ. We may be fully satisfied that the views which we have been led to adopt, in reference to the spirituality of Christ's kingdom, are more in accordance with the principles of the New Testament, than those entertained by others of our fellow-christians; but let us ever keep in mind, that it does not therefore follow that we ourselves are more spiritually minded—more alive to God—more zealous for his glory—more devoted to his service, than those who may be connected with worldly systems. In love, in zeal, in prayerfulness, and in purity, such Christians may be very far in advance of us. Differing from them, as we conscientiously do, in regard to their ecclesiastical position, it

becomes us to guard against the danger of disparaging their attainments in grace and knowledge—nay, let us ever be ready, with the candour of true humility, to acknowledge, in many instances, their superiority to ourselves. And never let us forget that the rejection of error is of little value, except as connected with the heart-felt reception of the truth. Have we received Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ of God? Have we seen his glory? Has his spiritual beauty attracted our affection, and won for him the devotion of our hearts? Then let the love of Christ displace within us the love of a vain and unsatisfying world, and let us seek in temper, in disposition, in spirit, in conduct, in deportment, to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour. *Activity, either physical or mental, is the condition of pleasurable existence. Activity in good is the condition of holy enjoyment.* Christianity frowns upon nothing but what is really injurious to our truest well-being. It calls out into active occupation all our mental faculties; it bids us be occupied in our thoughts and in our actions, with the true,

the honourable, the just and the lovely. Whatsoever is truly excellent, whatsoever is of good report, it bids us habitually to pursue.

There is danger lest, in the warmth of earnest controversy with the errors of Romanism or Puseyism, we should neglect to cultivate a tender solemnity of spirit. Let us guard, my friends, against this danger. We may cherish a holy indignation against wilful deceivers, but, on behalf of deceived souls, it becomes us to weep as Jesus did over rebellious and rejecting Jerusalem. We may not be called publicly to expound the errors of the Papacy—we may be unskilled to wield the weapons of controversy, but let our secret cries ascend up to Him, who heareth the sighing of the contrite heart, in intercession for those who have been turned aside into the paths of error and superstition.

Let me ask, are there any here present who as yet have never obeyed the Gospel? That Gospel is a *solemn*, as well as a *gracious* reality. Take heed lest, in that coming day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be laid bare, you be

found to have incurred the terrible consequences of dying in impenitent rejection of an offered Saviour. The poor, ignorant, deluded victim of priestly assumption will then rise in the judgment against you. What extremest folly, to be glorying in the name of Protestant, while that name only serves to enhance the magnitude of your guilt. It is well that you should repudiate the arrogance of Priestcraft in whatever quarter it appear; it is well that you should apprehend the groundlessness of the foundations on which such assumptions rest; it is well that you should seek the diffusion of evangelical Christianity; but, above all, it is well, it is absolutely needful, that you should receive and embrace Christ for the salvation of your own souls.

The notion of a state of purgatorial flame succeeding to the present life, and preparing the partially defiled spirit for the purity of heaven, is a fond and fabulous delusion. But, oh, how overwhelmingly momentous are the discoveries of Revelation, in regard to the future condition of those who die unsaved. These

discoveries constitute the most terribly affecting of all the disclosures of the Bible. Most of us, perhaps all of us, assent to the doctrine that asserts the hopelessness of the prospect that awaits the finally impenitent, but most of us only half believe it. To assent to this doctrine, as part of an orthodox creed, is *one* thing; to receive it, as a terrible reality, is altogether a different matter. Of all the doctrines of revelation, I readily admit that, in our present state of being, it is the most difficult to apprehend and yet to be happy while apprehending it. I, therefore, do not wonder at the efforts which, in every age of speculative activity, from the time of Origen downwards, have been made to explain away the solemn testimonies of the Scriptures in relation to so overwhelming a disclosure. During the whole of my Christian course—for more than a quarter of a century—this part of revealed truth has, at intervals, most deeply exercised my mind; and, as I have looked forth on some scene of natural loveliness, and felt, within me, the thrill of delight, and the glow of admiration,

as I gazed on the undulating vallies, the fruitful meadows, the silver rivulets, rejoicing under the amplitude of a cloudless firmament, while every sense has been regaled by the beauty and magnificence of the landscape, reflecting, as a mirror, the glory of the Creator; the thought of the prospect, awaiting the finally impenitent, has cast its dark shadow over the sun-lit scene, and prompted the earnest aspiration, "Oh, that it were possible for every child of humanity to be brought to the enjoyment of the smile of a pardoning God." This doctrine has been to me, I confess,

The one sad recollection, the sorrow that throws  
Its dark shade alike o'er our joys and our woes.

It has sometimes come over me so as to embitter my necessary food; it has deprived me of rest during the silent watches of the night; and, as I have gazed upon the happy countenances of my children, the thought of the possibility of any one of them being consigned to the place of despair, has made my heart sink within me, and filled me with inexpressible horror. Let me take this opportunity of

speaking my mind freely on a point of such overwhelming magnitude. On the one hand, I would remonstrate against that unhallowed boldness, which, in opposition to the plain testimony of Scripture, would set the mass of the ungodly free from the terrors and restraints connected with the prospect of an undone eternity; and, on the other hand, I would object to that flippancy and levity, that harshness and heartlessness, with which the scriptural doctrine is sometimes maintained and defended. No man is fitted to deal with this doctrine, in the way of controversy, who does not feel that it is, of all the discoveries of revelation, the most terribly affecting. However it may be with us hereafter, no man of a gracious spirit can, *during this life*, rejoice in the hopeless ruin of the ungodly, but rather would seek to cherish the feelings of the great Apostle, who declared that, by reason of the condition of his unbelieving countrymen, he had "great heaviness, and continual sorrow in his heart." Well may we ask ourselves, are we seriously affected with what we find written in the Word? and,

if so, why is it that the mere ordinary details of business, the success of our earthly speculations, the thousand matters of comparatively trivial importance, should so occupy and fill our hearts? Oh, if there be no warrant to expect forgiveness after this shadowy life is over (and such is the plain and obvious meaning of the divine testimonies), if the issues of everlasting things hang upon the brittle thread of our earthly existence, how deep ought to be our compassion for those who are exposed to the danger of eternal death! how intense our desire that sinners might be saved! how urgent the motive why every one, who hears the invitations of the Gospel, should repent and turn unto the Lord, for he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

If you have as yet no scriptural evidence leading you to conclude that you have passed from death unto life, surely, in that case, the one thing that should occupy your thoughts, and interest your hearts, is the question of *your personal interest* in the great salvation. The

Bible is imbued with a self-evidencing power. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Read and ponder the sayings of Scripture. Cry unto God for the quickening and enlightening energy of the Divine Spirit. Make secret confession before him of your manifold ungodliness, and rest not until you are able to say, from heartfelt conviction, "Lord, to whom can we go? *Thou* hast the words of eternal life." You may tell me, perhaps, that you cannot convert yourselves, and that you must just wait until the energy descend upon you from on high. This is either sadly to misunderstand or carelessly to pervert the Gospel message. By nature, you are at a distance from God, and at enmity against him. In that state you cannot be happy. You carry the elements of misery within your own bosoms. The sinfulness of a fallen nature, the guilt of actual and accumulated offences, the enmity that *will not*, and the moral helplessness that *cannot* please God, all unite to exclude you from his presence; but the words addressed to Israel of old, may be proclaimed as words

of encouragement to every one within hearing of the Gospel message—"Thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help found." The grace that saves may enter the heart of a sinner so instantaneously, that he passes, consciously and at once, from a state of alienation into a state of acceptance, but it may also gradually dawn upon his spirit, like the streaks of the morning light. To believe in a statement is to think it true, and to believe in a person is to confide in his faithfulness. The Son of God hath made such an atonement, that whosoever will, is invited to believe in him and be saved. The heartfelt reception of Jesus of Nazareth, as all our salvation, is the faith that saves us. See, then, that the precious blood of the Lamb that was slain, be your *only* foundation of confidence. Plead that blood against Satan—plead it in the presence of an infinitely holy God. Abhor the thought of anything that would interfere with the perfectness of the great, propitiatory sacrifice. Venture your all upon it. Thus will you learn the depth of your own ruin—the boundless

character of divine love—the measureless value of the great salvation. Thus will you prove, in your own experience, the meaning of that Scripture—“Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” The Bible will be precious to your heart, because it unfolds the attractive glories of the Saviour. The hour of secret retirement and divine communion will be refreshing, and gladdening to your spirit. The world, with its unsatisfying pleasures, will lose its charm; and it will then become your high calling, privilege and joy, to seek “to purify yourself from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God.”

# H Y M N S

FROM THE ITALIAN OF DR. C. MAPEI,

*Formerly Professor of Theology in the Church of Rome.*

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1.

JEHOVAH ! Sun of Splendour,  
Diffusing from above,  
In radiance soft and tender,  
The beams of grace and love ;  
Thy rod Thou wilt not brandish  
Over Thine erring child,  
When overwhelmed with anguish,  
Because by sin beguiled.

2.

I am a tainted offspring  
From a polluted source ;  
Within me truth and error  
Contend with mighty force.  
My wayward flesh rejecteth  
The warnings of thy word,  
And drags my struggling spirit  
Away from Thee, my Lord.

3.

God of all consolation,  
Of life and faith the spring,  
Deliverance and salvation  
Thine arm alone can bring.  
Thy matchless grace admiring,  
I gaze upon the tree,  
And see thy son expiring  
In agony for me !

4.

His blood so freely flowing  
Implores Thee to forgive :  
His blood proclaims the mercy  
That bids the sinner live.  
No more I mourn in sadness :  
To my *believing* heart  
Love, liberty, and gladness,  
Thy Spirit doth impart.

1.

SAVIOUR Divine ! my Hope and Trust,  
In Thee alone I make my boast;  
Thy blood hath cleansed my guilt away;  
In life and death, Thou art my stay.

2.

Fainting with thirst, and worn with toil,  
I trod the desert's burning soil;  
The heat oppressed my aching head,  
Till at thy cross I found a shade.

3.

As orient beams, at dawn of day,  
In golden light the clouds array,  
So now Thy gracious rays illumine  
My spirit, once engulfed in gloom.

4.

And now on Thee, in all my ways,  
I seek to fix my constant gaze;  
In heaven above—on earth below,  
Apart from Thee no joy I know.

H. C.