



Bodleian Libraries

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

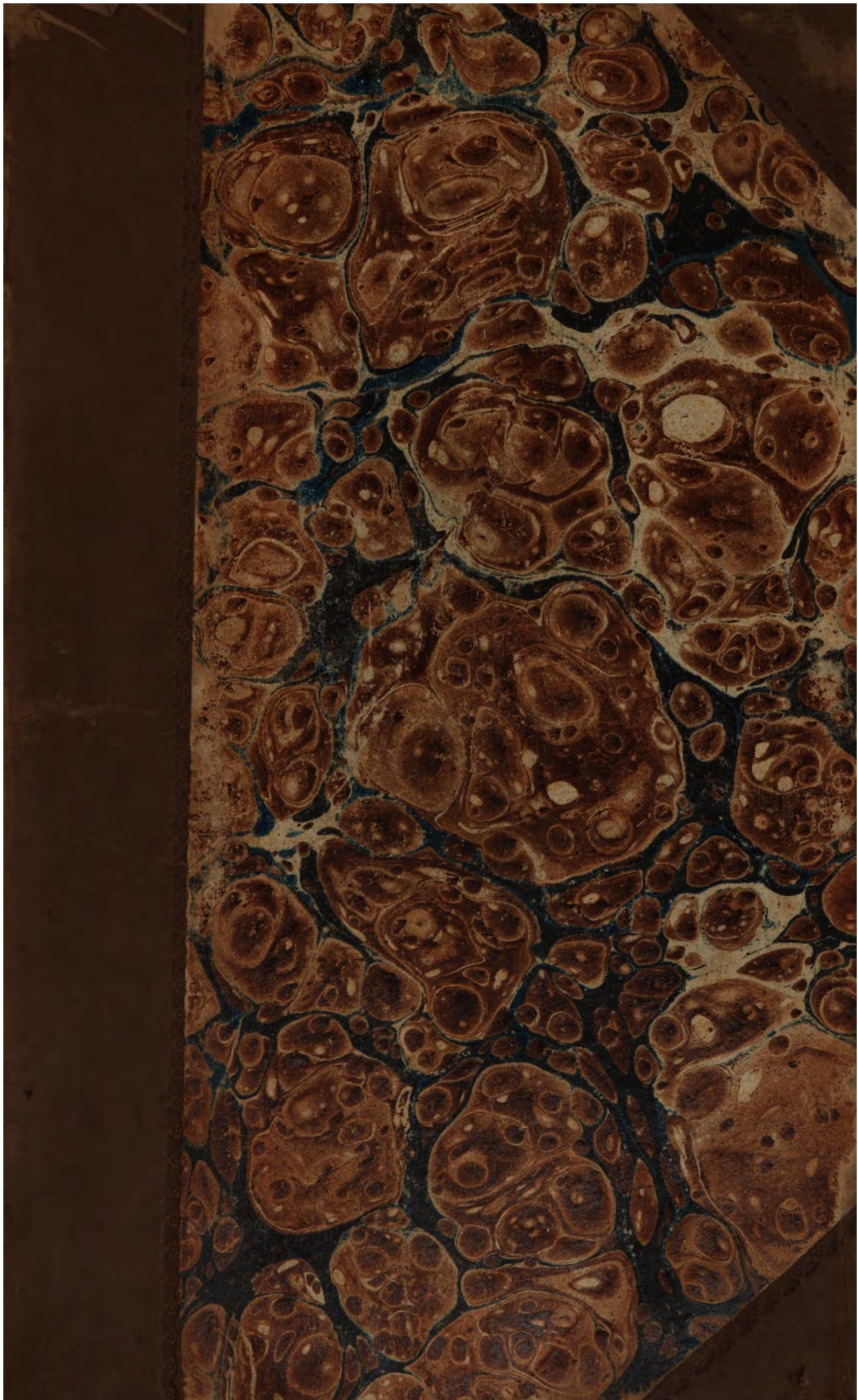
This book is part of the collection held by the Bodleian Libraries and scanned by Google, Inc. for the Google Books Library Project.

For more information see:

<http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/dbooks>



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.0 UK: England & Wales (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0) licence.

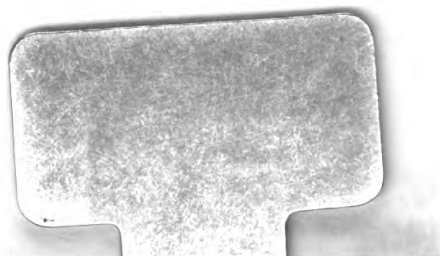




600007781T

34.

631.





THE
TRUTHS HIDDEN

BY THE
FALSE WITNESS OF CONVOCATION:

AN

ESSAY,



BY THE

REV. CHARLES SMITH, B.D.

LATE TUTOR OF ST. PETER'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE,
AND RECTOR OF NEWTON, SUFFOLK.

LONDON:
BALDWIN & CRADOCK, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1834.

631.

LONDON :
GILBERT & RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,
ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.

ADVERTISEMENT.

AN Appendix of historical documents has been withdrawn from this Essay, through an anxiety to make it as brief and as much within the reach of general readers as possible. The truths of Ecclesiastical Polity seem to crave the attention of the whole Church at a time, when many of its members are tempted to become members of unscriptural and uncanonical "unions" in defence, as it is alleged, of the Established Church. History teaches us that zeal in this matter, not according to knowledge and falsely directed, will tend to bring about that very evil it was its object to prevent: how far this Essay may be charged with a similar zeal its author knows not; but he

will be delighted if it prove the means of arousing zeal according to knowledge, which may not only correct his own, but also inspire and direct the Catholic energies of the whole Church.

THE
TRUTHS HIDDEN

BY THE
FALSE WITNESS OF CONVOCATION.

§. 1. SINCE the decease of the apostles has there Undue competition for the Headship of the Church. uniformly been a competition for the headship of Christ's Church militant on earth; indeed, during their presence in the body, this "love of pre-eminence" manifested itself, and we cannot therefore be surprised that, as the simplicity of the Gospel was perverted, the kingdom of Christ, which was set up on earth to give man consequence in the unseen world, and to fill him with a *hope* of glory, should have been abused to the purposes of gratifying a false ambition in the world that is seen. Most false has been this ambition in aiming at the headship of the Church, or of any portion of it: the headship of the Church was never proposed as an object of competition. The Head was manifested at the In- Christ is

Head of the
Church.

carnation, and witnesses of that eternal fact were chosen and ordained, and illumined, and one most important point of their testimony was to bear witness to the Head¹, and to excite all the members to “hold the Head,”—ever present to faith though absent to sight,—as a means of union in one faith, for headship is the ordinance of union. When the members let go the life of the Spirit and set up a notional religion in the life of the flesh, then they of course became more and more alienated from the true Head, of union with whom the Sacraments were the ordained means, as the apostolically authorized administration of them was the assured pledge of their continually blessed efficacy. Then many heads started up, and in the last apostolic days St. John could exclaim, “Even now are there many anti-Christis!” The plan on which these many heads or vice-Christis acted was to propose themselves or their doctrines² to Catholics as a new centre of union, as if in them resided the whole fulness of the Godhead bodily, and in their schism was the well-spring of everlasting life. A very slight acquaintance with the lives and inspired writings

False heads
set up.

¹ Ephes. i. 10. ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι.

² These doctrines were either some portion of Catholic truth, held up exclusively and to the disparagement of every other portion, or some heresy in a mystical or allegorical dress.

of the apostles shows with what holy earnestness they protested against this sin unto death. All their own apostolical authority they knew well was nothing but a *ministry* of the means of union by faith with the true Head. Who is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers *by* whom ye believed, even as the Lord (the true Head) gave to every one? Thus wrote St. Paul to the Corinthians, who were in many instances tempted to set up Apollos for his eloquence as a special head of union for their schism. Dominion over faith¹ was disclaimed by St. Paul, as likewise by all the apostles, and the care of the Churches was a most watchful anxiety, lest in any place a false doctrine or a schismatic teacher should hide from Catholics their liberty under Christ, the Head. The power of the keys was the power of opening the doors of Judaism and loosing the prison-gates of sin; but their power was the presence of the Lord by the Spirit; and all these opened avenues led the children of faith from revelation to revelation to the presence-chamber and unveiled glory of the incarnate Head—of Him that hath the key of David, that openeth and no one shutteth, and shutteth and no one openeth². The very remarkable gifts which were active in the apostles on special occasions, according to the will of the

The *apparent* headship of the apostles exercised in guarding the truth of the one true Head, and in ministering to union with Him.

¹ 2 Cor. i. 21.

² Rev. iii. 7.

Spirit, were all exercised with the most unequivocal denial of aught but *ministry*, and St. Paul's presence in Spirit when absent in the body, for the discipline of the Church, was in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ¹: a gift this which was exercised not for destruction, but for edification, *i. e.* building up in the sight of the whole world² that mystical body, of which, though the Head were in heaven, there were members upon the earth.

The primitive Bishops and Presbyters prevented any

When heresies and schisms arose after the decease of the apostles, it was the ordained office of the Bishops or overseers and Presbyters³ of the

¹ 1 Cor. v. 4.

² John xvii. 21.

³ Every bishop is a Presbyter, but every Presbyter is not a bishop. The only semblance of argument used by the writers of the Presbyterian apostasy—that untimely fruit of the “Reformation”—is in proving the first of these positions, which is of course held by the Church. At one time all the offices of the Church were lying undeveloped in their degrees in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. He developed them when He appointed His twelve and the seventy. So, in like manner, in the early days of the Church, there were scattered congregations, where the bishop could act as Presbyter, assisted by his own deacon; but as these congregations increased, then would this bishop ordain a due number of Presbyters, and become the overseer of the district or diocese. He himself remained a Presbyter, as well as Bishop, though the Presbyters

Church to meet such false methods of union by setting forth the Catholic truths and the sacramental union with the Head of the Church; and it was their calling to meet together on such occasions in faith, that He who holdeth the seven stars in his right hand was still walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; and thus every assault of the devil or man did but provoke a more detailed testimony to the mystery of godliness. They met on such occasions by almost the instinct of the first love of the Church, on the same motives—to use the words of an Apostolic Father—as men assemble by natural impulse to put out a fire in their neighbourhood, and the most vigilant watchman amongst them would be he who would be the most instrumental in summoning them together. The *technical* summons of the assembly would be in accordance with the known regulations of the Catholic Church at the time.

§. 2. The headship of the Church began to be veiled more than in any previous assaults of heresies and schisms and individual love of pre-eminence, when the Roman emperors professed and called themselves Christians. The Church's message to the rulers of the kingdoms of this world

invasion of
the head-
ship of the
Church.

The head-
ship of the
Church
mistaken
by the con-
verted em-
perors of
Rome.

ordained by him were not by him *consecrated* Bishops, as he was by the apostles, who thus by inspiration foresaw and made arrangements for the future increase of the Church.

Cause of
their mis-
take, the
contentions
about the
Arian apos-
tasy.

was, that all power had been given unto the Head of the Church in earth as well as in heaven, and that if they were wise they would kiss the Son, and recognize, by ruling after His mind, that they were but His ministers, as powers ordained of God upon earth. But this message was misinterpreted as a licence to bear a supreme sway in the affairs of the Church itself; an error which was caused by the contentions of those of the clergy who were departing from faith in the unseen Head and in His omnipotence, and who were using the means supplied to them, supposed to be ministers of Christ, by the converted state, as instruments of enforcing and disseminating their apostasy. The abuse of these temporal means of course called forth the interference of the ministers of things temporal, and the emperors were constrained to summon councils to inquire how they were to distinguish the pastors and teachers of the Church, and establish them in their dominions, to the exclusion of heretics and schismatics. But all these things, though the fluctuating orthodoxy of the emperors might have weaned the Church more and more from allowing the semblance of a head on earth, made much confusion in the primitive and simple notions of Church government. As the votaries of heresy made gods of their leaders, and were glad to consider as head any earthly power who would be-

Both sides
of the con-
tention pre-
judicial to
the know-

friend them, so Catholics were tempted to glorify the persons of orthodox witnesses of the truth among their pastors and teachers, and to invoke the exercise of the civil power in their behalf, and to pay all homage and humble thanksgiving for its interference.

Thus was the true headship of the Church darkened upon earth, and the way was prepared in the western half of the world for the sway of that bishop-king of Rome, whose blasphemous arrogance from generation to generation historians, whether Protestant or Popish, with all the attested reports before them, have hardly dared to transcribe into their annals. Not that the line of Roman popes are chargeable with the primary sin of bringing down the aspirations of the faithful from heaven to earth: but as Napoleon could plead that he found the crown of France lying in the gutter, so had the princes of Christendom, and all people in such earthly-mindedness left off holding the Head, and walking in heavenly love, that they were prepared for the tyranny of that vice-Christ who assumed the rights of a headship, thus faithlessly sought after upon earth. Since the "Reformation," which was impeded in this country, before the Church and State had been thoroughly extricated from the confusion of spiritual and civil functions, there has been much controversy as to the Headship of the Church. Nor can we

ledge of the One Head.

The way of Popery prepared by western Christendom forsaking the true Head.

The Reformation not complete in England, as to the headship of the Church.

Four things
confounded
under the
words "the
Church."

wonder at the controversy, when we find the Church as a branch of the Vine, whose root was in Jerusalem—the Establishment—the national provision for the clergy—and the clergy themselves,—all confounded together, and the confused mass of notions talked of rashly, and rashly made the objects of legislation, under the name of "the Church." It is the remark of ecclesiastical writers, and the truth of it must be apparent to every student, that the Church of England has not yet resumed her due position in reference to the State, having suffered not only from popery, but from the efforts made to extirpate it.

The Church
possesses
inalienably
the means
of *examining*
her
union with
the State ;
1st, for the
sake of the
State itself.

§. 3. Of all matters affected by the controversy about the Headship of the Church of England, perhaps, the greatest is,—who has the right of calling together the pastors and teachers? If the State had been uniformly healthy, and not cursed by a despotic spirit of partisanship, it would ever have been deemed a blessing by the temporal governors, that the spiritual should frequently meet together, according to the plan of the Church of Christ, if only to ascertain that they were properly discharging the moral trust which the nation had committed to them. If the most Erastian views of the Church be taken, if in every respect she be looked upon as the creature of the State, yet the creature should have the means of ascertaining whether

she is obeying the will of her framer,—the slave should be allowed some few moments of privacy, if only to meditate on the best way of obeying the commands of her task-master. But when the Church is contemplated as a part of the Church of Christ—of God, manifest in the flesh, who appeared on the earth, and planned the government of His Church, and ordained chosen witnesses to carry on that plan, by authorizing them to ordain others to the end of time—then does it become most solemnly imperative on these ordained trustees, to try and examine themselves, at every point of time, until their Lord appears to finish or to change this plan. And most especially is it their calling to ascertain whether their trust has been affected, in the hallowed distinctness of its principle, by careless intercourse with the institutions of any earthly kingdom; whether the great vigilant enemy of the Church may not have made that apparently holy consummation—the union of Church and State,—the means of his deadliest attacks upon the kingdom of heaven, established upon earth. There are some characteristics of the Church militant, which are inalienably her's, and which she cannot put away, even in appearance, though all the powers of this world again became her persecutors. These rights were duly proclaimed and duly recognized, when the Church of Christ

2ndly, as responsible to God.

The union of Church and State requires all watchfulness on the part of the Church.

This inalienable right of

watchfulness recognized by the State upon uniting with the Church.

Changes in the State require the exercise of this watchfulness in the Church.

The watchfulness of the State the same, according to Hooker, as that of the Church, when the incorporation is complete and every sub-

undertook the religious instruction of the State, an office previously held by the ministers of paganism ; and undertook also to be more than this—to be the assured channel of blessings from the God of nations, no longer worshipped as the unknown God. But if the State, like Jeshurun, waxes fat and kicks ; if its own constitution is so changed by revolutions, that its new powers consider themselves absolved from the stipulated terms of union with the Church, and begin to treat her with less respect, and even command her to make unto them gods, or frame herself into a sort of pantheon for any doctrine or any discipline, of course it is the duty of the Church, rather, it is her very existence, solemnly to consider whether she be not admitting the leaven of treason against her Great Head, and whether she can hold her bodily alimony, or any remaining portion of it, on terms tending to degrade her heavenly origin, and to compromise her spiritual trust. If the union were so complete that the nation were Christian, recognizing its call to the Church of Christ, as its greatest possible blessing, its truest means of exaltation ; if the State were made up of children of the Church, from the King to the last officer in authority—which is Hooker's view of incorporation—then would the legislature be necessarily solemnized, and the witness and the light of the Church, be

sought first in every act ; but as soon as this test is not required in legislators and officers, then does it become impossible for the Church to be governed, even indirectly, by those who reject, nay, who make their very profession of religion to consist in dissenting from her apostolic authority in doctrine and discipline. All the arguments of Bishop Warburton—and he was no high churchman, as the phrase goes—show the impossibility of the Church submitting to such legislation or government in ecclesiastical affairs ; and no ingenuity can torture the reasonings of these writers, on the two views of *incorporation* and *alliance*, to speak peace to our present position. If it be incorporation, it is the incorporation of good to be overcome of evil ; if it be alliance, it is between Christ and anti-Christ. But this worse than mockery has offended the reason of even the advocates of liberalism ; and one of them, whose guesses at theology amuse the children of this generation, has hinted that the time is come when the affairs of the Church must not be treated of in open parliament, but referred to a committee of churchmen exclusively. And this is proposed by one of those who strenuously vote that the State should be given up in other legislation to schismatics, Jews¹, Turks, and other

ject of the State is a member of the Church.

And also according to Warburton when the terms of the *alliance* are kept, and the test of Church communion made necessary to State offices.

The systems of both Hooker and Warburton outraged and brought to an end at present.

Ecclesiastical affairs no longer to be entrusted to the parliament.

¹ Of all systems of popery, the popery of liberalism gives, after all, the most plenary indulgences. It at once absolves

infidels. The proposal shows that it is still felt to be no trifling matter to be tampering with the Church of Christ, and that there is a limit beyond which it is impossible to allow the executive and legislative authorities of a nation, enthusiastic in apostasy, to define or direct the duties of any portion of the Apostolic Church.

The Church called upon to show herself uninjured by

§. 4. There is an almost universal feeling, that the time has come when the Church must show that her union with the State cannot deprive her of

the State from its allegiance to Christ, the revealed Lord, or God, executive over all. In late public speeches about what is called "Emancipation of the Jews," the only semblance of argument in favour of this delirium of apostasy was, that modern Jews, who blaspheme the Messiah come, are the same as the Jews *before that coming*, the faithful of whom were ardently looking for that great regeneration of man. The utterers of these speeches were allowed to remain in their ignorance, that the Jew before the Advent of Christ was the Christian anticipated, as the Christian is the Jew perfected. It was also argued, and the argument was cheered, that as Daniel and other Jews were chosen to give counsel to a *heathen* nation, so it behoves a Christian nation to apostatize for the sake of securing the counsel of apostate Jews, whose aversion to the inspired computations and prospective faith of Daniel is notorious. Really, such arguments amount to a denial that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, and the formula of anti-Christ given in the days of St. John, is applicable now. "Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God : and this is that spirit of anti-Christ, whereof ye have heard that it should come ; and even now already is it in the world." 1 John iv. 3.

her substantive character, and sacred responsibility, as a branch of the vine of the Lord's planting. It is not enough that rash and irresponsible magazines and newspapers take up the cause of the Church, and profess to defend her against the sectarian and infidel intentions of the State: her own Catholic communion is her defence under her Great Head; and she has only to show her faith in this to call forth primitive allegiance from all her sons, and to give dissent its death-blow in this country, strip it of its present garb of "conscience sake," and leave it for adherents those only, who love it for its infidel anarchy and vulgar despotism. This anxiety for the Church has been manifested by a demand for Convocation, and the demand has been met by two arguments: one which makes Convocation entirely dependent upon the will of the executive in the State; and another which denies all authority for its legal existence, since the clergy have ceased to tax themselves in it as a separate Estate. There is a third party, who look upon Convocation in a two-fold light, as a limb of parliament, and also an ecclesiastical convention; and that, as in the first sense, it is under the King, so in the second, it is under the Archbishop of Canterbury, whose power to convene, however, is limited by the King's licence, according to 25 Henry VIII. Great difficulty attends the inquiry, not

union with
the State.

Convoca-
tion de-
manded for
that pur-
pose.

Three opi-
nions of
convoca-
tion.

only because one of the abuses of antiquarian research is to make the blunders, as well as the wisdom of preceding ages, precedents never to be departed from, but also very little attention has been paid to what Delolme calls “the *metapolitics*, as you would say metaphysics,” of our constitution. Hence the writers upon convocation have involved themselves in polemical confusion, which has made the subject itself painful to an almost insurmountable degree. The following solution of the difficulty will be appreciated by those conversant with the controversies on the subject, and by all who are interested in the well-being of our national ark. The solution itself shall stand, in its general result, as the subject of the following section, and the particulars and their proof shall follow in the succeeding sections.

Convocation a false form of truths which belong to the State and to the Church.

§. 5. Convocation is false, both with regard to the Church and to the State : by it, however, are witnessed most important truths, and the “Reformation” was prevented by the despotism of regal interference, from clearing those truths, to the well-being of the established Church, and the palpable manifestation of her Apostolic and Catholic communion, as well as of the three estates of the realm.

The three estates.

§. 6. In Anglo-Saxon times the whole Gemot consisted of clergy, temporal lords, and commons,

for it consisted of bishops, presbyters, counts, and lesser Thaners, &c. &c. Here we have the origin of the representation of the three Estates: it is modern absurdity¹ to call the King an estate, and the absurdity has arisen from confounding the notion of an estate as admitted into parliament, with the estate itself existing in the nation. We have now but two estates in parliament, for the bishops, as will be shown, are no representatives of the clergy, who are in the present form of our constitution supposed to be represented by the second of the two estates in parliament, viz. the Commons. These three estates were called together by the Anglo-Saxon King, not only as a deliberative assembly for *legislation*, but also to be his assessors as a court of *judicature*: a two-fold purpose, still to be recognized in the present House of Lords. Twice a year there was a full assembly, or folcmote, and be-

¹ This has been distinctly pointed out by Bishop Warburton in his "Alliance," though, in consequence of his not studying the meaning of estate, according to Delolme's philosophical recommendation of "Metapolitics," he puzzled himself by his own arbitrary definition of estate, and wondered he could not find the clergy fulfilling *his* notion of estate, by giving ever a negative voice. Contemplate estates as derived from the qualities of man, and we cannot but be struck with the wisdom of Alfred, and the naturalness of his constitution. It is the fashion now to speak evil of these *δοξαι*, 2 Pet. ii. 10.

sides this larger assembly there was a lesser council of dignitaries, more frequently in consultation with the King; this council of "Episcopi, Principes, and Comites" was of a more *executive* character, and seems the foundation of our present "Privy Council," as a more choice selection from this Privy Council would originate a modern "Cabinet." The lesser council, in addition to their executive use, probably prepared the topics to be introduced into the full folcmote according to the Germanic institutions, whence the Anglo-Saxon were derived, described by Tacitus¹.

The political and ecclesiastical assemblies met at the same time.

The half yearly full assemblies appear to have been adjusted to the canonical times of holding ecclesiastical synods; and thus the clergy had the opportunity of aiding the consultations called for by the secular affairs of the kingdom, and also of transacting the exclusively ecclesiastical business of a branch of the visible Church of Christ. And before the Conquest there would be very much in common to transact of the affairs of Church and State, as to the best and most comprehensive manner the converted kingdom of Alfred might have for its tutelary god in

¹ De minoribus rebus principes consultant, de majoribus omnes, ita tamen ut ea quoque, quorum penes plebem arbitrium est, *apud principes prætractentur*. De Moribus Germ.

all its administration, the King of kings and Lord of lords. At this period there was every facility given, by frank almoigne tenure both of public and private grants, to the endowment of the clergy, nor had that Roman cupidity for wealth been developed, the odour of which has scarcely been removed by the sacrilegious flames of the "Reformation." It was before the Conquest that the monarchy was more limited—more tempered by the counsel of its spiritual and temporal advisers—more devotedly anxious to reserve to the Church of Christ the opportunities of her own peculiar legislation, and to crave of her clergy their civilizing aid in legislating for the whole land, and in reforming¹ the morals of the half-barbarous inhabitants.

Many points required the mutual deliberation of Church and State.

After the Conquest the notion of a kingdom *as a kingly possession* was introduced, and the

The temporal provision of the

¹ The chapter in Bp. Warburton's "Alliance" on the power committed by the State to the Church for the reformation of morals without persecuting for opinion, is worth the attentive study of all in this day who are crying out for Church discipline. The Church of Christ, of herself, never punishes by carnal weapons: she rebukes and excommunicates the impenitent. Burning for opinion, whether practised by Catholics or Romanists, Protestants or false witnesses, is as fiendish a libel on the love of the Church as the devil or man could have invented.

Church
alone
changed by
the Con-
quest.

monarchy assumed a more absolute form. The conqueror was not compelled to study the institutions he found, nor had he discovered any royal road to the piety and genius of Alfred. He opposed the attempted encroachments of Rome, not by asserting the national independence of the Anglican Church, but by announcing the antagonist will of the conqueror. He changed the tenure of the Bishops' temporalities from frank almoigne to baronial, and cited them as barons to sit under him, their feudal head, in the high court of judicature, allowing them at the same time to sit as prelates, or *nationally*¹ recognized governors of the Church in the same assembly when considered as a *legislative* assembly. He clearly ascertained that he had power over all the clergy, as they were citizens, and held the temporalities of his kingdom, and whether in summoning them he most wanted their counsel or their contributions matters little; he taught them

¹ *Nationally* recognized, not *ecclesiastically*, for they sit there not as Bishops, but as prelates. The Bishops cannot without the Presbytery legislate *for* the Church, whether in or out of parliament; they are the executive, and their parliamentary attendance *Churchwards* is only to watch *ne quid detrimenti ecclesia capiat*. Neither can the bishops legislate for the Church with the King in council; but more of this by and by.

to share the burdens of that state on whose authority and from whose members they were endowed and enriched.

§. 7. The right of the clergy to meet on the apostolical plan for ecclesiastical affairs was indisputably recognized in this country before and after the Conquest. It has been urged as an argument against this right, that when the Roman empire confessed allegiance to Christ in the person of its governors, and general councils were by them summoned, that the peculiarly ecclesiastical assemblies then ceased, and that national or provincial synods could no longer be convened by the patriarchal Bishops. But, in fact, the first general council provided by a canon for the continuance of provincial synods on the preceding system of Church government; and this canon was confirmed by succeeding general councils—was ratified by the emperors, and inserted at last in the code of the imperial laws. The synod of every province was as lawful an assembly as the senate itself, and had a right to be duly summoned, and in its proper sphere freely to act. The Bishops of the Church of Christ in England had no authority to surrender either to Alfred or to the Norman conqueror the right of the Church ecclesiastically to meet and examine her position, even though those kings had made the surrender a *sine quâ non* of establishment. Had the kingdom tumbled to pieces

The right of national or provincial councils undisputed before and after the Conquest.

Provincial synods confirmed by the acts of general councils.

No offers of establishment from the kings of England could be received by the Church on condition of her giving up provincial synods.

into a heptarchy again after the Conquest, it would still have been the office of the Church to meet for the direction of herself. It was an "accident" only as far as the Church was concerned (though indeed it may be called a consequent of the Church) that the island retained an integral form of government, and thus facility *was* given to the division of dioceses, and a national primate could, without a jealous persecution from petty kings, summon to the synods all the suffragan Bishops and the elect Presbyters, with their Deacons. Had the archbishop *then*, either in the time of Alfred or of William, resigned the right,—had all archbishops, with their whole clergy, ever since resigned it, and the Herodian leaven leavened the whole mass down to the present hour, yet has the living primate, the Archbishop of Canterbury, now the right of calling, and the Presbyters the right of meeting in a national synod—though the penalty were the instant denial by the King and his parliament of the Church of Christ, and an instant persecution were the immediate consequence. It is apostolically of the essence of the visible Church, however dormant the right may have lain in the houses of convocation, or in the breasts of the clergy, panic-struck by the unceremonious popery of Henry VIII. : it is of the very essence of the Church as a simple witness of its origin, not derived from the king-

The resignation of provincial synods not valid, and never to be considered binding.

doms of this world ; and no acts of any earthly parliament could disannul it—no time-serving ecclesiastics could ever barter it away from their successors ; hidden in one age it springs up in the next, like the hope of old of the promised Messiah, undefiled by the worthlessness of the earthen vessels to whom it has been committed for tradition unto the end.

§. 8. The natural effects of the papacy were early visible in this country in undermining the foundations of its ecclesiastical and civil polity ; indeed, the Anglo-Saxon Church was founded at a time when deference for the opinion of the Bishop of Rome was merging into the slavery of abject obedience to that see as an essential of faith. *With regard to the civil polity*, though the Saxon institution of one mixed assembly continued several reigns after the Conquest, yet it was gradually disturbed, to the regret surely of every student of history, who can but see how eminently adapted it was, with its lesser assembly of dignitaries acting as a privy council to the executive, to keep up that union with distinction of all orders, which binds the whole body politic together. There was no wisdom in the separation of what is called the House of Lords from the Commons in the One Parliament, whether the separating principles introduced by the *Romanized* clergy suggested it or not. It opened

The effects of Rome upon the previously united parliament of England.

Some of the consequences of separating the Lords from the Commons, and withdrawing the clergy from the latter.

the door for all those continued struggles which have blackened the history of every century:—it has hidden to the view of thousands the King as the summoner of the One Parliament, stating to them the points on which he asks their counsel, and the purposes for which he desires their subsidies, leaving them to deliberate while he attends elsewhere to his executive duties, and then returning prepared to assent to whatever results of their deliberation he considers compatible with his executive trust. It has set up the notion of the King as a legislative Estate distinct from his parliament, instead of as the president of the whole assembly; and thus the children of expediency have found a field for their chicanery how to prevent a collision between *these three* hostile Estates, and how to set the interests and passions of one as antagonists against the interests and passions of the others. The bug-bear of collisions has been raised, *i. e.* which separate house would be most likely to gather a mob to disturb the deliberations and awe the decisions of the other, if not to vote it altogether into annihilation. This open hostility has been often kept off by compromise, more frequently by corruption, as the King and the nobles have laboured to maintain an influence in the Commons, so likely from its election of members to have the multitude to back it in defiance and even in ab-

solite despotism itself. In the divided parliament the utmost confusion has invariably existed as to maintaining the terms of union between the Church and the State. The lower house, deserted by the clergy, has considered itself discharged from the responsibility of the Church: whereas, in the one mixed assembly, the national provision for public worship was as much at heart as the landed and commercial interests of the country; and the clergy, who had the usufruct of that provision could readily lend their aid in consulting for the common weal, and settling the amount of subsidies when called together by the King, as well as for the Church peculiarly in her spiritual exercises when called together by the archbishop or provincial. The national provision for public worship, whether entrusted "in the times of ignorance" to heathenism, or "in the marvellous great light" to Christianity, was under the legal controul, like other supplies of the bodily wants of man, of the whole body politic and its head; and the clergy should cheerfully have shared the assessments of their fellow-citizens. Whatever donations were made to the better provision of ministry in holy things, it was the duty of the clergy, when they met in the mixed assembly of the parliament, to take care, as they loved that the nation should be Christian, that these private donations should be registered

as a public and a sacred trust with all the other means of national worship; and it was their duty, even as Christian citizens, to take care that the zeal of individuals did not run into superstitious excess and prompt them to sow too prodigally in things temporal to those who sowed unto them things spiritual. Had the clergy, as the representatives of a national estate in the one mixed assembly, attended to this, they never would have brought upon their order that sad accusation of the statute of Mortmain.

The natural effects of Rome upon the ecclesiastical polity of England.

The Roman definition of the Church;

introduced into England.

But the natural effects of the papacy, in undermining the foundations of the *ecclesiastical* polity of this country, may be more easily traced, even to the conviction of those who may not be prepared to see how the constitution of three estates was affected by a foreign potentate interfering with the first of the three. The presumptuous absurdity of Romanism is to declare one see or patriarchate to be the whole Church; and as a natural consequence of this system of part for the whole, it treats the Church as a body of clergy only, to whom alone it fully administers the sacraments. The laity and their true interests, never enter into the calculation of Romanism, except as passive accessories to the power and glory of "*the Church.*" With this delusive separation, so palatable to their natural pride, that common root of priestcraft, the clergy

of this island were plied, and they were taught to consider that their temporal interests were quite distinct from those of their fellow-citizens. The secret of this was, that the “*Holy*” Roman empire was striving, by its papal head, to appropriate the temporal resources, so indispensable to its unhallowed pre-eminence, of other nations, and distant portions of the earth. It is interesting to remark the truth, which was pleaded in behalf of this delusion. True it is, that the Church, *i. e.* clergy and laity, has a calling with which no secular citizenship can interfere, and her ordained pastors and teachers bear a responsibility which no earthly allegiance can compromise; but, by the wisdom of the Divine Head of the Church, that calling and responsibility are so definite and simple—so heavenly in their tendency, and so peaceful in their practice, that they never interfere with any secular citizenship whatever. But by the natural process of Romanism, these spiritual things were soon buried in sensualism: the calling was interpreted to be an abject surrender of all moral dignity to the despot of Rome; and the clergy were instructed to become emissaries of the same despot, and to separate themselves, with a vast quantity of earthly possessions, from the tree, of which those possessions were, by the natural constitution of the kingdom, but a branch. In the middle of the reign of Henry II., the me-

The motives for this definition.

The truth pleaded in behalf of the delusion of the civil allegiance of the clergy due to Rome only.

Rome mistaken for “the Jerusalem above,” and the Pope for the King of the heavenly Jerusalem.

tropolitan rights of the primate of England were virtually, and almost formally, transferred to the Bishop of Rome ; and the power of the executive over the clergy, as responsible citizens, was wrested away, and given to the clergy, that they might become the easier dupes, with their temporal endowments, of the rapacity of the Roman potentate.

The clergy, styling themselves "the Church," separate from the laity, and divide the three estates.

The clergy now assumed the exclusive title of "the Church" (thus virtually excommunicating the baptized King and Laity,) they separated themselves every way from the laity, and demanded unconditional independence. They asserted their canonical duty of assembling in national and provincial synods : and this was a true assertion for the arrangement of things spiritual ; but, on the sensualizing system of Rome, they claimed to legislate there on things temporal, and their civil duties. They would tax themselves, they would, in fact, become a separate community¹. They thus divided the great council of the nation, and deprived it of one estate. The higher clergy, who held peculiar

¹ The period of Henry II.'s reign may be taken as a mean or critical date of these outrages of the clergy, and their confusion of Church, State, things spiritual, and things temporal, the Bishop of Rome, and the Great Head of the whole Church. The leaven, which was producing all this, had a much earlier date.

offices and tenures of a civil trust, too palpable for evasion, were still constrained, as functionaries of the state, to attend the parliament; and hence, in addition to the *Baronial* tenure of their temporalities, which otherwise they might have evaded, we may probably derive the continued sitting of the Bishops, after the voluntary secession of the other representatives of the estate to which they belong. It was then considered a condescension on the part of the Bishops, but this is as much a proof of ignorance, as the undue consequence and glory attached to it in the present day. One disunion having been introduced, many naturally followed; and Rome enjoyed ample success from her principle of "divide and rule." The clergy assumed more and more the form of an *imperium in imperio*, or rather of vassalage to Rome, in consequence of the absence of Richard I. in the Holy Land, and the vacillating reign of John, and the troublous times of Henry III. In this last reign, when the abbots had each a distinct writ, they are said to have been "*voluntariè summoniti*," by their own consent, not as of right, or owing the crown or country any service. The Pope spirited up the Archbishop of York against the superior primacy of Canterbury; and the Archbishop of York refused that homage, for the sake of union and decent order, to Canterbury, which

The probable reason of the bishops continuing to sit in the national parliament.

Increasing civil independence of the clergy.

had been paid to it from Lanfranc's time. At a great council (held first at Winchester, and afterwards at Windsor) it had been solemnly determined that the Archbishop of York and his clergy should attend the Archbishop of Canterbury's conciliary meetings and summons. But this rule was broken in less than fifty years after it was settled, and the see of York, by the authority of the Pope, made independent. Thus was the symmetrical union of the Church of England interrupted, and no *national* councils have ever afterwards been convened, but at the command of a legate—a legate *à latere* of a foreign bishop, that bishop an European potentate, too, of no slight imperial ambition. The ecclesiastical meetings were now in two separate assemblies of each province, held at the time of parliament, but claiming civic exemptions, utterly incompatible with the integrity and security of the kingdom, considered in any other light but as a vice-regal province of Rome.

The entire cessation of national councils, except at the summons of the Pope by his legate.

The position of the clergy under Edw. I.

§. 9. Edward I. found the clergy a separated body under a foreign polity, condescending to treat with his own kingdom, as with an enemy, by a flag of truce, borne into parliament by the higher clergy. If they met in one body, it was to be by legantine authority; but forming two provinces, they usually met in two synods, and transacted their affairs of *enmity to the state*, under plea of

ecclesiastical business : their real allegiance was given to Rome. Edward wanted money, and determined to call all his subjects to parliament, His treatment of them. by their representatives, or proctors. The inferior clergy pleaded exemption, and the higher clergy declared they could vote nothing without the consent of the lower clergy ; and thus for a time they hoped to evade the King's cupidity. But they saw it was in vain ; and, therefore, at the council of Reding, held in the 7th year of his reign, it was ordered that two proctors should be selected by the clergy of every diocese, and sent up to represent them in the next congregation of the clergy, to be held with the next parliament. What was agreed upon in the province of Canterbury, was generally notified, in royal terms, to that of York ; so that the Archbishop of York gained no pecuniary advantage by his sectarian position, with regard to Canterbury. Edward let slip no opportunity of procuring ecclesiastical subsidies, though he was compelled to make some compromises with the Archbishop, as to the right of convening an assembly to grant them. One eminent opportunity is worth noticing : while the new Archbishop of Canterbury was gone to fetch his pall from Rome—a journey of compound treason against his Heavenly and earthly king—and the Archbishop of York, fined by parliament, was at the King's mercy, Edward

sent a writ to the whole clergy, as a body, and inserted in the writ to every Bishop a præmunitory clause for the inferior clergy. On the receipt of the King's writ, the prior and chapter of Canterbury summoned the clergy of the several dioceses: they met, and each diocese deputed two proctors as representatives. These proctors attended parliament, though they debated and resolved separately. They decided to give the King half their goods for one year. The clergy of the province of York were commanded to do the same. Henceforward, the "præmunientes" became a usual part of the Bishop's writ, and the inferior clergy were unable to escape the honour of being represented, and, therefore, taxed. During the reign of Edward I., the "præmunientes" clause had full effect.

The comparison of what Edward I. *did* with what he *ought* to have done.

§. 10. It is interesting to weigh Edward's treatment of his traitorous clergy; and the interest is much increased, if, taught by our own times, and the experience of intervening ages, we compare what Edward did with what he ought to have done, had he understood his position, and the sacred trust reposed in him. He should have demanded the three estates in one parliament, glad, at the same time, that the clergy were canonically convened in their national synods; and feeling assured that such synods not only enabled them to keep pure and undefiled the Catholic faith,

but, as a natural consequence, made them more efficient as the first estate of the kingdom. Instead of allowing the clergy to entitle themselves exclusively "the Church," he should have reminded them, that he and every other baptized layman, were of the Church also. Instead of allowing them to hold ill-defined possessions, as means of revenue to a foreign potentate, he should have made an estimate of all ecclesiastical property, from whatever source derived, and in one parliament have called upon the three estates integrally for their subsidies. He should have taught them to read definitely their duties as citizens, and also as office-bearers in the Apostolic Church of Christ. He should have called upon them to recognize the Archbishop of Canterbury as the primate of all England, and have brought back the Archbishop of York to his proper position in unity. And if the primate of the clergy thought fit to pay any peculiar deference to the opinion of any foreign primate—for instance, the Bishop of Rome—it was his office to take care that such deference never interfered with the civil duties of any subject, be he clerical or lay. Not contented with putting the clergy out of his protection, he should also have charged them with treason, when, urged by a foreign prince, they created an *imperium in imperio*, and dared, in a mock parliament, which they had constructed

upon the ruins of their synod, to treat of affairs which belonged entirely to the national parliament. It is in vain to say that he might have exposed to them their theological blunders—the superstructure of Romanism, which they had heaped upon the sacred foundation of Catholic truth.

But Edward was blinded, not only by the ignorance of the times, but by his own cupidity; and so that he reduced the clergy into a condition of granting him subsidies, he was contented. Nor was he smitten with any abstract idea of the constitution of his country. For the wisdom of the clergy, in aiding the national deliberations, he cared little, for he looked upon the assembly itself, as a means mainly of supply to his own treasury.

The clergy, in like manner, ignorant of their true position, appeal to the Pope.

§. 11. It was for the clergy to make choice how they should defend themselves from the cupidity of Edward and future kings; whether by assuming their true position, as the pastors and teachers of one branch of the Church of Christ, under their great Head, the King of kings, or by appealing to his blasphemously self-constituted vicar at Rome. And they chose the Pope; and the consequence has been that though through the days of carnal violence and feudal barbarism they had some little protection from the despotism of their kings, yet they had many

heavy burdens laid upon their souls and bodies.

The reception of the paganized corruptions and false traditions of the see of Rome was the *unhallowed*, and the surrender of their first fruits

The consequences of their appeal.

and tenths was the *traitorous* tribute they soon had to pay to their chosen Lord Protector. Nor did this tribute procure for them any long continued promise even of this world. It reprieved, but did not altogether prevent, that abject spoliation which visited their temporal possessions at the "Reformation." When the long outraged state took vengeance upon the hypocritical treason which had been preying upon its constitutional resources, where, at that time, was their

plea for their own sacred right of a national synod convened by the Archbishop of Canterbury? They could make no disinterested defence of it, if indeed they were not ignorant of it altogether.

The sacred right of an ecclesiastical synod lost sight of at "the Reformation."

Henry VIII. found them in convocation, and gladly kept them there, kindly undertaking to keep the keys of the convocation-house. True, the "Reformation" put a stop to the right of any legate of a foreign potentate to convene the clergy, but it restored them not entirely to their Catholic position; it consigned them in some respects to a domestic potentate and his legate *à latere*, the prime minister of the many sectarian administrations which have desecrated this country by abusing the "Church" to the purposes of

Two opinions consequent upon the temporary loss of the ecclesiastical synods.

The instant exposure of these two false opinions prevented by the continuance of Convocation instead of the proper ecclesiastical councils.

party. Because the proper synodical or conciliary authority of the national Church has never yet emerged from its papal eclipse, or only emerged to be again obscured by a nearer despotism, two false opinions are current in this country. One is of those natives of England who are Romanists, and who still imagine that the usurpation of the Bishop-King is no usurpation at all, for that in him is ecclesiastical supremacy by right divine;—if, indeed, there be two Romanists who can agree as to the extent of their foreign Bishop's headship:—and the other is of those, who consider that the Church has altogether and for ever given up her ecclesiastical authority, and has formed an Erastian league with the State, whether monarchy or anarchy preside in the latter. And what prevents the instant exposure of these two false opinions? It is because the Bishops, and Presbyters, and Deacons, and Laity of one branch of the Vine do not recognize their true Apostolical position, but still carry on the popish farce of convocation. On this account it is that dissent, whether papal or infidel, at all flourishes in this country. While all is inactivity, or false activity, in the Church, ecclesiastically speaking, out of it all her enemies are marshalling their energies in complete order, and the Erastianism of the Church is their motto and their only strength. The papists are in their

meetings unshackled, and in full communion with Rome, taunt the Church as the mere creature of the State, and continually plague the State to wrong their creature even to annihilation. And the other dissenters meet in their well-advertized conferences, and laugh at the Bishops, cowering in the House of Lords and insulted by their ignorant petitions, as the sole representatives the Church presumes to set up, in addition to her mockery of convocation, of the dauntless assembly of the Apostles and elders. The papists are more protestant than the Church in one respect; for they meet unblushingly, and talk English though they be the vassals of Latin Rome. We keep up the language of Rome in a convocation we owe to Rome, not only as the grave of the first estate of parliament and its "spiritual commons," but of our national synods, which ought to be held under the Archbishop of Canterbury yearly at least.

§. 12. It was, however, gradually that Convocation became the grave of the rights and responsibility of the Church and State. In ascertaining the amount of an injury it is well to set down the result as simply as possible: but we must not forget that ecclesiastical and political corruptions are the work of time. Were they to spring up at once they would frighten and disgust their most zealous votaries, who are by degrees trained

Truths hidden by Convocation gradually.

The necessity of ascertaining the *full amount* of injury, in order to measure the limits of Reformation.

to tolerate and to venerate them. And yet if we dwell too much on the degrees we are apt to set up false precedents, to propose partial remedies, and to perpetuate the blunders of one age as a standard for all who would not be guilty of rash innovation. For instance, it is difficult to say how much this our branch of the Catholic and Apostolic Church has suffered from its popular idolatry of "the Reformation." In tracing Convocation from its origin to its present sepulchral state, we find that the truths which it entombs were entombed *alive*: there were many individuals from generation to generation who did good by holding up these truths, or portions of them, and it has not been until since the Reformation itself that the inhumation has been completed.

The truth of the first Estate of the realm is hidden in Convocation.

One truth entombed in the Convocation is of the first or spiritual Estate, that constitutional element of our polity, which bespeaks its citizens to be worshippers of the Superior Being, according to the best revelation and knowledge they can attain unto and apprehend. That the ministers employed in such high and noble functions should be eagerly summoned to give advice to the common weal by those, who know the value of wise counsel and *also the awful responsibility of legislation*, is not strange; and we have seen that such counsel was sought after by our forefathers even before the "great mystery of piety"

was revealed to the nations—"God manifest in the flesh." That this truth of the first Estate is buried in Convocation we find by the parliamentary character which is given, men know not why, to convocation. Ignorance of this truth pervades the writings of those who would make convocation a parliament of itself, exclusive of the national parliament, and of those also who consider it a merely ecclesiastical assembly. By restoring, however, this separated estate to the King's or national parliament, then would it more plainly appear that the clergy ought, equally with the laity, to bear the burdens of the State, and to abstain from deciding by themselves what portion belongs to them. In Charles the Second's reign the clergy ceased to tax themselves, and this was one step towards restoring the separated estate to parliament. But then, at the same time, the inferior clergy should have been again admitted to the parliament, according to their description in the old rolls "the spiritual Commons," unless it had been decided that, as the House of Lords was distinct from the House of Commons, so also the House of Clergy should be distinct from the other houses, and the three form the one parliament. But this would only have increased the injury already done to the constitution, by the division of the parliament into

Convoca-
tion is *par-*
liamentary
because it
contains the
first Estate,
which be-
longs pro-
perly to
parliament.

The partial
restoration
of the first
Estate to
parliament
in Charles
II.'s reign.

the Houses of Lords and Commons. As the higher clergy sit in the House of Lords, it is a desecration of the House of Commons, as a deliberative and legislative assembly, to exclude from their deliberations those citizens who, by learning and piety, are qualified to teach, and ordained to minister in holy things. This exclusion has tended to give a sectarian character to religion, as if it were an abstract science of spiritual things, instead of a living principle to inspire every one, whether belonging to a household or a nation, to do all to the glory of God, and heartily in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the only Potentate. It is not of the constitution of England, *formally* to exclude any clergyman from the parliament: how far it is expedient for them to be absent, that they may attend to their ministerial calling in detail, and commit the representation of the first estate to faithful laymen of the Church, (as is supposed at present) is another question. But there may be many agonies and temptations to apostasy, even in the history of a single nation, when it would be most desirable, that the voice of the accredited teachers of religion should be heard in the parliament; especially the voice of those clergymen, who, possessed of worldly affluence, might take Holy Orders, from a love solely of true philosophy, and

A full restoration is required by the constitution.

the desire of forwarding national education¹. There are religious acts of a nation, as well as of an individual; and nothing more clearly points out the unblushing advance of infidelity in these days among many, and the abstract notions of religion held by many more, than the position that religion and politics are essentially separate. In a Christian nation, unless it be in a state of decomposition and apostasy, they can be no more separate than soul and body in an individual.

Another truth entombed in convocation is, that the clergy have a right to meet for exclusively ecclesiastical or spiritual affairs, on the summons of the Archbishop of Canterbury: this is apparent to every one who has attended to the method of summons employed even in the days of the most despotic kings. Whatever compromise any one Archbishop of Canterbury, or a succession of them, may have made of their rights in their intercourse with kings, the subordinate clergy are guiltless of this, for they have uniformly met in convocation at the summons of the Archbishop, and not of the State. The synod *gradually* merged in the popish treason of Convocation: it

The truth of the apostolical right of councils, ecclesiastically convened, is hidden by Convocation.

¹ Why is not the clerical profession, by which the present systems of diffusing knowledge might be directed and elevated, considered as noble a calling as that of arms and advocacy?

was a matter of personal convenience to the clergy, that the same deputed proctors, who were sent up to discuss the amount of subsidy in "Convocation," as a limb of parliament, should also transact, by a double authority, in consequence of a double summons, ecclesiastical and spiritual affairs.

Convocation not altogether able formerly to hide our ecclesiastical polity.

When it is said that these truths were buried, as it were, alive in "Convocation," it is meant that before the Convocation merged as at present in a sort of mute attendant upon parliament—its silence only broken by some Latin prayers and exclamations—and before synods merged in Convocation, the truth struggled to be set free, and many things proper to a national synod were transacted in Convocation; members were deputed to general councils—means were discussed of restoring peace to the Church, when it was broken by the clashing of popes with councils, or by the contentions of rival popes about the lawfulness of their titles—and also of resisting papal encroachments and provisions:—*articuli reformandi, et gravamina cleri*, were presented and discussed. The royal declaration prefixed to the articles will show the notion of "Convocation" in that reign, however arbitrary the court opinions of the monarch's headship; and the use made of Convocation, even amidst the tyrannical popery of Henry VIII.,

will show that the truth was never left without witness, and beamed forth continually from the false forms used to suppress rather than to exhibit it for the good of Church and State. Occasion was taken also frequently by Presbyters, to set forth the crying abuses of the Church, and even of her highest Order of Pastors, in their addresses to the clergy, at the time of these councils. In an oration to the clergy by Dean Colet, we find the following expostulations and faithful exhortations. After reminding the Bishops, that Christ plainly teaches that rule in his Church is humble ministry, different from all Gentile lordship—that avarice is the mother of all iniquity—that ignorance and blindness must be universal, when Bishops and Presbyters are the servants of man rather than of God, and dare to do and speak nothing but what they know to be grateful to their earthly rulers—he earnestly implores that the laws and constitutions be read often in the assembly of the clergy; those laws, for instance, which admonish Bishops to lay hands on no one unadvisedly, to confer benefices on the most worthy, and to avoid simony. Most particularly, he proceeds to urge, let the laws be read which refer to you, reverend Fathers and my lords the Bishops; the laws concerning your just and canonical election in the Chapters of the Churches, with the invocation of the Divine Spirit: for, inasmuch as

this is not done in these days¹, and because prelates are often elected by the favour of men rather than the grace of God, therefore have we certainly sometimes Bishops little spiritual—men worldly rather than heavenly, wise in the spirit of this world, rather than in the Spirit of Christ. Let the laws and constitutions of our forefathers be renewed concerning the celebration of the councils, which enjoin, that provincial councils should very frequently be celebrated for the reformation of the Church: for never happens there a thing to the Church of Christ more detrimental than the omission of councils, general as well as provincial.

And in a similar *concio*, preached by Lancelot Andrews before he was raised to the bench, there is the same tone of expostulation and exhortation. He points out to the Bishops the great detriment the Church suffers by their inattention to the laws of the Church, and calls upon them to uphold the famous as well as healthy authority of synods provincial—that great remedy to be always applied to the *καταρτισμὸν* of the Church. If ever a murmur has arisen in the Church (he

¹ Much is said in these days about the election of Bishops: it is left by the clergy to the Dean and Chapters, and a solemn privilege it is. If the recommendation of the Prime Minister have undue weight, the whole service of prayer becomes a most revolting mockery; and deaneries and stalls are, indeed and in truth, awful positions.

proceeds), here, in synods, has it been allayed! If ever a heresy has sprung up, here has it been put down! If ever an indulgence in any matter was to be allowed to any one, here was it dispensed! Blessed be God, who hath given such power to men! Happy, indeed, the men to whom it is allowed lawfully to use such authority when given!

§. 13. It is not merely the temporal endowment of the clergy, which is concerned in awakening the truth of the first Estate from its present grave in Convocation: it is the very question of *national* atheism. The first or spiritual estate of a nation means the condition, or descriptive quality of its citizens as worshippers of a superior Being: but so it was, that at the formation of our constitution, and, indeed, at all its material changes, there prevailed the vulgar error of calling the clergy the Church, or of considering the ministers the whole body of Christian worshippers. Consequently, when the first Estate became one with the Church of Christ, and the highest *condition* of our forefathers was to be Christian; in other words, when the citizens of this kingdom were no longer left to *seek* God in Druidism, but were called by no earthly calling, to *know* him in Christ, then the first Estate was limited,¹ just as

The shutting up the first Estate in Convocation introduces *national* atheism.

¹ As well might the nobility say they possessed *exclusively*,

the notion of the Church was, to the clergy only. It partook of the vulgar error. The clergy having *exclusive* possession of this dignity of the first estate, carried it entirely away with them at their secession from the parliament to the house of Convocation, and left the lay representatives of the two other estates to legislate as practical atheists, with the exception of the few votes of the "Lords spiritual." Since this secession the loss of this first estate and the consequent confusion have been continually felt; and with all our disgust at the hypocritical fury of the commonwealth days, we can but be interested at the efforts made, in vain ignorance, to realize this venerable estate, and to conduct the affairs of the nation, as nationally responsible to the only Potentate. And, fanatical as those efforts were, there was decidedly more wisdom in them, or rather less absurdity, than in the system of those who make the King an estate—and cause him to summon the two other estates and *himself* by representatives—a sort of headless trio, to parliament. National atheism frightens many, even the violent opponents of the Church, and they propose a comprehensive plan of national instruc-

all the noble qualities, and the Commons' House of Parliament say they possessed all the commercial resources and wealth of the country.

tion ; and also that there should be a national provision made, out of the present ecclesiastical and other revenues, for the professors and teachers of all sects and heresies, to be christened Christian by the legislature, on Dr. Arnold's plan of reform : a plan which would reduce us, as in France, to the estate of having a standing army for our national Church, if only to keep the peace in sectarian polemics.

The simple remedy is to disabuse ourselves of the notion that the representatives of an estate are the estate itself ; to let out the clergy from their popish prison-house of Convocation, and to regard them nationally in their constitutional character, (constitutional in consequence of the alliance of the State with the Church of Christ) as *representatives*, with or without any number of laymen, of the first Estate. But if the nation is no longer nationally of the Church of Christ : if the national character be mainly that of infidelity, or pantheism, then, of course, neither can the clergy, nor can any faithful laymen of the Church of Christ, be representatives of such an apostate condition or estate, any more than they could be of the religion of a nation whose worship was Druidical. As well might the children of Christ be called the representatives of the race of Belial, or the angels of heaven of the schismatic anarchists of hell. If *dissent* be the prevailing

The first Estate let out from Convocation.

Useless if the nation be infidel and no longer *nationally* in the Estate of spiritual worshippers.

characteristic of the country, then is it a vain struggle to pretend to identify its chief and venerable estate with the Church of Christ; and the struggle can only terminate in driving the Dissenters to the last violence of their carnal warfare, or in degrading the Church from the ordained witness of God manifest in the flesh, to be the harlot mother of every apostate abomination, and every Erastian form of anti-Christ.

The representation of the first Estate confided to laymen in the absence of the clergy.

The clergy having been continually shut up in convocation, the representation of the first estate has been confided to laymen; and this is meant by the clergy being permitted to vote for members of parliament; which votes send up the elect member in a new responsibility, viz. to take especial heed that the national money, which the executive requires for the supplies of the State, be expended in a national fear of God, and that in all legislation there be paid a national regard to His glory and the kingdom of Christ. This implied presence of the clergy in parliament may have safely slept while the laity were sensible of their representing for them the venerable estate, and while the ecclesiastical councils were sleeping in the same sepulchre of convocation.

The change effected by the parliament not consisting of the laity of the Church.

But when the parliament is no longer of the Church, and of the Church only—when it is no longer a principle in assembling parliament that the legislators should belong to the national

Church, but may be called from sects whose very existence and titles are *dissent from the national Church*, some from her doctrine, some from her discipline, and all from her union with the State —then there is little sanity in imagining that even the civil rights of the clergy, as citizens, will be respected by these sectarian legislators. What an arena may not the parliament be made for Romanists to insult the government and ministers of the united Church of England and Ireland, which has been the consistent and the only truly ecclesiastical and scriptural reprovcr of the see of Rome! What may not be expected? exclusive taxes again laid on the clergy¹, the method once of the most despotic kings;—an ever watchful hostility against the erection of places of divine worship for an increasing population²;—public denunciations of the clergy not present to vindicate themselves;—continual taunts as to the amount of their endowments: all these things, and very many more, must be expected from such a body of legislators. It is well to attribute the animosity of men to ignorance rather than to malignity, and to await patiently that day when

¹ As in the case of the clergy of Ireland.

² It is, in my opinion, the *civil* right of every subject of the King to have the means supplied him of attending the public worship of the national Church: it is part of the protection for which tribute is paid.

it will be seen universally that dissent, whether popish or otherwise, is neither reasonable nor patriotic, and that the Church of Christ is by its doctrine and discipline God's ordinance of wisdom for man in all his relations—wisdom the most practical in reference to everything earthly as well as heavenly; and that its communion is the true test of pure reason and disinterested patriotism.

The Church (clergy and laity,) injured only by false protection.

It is this intermediate and confused state which is alone prejudicial to the clergy and the Church generally, and the only real enemies of the Church are those who, perplexed by this confusion, cry aloud "the Church is in danger:" whereas, never was this portion of Christendom in a more vigorous and inquiring state, whether we regard the candidates for the ministry at the Universities, the younger clergy, or the zealous laity. The Church only longs to be purged of the Herodian leaven in some of her influential members, and to break the Erastian bonds which fetter her, to spring up the loveliest witness of Catholic and Apostolic truth. If all the temporalities of the ministers of the Church, her Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons were relinquished according to the craving of sectarian legislators, and their sectarian petitioners, and given to "national purposes" (as if homage to the God of nations were not a national pur-

pose!) and the due support of all the clergy left directly to the care of the laity of the Church, as many clergy of our *half-established* Church are already; then, not only would justice, now so outraged, be done to the clergy, but they would be held very highly in honour for their works' sake, and such Catholic discipline be preserved that the whole weight of the country would be in the Church, her clergy and laity. For men are beginning to tire of the childish squabbles and manifest selfishness of political parties; and all those conscientious dissenters, who have been stumbling at the difficulties of the Church, as to her position in confused alliance with the State, would see her truth alone, when the *terms* of that alliance were set forth again, and would crowd into her pale; and our Church would flourish abundantly as a fruitful branch of the Vine—the Philadelphia of the West awaiting the second advent of her glorious Head.

§. 14. Whatever injury may be done to the nation by the first estate sleeping in convocation, and however the clergy may suffer, as *citizens*, from the enemies of the Church possessed of civil power, yet the great inquiry is, how fare the clergy, as the *trust-bearers apostolically* of that thing committed to them by God Himself manifest in the flesh? It must never be for an instant forgotten that the wrestling is not against

The great inquiry is, how far the *apostolical trust* committed to the clergy, suffers from Convocation.

flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against *the rulers* of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places or heavenly matters; and one peculiarity of the Church being that her discipline is doctrine and her doctrine discipline, her great adversary may prevail upon her enemies to invade some point of discipline, and through that of doctrine, under pretence of arranging the temporalities of the Church—a pretence irresistible to every Herodian in the Church. Should such a position be gained, the clergy, whether Bishops or Presbyters, are involved in treason against their Omnipotent Head, to avoid which it were out of all calculation better that a mill-stone were round their necks and themselves cast into the sea.

No sufficient compensation for the loss of ecclesiastical councils in Convocation, afforded by the pledged protection of the King.

But it may be argued that the King, the most influential layman and the head of all the estates, is the sworn protector of the Church as established, and that the stipulation with him, as the national person, is most definite. True: yet the King may delegate his right of protection to commissioners and committees formed of members of a sectarian parliament, *not bound* by the same oath as himself. Moreover, a jesuitical distinction may be made between the King's oath as an executive¹ and as a legislative trustee. Suppose

¹ When an oath is administered to the executive on his inauguration, whether it be a coronation oath or an appeal to

the government of this country had since the Conquest been moving gradually, with occasional impediments to its movement according to the capacity of the individual monarch, from a nearly absolute monarchy to a democracy, and that this change had been effected by means of a responsible oligarchy called the cabinet, who, formerly attaching themselves to the arbitrary will of the King, in later times had given the influence invested in them towards the creation of a new

God on any other occasion, it means that the body politic, *taught by experience*, causes its head to be solemnly pledged to God to uphold or resist certain measures. By the oath of the executive the nation is protected from its own vacillations, and by putting the King into the hands of God on certain subjects, during his life-time this country can never by legislation change those subjects without perjuring their King or causing him to abdicate; unless legislation, like a papal god, can absolve from an oath. It is very clumsy impiety to talk of a legislative capacity absolving the King from the oath which he takes as the executive; for legislation is deliberative, and of course the oath previously taken enters primarily and with Divine authority, into all deliberations. This is common honesty. The King, as the summoner and head of the representatives of the three estates, is called upon to assent to the result of their deliberations. He assents if he considers that he can *execute* such a measure when it is become law without breaking his previous oath, and without in his conscience injuring the country. George the Third saw this with every honest mind plainly enough when he said he was ready to lay down his crown, but not to break his oath.

national person, called "*the people*" by a figment of mock patriotism, but whose head and sceptre-bearer, the mob, is anything but a figment. Nor is this supposition extremely rash when it is remembered that the decision of the fiscal question—*who was to regulate the national purse*—was made in the reign of Charles I. ; and since that time the love of money has superseded the love of national polity and its studies, and the mob, being the greatest consumers of taxed spirituous liquors, may be supposed to be the great means of national wealth.

The Church essentially independent of all pledged protection, which may be uncertain in its terms or duration.

Now from all such oscillations, from monarchy to democracy and anarchy and dependence upon open enemies and denouncers, the Church of Christ, and every branch of it is, in its essential constitution by Christ and his Apostles, entirely free. It meets under its pastors, whether the State crave its instructive blessings, or persecute it for its meek and patient profession ; and in every case, it comes and continues in its substantive character, as a witness of God and His government upon earth. It allies itself with every institution—it incorporates itself every where, for the earth is the Lord's ; but, then, the terms of its alliance or incorporation have been defined by the Lord Himself. It has an executive office of blessing upon the earth ; but it has also its previous oath, which it has taken before it entered on this executive trust : it is under law to Christ. If the

Church, in its own national councils, vigilant for the good of all, discover that particular times require particular canons or constitutions, it submits them to the King in his parliament, that he may by and with the representatives of the three estates decide, whether they involve any thing contrary to the well-being of the State, and whether the Church has exceeded the terms of the alliance or incorporation. It is thus that the doctrine and discipline of the Church of Christ become the law of the land. The Church presents her witness of the word of life to the State, and the State receives this witness, thus apostolically transmitted to it, as its national religion. But the national reception of the truth gives the King no authority over its responsible ministers, beyond the terms mutually agreed upon at the time of the first reception. As the Church, when become an established Church, will not by civil means issue any forms of doctrine without first ascertaining the sanction of them by the State, so neither can the King give the executive sanction to any act of legislation, —he cannot delegate any authority which the clergy, according to the union between Church and State, have committed conditionally to his protection, without first ascertaining from a national council, apostolically summoned, that no important trust of Christ's Church is affected, or likely to be affected by the transfer : or the union

is virtually at an end. It is in vain to confide in the oath of a sworn executive, if the executive, professing the highest regard for his oath, transfers at the very same time the power committed to him, thus solemnly pledged to God, to others *not so pledged*. Confidence in a Mahometan prince would be much safer than this; and most serious injury may be committed by the free commissioners of “a most gracious and religious King.” It is a glorious thing for a King to be a Christian—glorious for himself and all. But the Church, which christens him, is, nevertheless, bound to be as watchful under his protection, as if exposed to persecution. Good report is found to be as difficult as evil report.

No sufficient compensation for the loss of ecclesiastical synods in Convocation, afforded by the sitting of the Bishops in parliament.

Nor is there any definite compensation made by the sitting of the Bishops in the House of Lords, for the injuries consequent upon the loss of national councils in the mockery of Convocation. As the King is the sworn executive of the laws of the State, so are the Bishops the sworn executives of the canons of the Church; and, under the King, they are also the functionaries of new offices committed to them, according to the union of Church and State, and for the very purpose of advantage to the latter. The term “spiritual,” is addressed to them in the House of Lords, as it was to all the clergy, who were summoned to the one national parliament: when “the spiritual Commons” seceded to Convocation, the term

spiritual still was retained by the Bishops, as representing with the members of Convocation, the spiritual estate. But *of themselves*, the Bishops are not legislators for the Church, neither in the House of Lords, nor out of it, not even if they were all made privy councillors of the King. In the House of Lords, they certainly are not ecclesiastically legislative, for they may, on any ecclesiastical question, be out-voted, however unanimous among themselves; nor would any vote of the House of Lords be considered invalid, if all the Bishops voted in the minority. The existence of Convocation has tended to give episcopacy in this country the character of a multiplied popery, and to invest it with a legislative authority: for the lower clergy, with their proctors, being excluded from parliament, while the Bishops, *as barons*, have continued to sit there, an immense *civil* distinction has been made between the Bishop and the Presbyter, which has been increased by the undue size of the dioceses, and the limited number of the Bishops¹. This civil distinction, this great interval between a Bishop and a Presbyter, even from a baron of the realm to one banished from parliament, has subtilely introduced an opinion far too prevalent, that the Bishops are, by their Order, legislators for the

¹ See Bingham's Eccles. Antiq. for the proposal to remedy this deficiency.

Church, and, therefore, that we may amuse ourselves with the farce of Convocation, and still go on without national synods, even in times when the Church requires all her ecclesiastical strength and apostolical institutions. The private meetings of the Bishops to arrange their proceedings in parliament are parliamentary only. Should the national synod of the clergy decide upon some new arrangement of the union between Church and State, to them appearing imperative in consequence of national changes, then by the Bishops sitting in parliament could such ecclesiastical decisions be proposed to the legislature, as indeed any one Bishop might as a baron interested in the welfare of the Church propose them, or any other peer. But the Bishops are not, without the representative clergy, legislators for the Church; and it is an idle and injudicious defence of the truly apostolical Order of Bishops, which would protect it from the wild Presbyterianism of dissent, by making Bishops a community of popes and autocrats in legislating for the Church. No wonder, when the recommendation sent to the Dean and Chapter of the vacant sees has been more in reference to what sort of political partizan should attain unto the barony and its votes, than in harmony with the scriptural description of a Bishop of the Church of Christ, that the distance *made by the State* between a

Bishop and a Presbyter should have been afterwards kept to the detriment of cordial union and concurrent exertion among the whole clergy, Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons. The Bishops sit in parliament with advantage to the Church (their very great value to the State is another matter) mainly to watch if measures are introduced which trench on the inalienable authority of the apostolical Church. If in times like these, when political partizanship is in critical agony, measures subversive of the terms of union between Church and State be introduced, by the accredited advisers of the crown—that responsible oligarchy called the cabinet, or by any other persons; if passed by a majority of the whole legislative assembly, and recognized by the King's assent, as compatible with his coronation oath; then is the Church's appeal not to Convocation, but to a national synod convened by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

If it be ecclesiastically wrong to assign to the Order of Bishops the exclusive legislation for the Church, whether in union with the State or not (and that it *is* wrong the bare existence of Convocation plainly sets forth), then is it imperative on every Churchman, clerical or lay, to take all admissible measures towards ascertaining the true and canonical and apostolical legislature of this portion of the Church of Christ, in order that

The Bishops not being *exclusive* legislators, the duty of ascertaining what is ecclesiastical legislation, when the union between Church and State is disturbed.

every assault of the great enemy, made through union with the State, may be met with all dignity, and in the most efficient manner exposed and traced to its proper source. It shows no real regard to the Bishops to heap upon them an unscriptural responsibility, and keep them in a false position. Their apostolical responsibility is enough for all vigilance ; their true position has ample dignity.

Consideration of the 25 Stat. Hen. VIII. which is supposed to prevent ecclesiastical synods convened by the Archbishop.

§. 16. The proper legislature for the Church is a national council or synod, convened by the Archbishop of Canterbury. And why may not his Grace at once convene this council or disentangle it from its confusion with the civil polity in the Latin assembly of Convocation? He is prevented, it would be re-asserted, by the following enactment of 25 Hen. VIII. "That the clergy, ne any of them, should from thenceforth presume to attempt, alledge, claime, or put in ure any constitutions or ordinances, provincial or synodal, or any other canons: nor shall enact, promulge, or execute any such canons, constitutions, or ordinances provincial, by whatsoever name or names they may be called in their Convocations in time coming (which alway shall be assembled by authority of the King's writ) unless the same clergy may have the King's most royal assent and license to make, promulge, and execute such canons, constitutions, and ordinances provincial

or synodal, upon paine of every one of the said clergy, doing contrary to this Act, and being thereof convict, to suffer imprisonment, and make fine at the King's will."

The terms of this statute are too explicit to admit of any evasion, nor has our ecclesiastical polity gained aught from those defenders, who have attempted to explain away the arbitrary enactments of this statute by dissertations on the probable meanings of each word. The more honest and only statesman-like course is to attend to the *animus* of the statute, which at once appears on the face of the history of those times. The civil usurpation of the Pope was at an end in this country: it had been resisted with success, and superstition itself began to give up the Pope without any ghostly dread. But the successor to those civil rights, which had been usurped by the Pope, it was not so easy to name: some belonged to the King—some to the parliament, completed by the presence of the clergy. The King formed too extensive an estimate of what ought to come to him, and the clergy were still in many instances inclined to estimate their own civil rights independently of their true connection with parliament; for the constitutional notion of the first Estate of the realm and its true position did not sufficiently form the study of the leaders, who moved in those troublous times. The submis-

sions of the clergy, which were offered by them and not accepted by the King previously to the passing of this statute, betray great ignorance of both civil and ecclesiastical polity: nay, in one of them, with at the same time the grossest flattery of Henry, they go so far as to assert "to belong to the prelates the power and authority in making laws in matters concerning *the faith and good manners necessary to the soul's health.*" Henry was too good a theologian to admit this, while he was too arbitrary to meet its errors in any other way than by the assertion of his own power. The parliament moved at his controul, nor were its members anxious to put the Church in any such position as might effectually prevent the spoliation of ecclesiastical revenues.

In these days, to say that the animus of the statute was to invest the King with an arbitrary power, contrary to the principles of the constitution and the liberty of a well defined monarchy, would be sufficient to show the necessity of an instant repeal. But it is better to take the ostensible animus of the statute, *viz.* that it was to prevent all further papal invasion carried on through the clergy. Directly, however, that this one branch of Christendom was purged of its undue connection with the branch of Rome, then was the purport of the statute fully answered, and it should have been withdrawn. Directly

the clergy ceased to be traitorously carrying their allegiance to Rome, then might they again have been permitted, without the persecution of fine and imprisonment, to meet in provincial synods under their own patriarchal Primate, and discuss things spiritual to the welfare of the State, not in a Roman but in a Catholic spirit, as trustees of the apostolic Church. Directly they had ascertained what was due to the King and to the parliament from them as representatives of the first or spiritual Estate, and what under Christ to the canons of the Catholic and Apostolic Church, then might they have discharged their calling in both relations, civil and ecclesiastical, without marring their responsibility and efficiency in either one. But this confusion went through the times of what is called "the Reformation," and the very despotism of Henry the Eighth is valuable in one respect, in that it kept the clergy as citizens fully in their civil relations, though at the temporary expense of their ecclesiastical, at a time when, emancipated from Rome, they might have been tempted to use the effects of the treason taught them by their late despot the Pope to their own civil aggrandisement exclusively. The existence of this statute now however favours popery, though it was its object to repress it; for it is supposed to prevent the Church presenting its full ecclesiastical truth against the false witness of

the popish dissenters in this country : and when we consider the other forms of dissent which have sprung up with their synods and conferences, since this statute was passed, and which were never contemplated by its framers, we can but wonder that it should have remained so long the unrepealed memorial of the natural popery of the autocrat Henry. It would be a libel, however, on even Henry the Eighth to suppose that he would attempt to justify the continuance of such a statute in the present day.

But if the *animus* of this statute may not be thus interpreted from the history of the times, and its wisdom must be still deemed indisputable, and its very letter solemnly kept in all its intolerance, yet it must not be forgotten that the statute was levelled against the clergy in *Convocation*, as it then existed, and now is. Should, however, the Church be further reformed from the popery of this Latin Convocation, and cease to regard it as an ecclesiastical meeting, obeying only the King's summons to attend it, if he think it worth while *thus* to call to his parliament the first estate ;—and should the Archbishop of Canterbury convene a national synod, disclaiming all the traitorous invasion of civil rights, which was the origin and strength of *Convocation* ;—and should this provincial synod, thus ecclesiastically convened, confine itself to eccle-

siastical matters, then has this arbitrary enactment of Henry VIII. no charge against the clergy of the Church of Christ. Its terror hangs over them in their "Convocations," their popish house so often used for traitorous defiance of the King, and the constitution of the realm ; and, with all the memory of former injuries rehearsed in its preamble, it but controuls them in these Convocations. In one sense, indeed, the law is merciful : it only controuls what it most justly might, with more learning and constitutional wisdom in its framers, have annihilated. The clergy, deluded by Rome, had plotted, in sensual ignorance of spiritual things, treason in their Convocations ; " divers constitutions, ordinances, and canons provincial, had heretofore been enacted in the Convocation, not only much prejudicial to the King's Prerogative Royal, and repugnant to the laws and statutes of this realm, but also overmuch onerous to his Highness, and his subjects ;" and the whole legislative functions of Convocation might most deservedly have been suspended altogether, rather than permitted under the King's licence. It only remains with the clergy to give up, *ecclesiastically*, this civil schism called Convocation, with the other schismatic corruptions of Rome, which they gave up at "the Reformation," and to betake themselves, in all solemn responsibility before the Lord to their

own ecclesiastical councils, apostolically convened for things spiritual, without invading one tittle of their dutiful allegiance to the King.

But if the animus of the statute may not be interpreted from the history of the times in favour of the Church at this day;—if the letter of the statute be applied strictly against the clergy, and moreover the letter be enlarged, and gifted with an animus against them, so as to forbid not only Convocation, but also the apostolical assemblies of the Church of Christ;—then there remains but one course, the clergy must do their duty to Him whose they are and whom they serve, which is indeed their duty to their King and country; and they must be prepared, on “being convict of doing aught contrary to this statute of Henry the Eighth, to suffer imprisonment, and to make fine at the King’s will.” It may be left to the readers of these remarks to speculate which among those of her enemies, who are loud in lamenting the Erastianism of the Church, would the quickest combine to move the King’s will in this matter against them. If the Church be of God, it is plain that it cannot so essentially involve itself with a State, which may gradually become constituted of enemies to the Church, that these enemies are to be permitted indirectly to govern this sacred ark. If the Church be of God, it cannot so essentially

involve itself with a State, that when the State falls the Church falls simultaneously: and no statute of an earthly kingdom, however the consent of the clergy of one ignorant age be extorted to its enactment, can deprive the Church of Christ, or any portion of it, of its substantive character as the kingdom of heaven established by Christ Himself upon the earth.

§. 17. This inalienable right of the pastors and teachers of the Church of Christ to meet, like the apostles and elders in Jerusalem, in national or provincial synods or councils, according to the geographical boundaries of the kingdoms of this world *or not*, has not only suffered from the false witness of Convocation, but also from the very defenders themselves of the Church. During the whole of that act called "the Reformation," the partially instructed and but half recovered clergy, in their zeal to shake off the thralldom of a foreign Pope, were not equally anxious to provide against domestic popery, whether in their own person or that of their King. They were not, therefore, simple and single-minded in giving up at once all that had been wrested from the King and the body politic, through means of the clergy, by the Bishop-King of Rome, nor, by upholding at the same time their own apostolical commission and by communing together in the assured presence of Christ, were they sufficiently vigilant to ascer-

The apostolical right of ecclesiastical synods suffered, as it lay buried in Convocation, from some of "the Reformers" or defenders of the Church against popery.

tain the pillar and ground of the truth entrusted to their watchfulness on earth. They consequently, in a confusion of duty, endeavoured to keep to themselves that which belonged to the King, and gave up to the King that which they had no power to resign, for necessity was laid on them to hold it fast under every persecution. Upon despoiling the usurper of Rome, the division of the usurped rights was made too much a matter between the King, the Pope, and themselves than between Christ and his trust-bearers, whether in Church or State. This is no hard saying against the clergy of the Reformation, for it was hinted at in other words by the most learned at the time, and the result has proved that it was in a great measure correct.

The apostolical right of synods suffered in like manner from some of the writers against the Puritans and non-conformists.

Secondly, this inalienable right of the Church has suffered not only from the defenders of the Church against Rome, but also from its defenders against the Puritans. The prejudices of the Puritans against the King's headship of the Church in all causes ecclesiastical in his dominions were silly enough, and so were their notions respecting episcopacy. But still far more caution was necessary than we find to have been used in many cases, that the King should not be described as an Erastian head of the Church, and that the dignity of the Presbyters as well as of the Bishops should be preserved in adjusting the

legislation of the Church. In proving the denial of the King's headship in all causes to be unreasonable, and in asserting the distinct jurisdiction of the Bishops, there was a temptation for writers to give too much to the King's supremacy, and to assert too exclusively the rights of the episcopal order; and such opinions tended to make the former a despot and the latter popes, until the two extremes of despotism and anarchy met, and treason established for a while its commonwealth in this island. And when the country had tasted the bitter fruits of disloyalty and ecclesiastical darkness, then, at the restoration the reaction was so great that despotism itself in the monarch and the most absolute episcopal ordinances would have been hailed with comparative joy in the State and in the Church.

Thirdly, after the Revolution the question of a *de jure* and a *de facto* King turned so entirely on the defence of the kingdom itself and national Church against the re-attempted usurpation of Rome that the course pursued by the clergy was of the greatest possible interest; and had they asserted the ecclesiastical right of a national or provincial synod to be convened by the Archbishop of Canterbury, or in any way insinuated that the *de facto* King was not the recognized convener of all assemblies, ecclesiastical and civil, they would have been denounced as secretly plotting to dis-

The apostolical right of synods suffered in like manner from the civil commotions since the Revolution.

to restore the Brunswick supremacy and to re-introduce the *de jure* line, under pretence of upholding the substantive constitution of the Church of Christ. In consequence of the continued existence of the Stuarts this panic has more or less pervaded all the later writers upon Convocation; so much so that the ecclesiastical writers have been charged by their more Herodian brethren with a desire of re-establishing popery, or of setting up Presbyterianism, when they have set forth the inalienable rights of the Church and the joint assessorship of Presbyters near the Bishops in her councils. These accusations will be found profusely scattered about the controversies on Convocation; and if the position which we have endeavoured to establish be correct, we cannot wonder that an unreformed piece of popery, like Convocation, made up of disjointed members of Church and State, should have suggested incessant and inexplicable recriminations. Often in this controversy has a portion of political truth, with its false witness, been set up against some portion of ecclesiastical truth, hidden by its false witness also; and the rest of these discussions was for the most part made up of personal charges of disloyalty to the King on one side, and of faithlessness to the Church on the other. But the season of all this childishness has passed away: the question is now at issue whether the

Lord Jesus Christ Himself established His Church upon earth; and it is palpable to all who study the war waged against Him by spiritual wickedness in high places, that the branch of the Catholic and Apostolic Church in this country must be seen in its essential independence, (however ready to unite with and bless the institutions of the State), unless, indeed, the word is gone forth, and the golden candlestick is to be removed by the clay counterfeit of Erastianism.

§. 18. The meetings of the chartered societies for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge and the Propagation of the Gospel must not be considered any compensation for the loss of ecclesiastical synods. Their charters are of the breath of man, whereas the charter of the assembling together of the Apostles and elders of the Church was given on this earth by God Himself, manifest in the flesh. And however venerable these societies are, and however excellent their aim and improved their administration, yet they have no ecclesiastical responsibility: they are responsible rather to the authority of their charter and to the good will of their subscribers, and though many subjects belonging to a synod are discussed in the meetings of the authoritative members, yet they are discussed in a desultory and irresponsible manner, and have no ecclesiastical result for the Church at large. Indeed, it is by no

The meetings of the two societies are no compensation for the loss of national synods in Convocation.

means desirable that topics not immediately bearing upon the details of the societies should be introduced into their deliberations. And it would be far better that the society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge should confine itself to a publication of spelling-books and the *authorized* publications of the Church, than that it should publicly discuss the orthodoxy or heterodoxy of its various tracts, at the suggestion of any subscribing member. For in the absence of synods many persons will naturally invest these meetings with an ecclesiastical character; and when it shall come to pass, that critical opinions upon suspected tracts will be more frequently broached, the general meetings of a society may give an improper witness of the decency and order of the Church. From the pecuniary constitution of these societies, it cannot be expected that all the members will preserve that solemnity and practical piety,—that preservation of the Orders of the Church, which would mark an ecclesiastical synod, towards membership with which money contributes nothing, and whose meetings are the most solemn upon earth.

Some of the advantages which would attend the revival of national synods.

§. 19. It would be an insult to the clergy to take notice of an objection raised against the revival of national synods, viz. that there would be nothing but doubtful disputations and exhibitions of the *odium theologicum*; and, therefore,

in conclusion, some few of the numberless advantages may be pointed out in addition to the absolute necessity there exists of the Church taking heed unto her apostolical construction.

With regard to the Church, the legislative would no longer be confounded with the executive functions, and the Presbyters would enter upon the full responsibility of their Order in the Church of Christ; that *civil* gulph, caused by the division of parliament, and now existing between the Order of Bishops and that of Presbyters, would no longer be able, in any instance, to produce its ill effects of lordship and alienation *ecclesiastically*; while at the same time all Catholic deference and affectionate regard would be paid to the Bishops, as executive rulers, according to the Apostolic laws, of the Twelve Tribes of Israel. But with all distinctness of Order there would be such cordial union between Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons, that the pastoral office would be an office of the loveliest regard; and the Church, in her Apostolic and Catholic communion, being better understood, there would be an end to the little now remaining of party spirit and sectarian divisions among the clergy.

The Laity also would recognise their standing in the Church; and those among them, who are in parliament, would see (the sepulchre of Con-

The whole ministry of the Church would be seen in three orders in its true ecclesiastical position.

The laity would also recognize their position in the

Church, no longer hidden by Convocation.

vocation no longer hiding this truth) that they are mainly responsible for representing the First Estate, as well as the civil rights of the clergy ; and they would feel a sacred and generous interest in their trust, and the representation of " the Church " (as it is called) would no longer be by a vulgar error identified with the representation of the universities.

Catholic communion restored with foreign branches of Christendom : and first, the Church in Scotland.

In national councils means might then be devised of restoring Catholic communion with foreign Churches ; but first, more especially, with the Church in Scotland. In consequence of a difference in temporal circumstances, there has been far too much of a want of cordial union between the Anglican Church and the Church militant in Scotland. In political language it may be right to talk of the Kirk of Scotland as a Sister Church with that of England, because, politically, both are called established. But in ecclesiastical language there is no such sisterhood ; and though members of the Kirk may make common cause and defend establishments, to the admiration of those of the Church of England, who look more at the *establishment*, than at the Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ, yet has the Church of England nothing more in common with the Kirk of Scotland, than she has with any dissenters nearer home, except the fact,—that the Church in England and pres-

byterianism in Scotland are nationally established. Whereas the Church in Scotland, with her Bishops and Presbyters, Deacons and Laity, justly demands the warmest union with the Church of England ; and it is high time that the hard saying, which some members of the Anglican Church have uttered against the apostolical succession in Scotland, should be exchanged for fervent prayers for the peace of Jerusalem, and wishes of good luck in the name of the Lord.

The Gallican Church, in its darkest and most sanguinary days, was never bigoted to Rome, and always professed to hold the authority of general councils above that of the Pope : and now that infidelity is struggling with popery on the continent, of what incalculable blessing would not the Church of England be, if she now appeared in her substantive character,—not the mere servant of a papal or sectarian parliament, but the apostolically ordained witness-bearer of the truths of Christ, and with a fostering alacrity protecting reformation from the annihilation of infidelity in all the branches of Christendom throughout the earth ? For as the temporal power of the Pope declines, the veil of papal sensualism will be taken off many eyes, and all will not be cast into the utter darkness of infidelity. True Protestantism, or the witness *for* God and his Christ, *against* the corruptions of Satan and man, will

Catholic communion restored with the churches, now first beginning reformation from popery, and assaulted by infidelity.

then be hailed ; and the Bishop-King of Rome, will no longer dare to take to himself the Divine glory of holding the seven stars in his right hand, and walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.

Dissenters
would be-
hold the
Church un-
hurt by
union with
the State.

With regard to dissenters—"them that are without"—the public appearance of the Church in her apostolical assemblies would have the best possible effect upon them. For though, heedless of all apostolical transmission of the authority of Christ, they have heaped to themselves teachers ; and the various sects are alert in recommending their teachers as the best—a recommendation they find fault with from the mouth of their civil governors,—yet would the sincere inquirers after truth among them hail with delight the Church beaming forth from the clouds of Erastianism, and bearing a meek and holy testimony, not only to the continued presence of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Spirit, but also to his Advent in all authority to found His Church in the flesh. It is difficult to say how much of dissent may not be owing to the Church appearing to pay by any of her influential members a more palpable deference to her union with the State, than to her Catholic and Apostolic union with her Great Head.

Conclusion. §. 20. It will have been seen that it is not the object of this Essay to revive the controversies

respecting Convocation, but rather to urge a surrender of it altogether, as to its *ecclesiastical* forms ;—and to protest against any precedent derived from its existence, for at no one period of our Church can an infallible precedent be taken. As to the *political* forms of Convocation, it may be hopeless to expect a constitutional restoration of the First Estate in national legislature, or that the atheistical effects of Rome upon the State will ever be removed : and Convocation will, probably, still be summoned with each parliament, *only to be adjourned*, its loss, as a severed limb of parliament, neither felt nor cared for amidst the boasted disunion of religion and politics. But it is not so hopeless to expect that the time is near when no longer will the national synods be identified with Convocation ;—no longer will the assembly of the Apostles and Elders be supposed to merge in the variegated parliament of these days. Neither is there any disloyalty in pointing out the essential independence of the Church in holding her councils, for it is in the power of the Archbishop to ask permission of the King to exercise this apostolic duty in his dominions, and thus to remove all technical excuse for statutable fine and imprisonment. Rather would it be disloyal to charge his Majesty with any wish to forbid so dutiful a request to perform a necessary duty, or

with any persecuting vengeance to put in force the statute of Henry VIII., should the synods be held as a matter of ecclesiastical course, without any notification to the executives of the State.

The cathedral chapters are standing councils to the Bishops as executives, whether they make use of them or not : so let them be, and let their existence and the whole history of the Church teach us that there is no want of deference to the Order of Bishops shown in denying them the exclusive power of *legislating* for the Church, whether they meet in or out of the sectarian parliaments, which may now be legally convened. It has always been considered the darkest popery to place the Pope and his cardinals above the councils, by investing them with a right of extemporaneous legislation, or to hold them in any other veneration but as the supreme college for the administration of ecclesiastical law. In like manner, it must be considered but a sad picture of Romanism for the Presbyters of the Church of Christ in this country to attempt to invest the Bishops with any power of ecclesiastical legislation. It is not the wisest method to escape the heady high-mindedness of these days to take refuge in multiplied popery, nor from a disgust for anarchy and a morbid love of quietude to set up any

number of "Protestant" Bishops as a conclave of cardinals. It is thus that the words Popish and Protestant become idle names. There now seems no alternative between abject Erastianism (as the penalty for departing from ecclesiastical legislation) and the revival of the councils of the Church. For urging this alternative earnestly and anxiously no apology is necessary to any Order or Persons of the Church: it is the interest of all, and all whose hearts and minds can be touched by the appeal of the Master Scribe of Ecclesiastical Polity will be rejoiced at any effort made to revive the Assembly of the Apostles and Elders. "A thing," says Hooker, "whereof God's own blessed Spirit was the Author; a thing practised by the apostles themselves; a thing always afterwards observed, and kept throughout the world; a thing never otherwise than most highly esteemed of, till pride, ambition, and tyranny began by factious and vile endeavours to abuse that Divine invention, unto the furtherance of wicked purposes. But as the just authority of civil courts and parliaments is not therefore to be abolished because sometimes there is cunning used to frame them according to the private intents of men over-potent in the commonwealth: so the grievous abuse which hath been of councils should rather cause men

to study how so grievous a thing may again be reduced to that first perfection, than in regard of stains and blemishes sithence growing to be held for ever in extreme disgrace.”

THE END.

By the same Author.

SEVEN LETTERS ON NATIONAL RELIGION;
addressed to the Rev. HENRY MELVILL, A.M. By CHARLES
SMITH, B.D. Price 7s. 6d.

CONTENTS:

- I. The Principle of National Religion.
- II. The Exemplification of the Gentile State of Britain.
- III. The Apostolical Accession of the Church of Christ.
- IV. The Operation of the Papacy.
- V. The Principle of Protestantism in regard to the Papacy.
- VI. The Principle of Protestantism in regard to Dissent.
- VII. Application to the Present Time.

