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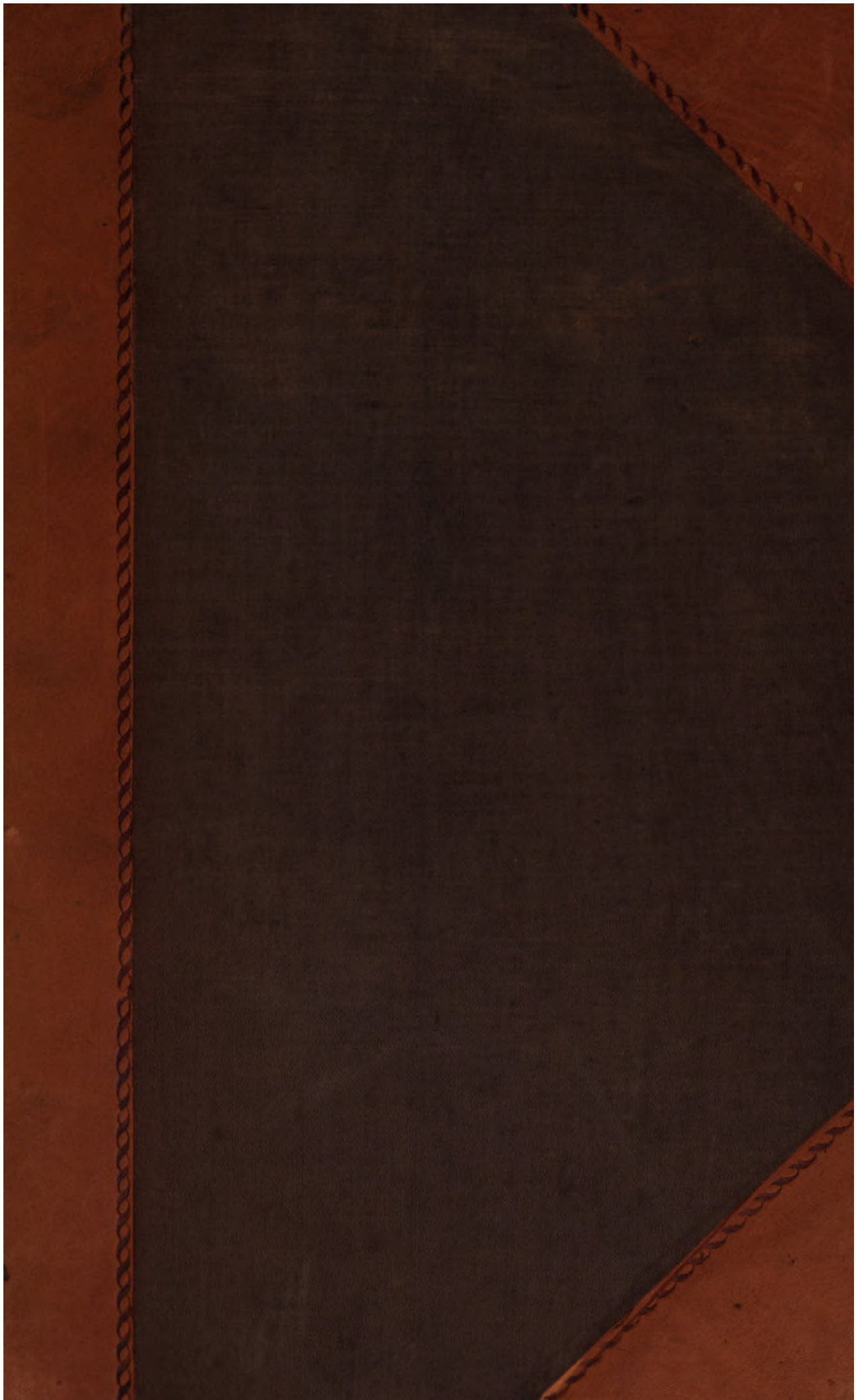
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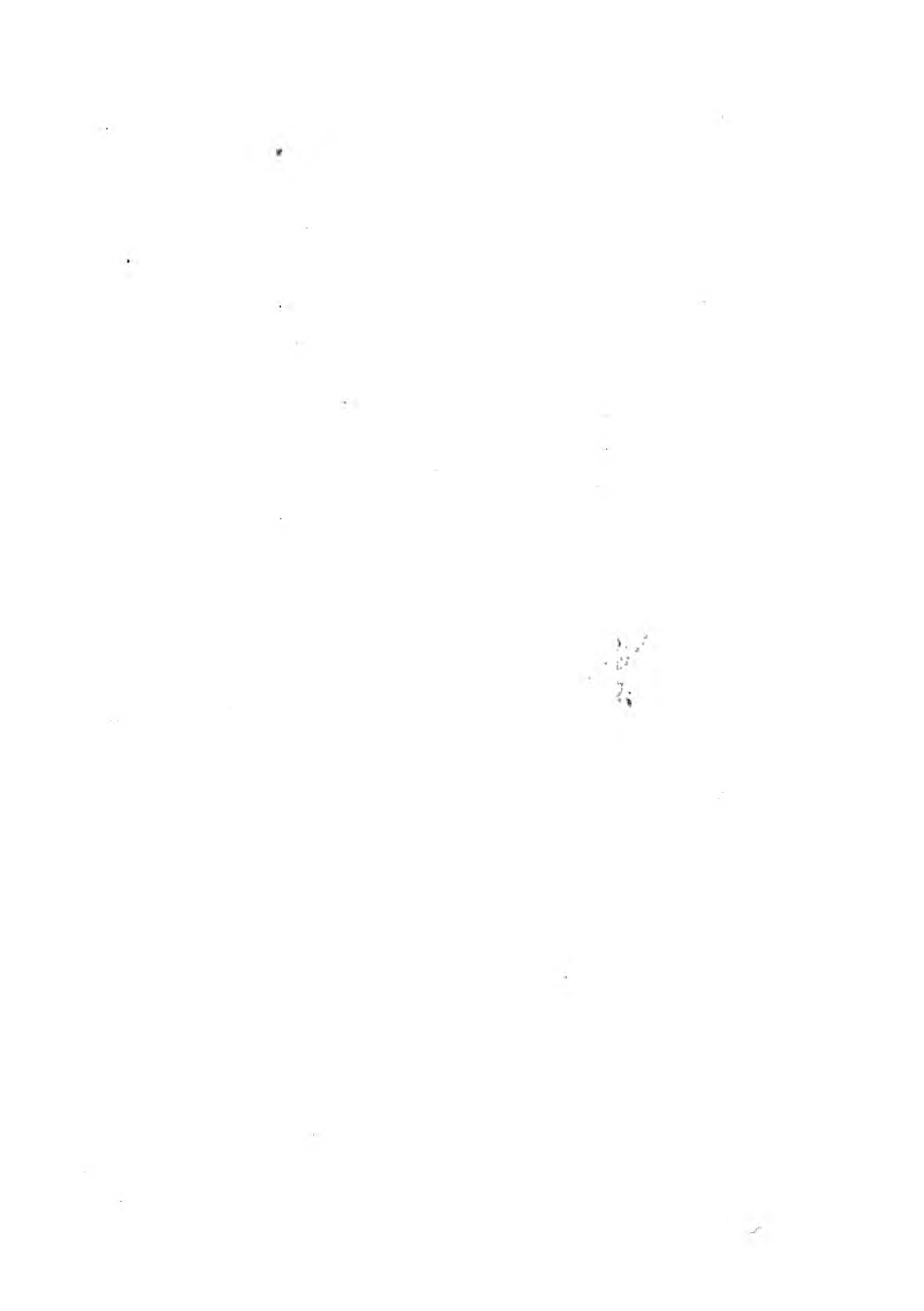


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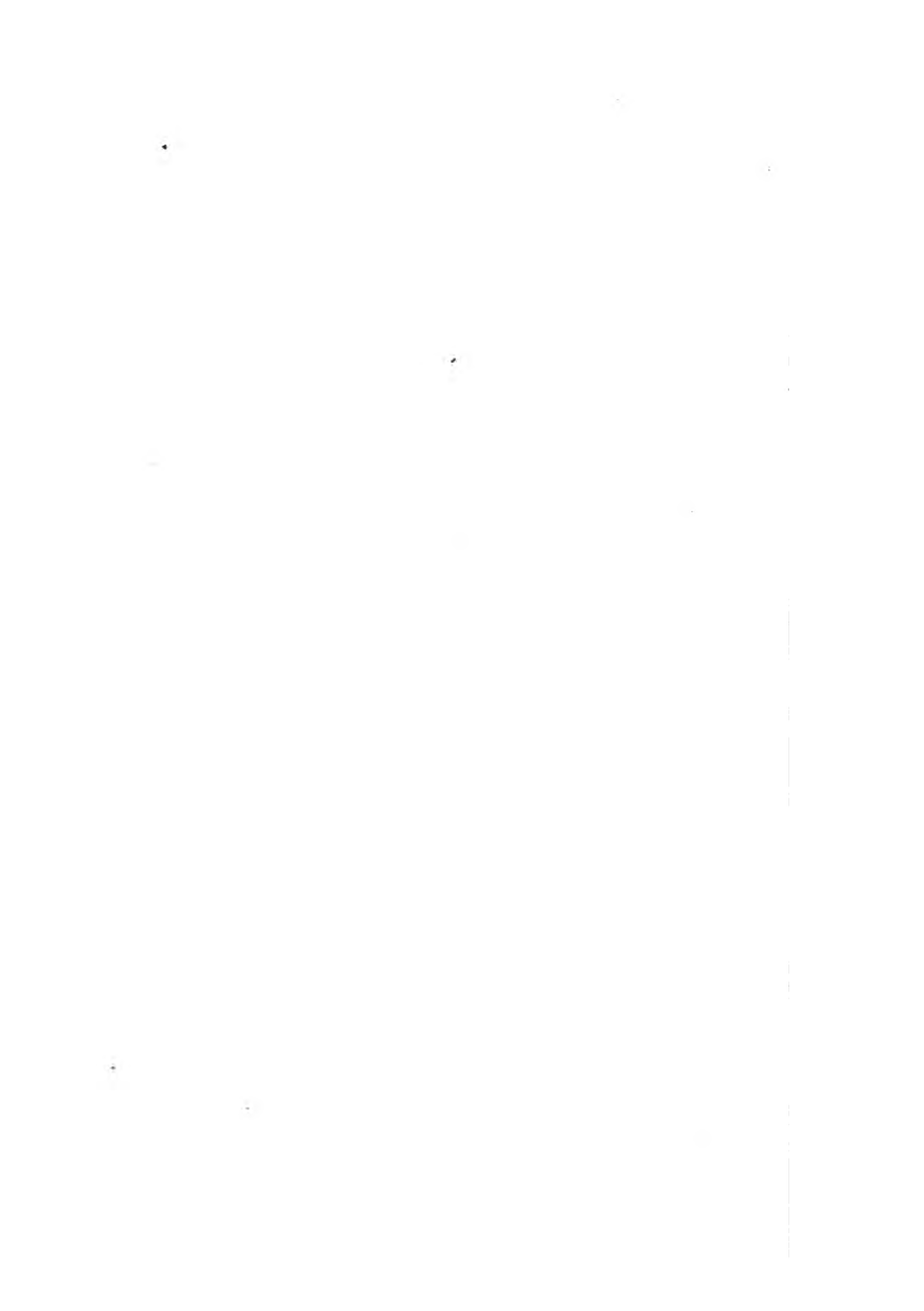
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ROMANISM  
IN THE  
PROTESTANT CHURCH.

FIVE SERMONS

BY

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THE subjects introduced into these Discourses have long appeared to the writer to be such as ought to be set before our congregations; and no season seemed more opportune than the present, when the public mind is in so many ways directed to the Romish church and its proceedings. Under this impression these Discourses were commenced during the Lent of this year; and the object has been not so much to confute Romish errors (although this has been attempted to a certain extent), as to shew in what particulars Protestants' practice and habits of thinking have grown to be in accordance with them; and to impress upon the people that, if danger is apprehended to the Protestant church, they must not take for granted that the cause of alarm exists altogether in other quarters; forasmuch as it is far too manifest that they themselves, by neglecting the principles on which the Reformation proceeded,

and by not using or abusing their religious privileges, are in many respects preparing the way for the arts of the Romish hierarchy. Above all it has been the writer's aim to enforce true and practical religion, and that holiness, "without which no man shall see the Lord."

The writer most gladly confesses his obligations to Archbishop Whately's work on the "Origin of Romish Errors," for many most useful hints; and he has made more particular acknowledgment in the course of his proceeding.

# S E R M O N I.

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## INTRODUCTORY.

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When thou shalt have eaten and be full ; then, beware, lest thou forget the Lord.—DEUT. vi. part of verses 11 and 12.

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MOSES, just previously to his death, addressed the children of Israel ; and, recapitulating God's manifold mercies to them, cautioned them respecting their conduct after they should have taken possession of the promised land : “ When the Lord thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he sware unto thy Fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities which thou buildedst not, and houses full of all good things which thou filledst not, and wells digged which thou diggedst not ; vineyards and olive trees which thou plantedst not ; when thou shalt have eaten and be full ; then, beware, lest thou forget the Lord.”

It is plain from this passage, that Moses accounted a state of ease and enjoyment unfavourable to religion. He does *not* say, “ when thou art in trouble, affliction and want, then, beware, lest thou

forget the Lord :” but, “when thou shalt have eaten and be full.” And this, which we may believe was Moses’s view, is fully corroborated by the ancient history of the Israelites. It was not so commonly in their adversity that they rebelled against God—but, “when Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked ;” that is, when Israel’s condition was like that of a pampered horse ; then, he forsook God, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his Salvation : and, “when the land had rest,” then it was that the children of Israel did evil *again* in the sight of the Lord.

And it may be well to mention that a most important use has been made of this feature in their history. Had the Israelites’ apostasies usually happened in seasons of their distress, there might have been room for doubting whether they themselves were really persuaded of the Divine authority of their law, and the Divine commission of their leader ; and for imagining that they trusted in Moses, so long only as he led them to conquest and glory. When, however, we observe them returning to their allegiance in times of trouble, and rebelling principally in their prosperity ; their conduct was so far natural, that it agrees with what we notice of human nature in common ; and it also bears a *peculiar* sort of testimony to the verity of their leader’s pretensions and achievements. For, surely, the Israelites had never returned to

Moses in their adversity, unless they themselves had been persuaded of the truth of his character and miraculous deliverances. However hypocritically men may act at other times, it is not their habit in occasions of calamity to fly for refuge to that which they themselves know to be unsubstantial, or to rest their hopes on that which they know to be a false trust. The Israelites, therefore, (if we may judge of them by ordinary rules), by returning to their faith in seasons of trouble, proved their confidence in Moses, and their conviction of his miraculous doings; and in this *fact* of their history—not formally set forth and insisted on by the sacred writers, but to be learned by a study of the narrative—we have incidental evidence to the divine mission of Moses; and borne by the most competent of judges, even the Israelites themselves, a whole people or nation.

We were proceeding, however, with the remark that the Jews' defections occurring chiefly in the times of their prosperity, is a proof that that condition is unfriendly to religion. If we turn to the New Testament, we shall find the same doctrine confirmed both by our Lord's proceedings and words. "The *poor* have the Gospel preached to them," was a very significant part of the answer returned by our Lord to John the Baptist's messengers. And, whilst it signified that a new era was opened to this description of persons, whose

education and improvement had been systematically neglected by both the Gentile Philosopher and the Jewish Doctor—a change so sudden and unprecedented, that it merited a place even with the greatest of miracles; such as raising the dead, and cleansing the leper—it imported also that our Lord's ministry was specially addressed to the *poor* in preference to the rich. Now, why did our Lord make this selection, but, because He knew that the poor were best qualified in spirit and circumstances to receive and profit by his glad tidings of salvation? or because, in other words, He knew that the condition of prosperity was not so well adapted for his discipleship. And that which we may gather from our Lord's method of proceeding is confirmed by certain sentiments which he openly expressed, such as the following; “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.” Our Lord did not, it is true, affirm this of rich men, universally and absolutely; for in the Gospel by St. Mark, his words are so qualified by himself that they apply to those only who *trust* in their riches. The sentiment, moreover, was directly levelled against rich men, in the first rise of the Gospel; when, by professing Christ's discipleship, they incurred manifest and imminent peril of fortune and life; and, therefore, it is only under very peculiar circumstances that it can or could

be justly and fully applied to the rich of subsequent times. And, also, some allowance must be made for the adoption of a *figurative* style; for, although our Saviour said “it is easier for a camel (or, perhaps, a cable) to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God;” he did not mean that it was an impossibility. His comparison, according to either of the above interpretations, would, indeed, imply as much, if it were literally taken; but this circumstance, along with other things, confirms the persuasion, that it must be figuratively rendered; for any sense which should deny possibility of salvation to the rich, would be utterly inconsistent with the doctrine so clearly and frequently inculcated; namely, that God “is no respecter of persons.” Yet—after all legitimate modifications—the sentiment, to which our Lord gave utterance, cannot be otherwise received than as a declaration from His lips, that a state of ease, abundance, and enjoyment, is prejudicial to religion.

If we pass from the Sacred Oracles to the results of human experience; the same conviction is forced upon us, whether we have respect to the *doctrines* of religion, or to its growth and vigour in the *heart* and *life*. Without seeking to exaggerate the statement, it must be admitted that a condition of ease, whilst it allows us leisure for, so does it abound in temptations to, those doubtings, refine-



ments, and speculations, which often spoil the *doctrines* of Christianity through vain philosophy, rob them of their entireness and heartiness in our belief, or create indifference to a portion of them. And if these are dangers produced to one's *faith* by circumstances of ease and enjoyment; we have the testimony of moralists, that pride, vanity, avarice, apathy, selfishness, intemperance, lust, are the natural offspring of prosperity. And, whilst moralists admit this, the *religious* observer finds occasion to deplore the growth of a forgetfulness of God (our dependence on Him, our obligations to Him, and our need of Him), and of a self-righteous and uncharitable spirit.

Enough has been said in confirmation of the doctrine implied in our text; and, elsewhere, more plainly expressed in the sacred volume. And there were several reasons which united in persuading me to introduce this subject on the present occasion. First, we hear and know much of the evils of *adversity*; but it is expedient that we should be frequently reminded that a condition of peace and fruition is also one of severe trial and imminent danger to the soul. Its evils, if not of the same kind, are not less plentiful; neither do they require less watchfulness and courage on the part of those who would maintain their integrity before God. And it was, we may believe, the full consciousness of this which introduced into our

beautiful and comprehensive Litany, this devout aspiration to the throne of Grace: "In all time of our wealth, good Lord, deliver us." But, secondly, I entered on this subject because it is desirable that men should be warned of the doubtful and perilous character of that condition after which they pant; and which is so naturally viewed with an envious eye; that they may learn to moderate their ambition, and reduce their wishes more and more into accordance with that station in which it has pleased God to place them. If they pray with Agur, "Give me not poverty, lest I be poor and steal, and take the name of my God in vain;" the hints which have been thrown out should admonish them to join in that which was also his prayer; "Feed me with food convenient for me;" "remove far from me vanity and lies;" "Give me not riches, lest I be full and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord?" Principally, however, have I selected this subject because I desire the present discourse to be considered introductory to matters to be hereafter more fully discussed. If the evils of ease and prosperity are such, as have been set forth, in the case of *individuals*; it cannot be cause of surprise, if like mischiefs have resulted from the same source to communities or bodies, which are composed of individuals, and take their tone or character from them.

Now, the Christian Church, and, especially, that

reformed portion of it of which we are members, has long time been in a state of uninterrupted prosperity. As a Church, “we have eaten and are full,” and have realized the utmost advantages which have fallen to the lot of any church. By the favour and providence of God, by firmness of principle in those of his servants who resisted error unto blood—and (in the language of our learned and eloquent Metropolitan) “it is lamentable that any should now be found, not amongst the enemies of our Church but amongst her sons and servants, to speak irreverently and disparagingly of those holy men who proved their sincerity by the test of martyrdom; and whose wisdom and moderation, under circumstances of difficulty to us almost unimaginable, were surely indications that they were guided by that Spirit who had been promised to the Church; and who would not forsake those who loved and prayed and suffered for it, in the moment of its fiercest struggle with the enemy”—by the mercy and protection of God, and his blessing on the labours and sufferings of those holy men, *we* have a goodly heritage, “verily the lines have fallen unto us in pleasant places.” Speaking in a figure, we have had given to us, “great and goodly cities which we builded not, houses full of all good things which we filled not, and wells digged which we digged not; vineyards and olive trees which we planted not;” we have inherited a

Church freed from all imputation of idolatry; purged from the monstrous errors of superstition; a truly Scriptural church, built upon the foundation of “the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone,”—admitting no human authority to an equality with the Word of God; no competition with the meritorious work of Christ; no Mediator, save One; allowing no substitute for personal holiness, acknowledging no sacraments but those which were ordained by Christ himself; burdening the conscience with no human devices; and enjoining no forms and ceremonies but such as carry out the Apostle’s recommendation, that “all things be done decently and in order,” and “unto edifying;” and such as are necessary to the maintenance of religion; and, not being in themselves superstitious, are useful in the promotion of devotional feelings and habits.

Into this Church we have passed by an easy inheritance. These privileges and others—such as the free use of the Word of God, the right of private judgment, and the full participation of the holy sacraments—have come to us as our birth-right. But they were not bought at a mean price; they cost such sacrifices as none but sincere and zealous servants of God would have paid—those struggles to which human nature, unaided from on high, can hardly be believed to have been equal. But the days of these holy conflicts for

the recovery of the pure faith and truth "as it is in Jesus," have long since past; and they have been followed by a long period of the Church's rest; and, together with ease and enjoyment, the natural evils of prosperity have succeeded. The holy joy experienced by our fathers, in having escaped from Romish darkness and thralldom, has greatly subsided into a vain-glorious boasting of a name. The precious privileges which were their meat and drink, have come by continued and uninterrupted possession to be regarded with indifference.—I say not this universally. God forbid that such a statement should ever be of universal application to a Church so eminently favoured as ours. But far too generally is this the case: and so wide and deep has the contagion spread, that it appears to be the duty of a minister of our Church to call the serious attention of his congregation to the evils which fearfully prevail; and which, if left unremedied, are the best or worst of preparatives for a return to our former condition of spiritual servitude and destitution.

And, that my hearers may not imagine that I am feigning causes of complaint in the absence of real and substantial ones; or that I am exaggerating the case beyond measure—I shall state at once a few points in which it is undeniable that the blessings of the Reformation are less valued and kept less entire than they should be; the

people retrograding in their religious course, and many Romish errors flourishing amongst us; the principal difference being, that the Romish Church *formally* avows them, and we cherish them whilst professedly disclaiming them. For example; we disallow the Romish doctrine of human infallibility—but, can it be denied that this doctrine, or a like one, is in *practical* operation amongst us; it being the way with multitudes to exalt their party, or sect, or their private judgment, or their favourite minister, into the place of the Roman pontiff or council; and to treat the one or the other as if invested with the attribute of infallibility? We disallow the Romish doctrine of tradition, in the sense of its being of equal authority with the Scriptures.—Are there not many Protestants holding this doctrine in abhorrence, who, nevertheless, can render no account of their faith, but that it has come to them from father to son; and is independent, so far as they themselves know, of any Scriptural warranty? We acknowledge no earthly priest in the sense of one who can effectively officiate in the stead of another, so as to supersede the necessity of individual exertion and holiness—does not the whole worship of many consist in being present at, and witnessing what the minister has said or done? We renounce the multitude of Romish superstitions—are not superstitions abounding whereby ‘going to Church,’

‘saying prayers without praying,’ ‘kneeling,’ ‘hearing sermons’ are all constituted substitutes for real devotion? We repudiate the Romish doctrine of purgatory—yet how very few live as in the *heartly* belief that “the tree must lie so as it falls,” and that they shall be recompensed according to the tenor of the deeds done in the body? how many, on the contrary, pass through this scene of probation like real Romanists in creed, although Protestants by name; and as if persuaded that, this life ended, some work shall be wrought in the grave by which sins of commission and omission shall be remedied, and the clean brought forth from the unclean. We thank God that we are not subject to Romish restrictions respecting the use of the Bible—restrictions, still, I believe, existing in their original force where the Papal dominion is in full sway, and not exposed to the jealous eye of an enlightened people—yet to how many is this rejoicing a boast of words only, seeing that they themselves do not study the sacred volume, but treat it as a proscribed book, and continue wilful in error, “not knowing the Scriptures.” It is our privilege, again, that the cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the Laity—but that “both the parts of the Lord’s sacrament by Christ’s ordinance and commandment are ministered to all Christian men alike.”—With how many do their own wickedness and wilfulness

operate more exclusively than the Romish prohibition? *This* would suffer them to communicate but in one kind; the former are the cause wherefore they communicate in neither.

These hints, on some of which I purpose to speak at greater length, are sufficient to shew that it is possible to renounce a name without giving up the thing; and that, whilst we condemn Romish errors, many of them may be in active operation amongst us; and ourselves may be imperceptibly and unconsciously, but surely doing the work of an enemy; and sweeping and garnishing our houses so that they shall not only be ready for, but even invite the return of our former masters, whose service galled and degraded us. And if these errors have crept in amongst us, and abound to a painful extent; they must be allowed to be of the first magnitude in respect of the consequences which they threaten to the Reformed Church; for no easier and more direct way does there seem by which Romanism might be restored than that, first, the minds and habits of the great body of the people should be accommodated to principles and practices similar to the Romish; so that no open violence should be necessary, but it should be needful only for the Romish Church to make her application of already prevailing feelings and customs. And this, if I may be permitted to venture my humble opinion, appears a truer source



of danger to the permanence of the Protestant faith than any real or supposed efforts of a few individuals, or any other ground of alarm which is commonly alleged. And, on the other hand, greater assurance of stability to the Reformed faith can scarcely be afforded (humanly speaking) than that which would consist in its being held and practised by the people in such purity and entireness that it should present the strongest possible contrast to Romish error; and it should be impossible for the one system to be considered as only indifferently varying from the other; or for any to be led blindfolded from the one to the other. But, if the remedy of these evils is eminently required by the interests of the Protestant faith; it is pre-eminently demanded by the interests of real and personal piety: for why have we renounced the Romish errors, but because, amongst other reasons, they are inconsistent with and prejudicial to true religion? not only vitiating the doctrines of the Gospel; but substituting “the form of godliness” for “the power,” and compensating in men’s minds for that service which alone is acceptable to the Father of Spirits, the “worship in spirit and in truth.”

I shall add no more at present, on this subject; only it may not, perhaps, be thought to have been unseasonably brought under our notice. Besides other reasons which may readily occur to some of my hearers; we have just entered on that portion

of the Ecclesiastical year which, after the example of holy men from the earliest times, has been appropriated to a more than ordinary attention to religious matters. We shall certainly not misapply this season if we devote it to a serious consideration and personal application of the words selected for our text; the Scriptural sense and ordinary import of which will invite to an examination, how far we have suffered from those mischiefs which have been pointed out, and which may be referred, in part, to the Church's state of ease and prosperity; in part, to time, the great innovator; in part to the natural bias of mankind.

“Beware lest thou forget the Lord,” signifies, according to the idiom of Scripture—and as might be shewn by a variety of passages—“Beware lest thou corrupt His worship.” A most useful and religious matter of self-examination, therefore, will be, whether we individually, from one cause or another, have become guilty in this respect, and sadly defected from either the *faith* or *practice* of true religion. If our consciences convict us, I would recommend that for our amendment we should give ourselves earnestly and heartily to the cultivation of a truly Protestant spirit. We keep the name; adherence to the thing, is the great matter required. We protest against error, ignorance, superstition; let us be careful that we do not allow ourselves in that which we condemn.

But alas! it is the way with many, that whilst glorying in their Protestant privileges, they do not use them, and are not the better for them; and they come at length to account them of little worth; in the same way as others first reduce the stirring service of our Liturgy into a cold and apathetic form, and then complain that it is wanting in life and energy, fervour and spirituality; and seek perhaps stronger religious excitement where it cannot be had but in conjunction with corrupt doctrine, or superstitious practice, or some of the many varieties of a licentious enthusiasm.

The remedy of existing evils, and the prevention of greater, are in our own power. Let us ourselves "beware lest we forget the Lord." In general this remembrance will defend us from much iniquity both of heart and life, for the fault with the wicked is that God is not in all their thoughts. In particular, it will serve us in the sanctuary; for if it be kept lively and fresh in our minds, we shall never enter a Church without remembering and feeling that "surely the Lord is in this place," and we shall hardly venture to offer him lip service, or "the sacrifice of fools;" but shall call to mind that He whose presence we have specially invited by meeting together in the name of His well-beloved Son, is the Supremely Intelligent Being, who judgeth not by outward appearance, but looketh to the heart; and weigheth actions by

the faith and spirit in which they are done. And if "we forget not the Lord" we shall think of his abounding benefits to ourselves, our souls and bodies; and also to the Church of which we are members; and, holding these in constant remembrance, a godly fear shall spring up and flourish in our hearts, lest when by our name and in our privileges we glory that "we are not as other men are" in respect of religious advantages, we, nevertheless, may be classed in the judgment of God with the many who "say and do not," and whose abuse of blessings is co-extensive with the favour shewed.

## SERMON II.

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### INFALLIBILITY.

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But be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.—MATTHEW xxiii. 8.

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THE boast of independence, which is one of the commonest put forth, is certainly one of the least supported. In some cases, it is manifestly vain and also presumptuous; in others, it is equally, if not so clearly, void of foundation, through men's wilfulness and apathy. In respect of health and fortune, and our comforts, we are hourly dependent on God, and on one another, and on those vicissitudes which none but He can control. And, as to independence in the matter of *sentiment*, the opinions of men are generally derived from others; if not engendered and enslaved by the bias of party or education. And this being true in ordinary matters, is true in the matter of religion. Either from a fancied lack of means or opportunities, or from indifference, or from want of inclination, or through dislike of the necessary pains, or through a morbid dread of being left in uncertainty (when it is evidently the will of God that

we should walk by faith and not by sight); or through a proneness to repose implicitly in religion (as in other things) on those who have reputation for professional skill: from one or more of these causes there prevail amongst men a servility and supineness ill befitting reasonable and accountable beings, and to whom, as such, are committed the oracles of God.

It is obvious, from the language in our text, that this tendency of mankind to take religion on trust, and to defer, in absolute submission, to human authority; as it could not elude the observation of Him “who knew what was in man,” so it did not escape His reprobation. But—if our Lord noted it for the purpose of condemnation, there have not been wanting others who, observing it, have encouraged it and endeavoured to turn it to their own advantage. And, whilst this charge appertains to many besides, in a less degree, it rests with its heaviest weight on the crafty and politic Church of Rome. For not being ignorant, on the one hand, of men’s disinclination to the investigation of religious truth; and, on the other hand, of their abhorrence of doubt in the most important of concerns; she has taken occasion of the same to erect an imaginary tribunal of *infallibility*, which is designed to preclude the necessity, and to satisfy the conscience for the neglect, of a personal investigation of divine truth.

As I mentioned on a previous occasion my intention to shew, in a few particulars, how unconsciously but undoubtedly many Protestants are proceeding on principles similar to the Romish, and thus facilitating the return of their errors; I shall commence with this their famous, but notoriously untenable doctrine; which, if it were granted, would of course sanction all the other corruptions of Rome.

The doctrine of infallibility is held by all Romish writers and expressly asserted; but 'whence it comes,' or 'where it is,' are questions which they cannot answer to any satisfaction; and about which we need not be over curious. Whether a general council derives its supposed infallibility from the Pope; or the Pope from a general council; or, whether it is a sort of joint production; this is a mystery which they leave undetermined; and it need not perplex us, for it is clear as the light of noon-day that there is infallibility in neither, nor in both conjointly. When we find at one time (<sup>1</sup>) a Pope anathematized; at another, two rival Popes in opposition; at another, a Pope subjecting himself to the condemnation of a general council, by setting forth a *new* creed, and adding to the Nicene Creed the peculiar doctrinal errors of their modern Church; with these facts before us, we should scarcely think the Romanist serious if he should pretend that the infallibility resided in the Pontiff.

Neither should we give him readier credence if he contended for the infallibility of a council or a general council; for one council has condemned the celibacy of the clergy, another has enjoined it; one has ordained prayers in the vulgar tongue, another disapproves of the same; one has affirmed, as an article of faith, that in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper the body of the Lord is *sensually* handled by the Priest, and another has denied it. In the face of these glaring contradictions (and others might be produced), the pretence of infallibility is monstrous; and it surpasses the apprehension of ordinary minds how it could ever have been formally and positively asserted in a Romish Catechism "that the Church of Rome cannot err in matters of faith and morals, inasmuch as it is guided by the Holy Spirit; but that all other Churches must err in faith and morals, inasmuch as they are led by the spirit of the devil."(2)

But the claim of infallibility (although a most daring and baseless presumption) might have been passed over with comparative indifference, if it had only been entered on the books of the Church, and thenceforward suffered to remain as a dead letter. On the contrary, however, it has been applied to the furtherance of the worst tyranny which man can meditate against man; even to the prostration of his reason, and the enslaving of his conscience. Building on this fictitious claim, the



Romish Church maintains that she alone, by consequence, is the competent expounder of Scripture, and she allows not at all of private judgment in matters of faith and morals. But here again she is at variance with herself; for, if her members are conscientious, they must, in the exercise of their private judgment, have preferred her to other churches; and, in the case of converts at least, she must be supposed to approve of the exercise of private judgment on the leading matters of her faith and discipline; unless she herself desires that her converts be uniformly considered of the number of the blind following the blind. Avowedly, however, she denies the exercise of private judgment not simply in the public teaching of her ministers; but “not even in private shall any one interpret the Scriptures in any other way than according to the prescribed form.” Conscience is, therefore, reduced to a state of servitude, and men are compelled (if they could be) even to think as the Church has determined that they shall think. And this tyranny is not claimed over the members of her own communion only; but, affecting to be the *Universal* Church (as well as infallible), she requires obedience from all, whether never belonging to her, or having departed from her; and thus it is said in the Roman Catechism, that “heretics and schismatics (though no longer members of the Church of Rome) are still in the power of the Church, as

persons to be called by it to judgment, punished, and doomed by anathema to damnation." It is true, indeed, that she limits her right to interpret the Scriptures, by intimating that her sense must not be at variance with the unanimous consent of the Fathers; but it has been answered to this, that if the unanimous consent of the Fathers is to be obtained before we can arrive at the true sense of Scripture, that sense is to be despaired of in a vast variety of cases; one Father differing from another, and often from himself. For example: they disagree in the interpretation of the words, "Thou art Peter; and upon this rock will I build my Church;" and yet the system of the Papacy is founded on this passage. They differ, too, in the import of a part of the sixth chapter of St. John, and this difference is confessed by the Council of Trent; and yet this Council alleges this very chapter as a main pillar of Transubstantiation.

We see from what tyranny Protestants have escaped — tyranny, where the doctrine is conscientiously and zealously held, conscientiously tending to the bitterest persecution. Our Church pretends not to any such infallibility. She denies not the right of private judgment; she affects not power or control over those who do not belong to her Communion. And, if any depart from her bosom, they may do so, not without grief, but without molestation on her part, and without liability

to ecclesiastical censure or punishment. In her 20th Article she arrogates to herself no higher distinction than that of "a witness, and a keeper of Holy Writ;" in her 21st Article she confesses her liability to err; in her 6th Article she admits the right of private judgment. She asserts, indeed, her 'power to decree rights or ceremonies;' and such power devolves to her from Apostolic usage; and is exercised, if not formally asserted, by every church. She requires of her ministers, and expects of her members universally, that (so long as they continue in connexion with her) they conform to her Articles, Ordinances, and Ritual. And as a pure and reformed portion of the Church catholic she claims men's assent and fellowship. But she interferes not with strangers and deserters, however she may deplore their dissension. She declares that she has authority in 'controversies of faith;' but not the authority of infallibility; only she demands *that* deference over private judgment which is justly due, and will be readily paid by the humble, to the decisions of a body of men in all respects most eminently and peculiarly qualified to pronounce on matters of Christian dispute. And withal she vindicates to herself the right (which every civil and religious society asserts for its own preservation) of removing those, especially of her ministers, who, by violating the terms of communion, would destroy her existence as a dis-

tinct Church of Christ. If she went further and extended her jurisdiction over other societies of Christians, she would be as faulty as the Church of Rome. But this she does not: allowing every one the right of worshipping God according to his conscience; not forcing any to her communion, nor compelling any to remain in it; nor affecting dominion over those who separate from it.

The principle of the Romish Church is a slavish one; and we see not how a man can submit to it until he has persuaded himself that the highest endowment of his nature was vouchsafed for his guidance in secular concerns alone; and not that he might offer unto his Maker a reasonable service. The principle of our Church befits a freeman, and him who must give account for the discreet use of that gift which ennobles him above the beasts that perish; and its exercise on the highest subjects which can be submitted to the mind of man; subjects which had never constituted a formal revelation from God, had it not been the divine will that the human faculties should be employed on them.

And now having before us the case of the two Churches, so far as this particular doctrine is concerned, and so far as is necessary to my purpose; I proceed to the proposed application of the subject. We boast, and justly, that as Protestants we are not under the dominion of the Church of

Rome, in matters of religion. We rejoice, moreover, in the belief that we are not in spiritual bondage to any man. But as the Jews of old exulted in the notion of national independence, even when at the very time they were in subjection to the Romans; so, upon inquiry, it may be found that many glorying in their religious liberty are as much enslaved as ever the Church of Rome would wish or make them. It is true that, by word of mouth, they call no man "Rabbi" in the sense of 'Lord over their consciences;' and they themselves perhaps usurp not the title so as to dictate to others, but hold, and justly hold, that every one is entitled to a conscientious belief; and this sounds exceedingly well, and becoming a reasonable being. But alas! how many Protestants have erected to themselves a tribunal as absolute and tyrannical and unreasonable as the Romish; and to which they render equally blind and implicit obedience. They substitute their own capricious sentiments, or their party, or their minister, in the place of the Roman Pontiff; and by a servile following of one or the other of these, are renouncing the privileges in which they rejoice; sinning as certainly against the spirit of our text, as if they were under the government which they disown; and paving the way for the re-admission of Romish pretensions by disqualifying themselves to resist them, and rendering it only necessary that their

allegiance should be transferred to an authority which may really possess greater claims to obedience.

First, there are unquestionably many Protestants who exalt their *capricious sentiments* into the place of the Roman Pontiff or Council; and constitute these an arbitrary and absolute rule of faith or life; if not in all things, yet in some things. They have certain notions on, perhaps, some principal doctrines or duties of the Gospel. Whence they were derived—how imbibed—how consistent with the word of God—how prepared to stand the tests of reason and argument and antiquity,—these are considerations never entertained, nor suffered to interrupt their complacency; and sometimes it is a condition of friendship that no interference should be attempted in the matter of their peculiar religious tenets. Thus is light scrupulously excluded, and along with it all hope that they shall ever attain to the knowledge of the truth. They believe one thing, qualify another, reject a third; without care of the solidity of their views, without concern for Scriptural warranty, without balancing of evidence, without deference to the more competent, without thought of any existing bias or temptation on their parts to pervert truth. They may dignify their sentiments with the honourable title of private *judgment*; but all of judgment which appertains to them is, that they

have passed sentence, and made up their minds, and determined without hearing; and their wilfulness and obstinacy are to them as the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. Are not such acting on the Romish principle of a blind submission to human authority; even the authority of their own caprice? and on the supposition that through their wilfulness they discard any of the fundamentals of the faith; would they not act more wisely if they at once embraced the Romish servitude? for, with all its many and grievous faults, it holds the essentials of the Gospel, and can plead something better in behalf even of its errors, than the arbitrary pleasure of a single individual.

It is certain that these are not acting on the Protestant principle of proving all things in order to hold fast that which is good. So neither are they, who take their religion absolutely from the *sect* or *church* to which they belong. And very many, again, are chargeable in this respect. They are Churchmen or Dissenters, Socinians or Calvinists, simply and solely, because they belong by birth or inheritance to such a party or sect. They themselves can render no other reason: and on the same principle they would have been Mahomedans or Jews, if the same cause had existed. As to the *peculiar* tenets of their body, many are but very imperfectly acquainted even with the

name of them ; although their Church membership would give the world to understand that they conscientiously prefer them before all others. And as to their agreement with Scripture (impartially and diligently investigated), this is frequently, indeed, altogether excluded from thought. They have the strong bias of party ; and this serves them in the stead of a Pope ; and they foster it, perhaps, by all appliances of reading in the direction of their *prejudices* ; sensitively shunning the light which may be shining with meridian brightness in the opposite direction. And thus error is perpetuated without prospect of redemption. They are, assuredly, not acting up to the Protestant principle ; for according to their mode of proceeding we should have been Romanists now and for ever after. However devoted they may be to their party, they must not affect to be lovers of truth ; and if they are members of *our* Communion it must surely be in ignorance of our principles ; for it is too manifestly their confidence that a man shall be saved *by* the law or sect which he professeth ; and this is a doctrine which our Church utterly repudiates.

But besides those who exalt their wilfulness of belief, or their sect, into an arbitrary and absolute rule of faith or morals ; there are others, and a numerous class, who suffer a favourite *minister* to usurp the same superhuman office. It is true that



they boldly allege that the Bible, and the Bible alone, is their religion; but, if the truth of the case were made known, it would frequently be manifest that *their* Bible dwindles down into just so much of it as they may gather from the discourses of the spiritual instructor of their choice or preference; or, if they are otherwise given to the study of it, the thought of inquiring into the validity of what they hear, would be checked at once by themselves as presumption unbecoming them and somewhat derogating from the allegiance due. As it was in the Corinthian church when every one said, "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas;" so is it much the case now.— But, however flattering such distinction may be to his vanity, every faithful minister of the Reformed Church will discourage an absolute dependence on his word and wisdom. In some cases it consists not with a full knowledge of divine truth; and if the blind follow the blind the consequences are not doubtful. In every case it is the transfer of honour, due to our Master in heaven, to one of like passions with ourselves. In every case it is an irreverent treatment of those Scriptures which must have been intended for our dutiful and diligent investigation. In every case it is a practice hostile to the principles of the Reformation, and favourable to that servile acquiescence which is the first thing required in the Romish Commu-

nion. Undoubtedly, if we make ourselves slaves to any human authority, we assign to that authority the virtue (if we withhold the name) of infallibility; and our profit as Protestants or Christians is small if, renouncing the name, we keep the evil.

What has been said, would seem sufficient in illustration of this part of our subject. And, now, for the remedy of the evils pointed out, it is necessary only that we imbibe and cultivate the spirit embodied in the words of our text. "Be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." The import of this is obvious. The Jews were so attached to their Rabbis that they admitted their opinions as a law equal with the law of God; and the Scribes and Pharisees, together with the title of Rabbi, affected an infallibility in matters of religion. Our Saviour cautioned his disciples against the usurpation of the name in this high sounding sense of authority, and against the admission of such pretensions on the part of others; and said to them, not even excepting Peter (a circumstance which by no means favours the notion of his supremacy) "all ye are brethren:" he condemned the Pharisees' assertion of lordship over the consciences of men, and forbade his disciples to surrender themselves absolutely to any human judgment; Himself being alone, and the only infallible Head of the Church.

But when our Lord forbade tyranny over men's minds, He did not forbid that just deference should be paid to the Church's judgment. Far from it. And the line of distinction is drawn with sufficient accuracy in the opening of this chapter: "The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses's seat: all, therefore, whatsoever they bid you, observe and do." Here the authority of the Jewish Church was recognised to the full; whatsoever they enjoined in Moses's 'stead, and on Moses's authority, and agreeably to the law and the Prophets, was carefully to be observed; but, then, they were not to yield a blind and servile obedience; for it is closely added, "do not ye after their works, for they say and do not;" and, elsewhere, our Lord expressly warned them to "beware of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees." Here certainly the right of private judgment is sanctioned. And in the case of the man born blind, the exercise of it was eminently rewarded; for our Lord favourably received the man who, by reason of exercising it, had been excommunicated by the church. And this is precisely the principle on which our Church proceeds. She repudiates the notion of any spiritual tyranny; but she claims authority, so far as she is agreeable to the word of God. And in matters of controversy, and indeed in all matters, no humble and well-regulated mind will think her authority light, or that moderate deference is due

to it, or that it is a small matter to set it at naught, or that it is unreasonably founded, when he takes into account the faith and sincerity, the learning, pains, and patience, the zeal for the exclusion of error, the reverence for antiquity, and the moderation between conflicting views which characterized those holy men by whom the system of our church was restored.

But it is often alleged against the exercise of private judgment, that, if it were carried out, it would open the floodgates to errors, schisms, and heresies, without limit. These evils would be less to be feared if it were not the habit of men to dignify with the name of judgment that which deserves no higher designation than that of individual caprice, rashness, or presumption. Judgment is, surely, somewhat more worthy and solemn than this. It implies a patient hearing of both sides; a careful balancing of testimony; a submission to more competent authority; and a decision according to the real merits of the case, without favour or prejudice. If none flattered themselves that they had attained to a judgment before they had gone through this process, the dangers apprehended would be immensely spoiled of their magnitude. For the chief mischiefs have arisen either from men's first forming their opinions and then calling in the Scriptures to the support of their bias; or, else, from their having formed their

decision in doubtful matters, independently of or without due regard to those helps and lights without the application of which a right judgment cannot be reasonably expected. If men searched the Scriptures diligently, free from bias or the interests of party—above all, with humility, diffidence, and prayer, and in the consciousness of the importance and responsibility which are attached to a discreet exercise of judgment on the things of God and eternity; and, consequently, with a grateful use of and dutiful submission to those guides which are most competent to direct them; we know that there is the promise of the Spirit of Truth to guide into all truth; and we know, too, that He is not the spirit of confusion, but would have all men to be of one mind and to have a right judgment in all things.

But, whatever be the mischiefs feared (and they seem to be overrated; for, notwithstanding all that private judgment has done, the number of those who formally reject the essentials of the Gospel is comparatively small)—but whatever be the abuse of the name and thing—three things are certain: first, that the Romish specific of infallibility is no sufficient security against them; for (in the words of a writer learned on the subject) “the fanaticism of new *orders* in the Romish church was the same with that of new sects among us; Arminianism being the doctrine of the Jesuits; Calvinism of the

Jansenists; Quakerism, of the Franciscans; and Socinianism in all its gradations being taught by others." Secondly—whatever evils arise, they must arise, though it may be in less proportion; for it is not in the power of man to enslave thought, however he may desire or seek it: human power can only arrest the circulation of error, it cannot prevent the entertainment of it. And, thirdly, if the evils or dangers of the exercise of private judgment were multiplied an hundredfold, it would, nevertheless, be our duty to use it. God is an intelligent Being. He cannot be pleased with a blind worship. We are reasonable creatures, and our service ought to be reasonable. We are free agents, and our devotion ought to be worthy of "the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." And if there were no *command* to the effect that we should read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the Scriptures, it would be plainly the will of God that we should do so, from the single fact, that by no other way could we ever have attained to a *system* of Christian faith and duties. The doctrines and duties of religion are not given us in any summary form in the New Testament, but are scattered here and there and without arrangement; and it is only by searching and comparison that we have ever derived the rule of faith and life.

I conclude, therefore, with exhorting that as our Church does not seek to lord it over God's

heritage; so be we careful to call no man (either ourselves or another) "Rabbi" in the sense of absolute Master over our consciences. Let every man be "fully persuaded in his own mind;" and, that his persuasion may not be injurious, let him provide that the moral judgment of his mind and understanding be not corrupted with blind unreasonable prejudices; or, by pride, or self-conceit, or any vicious affection; and that his habits of thinking be not enslaved to party or human authority; and let him remember the solemn admonition of Bishop Burnet, "that we may abuse the use of our *reason* as well as the liberty of our will, and may be damned for the one as well as the other."

If we neglect this duty, we are Romanists in principle; and to enter their communion it would be necessary not to pass from freedom to slavery, but only to exchange Masters, and sometimes a worse for a better service. But, if we follow it, whilst we shall discharge our obligation as those to whom the oracles of God have been committed, and as those who must give account of their use of God's gifts—whilst we shall improve our minds and grow in knowledge, and in grace too (if we be clothed with humility)—we shall also arm ourselves most effectively against the aggressions of a crafty church, which may promise itself success—in proportion as there prevails an indisposition to investigate truth, and to know the certainty of the

things wherein we have been instructed. For these reasons and on these grounds I repeat, let us search the Scriptures for ourselves, and search them daily. The very simple and manly avowal of the principle will itself, and alone, defend us from some Romish errors which do not even affect the warranty of Scripture, and cannot abide its light; and a bold and vigorous application of it will be again, as it once was, the discomfiture of them all.

But whilst we thus give ourselves to the cultivation of a Protestant spirit, and reject the right of any human authority to tyrannize over us; let us as carefully, nay *more* carefully, remember, that we have a Master, even Christ, to whom entire and implicit submission is due. If we call Him 'Master and Lord' we say well; for so He is; but it is in vain that we call him 'Lord' if we do not the things which he hath said. And whilst he hath said many things, and obedience is due to them all; He hath said one thing which, especially, in matters of religious controversy it becomes us to remember; "all we are *brethren*." Whilst this reminds us of our equality, and that no one should tyrannize over another in matters of religion; whilst it suggests that, although brethren, some may be wiser and better than others, and deference due from the less to the better qualified; let it also admonish us to a charitable and loving spirit.



Whilst we hate and repel error, let us remember that, as brethren, we are heirs of the same corrupt nature and perverse wills, and in need of the same mercy; as brethren, indebted one to another; we to the Romish church, for the preservation of the truth in ages of the grossest darkness and superstition; they to us (if they did but value the service) for restoring the light in its purity and brightness: and, bearing this our relationship and this our obligation in mind, let us seek, and prize, above all the triumphs of controversy, their spiritual welfare, for whom, as well as for us, Christ died.

## S E R M O N   I I I .

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### VICARIOUS MERIT.

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And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out.—MATTHEW XXV. 8.

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THESE words belong to the parable of the 'Ten Virgins.' Five of them were wise, and five foolish. They all went forth to meet the bridegroom, and attend him to the marriage feast; by which we are reminded of the marriage of the Lamb when Christ and his Church shall be eternally united. The wise and the foolish both alike took 'lamps; and oil' in their lamps, and lighted them; but the wise were distinguished in *this* respect, that they took oil in 'vessels' along with their lamps; conformably, it is said, to the practice in the East of carrying a lamp in one hand, and in the other a vessel of oil wherewith to replenish it. And this precaution was of the first importance: for (the bridegroom, tarrying and delaying beyond their expectation) they all, 'wise' as well as 'foolish,' (shewing that none are perfect) slumbered and slept: and at midnight (the day of the Lord cometh

as a thief in the night) there was a cry made, "Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him." The wise arose, and trimmed their lamps; but the foolish now suffered through their want of consideration; for their lamps were gone out. In their alarm and anxiety they applied to the wise, saying, 'Give us of your oil.' The prudent ones answered that this could not be, lest there should not be enough for both; but advised them to go and buy of those who had to sell. And, while they went, the bridegroom came: and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut. Afterwards came the others saying, "Lord, Lord, open to us; but He answered and said, Verily, I say unto you, I know you not."

The aim of this parable is sufficiently manifest from what our Lord immediately added, "Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day, nor the hour, wherein the Son of Man cometh." It was evidently designed to teach us the necessity of being always prepared for the 'coming of the Lord,' whether virtually in death, or, formally, in the day of judgment; and to warn us, moreover, against putting our trust in a late repentance. By the "lamps" we may understand the outward profession of faith and holiness; by the oil in the 'vessels,' which the wise carried with their lamps, is signified, the abounding in the virtues and

graces of the Christian character. The foolish virgins had the one, the *external* profession; the wise (together with the name and profession) had the oil of divine grace in their hearts; and, when the door was shut, it was too late for them who had trusted in a name to correct their error.

Thus much respecting the drift of the parable; my concern being not so properly with the parable, as with the *principle* set forth in that portion of it which has been selected for our text.—“Give us of your oil” was a very natural request, under the circumstances. It is the ordinary language of the thoughtless to the careful; of the spendthrift to the frugal; of the idle to the diligent: and being thus common in temporal emergencies, I proceed to shew that it is applied and acted upon in spiritual things; and that, whilst the principle is not obsolete amongst ourselves, it has been taken advantage of by one branch of the Church of Christ for the introduction and maintenance of some of the worst corruptions in religion.

“Give us of your oil,” is in other words, “supply our deficiency out of your abundance.” Now this is a principle plainly acknowledged and acted upon in the Romish church; and as it is my intention to shew, in this matter, how much Protestant practice may be in agreement with Romish error, whilst we flatter ourselves that we are exempt from the same; it would seem right

that, in the first place, we should have the Romish principle and practice before us.

The principle, 'Give us of your oil,' is first plainly exhibited in their doctrine of indulgences. They profess that there is lodged with their church 'a fund' of those good works which were the saints,' and over and above those which were necessary to their own justification; and that the keys of this treasury belong to the Roman Pontiff, who may open it at pleasure, and transfer a portion of their superabundant merit to any particular person; and thus convey to him a pardon of his own sins, or a release for any one, in whom he is interested, from the pains of purgatory. This doctrine is unequivocally condemned by our Church, which says, that "voluntary works, besides, over and above God's commandments, which they call works of supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogance and impiety; for by them men do declare that they do not only render unto God as much as they are bound to do; but that they do more for his sake than of bounden duty is required; whereas Christ saith plainly, When ye have done all that are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants." But it is not only in the matter of indulgences that this principle, 'Give us of your oil,' is exhibited; it pervades the system. The efficacy of the sacrifice of the Mass is made to depend on the sincerity and rectitude of intention; not in the

Communicants, but in the *Priest*; so that if the priest's holiness may not compensate for the absence of faith and piety in the communicants (which is not said), yet the communicants' sufficiency is made contingent on the priest's oil; and they are at the mercy of the priest, for *his* want negatives their abundance.<sup>(3)</sup> The same is the case in the matter of absolution. It is stated, in so many words (as a decree of their church), that "if the priest have no intention of acting seriously, and truly absolving him, the penitent ought not so to flatter himself of his own faith as to think that, on account of it, he is truly absolved before God; but should carefully seek out another priest to absolve him *seriously*." This principle is, again, applied in their solitary masses, in which the priest alone communicates for all the faithful; and the priest's devotion is substituted for the faith and act of the body of the Church. So also in those prayers which are directed to be uttered on certain occasions in a language not common to the people. The people have no understanding of those prayers, and can be supposed to have part in them only by virtue of the priest's officiating.— But, most conspicuously, is this principle illustrated in their doctrine of Purgatory, which declares that if any true penitent shall depart this life, in the love of God, before that they have made satisfaction by worthy fruits of penance for

faults of commission and omission, their souls are purified after death by the pains of purgatory; and that, for their release from these pains, the suffrages of the faithful who are alive are profitable to them; to wit, the sacrifices of masses, prayers, and alms, and other works of piety.

We have proof enough before us that the principle, "Give us of your oil," is avowed and plentifully acted upon by the Romish church; the people are taught that they may share in the righteousness of the saints, as if the saints had more than sufficient; they are left dependent on the priest's holiness for the acceptableness of their own worship,—and for their assurance of pardon; and they are given to understand that, when they shall have departed this life, their sins of commission and omission may be remedied by other men's performances.

It is not my purpose to enter on the confutation of these errors. The task would be easy, I should hope, to every one present. Neither men nor angels can do more than their bounden duty for the time being; and, therefore, cannot have any *superabundance* of merit. And our Saviour hath said that when we have done all that is commanded us, we are to confess ourselves unprofitable servants. Certainly, then, none can be over righteous in the sense of having goodness enough and to spare. And the other views are directly

opposed to the many Scriptures which say “the soul that sinneth it shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.”

“None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him.”

“There is no work nor device nor knowledge nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest.”

“As the tree falleth so it must lie.” “*Now* is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.”

“The night cometh in which no man can work.”

—And, as to our assurance of pardon and peace being at the mercy of the priest’s integrity of purpose to absolve, we have the surer word from the mouth of the Master himself, “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out;” and, as to the priest’s defects vitiating or nullifying the devotional offerings of others, the Psalmist again and again hath declared that “the Lord rewarded him according to his (and not another’s) righteousness; and recompensed him according to the cleanness of his (and not another’s) hands.” And when the prophet Micah inquireth “Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, or bow myself before the High God?” the answer is *not* that he must seek out a priest of inward purity and serious intentions to be the medium of his devotional



offerings, but, “He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.”

But, as I have already said, it is not my purpose to refute these errors of the Romish church. We protest against them, and we rejoice that “our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler; the snare is broken and we are escaped.” If the question were formally proposed to us, “whether we believed that the acceptableness of our worship was contingent on the worthiness of the priest? or, whether we believed that his praying in our steads, was prayer on our part? or, whether we thought that the righteousness of another creature, man or angel, could supply our deficiency?” we should instantly repel the imputation of such belief. It is one thing, however, to abhor a name, and another to have done with the reality. It is one thing to repudiate a principle; and another to be exempt from the practice which flows from that principle. It is one thing to say ‘I will not,’ and another to be able to say with a clear conscience, ‘I *do* not;’ how many “do that which they allow not, and what they hate that they do.”

And that this is not a baseless reproach on many Protestants is, unhappily, far too manifest and easily susceptible of proof. The principle,

“Give us of your oil,” or, in other words, Let another’s sufficiency in religious respects, serve in the stead of mine; let another’s merit stand for mine; another’s zeal atone for my apathy—this principle is habitually acted upon by Protestants in vast numbers; however ignorant or unsuspecting they may be of its operation. And I shall now, in pursuance of my plan, instance this in a few particulars deserving the serious thought of all who have a real regard for true religion, as well as for the welfare and consistency of the Protestant Church.

First then, how clearly and grievously is this principle seen in operation when we are assembled in the sanctuary. I speak not of any congregation in particular, but generally. Large numbers of Christians meet together—but who are the worshippers? Certainly not (as it should be) the *whole* congregation, but a comparative few. The rest, and we fear that, oftentimes, the great mass proceed on the principle, ‘Give us of your oil.’ The minister prays, the children sing, the clerk responds; and with what is a large proportion of the congregation content but with this—that others have done what *they* ought to have done, and that other’s devotion has been in the stead of their own. If there were *no* singing nor prayers, they would be grievously shocked, and think that the service of the sanctuary was most incomplete and

unsatisfactory; but where is the real difference (so far as they are concerned), whether there be Psalmody and Prayers or none, if they do not join in them? Clearly there is no difference whatever; unless they call to their aid the Romish principle, that we share in the virtue of other people's performances. And this apathy prevails, to a great extent, in our congregations; so that a stranger might often suppose that it is a *principle* with us (as with the Romish church) that the ministration of one or a few may be substituted for the devotion of all. Nothing can be further from the doctrine or intention of our Church: and this is easily evident to any who will just consider the title our Prayer Book; the book of '*Common*' Prayer, common to the minister and the people; to any who will but inspect '*the Rubric,*' and see what a large portion of the service is exclusively divided to the *people*; how some parts of it are designedly left incomplete and senseless without the people's co-operation; how the plural mode of expression occurs throughout, on the presumption that the congregation are engaged in mind and affections with the minister; and how earnestly the congregation are reminded of their duty by the solemn form '*Let us pray.*'

The matters which yet remain to be noticed in this discourse will not admit of my dwelling, at any length, on this great abuse; but I would urge upon persons to consider seriously what injury they

are inflicting on our beautiful service by their apathy! how they spoil it of the efficiency and attractiveness which would belong to it, and of the conversion of souls which might flow from it, if it were conducted by the *congregation* in a proper spirit! how they subject it to slander and misrepresentation as a cold and lifeless formulary! and how they furnish the adversaries of our Church, with weapons to use against us. We object to the Dissenter, that we cannot pray *with* him, but must follow; waiting for the utterance of his mind, and being carried forward, without time or ability to weigh or feel his sentiments—with what reason may he turn round upon us and say, that our complaint is not remedied by a service in which we take no part;—we tell the Romanist that we object to the solitary prayers of the priest, and his use of a foreign tongue: may he not justly retort, that “we are as he is,” and that the difference is, principally, in name; and that his principle, however disallowed, is in practical operation amongst us; seeing that we leave the service of the sanctuary to the minister and others; and it matters not whether the prayer be in a known or unknown tongue, to those who do not use it. But, especially would I urge this, that our worship may be accepted of God; and something better than a vain and empty parade, a solemn mockery, or perhaps a daring trifling in His sight,

whose presence we have specially invited by meeting together in the name of Christ.—We are altogether without excuse if we do not join devoutly in the prayers. And as to the Psalmody; if it be of the simplest form, all may unite in it, if there be first a willing mind; and if it be of a higher description, it is generally in congregations where there would be no lack of *congregational* harmony if there were not a reluctance to consecrate, to the service of God, those abilities which are readily enough applied to the use and gratification of society.

A second instance, which I shall adduce, of the operation of this principle, is taken from the treatment which the Holy Scriptures receive at the hands of many Protestants. The parties of whom I am speaking do not pretend that the Scriptures ought not to be searched and studied; on the contrary, they account this a leading feature of Protestantism: but, whilst they allow so much, it is as certainly their plan that they leave the study of the sacred volume (as they leave the statutes of the realm) to those whose professional office they account it. Here, again, is the principle (although formally disallowed) in actual and active operation; “Give us of your oil: let the clergyman do what we ought to do, and confess that we ought to do; let his pains and assiduity be in the stead of ours.” And with what reason can such find fault with the

Romish church, which would restrict the use of the Scriptures, and which denies the right of private judgment? They themselves virtually renounce what that Church would prohibit; and if such neglect should ever be universal, or very general, it is manifest that any designing priesthood would find little difficulty in teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, and rebuilding that spiritual tyranny which we have cast off. Many pretences are, indeed, alleged in excuse of such neglect of the Scriptures, and one of them is "want of time;" but, few persons are so usefully and profitably employed throughout the day that they cannot afford, without loss or inconvenience, some portion of it for the perusal of God's Word: and a truly religious person will, perhaps, think that if the infinitely wise God hath condescended to make a revelation of his will and salvation, time ought to be *made* in order to do it reverence. Others allege that the clergy are the most competent to the interpretation of Scripture; but they forget that their competency arises greatly from the practice and study; and that others' proficiency would grow in like manner. Again,—it is said that the study of the Scriptures embraces an investigation of the evidences of religion, and that the life of an individual would not suffice to this work in all its branches. We grant that there is truth in this plea. Yet, generally speaking, and in the

case of those who have not leisure, we may say that they may with reason and assurance of safety leave the evidences of religion alone, and proceed on the assumption of the truth of the Bible. And this they may do upon the single but substantial ground, that the world has been freely challenged for hundreds of years to shake its credit; and that thousands have made it their business to do so, and yet they have availed nothing; for if it had been otherwise, the news had been spread with a trumpet of thunder from the one end of the world to the other, by some of the malevolent spirits that are seeking the destruction of the Word of God.

In close connexion with this part of our subject, we may just notice, in passing, that we find this same principle at work in the matter of the education of the poor (<sup>4</sup>). If a Protestant were asked whether he considered the Romish church justified in restricting the use of the Scriptures, he would answer, generally, in the negative; and declare, on the contrary, that our Lord himself noted it as a peculiar, and not the least distinguishing characteristic of His Gospel, that it was preached to the poor. But, if (without putting this leading question) he were asked whether the poor ought to be taught to *read*? it is not in every case that the same positive and prompt answer would be returned; but often would it be met with doubts and scruples. Yet it is evident that giving the

Scriptures to the poor is utterly vain, unless we enable them to read them. We might as well impart them in a dead language. How then can we reconcile the inconsistency of giving the poor the Bible, and, at the same time, denying them the means of understanding it? how, unless on the principle which we are considering and condemning, namely, that as some of the educated leave the study of the Scriptures to the clergy, so the poor may treat it as the peculiar office of the upper classes. And thus, in both cases, our boasted privilege of the free use of the Scriptures would become a dead letter. There is but another instance in which I shall illustrate the practical operation of this principle, "give us of your oil," and it is in a matter which repeatedly comes under observation. They who are acquainted with the religious world, are well aware that frequently the *ministry* which one attends is a sort of passport in certain portions of society. And of this, perhaps, we have little cause to complain. But we often find more than this, and of which there is cause to complain; namely, that many think themselves "better than others," accordingly as, in their opinion, their minister is superior to others. Their minister is, or they think that he is, remarkable for zeal, piety, learning, benevolence—they are of his congregation; *therefore*, they are all this above others who do not attend such a gifted ministry.



However absurd this sounds, and is; unquestionably it is often the case, that the real or presumed goodness of the minister is appropriated by some of the congregation, and so as to preclude the necessary inquiry into their own personal qualifications; and how far they are like unto him whom they admire with, *perhaps*, excess of veneration. He is learned in the Scriptures; *therefore* they are not so ignorant as others, although perhaps they hardly listen to his discourses, and it is not their endeavour to profit by them. He is zealous—*therefore*, they must be distinguished above Christians in ordinary. He is charitable—and *therefore*, are they; notwithstanding, perhaps, that they take no part in his benevolent works. How plainly is here the principle at work, “give us of your oil.” Their minister possesses, in their belief, goodness enough, and to spare, and they virtually apply it and trust to it as supplying their deficiency.

But nothing, perhaps, shews the accuracy of the view which we are taking more powerfully than the following fact, pointed out by an acute observer of men and things (<sup>5</sup>), namely, that those persons who make profession of religion indeed, but are themselves the least conscientious in their profession, are the very same who make the greatest demands of purity and exemplary conduct in their ministers. One might have supposed that they who themselves are lax in their morals, would be

the very ones to overlook like blemishes in others, not excepting the ministers of religion. The truth, however, is just the reverse. Whilst the truly religious will often make allowances; none are more rigid in exacting perfection in the clergy than those who themselves are sadly wanting in Christian duty and decorum. This may appear strange, but it is easily accounted for, on the principle "give us of your oil." Knowing themselves to be far different from what they ought to be, the pleasing infatuation prevails with them that they are better, as their minister is free from exception. If they are not good Christians, they are followers of one who is; they hear, perhaps, sound doctrine, although they heed it not; in the same way as multitudes who take no part in active benevolence, comfort themselves in belonging to a Christian *community* which abounds in works of brotherly love; and that which tends to a heavier condemnation at the last, answers the present purpose of a consolation and a treacherous ease. I shall only add, that sometimes this principle extends from persons to things; for it is not rarely that we find men who think themselves better than others because they go to a church and not to a conventicle; and this they think, not on any substantial and scriptural grounds by which the worshippers in the one are justly preferred before the others—but, simply, as if a consecrated building had a

goodness which it could impart to those assembled within its walls.

In these particulars I have illustrated the prevailing tendency to commit our religious concerns to others; and the practical operation (amongst us Protestants) of that principle of vicarious merit on which the Romish church proceeds, and in conformity with which are its doctrines of indulgences, purgatory, and intercession of saints; and its habits of substituting the service of the priest for the devotion of others; of depriving the people of the free use of the Scriptures; and of ministering in a tongue not understood by the people. This is the working of the principle in the Romish church; and, by the way, it is rather curious that they should cite the parable (to which the text belongs) in support of a superabounding merit in saints wherewith to supply believers' wants, when it is obvious that the *foolish* virgins made the request, and the wise denied it. But if the mischiefs of this principle are glaring and grievous in the church of Rome; they are not light in our Church, if (as we have seen) this principle tends, to a great extent, to the neglect of the study of the Scriptures, to the prejudice of devotion in the sanctuary, and to the reconciling of men (in several ways) to some substitute for personal holiness and benevolence.

I have pointed out these mischiefs, in the hope

that we may the better guard against them, and that, abjuring Romanism, we may not insensibly be chargeable with some of its worst errors.

And now, in few words, and as the drift and substance of what has been aimed at; let me exhort my hearers that, as our Church allows not of any human substitute for *personal* qualities, so we ourselves be careful to cultivate the same, and fall not into the fatal error of regarding other men's faith or works as compensation for neglect on our parts. Let it be the care of every one of us to have grace of his own; to have, not only oil in our lamps—that is, the profession of religion;—but that we may abound in those virtues by which the profession is adorned and invigorated, and the light shines to the glory of God and the salvation of the soul. When the great day of the Lord shall come, we shall all *desire* salvation, however we may have failed to follow it in this our only season of probation. If we serve God by proxy now, we shall not be content that the joys of heaven shall be awarded on this principle; and it is not by proxy that we shall suffer for our folly; for the soul that sinneth, it shall die. Let us awake and arise to the great purpose of our being; the fitting ourselves in *heart* and *habit* for another and a better state. Our best and utmost vigilance and endeavours shall, indeed, fall infinitely short of any *earning* of the glory to be revealed; but

then we live not under a covenant of works, but of grace, mercy, and pardon, through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ our Saviour. And, whilst we forbid all trust in the merits and intercession of saints, and in the vicarious agency of sinful mortals; we counsel to the highest trust, and the sole trust, in Him whom alone God hath set forth to be the propitiation for the sins of the world. He, indeed, hath merited in our stead: he hath suffered in our place: He ever liveth to make intercession for true believers: He is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him. Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, and have our lamps always burning; that we may be ready to go in with Him to the marriage feast, whenever the voice of death or judgment shall proclaim, “ Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him.”

## S E R M O N IV.

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### SUPERSTITION.

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We know that an idol is nothing in the world.  
1 COR. viii. part of verse 4.

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ALTHOUGH (in the words of our text) “we know that an idol is nothing in the world;” we know also that few things in the world have been occasion of so much impiety and wickedness. If idols have been taken for “gods,” they have certainly done the devil’s work most diligently and plentifully. It was to be expected, therefore, that the true religion would set itself in most determined array against the practice of idolatry. Accordingly, the laws of Moses were the severest possible in order to its prevention; and one principal cause which armed the Gentile world against Christianity, was the ridicule and contempt which it heaped on Pagan superstitions.

The true religion has not yet, however, done its perfect work. Idolatry is still the besetting sin of many heathen nations; would that we could add that it is *exclusively* theirs, and that it can be detected in no shape or degree where the purest

religious light, and most extensive religious privileges prevail. Such holy rejoicing, however, is denied us. Future generations may, perhaps, witness the total extirpation of all such error from the Christian Church; but we have too much cause to deplore its existence, if not in its grossest form, yet, undoubtedly, in a sense and extent eminently prejudicial to the religion of spirit and truth. My hearers will at once admit the partial truth of this statement, so far as one branch of the Church of Christ is concerned—that branch which is known by the designation of the ‘Papal’ or ‘Romish.’ Some, perhaps, may scruple to charge her with the fragrance of idolatry; yet few will hesitate to condemn her of most guilty superstition. For my own part, however (although, I trust, that I am not uncharitably disposed), I must confess, that I see not how the Romanists escape from the graver and the gravest imputation. It may be very true, and doubtless it is true, that the more intelligent of their body ‘know’ as well as we do, ‘that an *idol* is nothing in the world;’ and it may be true, that when they bow before an image or a picture, they only intend honour to the party *represented*; but this excuse will not save them. If idolatry meant only the worshipping of a stock or stone ‘as such,’ that is, ‘as a stock or stone;’ few, even of the most stupid of mankind, have been chargeable with it. But there has always been

associated in the mind some notion of *Divine* virtue or energy in the representation; and to this (and not to the stock or stone) has the honour been rendered; and upon this ground has worship before an image been preferred to worship elsewhere. If the Romanist repudiates any such notion of Divine energy in the visible representation; he is free, individually, from the guilt of worshipping anything 'created' as God; but his church, nevertheless, is justly characterised as 'idolatrous,' seeing that such reverence has a certain and notorious tendency to corrupt to idolatry the multitude, who are not nice in such distinctions; but have been prone in all ages to transfer to the visible, that homage which is the peculiar prerogative of the Invisible. And if the Romanist, by various refinements, evades the criminality attached to the violation of the first commandment, how is he acquitted of a breach of the second; wherein it is expressly forbidden to make any graven image, or the likeness of anything that is in 'heaven above;' and to bow down to them, or worship them? He, certainly *does* make images and likenesses, and bows down before them, and pays them all the adoration, outwardly, which he could render, if in his heart he believed them to be possessed of Divine virtue.

Upon the whole we may observe, that the facts and words of Scripture by no means allow the



Romanist in that license for which he contends as being itself innocent. On the contrary, they convict him of the guilt which he disowns, and which he asserts that he contemplates with the most perfect abhorrence; for it is clear that the Scriptures treat as idolatrous any religious veneration not simply 'to' but '*before*' an image or creature regarded as the medium of the same. When the Israelites worshipped the 'molten calf,' it can hardly be supposed that they considered it as their actual deliverer; especially, when the feast was appointed to Jehovah. It seems far more likely that they viewed it only as a visible representation of God, and bowed before it as such; yet was their sin designated '*worshipping* a calf,' and it was punished accordingly. If *they* were guilty, how is the Romanist safe, who in like manner (as he declares) worships the Invisible through the medium of honour paid to the visible? Again, if the Romanist is justified in his view and notion of mental reservation; Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, might with safe consciences have escaped the fiery furnace; for it was only required of them to fall down and worship the golden image; and this they might have done, on the Romish principle, provided only that their *minds* had been firmly intent on the true God. Nay, if idolatry consisted only in worshipping a creature as actually God; we see not why the angel, in

the Revelation, forbade the apostle John when he fell down to worship *before* his feet; nor so clearly with what appositeness our Lord replied to the Tempter with a passage forbidding *idolatry*, when Satan demanded only the outward act of adoration, that our Saviour should fall down and worship *before* him.

But, without insisting at greater and unnecessary length on the charge of idolatry, it is clear to Protestant eyes that the Romanist is at least guilty of the practice of much and grievous *superstition*. ‘Superstition’ has been defined to be—by one eminently qualified to speak with authority on the subject (<sup>6</sup>), “Any misdirection of religious feeling manifested either in showing religious veneration or regard to objects which deserve none; that is, properly speaking, the worship of false gods: or in the assignment of such a degree, or such a kind of religious veneration to any object, as that object, though worthy of some reverence, does not deserve: or in the worship of the true God through the medium of improper ceremonies or symbols.” This definition—the best which I have been able to find—embraces ‘idolatry’ in its grossest forms, and comprises all those acts which are usually objected against the Romish church as being superstitious, if not idolatrous; such as the adoration of the Virgin Mary, the worshipping of saints, angels, and relics, and images; all which

come under the denomination of religious veneration paid to objects deserving none; or of undue veneration to objects deserving some.

As these things, however, are commonly allowed by Protestants to be superstitious; and as my object is not to encourage a spirit of exultation over others; but, rather one of watchfulness over ourselves: I shall not dwell upon them in detail, but rather proceed to the less grateful, but (if we will make it so) the more profitable task of shewing how unconsciously many Protestants are indulging in superstitions similar to those which they condemn in others.

And, in speaking on this subject, I shall at once pass by, and without notice of reprobation, those things which even in vulgar estimation are reckoned superstitious; however they may be followed. I am not about to speak of a belief in magic, witchcraft, dreams, omens, lucky or unlucky days, or of respect paid in various parts of the land to persons labouring under defect of intellect. My design is more strictly of a religious nature. Bearing in mind that superstition consists in a misdirection of religious veneration, I shall proceed to shew that such abuse of this feeling is not uncommon amongst Protestants; forasmuch as they are given to ascribe to *acts*, the virtue that is due to *motives* or *dispositions*; and to *names*, the worth which belongs to *things*.

And, first; I shall instance this in the matter of the Sacraments of our church. These sacraments are none other than the same which were ordained of our Lord himself. They have each two parts; “the outward visible sign,” and the “inward spiritual grace.” Religious feeling *rightly* directed, dwells upon, and seeks first, and above all, the *spiritual* grace covenanted to the conditions of repentance and faith; and regards the outward part, not as the thing signified, but as *divinely* appointed means, through the medium of which it pleases God to convey his grace to the faithful penitent; which grace it is not in ordinary His pleasure to confer, otherwise than through the medium of the sacraments. This is the correct light in which to regard these holy ordinances; but superstition shews itself amongst us in the misdirection of religious feeling from the Giver of grace, and the qualifications for grace on our parts, to the consecrated *elements*; or to the *act* of the minister, or the bare circumstance of *receiving*.

In respect of Baptism, it has been openly stated, and by high authority (<sup>7</sup>), that it has been sought for in extreme cases of illness, in the hope that it might save *life*; at all events with strong expectation of some such benefit; without thought or intention of bringing up the child in the Christian faith or training. And as to the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper—the superstitious abuse which has

been made of the consecrated bread and wine, is clearly hinted at, and provided against, by our Rubric, which directs, that if any of the consecrated elements remain, it shall not be carried out of the church, but the priest, and other of the communicants, shall reverently eat and drink the same.

But we hope and trust and believe that such gross and ignorant abuses of the outward emblems (and we might add the like of the offertory *money*) are rare indeed, amongst us of the present day. If, however, the superstition is uncommon whereby independent virtue is ascribed to the sensible signs themselves, it is far from seldom that virtue is considered (practically at least) to be inherent in the *outward* performance. Many, for instance, have no notion of baptism, beyond the idea of a sort of charm attendant on the imposition of a name, and the reception into the Church. The thought of "a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness," (which are really the essentials in baptism) enters not at all into their views; and though in the act of baptism the child is solemnly dedicated to a Christian life, and, for a time, on the responsibility of the sponsors; the fact that the child has been baptized is to all intents and purposes regarded by the sponsors as the discharge of their office, when it is only the commencement; and they themselves neither feel,

nor impress upon him, as years and reason increase, what solemn obligation both they and he are under, that he should lead the rest of his life according to that beginning. And the case of the other sacrament is much the same. It suffices to numbers, that the priest has administered the Lord's Supper, and they have received it. They would not forbear from communion (and in this respect it cannot be thought that I would censure them), but it is evident that they treat the act (independently of the state or frame of mind) as possessed of virtue; and not seldom is the bare circumstance of receiving this Sacrament cited in proof of greater piety when, at the same time, there has been no effort to *qualify* themselves for the grace promised. I see not how such can exult over the Romanist, and thank God that they are not as he is; for they are manifestly proceeding on the avowed Romish principle, that "the Sacraments contain the grace, of which they are the signs;" and I see not how the Romanist can justly be held superstitious, for his use of holy water, and beads, and lighted candles, if *they* are exempt from the imputation, who think or treat the 'symbols' of religion, as religion itself; or any outward performance, as a commutation for the everlasting obligations of a Christian faith and life.

If we pass from the Holy Sacraments of our Church to her occasional offices; here also we find

reason to lament the misdirection of religious feeling: and I shall notice it in two particulars. In our service for the visitation of the sick, the minister pronounces an absolution of those who truly repent and believe. It is not my business to inquire whether or no this is merely a release from ecclesiastical censure and disabilities; or whether the priest directly conveys God's pardon to the conscience of the sinner. Undoubtedly, the 'absolution' is regarded in this latter sense by many; and, in this belief, the minister is sometimes sent for, as if his pronouncing this form of words could compensate for the want of true penitence and faith on the part of the sick. Now it is clear that the minister's authority, being delegated and derived, cannot be supposed to extend beyond what is known of His pleasure who hath committed it to him; and as it is not known that God himself will pardon any but the 'faithful penitent,' the minister's act and authority cannot be thought to avail in the absence of those conditions which God himself requires. This I suppose will be granted by the staunchest advocate of the church's power and privileges; but a superstitious use is made of the priest's *act* and *words*, whereby they are considered as having virtue independently of the person's state of mind: and the superstition is evidently of the most mischievous sort; for this office comes to be trusted

in as a sure refuge, at the last, from the wrath of God, under circumstances which *almost* preclude hope of salvation.

In like manner—in the case of the burial of the dead, there is a superstition whereby the carrying of the body into the church, its being laid in consecrated ground, and the funeral service being duly performed; are regarded as if in themselves and of themselves, and without consideration of the life and death of the departed, in some sense or measure they affected and promoted his future condition. The desire of *Christian* burial is both innocent and salutary; but if the *act* impart holiness to the deceased, our Church has been hasty in condemning the Romish doctrine of Purgatory, “as a fond thing vainly invented, and repugnant to the word of God:” and this doctrine is to be preferred before the superstition (which we are noticing); for whilst the one applies to the case of the faithful, the latter does not embrace a like regard to character.

But it is not only in the matters of the Sacraments and occasional offices of our Church that we find superstition in practical operation amongst us; there is abundant cause to lament it in the *ordinary* service of the sanctuary. How many treat the acts of ‘going to church,’ ‘hearing prayers and a sermon,’ as devotion on their part. Yet, take the acts by themselves, and it is hard to



discern how they have more virtue in them than the multitudinous bowings and crossings of the Romanist. It is plain that the mind and spirit in which they are done can alone constitute them devotional. And yet how habitually with some are this mind and spirit not only not cultivated, but not thought of, from the commencement to the very end of our service. When first we enter the sanctuary, it is decorous and reverential that each should address himself in private to God, and beseech Him, that He would dispose his heart aright for the duties in which he is about to engage. And this avowedly is our practice; and I trust that very many are conscientious in the discharge of it: but, I should rejoice to be convicted of misrepresentation, when I say that some, although they affect the attitude of prayer, never pray, but their very first act is one of solemn deceit<sup>(8)</sup>. And with how many is this deceptive religion applied throughout. They kneel without praying; hear without desire to improve; and it suffices to them that they have been to Church.— Is there not in the habit of the minds of such, a transfer of veneration from the thing meant to the thing done? is there not that regard paid to the forms of godliness, which is due only to its substance and power? They may pity the Romanist; but let them take heed to their own ways; and listen to the preacher's wisdom; “keep thy foot

when thou goest to the House of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools; for they consider not that they do evil.”

We have instanced superstition in the transfer of respect or veneration due to religion itself to outward *things* and *acts*; and the subject might have been pursued to a much greater extent; but I shall only add that it is also manifest in the assigning to ‘names’ and ‘privileges,’ that virtue or worth which belongs only to the consistent use of them. The Jews of old were chargeable with this folly. They trusted in their title and privilege as Abraham’s children; without thought that the virtue of the same consisted in their doing the works of Abraham; and that if they did the works of the devil, they were of their father, the devil. In the early Christian church too we observe the same propensity; “I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas”—calling themselves by and rejoicing in the distinction of their leaders, without consideration of their own worthiness as followers; ‘glorying in men,’ and too indifferent as to what they themselves had wherein to glory. And our blessed Saviour hath foretold that, at the great day of account, many shall be assembled before Him, who had put their confidence in their eminent, even supernatural endowments; and who (it would seem) through a blind and implicit *reliance* on the same, shall fail of acceptableness in his sight.

If we pass to the Romish church, we find them exulting in the titles of 'Catholic' and 'Primitive;' and, through an overweening dependence on such pretensions, that church has come, at length, to be more accurately distinguished by her estrangement from the Catholic and Primitive faith than by her agreement with it.

The titles, or designations, in which *we* most commonly rejoice, are, 'Christian,' 'Protestant,' 'Reformed,' 'Churchmen,' 'Orthodox,' or perhaps, 'Evangelical.' But if we would avoid the errors into which others have fallen; if we would be free from the charge of superstition in the use of, and trust in a 'name;' that is, the rendering to a name that respect which is due to the thing; it will be our wisdom to examine frequently and scrupulously whether the *significance* of the name has departed from us. We may delight in the name of 'Christian;' but a confident reliance on it may cause that there shall be little in our *morals* distinguishing us from the heathen; and little or nothing in our *creeds* which is peculiar to the Gospel. We may glory as 'Protestants,' and yet (as I have shewn) be guilty of some of the worst corruptions against which we protest. The name of 'churchman' may be preserved—and yet conceal an ignorance of, or indifference to, all that is peculiarly distinctive of our Apostolic doctrine and form of government. The name of 'orthodox,'

if it be not repeatedly tested, may let in the worst of heresies; and so may, and often has, the name 'evangelical;' together with a woful neglect of that charity which "vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, and doth not behave itself unseemly." The possibility, nay—from past history and present experience—the *probability*, that veneration for a 'name' may be productive of such mischiefs, will cause the prudent, in respect to the affairs of their souls, to institute frequent and careful examination, whether their state agrees with their professions; and their improvement accords with their privileges. "Do they regard the names of Christian and Protestant as a reproach to those who bear them; if they are not led by the spirit of Christ; and if they do not in their heart and life, as well as with their lips, protest against the faults which they condemn in the Romanists?" (9) We know, from the instance of the Church of Sardis, that it is possible to have 'a name that we live,' and yet to be dead before God; and, whilst we are prone to repose in a name, we know that it is by the use or abuse of our privileges that we shall stand or fall; and that he is not a Jew nor a Christian, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew or a Christian, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

The design of this discourse was not to censure the use of names or distinctions, if they be justly taken, and charitably applied; neither was it to condemn forms or ceremonies: as well might any one suppose that it was my aim to bring into contempt or disuse the Holy Sacraments of the Church. They who have given me their attention have not, I trust, so *grievously* misunderstood my object. Proceeding on the definition, that superstition is any misdirection of religious feeling or veneration, I have endeavoured to place my hearers on their guard against the practice of the same; and to caution them, lest, imperceptibly, respect for forms or names, or external performances, may induce a practical forgetfulness of 'the one thing needful;' the religion of the heart and mind; and a *practical* belief that the ordinances of religion are any substitute for personal faith and holiness; or that they are vehicles of Divine Grace (in the case of adults at least) to those who simply observe them; and independently of the condition of one's mind. Instead of discouraging forms, my object has been rather to give life to them; substance to shadows; and virtue to ministerial performances; by providing that we put not our trust in anything that we do or is done for us, without that constant respect which God himself hath to the spirit which we are of.

And now, in concluding, I revert to the words

of our text. “ We know that an idol is nothing in the world;” we know, also, that idolatry is most grievous iniquity in the eye of a jealous God; for wherever anger, fury, jealousy, indignation, are ascribed to God, in the Law and the Prophets, it is in the case of idolatry. We know also that superstition and idolatry are very closely allied. Let us beware of any *approach* to an offence which is so strongly reprobated in the word of God, and has called down his heaviest judgments on nations and individuals. There is nothing in our Liturgy which is in itself superstitious; but we ourselves may make it abound in superstition.—For the honour of our Church—for the consistency of our profession as ‘reformed,’—above all, for the glory of God, and for our souls’ good; let us vigilantly watch and scrutinize our habits of worship and also our habits of thinking. It has been well observed that superstition is that of which none, even of the most superstitious, ever suspect themselves; and one of the easiest ways by which *we* may fall into it, is by taking for granted that it is peculiar to another person or class of persons. Let this remark admonish us to a careful and frequent examination, how far and in what respect the forms and names of religious things may be supplanting in us the religion of the heart. If the light that is in *us* be darkness, how great is that darkness! and how great must be the amount of

guilt, considering the peculiar and eminent advantages in which we share. *We* have not been kept in ignorance, nor tutored in error. The worship of God in spirit and in truth has been perpetually urged upon us: take we heed that we be not found woefully wanting when judgment shall be executed according to the *use* of the light and privileges which have been vouchsafed to us.

It is often said, that "it is easy to be religious when religion is the fashion." I believe this statement to be far, indeed, removed from the truth. It is doubtless easy to conform to outward observances and ordinances; for, then, we go with the many; and there is no fear of the finger of scorn, or the charge of singularity. But religion is somewhat more and harder than *external* obedience: it is the way to heaven, and heaven is high and must be climbed; it is the path of holiness, and our journey lies through a world of temptation and wickedness; it is the way to happiness; and all that is valuable, even on earth, must be diligently sought. Religion is somewhat more than external obedience. The demand of God is "Give me thine *heart*:" and this is never easy, and cannot be more so when, together with the ordinary temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, the *habits* of the professing world themselves conspire to steal away that heart which God requires above all. It is *never* easy; and if ever we think

it so, this alone should operate as a warning, that we be not high minded, but fear; and examine into the *quality* of that which we imagine to be religion. Frequently, shall we find the idea to exist together with a woful estrangement of the heart or affections from God, and true holiness; the form of godliness, being in part or altogether substituted for the power. And one of the best of methods whereby to fortify ourselves against superstition, is to live in the constant suspicion of it, and watchfulness against it. Let us make this *our* wisdom; and labour as well as pray for the grace of *sincerity*. Outward performances are as the gold which adorns the temple; sincerity is that which sanctifies the gold. Be it our earnest endeavour to abound in it. And if such desire possess us, oh, how quickly shall our sanctuaries be liberated from that reproach of apathy, which is often enough to chill the devotion of the most devout, instead of awakening a flame where it slumbers! how excellent above other worship shall the service of our Liturgy *appear* (as it really is), when graced with the devotion of truly grateful and contrite hearts! How satisfying the ordinance of the Lord's appointment, when, being worthily received, we *feel* the grace it was designed to impart! How substantial and contentful the authoritative declarations of the minister of religion, when our *hearts* respond, that we are



truly penitent and believing, and that his words are the judgment of the Judge of all the earth; and, at the close of life, with what placidity may we await the great event if (as the fruit of a lively faith in God's mercy through the merits and mediation of Christ) we can call to mind, that we have heartily and constantly endeavoured to render that worship, which alone is acceptable to Him who must be worshipped in spirit and in truth; and is the angels' inheritance and also the angels' joy.

## SERMON V.

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### CONCLUDING ADDRESS.

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And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the Mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron and said unto him, Up, make us gods which shall go before us.—EXODUS xxxii. part of verse 1.

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IF my object had been to expose *all* the perversions and abominations of the church of Rome, I should not have proceeded as I have done, neither should I stop where I now intend. It would have been my duty to have considered separately, and at some length, a variety of matters which have been passed by; and upon which if I now touch, it is not because they come strictly within my purpose, but because, in closing this brief series, it may be well to notice them; lest my hearers should imagine that that church has no errors of importance besides those which have been selected with a *particular* view; namely, of exhibiting the conformity of Protestant practice with Romish doctrine as well as practice.

The Romish church holds that “unwritten

*traditions* must be received with like and equal affection of godliness and reverence as the Holy Scripture itself;" evidently acknowledging *two* rules of faith and life, and equally obligatory. *Our* Church pronounces that "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation;" and it is somewhat suspicious if that church is, as she pretends, in possession of unwritten traditions from the mouths of the Apostles, that she does not commit them to writing; that we may be able to judge how far they agree with the character given of them, and abide their own test of having been preserved by continued succession in the Catholic church.

The Romish church holds, that in the sacrifice of the mass there is "one and the same sacrifice offered by the priest (only in an unbloody manner) which Christ himself offered upon the cross;" in the face of the many Scriptures which say (and in seeming anticipation of such gross abuse) that Christ "*once* appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself;" that "by *one* offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified;" and "after he had offered *one* sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God." And whilst the Scripture plainly saith that "where remission of sin is" (as there is by the blood of Christ) "there is no more offering for sin;" yet the Romish priest, daily ministering, offereth up the

same sacrifice; which, however, can never take away sin, for “without shedding of blood is no remission.”

The Romish church holds the doctrine of transubstantiation, by which (as has been proved by one who was once of her communion) <sup>(10)</sup> Christ is transformed into bread, and not (as they declare) bread transformed into Christ; a doctrine (to say nothing of its impiety) of the most ill-natured character and irreligious tendency: of the most ill-natured character (as it has been aptly described), for it, itself bringing no evidences of its own truth, will not allow anything else to be established as truth on the testimony of the *senses*: and of the most irreligious tendency; for, in the first place, it makes God unjust, representing that he demands our belief in opposition to those principles which, by His own ordering, the human mind requires as a ground of belief;—and, secondly, if we cannot believe our senses neither may we safely trust those who believed theirs; and thus the Israelites and the early Christians may not be cited with confidence in proof of God’s miraculous works.

Further—the Romish church holds the doctrine of ‘sacramental justification;’ namely, that the sacraments of the Gospel contain the grace of which they are the signs; and that if men do not put a bar to them, and if they have only imperfect acts of sorrow accompanying them, the use of the

sacraments so far completes those weak acts as to *justify*. “This doctrine (says Bishop Burnet) is justly to be reckoned among the most mischievous of all those practical errors that are in the church of Rome; and we utterly deny it, and have just reason to detest it, as one of the depths of Satan; its tendency being to make those ordinances of the Gospel — which were given us as means to raise and heighten our faith and repentance—become engines to encourage sloth and impenitence; as if the sacraments were of the nature of charms, which if they could be come at, though with ever so slight a preparation, would make up all defects.”

Again, the Romish church allows and encourages prayers to the Virgin Mary and the Saints; and these are as much, if not more, invoked than God himself; and thus creatures are virtually invested with the divine attribute of Omnipresence; and they are, moreover, constituted ‘Mediators’ to the impious disparagement or division of the office of our Saviour Christ; and in bold contempt of the Scripture which saith, “there is *one* mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”

Lastly—for I must still omit many things—such as their Seven Sacraments, which they falsely assert to have been instituted by our Lord; their doctrine of temporal punishments, to be inflicted after the eternal has been remitted; their injunction of the celibacy of the clergy,—their pretensions

to miracles—passing by these things, I shall only note that the Romish church claims to itself supremacy over all churches, and universal obedience; and this, too, on the pretence that the Apostle Peter had such supremacy over the other Apostles; and that the Bishop of Rome has derived it from him as the direct successor of that Apostle. But the Apostle Peter had evidently no such supremacy; and, consequently, the Romish superstructure is baseless as well as arrogant. It was our Lord's plain teaching, that his Apostles should *not* exercise lordship as did the Kings of the Gentiles. And, together with this declaration, let us glance for a moment at the *facts* of the case. The Apostle Peter's commission was limited to the Gospel of 'the circumcision,' "the lost sheep of the house of Israel"—St. Paul's extended to the uncircumcised, the whole Gentile world; this might surely be better used as an argument for St. Paul's and not St. Peter's pre-eminence. Again, the Apostles *sent* Peter; and "he that is sent is not greater than he that sent him." In the matter of Cornelius's baptism, 'they of the circumcision' *contended* with Peter; and he thought proper to answer for himself and before them; not affecting superiority. On another occasion, Paul 'withstood him to the face;' on another James, and not Peter, delivered the judgment of the church at Jerusalem; shewing that Peter was not even

president of that body. Besides, Paul himself declared that he (Paul) was not a whit behind the very chiefest Apostles. It is replied, however, to these statements, that our Saviour himself said to the Apostle Peter, "thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church." But it is clear that 'the rock' did not mean 'Peter,' but the *confession* which he made just previously, "thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." It could not be meant that Peter himself was the foundation on which the church was to be built, for the Apostle St. Paul declares that "*other* foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ." And if Peter *had* been meant, it would have given him no supremacy over the other Apostles; for if our Lord had said that Peter was the foundation on which he would build, St. Paul (speaking by inspiration) reminds the Ephesians that they were built (not upon Peter alone) but upon the foundation of the Apostles (not apostle) and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; and, in another place, not Peter alone, but James and John along with him are designated 'pillars' of the Christian faith or church.

All these matters, and more, would have come under our review, if it had been my business to deal with the errors of the Church of Rome, at large; but my purpose was far more limited. I designed to point out those Romish errors alone,

to which there is a manifest approximation in Protestant minds and habits. And I am not aware that there is any tendency amongst us to treat tradition, and especially 'unwritten,' as of equal authority with the Scripture; or any bias to the Romish doctrines of the Mass and Transubstantiation; or any disposition to confide in the prayers and mediation of saints; or any prejudice in favour of the doctrine of the supremacy of the Apostle Peter. But there is a propensity prevailing with us, to take religion on trust, and to defer absolutely to human authority; there is a propensity to commit our religious concerns to others, and to regard their performances and merits as our own; and there is amongst us the practice of much superstition, like unto the Romish. And to these matters, in which we approach to the Romanist, I might have added, that there is often in Protestant breasts a self-conceit of righteousness and meritorious deserving in the sight of God, equalling, if not exceeding, the Romish doctrine of merit; even when her doctrine is expounded by the most prejudiced and the least ingenuous of the adversaries of that church. If we are given, above others, to works of holiness and charity, it is in human nature that there should result from the same a feeling of pride and boasting; and there is but a short step in a presumptuous mind, from thanking God that we "are not as other men," to believing that we are as good as



we need to be, even for the purpose of meriting salvation; a belief utterly incompatible with our Lord's declaration, that "after we have done all that is commanded, we should confess ourselves unprofitable servants;" and altogether inconsistent with, and opposed to, the great Christian principle, that "eternal life is the free gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord; not of works, lest any man should boast." And so, again, although we altogether reject the Romish doctrine of 'Purgatory;' yet, surely there is practically amongst us an indistinct notion of some purifying process which the soul shall pass through after death, and before its appearance at the judgment-seat of Christ: for we can hardly think that so many really believing in a God and future retribution, would so obstinately keep to their wicked tempers, dispositions, and habits, without any serious effort to amend them; unless the imagination were at work, that in death some wondrous change shall render them different from what they are, and such as death, if it were now to come, would find them.

These tendencies to Romish error I have noticed; and if I have not traced a resemblance to *all* the mischiefs of the Romish system, yet the evils which have been specified, are neither imaginary nor light; whether we regard the consistency of our character as a Reformed church; the welfare of the Protestant faith; our responsibility to God, or the general interests of true religion.

But, perhaps, it will be said that in some instances I should have acted more fairly, and also more charitably, if I had referred these mischiefs, not to the Romish system, but to 'human nature,' which is undoubtedly their source. The reason of my proceeding, as I have done, is briefly told. We hear much in these days of the Romish church, of its activity and zeal for the recovery of its lost sway, and of supposed endeavours on the part of others to promote its object. My design has been to shew that the people themselves (although sufficiently jealous of attempts, real or imaginary, in *other* directions), are themselves, in a great degree, doing the very work which they deplore; and preparing the way and encouraging the return of that system which they professedly abhor. And though it is generally true that the evils which I have noticed have their seat in human nature; yet my purpose would not, at least, have been so *directly* answered, if I had traced them to their first origin.

The church of Rome was once a pure church; she still holds the essentials of the Christian faith. And, by the way, whilst we make and gladly make this admission, it may be useful to deviate for a moment from our course of observation; and remark on an argument which is built on this admission, and which, together with another equally futile, weighs considerably in some per-

sons' minds in favour of the Romish church. We grant that she keeps the essentials of the faith: therefore, they conclude that it cannot be unsafe to belong to her; and, then, proceeding on the assumption that she has antiquity on her side, they leap to the conclusion that it is the safest to belong to her. This sort of reasoning has contributed greatly to the enlargement of her ranks. But one part of it is manifestly false; and the other miserably weak and anti-scriptural. As to the *antiquity* of the Romish church, it is notorious that it cannot be referred farther back than to the 16th century; for it was then only, and then first that she *formally* imposed a creed embracing all her peculiar errors as necessary to salvation; and, thereby, caused a schism in the Catholic church, and constituted herself what she now is. She has been boldly challenged to produce one single Council general or provincial, or one single Ecclesiastical writer in the first seven centuries, who ever enforced an assent to her peculiar doctrines as essential to salvation, or required assent to any one of them as a term of communion <sup>(11)</sup>. The plea of antiquity is, therefore, vain; and our Church is more truly entitled to the distinction of primitive, having renounced those errors which she grafted on the early faith, and were deviations from it, and which are now her characteristics as a distinct church. But, next, it is said, that

it cannot be unsafe to join her communion, because she maintains the essentials; and her errors are only additions to what is sound and scriptural. It is argued that if she has all that is good, the bad that is joined with it is of little or no consequence. But what saith the Scripture to this sort of reasoning? David testifies that "the law of the Lord is perfect;" and that which is perfect is disfigured and dishonoured by additions. God himself forbade the Israelites from adding to or diminishing from the Word which he commanded them, and there are other passages to the like effect. But what was our Saviour's grave condemnation of the Pharisees and others? was it not that they rejected the commandment of God, that they might keep their own traditions? and that "they made the word of God of none effect *through* their tradition?" And may not this language in its truth and force, be applied to the Romish church? Has she not by her additions neutralized some doctrines of Scripture, divided others, and grossly corrupted others? Has she not exalted the Roman Pontiff into the place of God, and made him Lord over men's consciences? When the Word of God saith "there is *one* Mediator," has she not made many? When it saith "that after we have done all we are unprofitable servants," has she not the doctrine of superabounding human merit? When it saith that "the Scriptures

the first step to the practice having been, that the service was said in so low a tone, that even they who understood the language were not the better for it. The like may be said of their doctrine of infallibility. We may venture to pronounce that if it had been all at once forced upon the people, so monstrous an assumption would have met with most fatal opposition. But the church took advantage of the people's indisposition to investigate truth, and founded her claim upon it. And the same may be, and probably is, true in other matters. The people were careless of searching the Scriptures (when printing was unknown, and books scarce), and the priest took advantage of it to restrict and prohibit the use. The people were ready to give their money as a commutation for personal holiness; and the church found out a variety of substitutes. The people wished to live as they pleased, and yet after death to be relieved from the consequences of transgression; and the church framed a purgatory suited to their convenience and desires. That which supports this view is, that the peculiar errors of the church of Rome were long in being before ever they were insisted upon as dogmas *necessary* to be believed. That crafty church watched the state of men's minds and habits; and when she found them suited for slavery, she enslaved them to her and their will. And herein a powerful lesson is read to us of the present generation.

Instead, however, of dwelling on these matters to weariness, I shall conclude and dismiss this subject by calling my hearers' attention to the fact recorded in our text. Moses was in the Mount, receiving the law from God. The people were weary of waiting for his return, and they beset Aaron, saying unto him, "Make us gods which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we know not what is become of him." They desired a sacred symbol or sign representing God in a visible manner, and somewhat after the fashion of what they had seen in Egypt. This is the first recorded instance of a departure from the true faith as established by revelation to the Israelites: but the point on which I desire to fix attention is, that the *people* were the instigators of Aaron's iniquity. And (without attempting to palliate his wickedness) we may confidently allege, that if the people clamour for 'gods,' or 'deceits and errors in religion,' there will always be some (and, perhaps, of the priestly office) prepared to answer 'these be they.' If there be truth in this view—and I am persuaded that there is much—it becomes the people to watch, not only their ministers or rulers, but especially *themselves*; and any excitement calling off their attention from themselves to other quarters, may be in fact only a device of Satan to blind them to the real seat of danger.

Whether I shall avail anything by this exhortation I know not; but certainly there is little encouragement of such a belief to be gathered from the circumstances to which our text has respect. It was only a few days before, and in that very place, that the Israelites had been solemnly warned by the voice of the Lord God himself out of the midst of the fire, "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image;" and they had been *particularly* forbidden to make gods of gold; and they had solemnly covenanted to do all that the Lord had commanded them. Yet we find them in our chapter busy with the worship of a *golden calf*, and Aaron, too, assisting them. Alas! human nature is the same, and in priests as well as the people. And if the voice of God himself produced no more lasting effect, it is not to be wondered at if the voice of man should pass away as the breath of air. But still, our sacred office obliges us to repeat again and again the words of warning. And in the discharge of my duty, and as an humble offering to promote the welfare of the Protestant church, I call upon the people as they express a fear of the inroads of Romanism, as they profess a regard for the interests and permanence of our Reformed faith; and, above all, as they desire to approve themselves in the sight of God—I call upon them to set themselves diligently to the work of self-reformation; and to the

remedy of those evils which have been marked out for reprobation. They treat religion too slovenly, and the salvation of their souls too much as a matter of course. Let them gird themselves to a hearty service and a thankful and diligent use of their privileges. They know too little of the Scriptures, and of the principles and providential history of our Church; they think too little of that spirituality which characterizes our religion above others; and of that purity of heart which distinguishes Christian morals above other systems. They practise too little of what they know; are too careless of what they hear; and far too content with outward forms, and too prone to commit their souls' interests to others. If they give themselves sincerely to the correction of such faults and sins, there shall be in their *minds*, as well as in outward demonstrations, the strong contrast of light and darkness between our Church and that of Rome; and the strongest barrier against the aggressions of the latter, whether in disguise or in open array. The constant study of the Scriptures and the habit of appealing to them, shall be Rome's great defeat, as it is her abhorrence: the demand of a reasonable service is that which she cannot abide, and does not supply; the life and vigour which shall be exhibited in our devotions, shall forbid all taste or desire for the dumb show and gaudy apparatus of the Romanist; and the satis-



factoriness of a scriptural and spiritual service, shall be that which they shall *fear* to exchange for all the substitutes for personal holiness which Rome has provided.

The Israelites' sin in the chapter before us was partly attributable to the circumstance that they were left to themselves; Moses being in the Mount with God. We are not left to ourselves, and we have no such excuse. It is true that our God is in heaven, "from whence also we look for the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ; but His word is with us, "a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path;" His Spirit is with us, inviting us to walk consistently with our holy privileges; His ministers are with us, and fail not in faithful admonitions of what we owe to God for his singular mercies to us as a Church and people. May we, both ministers and people, labour and pray that our Church may be able to say to her congregations as the Apostle wrote to the Corinthians, "need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you? *Ye* are our *epistle*, written in our hearts, known and read of all men."

The people's practice is the preacher's crown.

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## NOTES.



## NOTES.

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(<sup>1</sup>) The following are the facts, with the dates to which allusion is made in this place:—1. Honorius, Bishop of Rome, was condemned of heresy in the General Council of Constantinople, A.D. 680. 2. In the time of the great schism, Europe was divided under the domination of rival Popes: one of whom resided at Avignon in France, and was acknowledged by France and Spain; and the other resided at Rome, and was obeyed by the rest of Europe. 3. The General Council at Ephesus, A.D. 431, determined that it should not be lawful for any one to set forth, write or compose, any other creed than that which was settled at Nice; and that if a Bishop should attempt it, he should be deprived of his episcopal office. In the face of this decree, Pius IV. in the 16th century, set forth his creed containing the peculiar errors of the Roman church, and for so doing ought to have been deprived. 4. The Bishops of the Council of Nice, A.D. 315, left the question of celibacy to the discretion of the clergy: the Council of the Lateran, A.D. 1123, strictly enjoined it. 5. The Fourth Council of the Lateran, A.D. 1215, charged the Bishops and others to administer the service in a language understood by the people: the Council of Trent directed that the mass should not be celebrated in the common tongue. 6. At a Synod of the Church held at Rome, A.D. 1059, and in which Pope Nicolas II. presided, the sensual handling of the body of the Lord was enforced: the Council of Trent declared the reverse. And to these instances might be added like contradictions respecting the Canon of the Old Testament, and the supremacy of the Roman Church and Pontiff.

(<sup>2</sup>) See "A Comparative View of the Churches of England and Rome," by Herbert Marsh, D.D., afterwards Bishop of

Peterberough (p. 190), to which work reference was made in this part of the discourse.

(<sup>3</sup>) It also appears that the church of Rome is not content with placing all receivers of sacraments at the mercy of the priest's intention, but she has placed them at the mercy of the *baker's* and *vintner's* intention; and any malevolent tradesman, who supplies the wine and wafers to be used in the Lord's Supper, has it in his power, according to their Rubrics, to deprive the communicants of the grace of the Sacrament. For "Si panis non sit triticeus, vel si triticeus, admixtus sit granis alterius generis in tanta quantitate ut non maneat panis triticeus, vel sit alioqui corruptus: *non conficitur sacramentum.*" "Si sit confectus de aqua rosacea, vel alterius distillationis, *dubium est an conficiatur.*" "Si vinum sit factum penitus acetum, vel penitus putridum, vel de uvis acerbis seu non maturis expressum; vel admixtum tantum aquæ ut vinum sit corruptum, *non conficitur sacramentum.*" — Rubricæ Generales, Lugd. 1827. Quoted from "Percival's Roman Schism," p. 370.

(<sup>4</sup>) For this hint, and those in Nos. (<sup>5</sup>), (<sup>7</sup>), and the definition in No. (<sup>6</sup>), and the quotation in No. (<sup>9</sup>), the writer is indebted to Archbishop Whately's work.

(<sup>8</sup>) That the suspicion here expressed is not altogether groundless, is rendered probable by the circumstance that some persons make no pretence of devotion on their first entrance into a church, but reserve the same until they are accommodated with seats; whence we might infer that their attitude betokened rather a sense of the civility shewn them than any reverential feeling.

(<sup>10</sup>) The Rev. J. Blanco White, quoted by Archbishop Whately.

(<sup>11</sup>) See "The Roman Schism illustrated, by the Hon. and Rev. A. P. Percival." Introduction, p. xxviii.

(<sup>12</sup>) See Bishop Burnet on Article xxiv.













