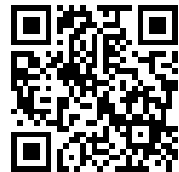

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1837
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OBSERVATIONS

ON

“A CALL TO THE CONVERTED,”

AS IT RELATES TO

Members of the Church of England,

ADDRESSED TO

Capt. P. HALL, R. N.



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- 1 *Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain ; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field.*
 - 2 *For the idols have spoken vanity, and the diviners have seen a lie, and have told false dreams ; they comfort in vain : therefore they went their ways as a flock, they were troubled because there was no shepherd.* ZECH. x. 1, 2.
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MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have to thank* you very sincerely for sending me “THE CALL TO THE CONVERTED,” although perhaps when you read the following remarks you will consider me unworthy of it. Without them however I could not conscientiously give it that circulation I otherwise feel disposed to do, lest I should be guilty of encreasing those divisions which it proposes to remedy. Greatly indeed does my soul bless God for the precious truths it unfolds, in calling the attention of the poor scattered sheep of Christ to look for more ONENESS and more LOVE ; in pointing out the necessity we have for a Reformation in our unbelieving notions of the Promises of the Holy Ghost, and in shewing so forcibly that *that* reformation must be begun in love and unity among the brethren of the Lord Jesus Christ, if we would look for the full renewal of Pentecostal power. It brought me to that very striking Scripture so accordant with this idea in 2 Chron. v. 13. “It came even to pass, as the trumpeters, (viz. an hundred and twenty priests, see Acts i. 15) and singers WERE AS ONE, TO MAKE ONE SOUND to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord : and when they lift up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals, and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever, that THEN the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord.” I feel that this is altogether the point we must begin at, and that to assist in bringing the scattered sheep of Christ together, to be of one accord,

SOLD BY L. B. SEELEY & SON, FLEET-STREET, J. NISBET, BERNERS-STREET, LONDON ;
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in one place, is an object worthy of every effort, and every sacrifice that any poor wandering sheep is capable of making. I feel with the writer that while living under the Spiritual the Pentecostal dispensation, our state resembles only that of the disciples during our Lord's sojourn on earth, before the Holy Ghost was given. We know indeed the Lord Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of the living God, in a way we are sure flesh and blood hath not revealed him to us, but our Father which is in heaven, still we are a continual offence unto him, by our savouring, [i.e. relishing] "not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." (Matt. xvi. 17 & 23.) But which of us have said, or can say with Paul 'Henceforth know we no man after the flesh, yea though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.'—2 Cor. v. 16 Our hearts do indeed burn within us when he condescends to commune with us in the word; or to open to us the Scriptures, still may he not justly call us "fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken," (Luke xxiv. 32, 25) and how far are we from being able to say, "we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit that is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." (1 Cor ii. 12) We are too ready like Peter, to draw the sword in Christ's defence, while we are unable to watch with him one hour, but fall asleep when we ought to be watching and praying lest we enter into temptation. (Matt. xxvi. 51, 40, 41) But how far are we from having learnt "that though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh;" (2 Cor. x. 3) or that the way to open the gates of brass and break the bars of iron in sunder, is by the Church making prayer without ceasing unto God. (Acts xii. 5-11) Ready are we to make great professions, to say, and even to feel as if it were so because we say it, "though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee;" yet when persecution cometh because of the word how soon are we offended, how liable when taxed with belonging to Jesus in the confession of some parts of his truth which those around us deny, to answer, even with vehemence, 'I know not what thou sayest.' Matt. xxvi. 35, & 70, 71. But what know we of that boldness which the same Peter afterwards displayed, and at which the council marvelled, (Acts iv. 13) or of that real indifference to life itself where the glory of the Lord Jesus is at stake, to which Paul so affectingly gave utterance at Cæsarea. Acts xxi. 13

We may indeed have individually some little witness that the Holy Ghost dwelleth *with* us, but what have we to lead us to think the rest of the promise is yet granted in our case, "He shall be *IN* you." (John xiv. 17) I find no one trace among us of our being yet collectively partakers of that blessed Spirit, for where he dwells there will be abounding love to Christ, boldness for Christ, and affectionate unity among his members, and therefore still farther are we from enjoying any of his outward powers and gifts. In all these particulars my heart fully goes along with what our dear brother has set forth, with so much more perspicuity and power than I am capable of doing.

But notwithstanding I go so far with him, there is one point in his work to which I do seriously object, and on which I feel bound in all humility to make these few remarks to you, and such other of our brethren in the Lord as will bear with me. It is a subject I desire to approach with the deepest humility, conscious how liable we are to be biassed on the one hand by all the corrupt prejudices of our old nature in favour of antiquity, and on the other by all the feverish paroxysms of inherent pride, which a sense of increased spiritual attainment is calculated to call forth in favour of novelty. From both these evils may the Holy Spirit of God preserve me, while I endeavour to explain how I differ from this beloved writer, in what he says concerning the necessity of both coming out of the Established Church, and testifying against (i. e. abusing) it, as a preliminary step to obtaining that unity and love among the brethren of Christ, in the absence of which, and necessity for which I altogether agree with him. And indeed it must strike every reader as remarkable, how much he is given up to his own spirit when speaking on this subject, and permitted to indulge in a levity, unbecoming the solemn truths he elsewhere so well treats of, when (*p.* 54) he talks of "*musty, fusty written forms*," and of our being "*tumbled out of them*." Now it is curious that to these very '*written forms*' the other hostile pamphlet which you sent me, at the same time bears the following honourable testimony, "FOR A CHURCH *strictly spiritual*, NO FORM, AS ALL ALLOW, COULD BE MORE EXPRESSIVE, NONE MORE SOUND." Gladly do I record this sentiment from *p.* 25 of "A Protest *against* the National Establishment of England, by George V. Wigram." for from it we may collect that it is to the abuses of the Church forms, and not to the forms

themselves *he* objects, so that even these two advocates for leaving the Church are not "perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment." (1 Cor. i. 10) Oh! when shall we open our eyes to the fearful delusion with which Satan is destroying the world, and especially this poor country, I mean the fallacious dogma "That the abuse of an institution in itself approved, is ground for its abolition." And here I would observe by the way, that while I deplore the absence of discipline and neglect of the Rubrics, as much as he can do, I think he has expended much strength which might have been better employed than in thus straining the Church for gnats, and thereby sending people who will not look beyond the surface, to swallow camels elsewhere. For when I collect from the Apostle John (1 John ii. 18, 19) that so early as the primitive days in which he presided over a church, he had HAD in his congregation "*many antichrists*" of whom it would appear, he must have been ignorant, by his own principle (2 John 10, 11) until by their "going out from us" (he says) "it was manifested they were not all of us." It does appear to me that "*a church so strictly spiritual*" as our friend speaks of is not so easily attainable, or indeed not attainable at all 'Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, &c.' Is. xxxii. 15 For which consummation earnestly do I call on him and every brother in the Lord, to unite in continual urgent supplication with all that will join him, in the full faith of the Church of England on that subject, as it is set forth in her Homily for Whitsunday, more particularly that part of it which I have quoted in another part of this letter, and which I think he must have overlooked when he accused her of making that unscriptural distinction he speaks of between ordinary and extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost. I would, I say, approach this subject with all humility, because I feel it quite possible I may be wrong in the view I take of it, and that the Lord may shew me hereafter that I am so, but certainly as yet I am unable to see it, and being so, feel bound to state candidly the light in which I now view it, and have viewed it for some time.

In the outset however, let me not be misunderstood as overvaluing the means of spiritual edification which the Established Church affords to an awakened christian; this will appear when I state that the ground on which I would defend it, is that of standing in a similar position to awakened christians in our day, to that in which the Temple service

stood to the Apostles *after* the day of Pentecost. Some I know consider that this is *too low* a standard to estimate the Church at; others again that it is far *too high*, but the vehemence with which these opposite opinions have been urged as the views of the individuals were to exalt or depress the Church, leads me to think that the parallel is pretty near the truth, and quite near enough for all the use I purpose to make of it at present. Let us imagine then an awakened christian, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, dissatisfied with the scanty portion of food a National Church can afford him, and after looking in vain to obtain more from any existing assemblage of christians set up in opposition to it: still feeling the want of that sustaining power in trying times which the Unity of the members of Christ *in Christ* alone is calculated to afford, he goes at last where he ought to have gone at first, to the Law and to the Testimony, to learn how to act towards that Church; and on reading the Acts of the Apostles with this view, he perceives that notwithstanding the corrupted state in which their Lord had pronounced the Temple to be, (Matt. xxi. 12; 13) and that He had in no measured terms denounced the conductors of its service, (Matt. xxiii) ending with declaring its speedy destruction, (Matt. xxiv. 2) still the Apostles *after being endowed with power from on high* attended those services to the very last. We find them doing so, between the ascension of their Lord and the day of Pentecost, see Luke xxiv. 53. And immediately after, Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer. (Acts iii. 1) Paul also the Apostle of the Gentiles after his return from Damascus, i. e. after he was *converted*, prayed in the temple, and had a trance there for his direction; (Acts xxii. 17) and even after he had withstood Peter to the face for a temporizing conformity to Jewish ceremonies, we find him to the very last attending there, so that from the temple door he was made prisoner before he was sent to Rome. (Acts xxi. 30.) Let those that would meet me on the ground that the Established Church stands *higher* than the Temple service, remember that the latter stood on the direct enactment of God, and let those who would place it *lower* because of its corruptions, say, do they desire to speak worse of it than our Lord spoke of the Temple in the Scriptures above-mentioned.

But did the Apostles confine themselves to the Temple service? no: for their most spiritual services they assembled in upper rooms, (Acts i. 13, and xx. 8) and they made much use of the synagogues, (Acts xiii. 14, 15, xiv. 1, xviii. 4, 26) And this is just what christians are in want of now-a-days. A National Church is of necessity a place of forms, and liable as they are to be administered by persons who do not feel any thing but what is formal, it is perhaps well that it is so, nay in *some instances* it might be better if these forms went to their full extent, to give the congregation an established Homily for a sermon instead of a mere moral essay. (See Preface to the Homilies in 1562) But true it is that being a place of forms, there is no opportunity for that sort of christian assembly of which Paul is evidently speaking to the Corinthians in his Epistles, where he says, "Ye all may prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted." (1 Cor. xiv. 31) Yet feeling that THAT formal service has its place, and that an important one with respect to the mass of the population, and that it does not interfere with (the laity at least) having other assemblies more akin to that of which the Apostle speaks, any more than the temple service prevented the hundred and twenty from assembling in the large upper room. (Acts i.)—My counsel is, that we bid it God speed by our prayers and our presence in the name of the Lord; He has blessed it, and is blessing it to the souls of thousands, and who are we to gainsay his work? Disorders we are bound to confess there are in the house, and when those disorders amount in the estimation of the Great High Priest to a confirmed leprosy, He will issue its sentence, (Lev. xiv. 44, 45) as He did that of the temple; meantime let us remember this is His province not ours, let us not take too much upon us; and oh! may the Lord keep us from being heady enough to think, we can do without a National Protestant Church. Let us remember what a positive blessing it has been and is to our land, to have throughout it such pipes and conduits for the word of God to run in, as are our Churches, while they set before the people who attend there so large a portion of that precious word in their services, in the course of a year, so much more, be it remembered, than any other denomination of Christians pretends to do; and which the Minister is not at liberty to select according to his own particular doctrines. On these grounds then without speaking of our own personal

obligations to it, I humbly conceive it deserves the support of every christian, be his state of advancement never so great; and deeply do I deplore that a man no sooner has his eyes open to desire a greater measure of spiritual food, than a National Church is able to supply him with, than he thinks it necessary to turn his back on the Church altogether, and lend his approving voice to the infidel and political dissenter in crying, "down with her, down with her even to the ground." What should we say of the young person who when come to years to require more mental instruction than his nurse could give him, set it down for a principle that he could get no good whatever from a tutor until he had abused his nurse, and held up her character to obloquy of every kind, although she had nourished him with pure milk, and under her fostering care he had arrived at maturity, to be able to appreciate the additional advantages that his kind parent was about to provide for him. The nurse may indeed have some faults, but they are of a nature to affect her own safety, not his health or attainment; would not a sense of gratitude, affection and duty revolt at such a proceeding, yet faint appears to me the image compared to that of the man, who brought up in the Established Church, and kept during his christian infancy by her scriptural formularies from "being tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive," (Eph. iv. 14) should when awakened to desire more than this, think it cannot be attained until he has first renounced and denounced her to whom he is thus indebted, and joined with her adversaries. and those who never knew her fostering care, in laying her open for the wild boar out of the woods to devour her. Such conduct I do confess I am unable to see to be the mind of God, and think I come to this conclusion, after having much examined the liability which may exist in the heart to shrink from any cross attendant on quitting caste. Indeed my firm conviction is, that the awakened christian will in our day find it a far greater cross to stand by the Established Church, and in meekness to maintain what is good in her, against what is evil, without holding himself bound to be confined by her restrictions upon spiritual exertion, exercised as they now too frequently are, than he will to join the cry of infidelity, popery, and political dissent in effecting her overthrow, and sure I am that there are fewer barriers in the way

of her laity at least, consistently seeking all that their soul longeth after, for their spiritual advancement, without deserting her ranks, than in any communion in Christendom. Here I wish to be understood, when speaking of the Established Church, to speak of her Articles, Homilies, and Liturgy, without including her Ecclesiastical appointments or her Canons, which were the offspring of more popish times, and with which as a layman having given no pledge to them, I have nothing to do.

Yet one reason more presents itself to my mind for not acting towards the Church as our dear Brother would advise, I mean a review of the numbers who have done so, with highly spiritual views, and holding out great prospects of something better, but in the event have either made shipwreck of their faith, or at least failed in the proposed object of a regenerate church, without bearing any evidence satisfactory to our brother of God's having acknowledged their work, for had they succeeded, there would now exist some communion to which he could direct us, and where a good foundation had been laid for building up all that he recommends, but as he mentions none such, I conclude he knows of none.

But dear Brother, do not imagine from what I have said, that I desire you, or any child of God awakened by the Spirit to a sense of the things that are freely given to us of God, should rest satisfied with the National Rations of Religion which the Established Church gives, (in her present Laodicean state) I believe them to be wholesome food as far as they go, but I believe them to be quite inadequate to our hungry souls, or to meet the wants of the perishing sinners around us. I look upon the Church more as a *store fold* than as a *fattening fold*,* and I do indeed

* Still I would say, that where a godly minister acts with energy under a superior, whose object is to *promote* godliness, not to *suppress* it, much may be done to feed the flock; and Social Religion may be encouraged hand in hand with Public and Closet Religion. By Social Religion I mean not the *religious gossip* that goes by that name, but the frequent, chastened assembly of the christian brethren of a town or neighbourhood, either at each other's houses, or at an appointed place set apart for the purpose, for social prayer and praise, and colloquial intercourse in the Scriptures, that individuals studying the same in their closets may mutually communicate edification to each other, according to (1 Cor. xiv. 31) But when christians meet now-a-days, and one is persuaded to leave their private occupations in the hope of learning something from them, half the time goes in gossip, and the other half in feasting, so that one may spend hours in the room with them as unprofitably as if they were so many worldlings. When christians meet in their Lord's name for social edification, refreshments when necessary, should be as simple, and occupy as little time as possible, and if we valued more what we profess to meet for, so they would; but as long as our assemblies are conducted in the half dress character of the world, the Holy Spirit will not acknowledge them, and we shall go empty away.

thankfully hail the anticipations of some closer union in the wisdom and love of our good Shepherd, through the power of the Holy Ghost, than any we are yet acquainted with. For without desiring to say an unkind word of our dissenting systems, candour obliges me to state, that in my judgment, they have too little Form to preserve truth, and yet too much either to encrease or to diffuse it; not one of them seem to me to have stored ALL the doctrines of Scripture in the beautiful harmony the Church has done,* but each system has magnified its own peculiar doctrine at the expense of its *apparent* opposite, though equally plain in Scripture; therefore I cannot look upon any of them as answering the purpose for which the National Church is so admirably calculated, of a *store fold*, from whence the electing love of the shepherd, may from time to time, raise up individuals already taught in the unrestricted range of his word, for the work whereunto he appoints them; and the same deficiency (*viz.* having party doctrines to sustain) prevents other systems

* Surely every candid man will feel this, and however he may lament that in our day the Church thinks more of keeping truth on paper, than spreading it by the power of the Spirit in living witnesses, still amid the controversies of the day, he must allow, that after being harrassed in the endeavour to settle many of them for himself, he has found at last, the Church had done it most scripturally before in some part of her formularies. Are the doctrines of Free-will presented to him? the xth. and xviiith. Articles recall to his memory that there are such passages as *Rom. viii.* and *Eph. i.* which are "full of sweet, pleasant and unspeakable comfort to godly persons." Is he called upon to take this precious truth out of its due place, and make it an argument against simply believing, *John i. 9,* 1 *John ii. 2,* c. m. a.--a child instructed in the catechism will settle the point, and say, "I learn from the Creed to believe Secondly in God the Son, who hath redeemed me and *all mankind.* Thirdly in God the Holy Ghost who sanctifieth me and *all the elect people of God.*" Is he harassed either as to the Deity or Humanity of the Redeemer? the Athanasian creed reminds him that our Lord Jesus Christ "the Son of God, is God *and* Man, God of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds, and Man of the substance of his mother, born in the world, Perfect God and Perfect Man: of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting, &c." Is he attacked upon the plenary Inspiration of Scripture, the (10th) Homily recommended in Article xxxv. will explain most of the assailed passages for him, and tell him that "*every jot and tittle of the Holy Scripture,* have been, is, and shall be for evermore, the savour of life unto eternal life, unto all those whose hearts God hath purified by faith." Does he doubt whether the gifts of the Holy Ghost belong to the Church still? the 16th Homily recommended in Article xxxv. satisfies him that they do, and leads him to pray for them. Is the Lord's Second Coming and Kingdom slighted? he points to the Collects I. and III. before Advent, and explaining the word '*judge*' in its scriptural sense, (i. e. not merely to condemn, but to rule and regulate as Judges of Israel did,) he finds it clearly maintained, and is taught in the Burial Service to pray, that God "may speedily accomplish the number of his elect, and hasten his kingdom, &c." thus is he compelled to confess 'that the Church has well said all that she has spoken,' while he is led to cry out, "Oh! that such a heart were in her." *Deut. v. 28.*

from presenting a field where the sheep of Christ can fatten upon the wide range which the green pastures of his word have provided for them.

But before I exceed the limits I have proposed to myself, let me endeavour to state my views, of the means that may be used towards the attainment of more spiritual union, fellowship and love, without seceding from the Church; and for this purpose let us look at what the disciples carried on in upper rooms, without saying any thing of the synagogues, lest cavil arise as to the parallel between our public places of worship, and the ancient synagogues, which it is not my present purpose to examine: I only wish that all our dissenting chapels stood to our churches in the same relation as the synagogues did to the temple, instead of assuming as they commonly do the attitude of batteries erected for their demolition;—But until the Unity of the Spirit reigning among us shall vouchsafe to effect this, what is said of upper rooms will answer my purpose sufficiently. I will suppose then that two, or more individuals in a neighbourhood, into whose hearts the Spirit of God may have put it, to feel the urgent necessity for all that our dear brother so well describes the absence of, that to his pages I refer for it; I consider their first step would be, to pass a season together in much prayer for the Holy Ghost, and much communion in the Word, until brought to a state, almost, if not altogether, unknown in our day, namely, “*that all speak the same thing,*” and are *‘perfectly joined together in the same mind and judgment.’* (1 Cor. i. 10) And here I would take occasion to remark what appears to me of great importance in all Christian undertakings, the union of *two* for conducting them, instead of *one* individual. We have learnt from Popery to disregard this principle altogether, notwithstanding the high authority on which it stands, and the numerous benefits which the going forth by two and two, confers on teachers and hearers, the principle of a Pope has obtained such a deep root, even among the children of the Reformation, that a Clergyman (being alone) often becomes a Pope to his Parish; and still more in systems of dissent, the Minister becomes an uncontrolled Pope *over* his congregation. Surely this ought not so to be, for He who knew what was in man, appointed it otherwise; He sent forth the twelve Apostles “by two and two” (Mark vi. 7) and likewise the Seventy (Luke x. 1) According to the same rule, Peter and John went up *together* to the temple. (Acts iii. 1) The Holy Ghost said

“Separate me Barnabas *and* Saul for the work whereunto I have called them;” (Acts xiii. 2) and so far did this principle obtain in the early church, that even in writing the Epistles, Paul in Seven of his, unites one or more persons with himself. It is not to be denied that the practice was not universal, but it is plain that it constituted the rule, while such instances as Timothy, were exceptions; and at least it will be allowed to be very general in every thing of itinerant labour; but we have adopted the exception for the rule, while we have cast away the rule altogether. Now the advantages of going forth by two and two are obvious, and may be best stated in the words of Scripture itself, “Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labour, for if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow—but woe to him that is alone when he falleth, for he hath not another to lift him up, &c.” (Eccles. iv. 9-12) Two are enabled together to plead the precious promise, “If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven.” (Matt. xviii. 19) It was a principle of the Law to which our Lord appealed, “It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.” (John viii. 17) Whenever two stand up together for preaching, the one bears his testimony to what his brother utters, much to the confirmation of the hearers. Again to the messengers of truth themselves, how great are the blessings of thus going forth by two and two, besides having a companion and counsellor in difficulties, how blessed are the effects upon the hearts of each, when under the power of the Holy Spirit, each has in his fellow labourer an object for the continual exercise of forbearance, self-denial, and love. But to return, let us suppose even two or three in a place thus “joined together in the same mind,” agreeing on the necessity for some closer fellowship among the children of God than public assemblies admit of, and brought in a spirit of unity and love to form such a union; with this view let them invite those, out of *every system*, who feel with them on these points, to assemble as often as circumstances will allow, in some convenient place, forgetting the distinguishing prominences which have kept them asunder; being brought together by the constraining love of Christ, and agreed that whatever unity of opinion *may be*, unity of spirit *must be* the work of the Spirit, and not of the reasoning powers of man. Let them be fully aware that the purpose they assemble for, is

“to enquire of the Lord,” not to sit together as if they already knew all that was necessary to be known of God’s word; but to plead with the Lord for the *indwelling presence* of the Holy Ghost, (see Rom. viii. 9) and “that we be not left destitute of His manifold gifts,”* nor contenting ourselves with talking merely of *influences*, which are no where spoken of in Scripture, except where the influences of the Pleiades are mentioned in Job, and therefore to rest in such a term, respecting the Spirit, is, as if we feared to have more of His power, than what the influences of the fixed stars exercise over the motions of our world. Let them meditate much together on the word, on such passages as Dan. ix., and John xiv. xv. and xvi., endeavouring to ascertain in much prayer, what the mind of God intended to convey in the prophetic Scriptures, instead of resting content with an adaptation of them; as for instance, Whether besides the general abundant promise of the Holy Ghost to the Church, during the whole personal absence of the Lord Jesus, the special season to expect “THE LATTER RAIN,” i. e. immediately before the harvest, (see Jer. v. 24, and Joel ii. 23) may not be nigh at hand to give additional earnestness to such supplications, and how far God’s ancient people, the Jews, are interwoven with the hopes of the Church in this promise,

* In case you may not be aware of them, I will transcribe a few passages from the formularies of the Church on this important subject of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, proving to all gainsayers that she recognizes their continuance.

Extract from the Ordination Service,

“Come Holy Ghost, our souls inspire
And lighten with celestial fire,
Thou the anointing Spirit art
Who dost thy SEVEN-FOLD GIFTS impart;
Thy blessed unction from above
Is comfort, life and fire of love.”

Extract from the Collect for St. Barnabas’ day,

“Leave us not, we beseech thee, destitute of thy MANIFOLD GIFTS, nor yet of grace to use them alway to thy honour and glory.”

See Book of Common Prayer.

Extract from the First Homily for Whitsunday,

“The Holy Ghost doth *always* declare himself by his fruitful and gracious gifts, namely, by the word of wisdom, by the word of knowledge, which is the understanding of the Scriptures, by faith in doing miracles, by healing them that are diseased, by prophecy, which is the declaration of God’s mysteries, by discerning of spirits, diversities of tongues, interpretation of tongues, and so forth. All which gifts, as they proceed from one Spirit, and are severally given to men, according to the measurable distribution of the Holy Ghost, even so do they bring men, and not without good cause, into a wonderful admiration of God’s divine power.”

See Article xxxv. where it is said of this Homily among others, that it “doth contain a godly and wholesome doctrine, and necessary for these times.”

and ought therefore to be a very prominent subject in her prayers. Let us picture to ourselves such an assembly, selecting two or more out of those whose devotedness to the cause of their Lord has been acknowledged among them, to preside for order sake, and thus meeting continually for building up each other in their most holy faith. And here the suggestions of man come to a stop! for the promise beyond this is as follows, "But the Comforter, the Holy Ghost whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (John xiv. 26)

But oh! dear friend what need there will be of deep self-examination in joining such a union, whether we really do wish there should be men among us again, that may be gifted with the power of looking into our hearts? Whether the love we desire to bring with us be really that love described by the Holy Ghost, (1 Cor. xiii) or the counterfeit called "Modern Charity" which may be easily pointed out by just putting Satan's negative into the Apostle's description, thus, *Modern* "Charity suffereth *not* long, is *not* kind, envieth, vaunteth itself, is puffed up, behaveth itself unseemly, seeketh *only* her own, is easily provoked, thinketh evil, rejoiceth in iniquity, but rejoiceth *not* in the truth, beareth *nothing*, believeth *only what it likes*, hopeth *little*, endureth *less*, &c." Great need have we to search lest we come there more anxious to have our own preconceived opinions confirmed, than to be instructed what the will of the Lord is, "lest the Lord answer him that so cometh after the multitude of his idols;" (Ezek. xiv. 3, 4) for sure I am when the Holy Ghost shall again vouchsafe 'to teach us all things' there is not one of us, however he may be inclined to consider his own notions most conformable to the divine will, that will not be taught to know that those notions are in many things miserably defective, and miserably erroneous, and that little will abide the fiery searching of His presence, save whatever knowledge and love of the Lord Jesus has been wrought in our hearts, not by the will of the flesh, nor the reasonings of man, but by the unspeakable love of our Father which is in heaven.

But may not all this be done without forsaking the National Church, without denouncing the National Church, or without attending meetings during her appointed hours of prayer, yet *without suffering communion with her to be a restraint upon any exertion in the cause of the Lord Jesus*,

to which a way may be opened in the course of such a union as has been spoken of. Should it be found advisable to send forth some, in prayer and fasting, to go by two and two into the villages, and teach and preach Jesus Christ, in the house, or out of the house, as may be convenient; let such as are judged competent be ready to go, and if Churchmen they may be encouraged by the remembrance that such a practice was not unheard of in the Church, when a Latimer recommended Edward VI. to send "laymen well learned in the Scriptures, and of virtuous and godly conversation," to do the work of his negligent clergy; and thought it no indignity himself, to deliver his Master's invitation to sinners in the streets and lanes of the City standing upon London stone. A practice not uncommon in those days, until the light which had been vouchsafed at the Reformation, began to be hid by the wisdom of man, under the bushel of the Canons, and the weight of appointments put upon it, of which the less said the better, except to pray to the Great Shepherd speedily to take them again into his own hands.

This brings me to a point connected with such a union, which I feel it peculiarly difficult to touch upon, and yet concerning which I cannot be silent, I allude to the difficult position in which we shall be placed by it, with respect to our dear brethren in the ministry of the Church, who love the Lord in sincerity. For not only will the ungodly scoff at and denounce us, but many who have been accustomed to meet us as brethren in the first principles of our common salvation, will, when we speak of the Gifts of the Spirit, and the Personal Coming and Kingdom of our Lord, be equally, if not more violent against us; for both these we must be prepared, and learn to bear them with meekness and forbearance. I am sure we have all felt how much more agreeable to the flesh it is, to denounce an opposing Minister, than to pray for him; would it not then be a good rule, and tend to the unity we so much desire if we never spoke of a minister's neglects, until we had wrestled much with God in prayer for him, and then told *him* of them, face to face, before we told them to any one else. We shall also hear of many who feel we are right, but yet have not faith to confess it before men, and these should be objects of peculiar tenderness and much prayer: still more so, those who feel we are right, and having counted the cost, as to joining us, are fully persuaded in their own minds, that when it comes to an issue between the Canons of men and the Promises of God, they

ought not to hearken unto men more than unto God, and for such every proposed union of christian brethren should pray most earnestly, that in the course they take, they may be enabled to glorify God, not to gratify their own fleshly nature. A minister for instance, on reading our dear brother's book, may be stirred up to commence such a meeting in his parish, or may see it to be his duty to join one, begun by others; and Canon law may be brought to bear upon him, to the depriving him of his Cure. How earnestly ought we to pray, that instead of denouncing the whole system of the Church, as many have done, when thus assailed for more zeal than carnal superiors will admit of, such a one should have previously counted the cost, and being prepared for such an issue, meet it and receive it in the full spirit of the Apostle's injunction, "If when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." (1 Pet. ii. 20) How much more glory would thus have redounded to the Great Shepherd, and to His church, if an under shepherd, when trampled upon by one "who had not entered by the door, but climbed up some other way," should, instead of letting loose his old nature upon the sheep-fold, to break it down, commit his cause to Him who judgeth right; and if suspended from his ministry for righteousness' sake, take his seat among the congregation regularly, while he continues at other times to teach and to preach Jesus Christ, and to join with the waiting disciples in his neighbourhood who are giving themselves to prayer and the word. I repeat it, the Lord would be more glorified by such a proceeding, than by all the thundering denunciations that have been uttered or printed, or by all the burning of bulls,* or tearing of letters from the days of Luther to the present hour. (Prov. xx. 21, 22)

I must now dear friend, bring these observations to a close, they have been undertaken in much weakness, continued in much prayer, and are I trust sent forth in much holy fear, lest in any thing I should have spoken unadvisedly with my lips. I trust their object will not be misunderstood, being simply to explain on what grounds I would recommend

* I know it will be said, "Upon these principles you would have had us remain in the Church of Rome." By no means: the decrees of the Council of Trent, made that Church the *seceder* from the Church "built upon the Apostles and Prophets, having Jesus Christ himself for the chief corner stone;" and *she* still feeds her children with the poison of human devices: while the Church to which I claim adherence, has continued to build Salvation on the Rock of Ages, and to feed her children with the sincere milk of the word. Until therefore some act, like the Council of Trent, shall withdraw some of the Scriptural truth, the integrity of which, the present written documents of the Church of England so well maintain, the parallel will not hold.

moderate (not Popish) adherence to a National Church, which in the main I believe to be sound, though not always spiritually administered. With this reservation, my prayer is, that "THE CALL TO THE CONVERTED" may echo through our land, and be made an honoured instrument in *gathering* the Lord's people in love, and leading them *to hold* their precious faith, in unity of spirit, and in the bond of peace; *to prove* to the world by that unity that He hath sent them; *to exhibit* a meek and lowly spirit which is in the sight of God of great price; *to exercise* a devotedness in worldly substance, of which as yet they know but little; *to testify* against every evil practice that comes in their way; *to make* the glory of God, not that of man, their object; *not to fight* with each other about doctrines which have only had place in the head, and are not yet believed with the heart unto righteousness, but when differences arise, *to wait* and *pray* to be taught; *not to despise* gifts, nor unduly desire them; but *to follow after* love, without which he that possessed gifts would be nothing profited; *not to neglect* to edify the body of Christ, *nor forget* to preach his Gospel to every creature for a testimony unto them; *to reform* their unbelief respecting the Holy Ghost, and lead them to continual united prayer, that He may dwell in them; and *that* in taking of the things of Christ, to shew them to his people, He may teach them rightly to receive, rightly to apply, and rightly to proclaim the overwhelming truths of the Personal Appearing and Glorious Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, that they may *neither join* an unbelieving world *in asking* 'where is the promise of his coming?' *nor* a slumbering church, *in saying*, 'my Lord delayeth his coming;' *but may see* the blessed importance of standing continually ready, with their loins girded and their lights burning, as servants waiting for their Lord, and thus be more conformed to the character of those '*tormenting prophets*' of whom, when they shall have finished their testimony, and the world will no longer bear with them, it is written that "they ascended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them, and the same hour there was A GREAT EARTHQUAKE." (Rev. xi. 13, also Is. lxvi. 5) Who will not then wish he had been of their company—that we, my dear friend, may have grace given us *now* to realize that wish, earnestly prays,

Your's affectionately in the Lord,

J. SYNGE.

Teignmouth, November 1, 1831.

26.11.66

Barnett, Printer, Teignmouth.



