

REPLY

TO

CAPTAIN HALL'S PAMPHLET,

ENTITLED

“AN ADDRESS TO THE CHRISTIANS,” &c.

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BY THE REV. C. GARBETT, B. A.,

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P R E F A C E .

I HAVE undertaken my present task, simply, because no one else seemed inclined to undertake it; and I could not but think, that the assault made on our Church, in Captain Hall's pamphlet, (putting entirely out of the question the merits or demerits of his argument) loudly called for a reply. With much hesitation I commit these pages to the press, and with a feeling that I am doing, what others of riper age and greater experience ought to have done instead of me. Two considerations, however, encourage me—if I fail, there will be a more urgent reason, and therefore, I should hope, a better chance of some abler champion entering the lists—if I in any degree succeed, it will only prove, how triumphantly *those* would have succeeded, whose pretensions are so much superior to my own.

CHARLES GARBETT, B.A.

REPLY

TO CAPTAIN HALL'S PAMPHLET.

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THOUGH it certainly is not one of Captain Percy Hall's excellencies to be gifted with perspicuity of style, orderly arrangement, or logical acuteness, his pamphlet is so far intelligible that an attentive reader may discover three leading divisions at least in it, to direct him in the maze through which he has to grope. These are—first, an attempted reply to the Rev. J. Venn's sermon; secondly, objections of his own fancy, though not a very original or exuberant one, to the constitution of the Church of England; thirdly, a statement of his own peculiar doctrines, or rather doctrine. I shall reply to these in order, after I have made one remark, which will serve as an introduction not irrelevant to the subject, or the persons whom I am addressing.

It is sometimes a very hard thing, or even impossible, to treat with those who make ostentation of their superior spiritual advantages, and hedge themselves about with extraordinary gifts of piety, as if all, except themselves, were infected with the plague spot: they so often retire under the shelter of feelings and secret influences, so as not to be assailable by anything like an argument, even though directly grounded on appeals to scripture. Captain Hall however, I would observe, has exempted himself from this charge, and has himself been the first to throw down the gauntlet on the present occasion, in vindicating the right of human judgment on religious subjects,

and in the interpretation of scripture. I do not assert, or mean that Captain Hall asserts, that human judgment and reason are to be made use of, independently of the spirit of God; no, in the words of our liturgy, we must open the scriptures with humble prayer, that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, &c. But, though under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, human reason is to be applied to the interpretation of the word of God, and human arguments, in which reason expresses itself, must be weighed, examined, and admitted. That Captain Hall is of this opinion is evident from several parts of his own address. "The responsibility," he says, "plainly belongs to each and to all, to prove all things." "I do not deny either their wisdom or their holiness, but revere them for both," speaking of the wise and holy men of past days. There can be no doubt as to what this wisdom means, since the passage has reference to page 12 in Mr. Venn's sermon, in which he speaks of the patient examination, discovery, and refutation of doctrines. Wisdom and holiness, moreover, are made distinct in Captain Hall's own sentence and form of expression. But a person who reveres great reasoning powers and the proper exercise of them in others, must be an advocate for the exercise of them in himself. Again, he complains that "Mr. Venn's sermon contains heavy charges and his own judgment, unsupported by the word of God, or *by proof!*" He does not complain of Mr. Venn's exercising his judgment, but of this judgment being unsupported by proof. But there is no need to multiply instances: sufficient have been brought forward for the purpose. Indeed, how could Captain Hall deny this proper use of our reason? for scripture enjoins it—"Prove all things," (his own text)—"Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you." Lastly, the Bercans

are commended for "searching the scriptures daily, whether those things were so," the exercise of judgment and reason being clearly implied. Next, as scripture enforces it, so *a priori* may we have come to the same conclusion. Reason distinguishes man from the brutes; it is our noblest faculty, and ought it not to be exercised on the noblest subjects? besides, we must apprehend God and God's revelations, through the faculty he has given us, we can do it through no other. In the third place I will add, that as the Holy Ghost is the Author of all knowledge and understanding, human as well as angelical, whatever plainly contradicts these cannot proceed from him.—Mind, not whatever passeth the reach of these, but whatever contradicts them. So that there can be no danger in the discreet use of our understanding, nay, infinite advantage; for if we cannot discover or comprehend every thing which is true, we may avoid being misled by any thing that is false. This latter it is our duty to do, as far as we are able; and therefore Captain Hall's religious tenets and interpretations of scripture, in common with all others, must and ought to be put to the test of human dialectics. I have been particular on this subject, because Captain Hall, if he has not already given some intimations of uneasiness under his avowal (for avowed the authority of human reason he has), yet hereafter he may endeavour, perhaps, to shake it off—as a dog, who has imprudently entangled himself in a noose, when he feels it tighten about him, struggles to get rid of this self-inflicted appendage, not finding it quite so comfortable as he could wish. At all events, we shall have occasion, as we proceed, to apply what we have said.

There is nothing to be found fault with in the two or three first sentences of Captain Hall's pamphlet. We perfectly agree with him, that, if there are differences of judgment and conduct,

there must be wrong somewhere, and that we ought not to be satisfied till we have ascertained whether it be chargeable on ourselves or not: we are also most fully persuaded that the word of God is the only infallible standard to which we can appeal. But what follows next? the extraordinary assertion that "it is urged, both by Protestants and Roman Catholics, that the variety of interpretations given to that word destroy the certainty of its decision to us, and render such appeals vain." Very strange it is that he should unite the names of Protestant and Roman Catholic on an opinion in which every body knows, at least one who professes to have examined the tenets of the Church of England ought to know, that they widely and materially differ,—why, it is one of the most important and prominent subjects of dispute between the Church of England and Rome, and a principal cause, among others, of the separation of the former from the latter: still stranger is it that he should make such a remark, since, judging from the circumstance of his several times quoting them, he seems to be acquainted with the articles of our Reformed Church: and strangest of all, because, in the very next page, he quotes that particular article in which the Church avows, in language as pointed and energetic as it can be, her submission—her absolute submission, to the authority of holy scripture, "Holy scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein, or may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the faith." But, perhaps, it is not to the grand and leading truths of the gospel that Captain Hall refers, but to questions of minor importance, such as relate to the rites and ceremonies, or government of the Church. But suppose we are agreed (as we certainly are) "that councils have erred, that men and teachers of all kinds have erred, and do constantly err,"—what then?



Do we allow, therefore, that appeals to scripture are vain, and the certainty of its decisions destroyed to us? Undoubtedly not. If there were ten thousand different interpretations of scripture, we might still maintain that there was one right interpretation to be discovered, and we should be justified in considering that the right one, which, while all others had been proved to be wrong, remained itself, in its simple and plain appeal to scripture, unrefuted and unshaken. The Church of England is ready to stand or fall by the word of God, and it is her glory that she can defend not only the fundamentals of her belief, but also her forms and ceremonies, if not in their detail, at least in their principle, by the authority of that word.

Mr. Venn is called to account for using the terms "unscriptural," and "dangerous," and "non-essential" also, as applied to the same opinions. Captain Hall triumphs not a little in the supposed discrepancy which he has found out between the two former and latter of these expressions. In the page open before us, and in the following ones, he crows almost *sans intermission* over this imaginary fall of his enemy; but even a moderate attention will show that these terms are perfectly consistent with each other. The word "essential" has two meanings,—there is the strict and logical one, implying something necessary to entity, existence; there is also another and looser application of the word, and it is often used to signify anything which is important. This latter meaning Captain Hall has chosen to take, for no other reason that I can see, than because Mr. Venn evidently had the former in view.—Now, since a belief in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, as they are set forth to us in scripture, are the very foundations of the Christian religion, i. e., we cannot even form AN IDEA of this religion without them; for this reason they are properly considered as the essentials of our

faith, and without which no man can be saved. But holy scripture contains not only these truths, but matters also of inferior importance; and even Captain Hall, I should think, will be charitable enough to allow that a proper understanding of many of the directions relative to Church discipline, contained in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, is not equally necessary for a Christian, or requisite to salvation. Nevertheless, owing to the want of this proper understanding, an unscriptural opinion may be taken up, i. e., an opinion contrary to the direction of scripture; and, therefore, the terms "unscriptural" and "non-essential" need not be opposite. Again, since "deadly" and "dangerous" are by no means the same thing, and many opinions are dangerous, not because fatal absolutely, but because they may have fatal effects on others, or may tend to fatal opinions and practice in ourselves, all three terms, "unscriptural," "dangerous," and "non-essential," are completely reconcilable."

And this brings us next to the enquiry, whether some persons are incompetent to examine the statements presented by Captain Hall—whether learning or cleverness have anything to do with the exposition of scripture truths, and whether the true believer, without any helps either from talent or education, is competent to understand the word of God. Well may it be asked, what part of the word of God? And we must do what Captain Hall has omitted to do, distinguish and particularize the question rather more, before we can answer. To understand the essential truths of the gospel we believe the humblest and most unlettered Christian to be competent, i. e., to understand them as far as they are necessary to be understood; nay, with earnest prayer to God, and in submission to the guidance of his spirit, we believe that he may arrive at a practical understanding and deep appreciation of them, infinitely greater

than that of his more learned but less spiritual brethren.— With non-essential truths, however, the case is different; many of them, e.g. questions of Church discipline, interpretation of prophecy, requiring an expense of time, a closeness of attention, and a well-trained capacity of mind, which cannot be expected from uneducated persons. This argument is drawn from the nature of the case; and certainly we read in scripture that God made use of human talent and learning to effect some of his greatest purposes; *a fortiori*, therefore, he would do it now, when miraculous gifts have (to accommodate our argument to persons) *at least* declined. Nobody can be acquainted with the history of St. Paul, or have read his writings, without perceiving that he was versed in all the arts and learning of his age, and that he applied them also to the great work of his ministry. With the Jew he argued as a Jew, with the Greek as a Greek; he took them on their own ground, and reasoned from their own principles. But Captain Hall brings forward a passage, by which, if literally understood, it would appear that in *no* Gospel truths have the wise and learned any superiority over their simpler neighbours. “Prove all things,” is the text alluded to, 1 Thess. v. 21. But, I would ask, can this be said of all the mysteries of Redemption, the Incarnation of our Lord, his miraculous conception; or can it be spoken of that mystery of mysteries, the Trinity in Unity? Surely over these the veil is drawn; it is not exercise of reason to penetrate it, rather a renouncing of reason, since reason tells, that they are matters for faith and not for itself to deal with. The passage, therefore, cannot be understood literally; and if so, we are to use our reason and experience in deciding how far and in what sense it is to be received. As to what he says of wordliness and deference to human opinion merely, being the reason of our different opinions and conduct, it is not worth

while to consider this, since *we*, at least, who are members of the Church of England, cannot be included in any charge of this kind, professing, as we do, by word and deed, (as a body, I mean), the Bible to be the only rule and standard of our faith.

“I am referred,” says Captain Hall, “to wise and holy men of past days, am I safe?” &c. “Yet have they erred in some things they may have erred in many.” “What an uncertain ground, then, of reference is this.” It is a little unaccountable, truly, that, while he professes not to deny either the wisdom or holiness of those alluded to, but to venerate them for both, he refuses at the same time, in words sufficiently intelligible, to pay any deference to their authority. He condemns himself, for he can have no other ground for admitting their wisdom and holiness (which are very strong terms) excepting their opinions, or their actions resulting from their opinions; but how a man can acknowledge the wisdom and goodness of these, and yet refuse to accept them—how he can venerate them, i. e., pay them a worshipful respect, and at the same moment slight them, it is difficult to conceive. Holiness is united with wisdom, and goes hand in hand in their case, so that the charge of worldliness, or human opinion merely, cannot be launched against them,—to think, and speak, and act thus, therefore, is inconsistent and absurd. Again, he states, as his reason, that they have erred in some things, and, therefore, may have erred in many, meaning, doubtless, that the probability is, that they have erred in many; but by what new calculation of chances, or new laws of logic he makes this conclusion, I am at a loss to know; or why, though they have erred in some things, they may not have been right in many,—nay, in many more things than they have been mistaken in, I am unable to comprehend. The argument used by Captain Hall is very similar to that

that notorious one which some sceptical writers have employed against the miracles of our Lord. This miracle or that miracle may have been effected by collusion, say they, therefore all of them may have been,—forgetting that, as this is applied to one miracle after another, the chances are multiplied enormously against them. Our glorious army of confessors and martyrs is not to be slighted so easily, nor that veneration which is due to their authority to be put to flight at the sound of a novelty, or be crushed by the heel of a fanatic,—the authority of those who, through successive ages, have been the soldiers and champions of the Cross; who have sealed their faith with their blood, have smiled at the axe or hugged the stake, and, doubtless, through their brief tribulation, have long since entered into glory. But suppose we argue in an opposite way for a moment, and say that the chances are against the opinions *en masse* of these wise and holy men being correct; suppose also that Captain Hall is a wise and holy man equally with any of them, what is the consequence then? Nobody can doubt, but that if so many wise and holy men, through so many ages, have been mistaken, the chances are incalculably great against *one* person of the same pretensions being right. Or perhaps we shall be justified (considering the specimens he has given of himself) in setting down Captain Hall as a few degrees inferior in wisdom and holiness to many of our Saintly ancestors; then of course the chances against him are increased, in proportion as he is thus inferior. Mr. Baptist Noel's remark, to which our attention is directed by Captain Hall, is not, in the slightest degree, an objection to what we have said,—for the party, with whom we are disputing, not only are at issue with the principles of our national Establishment, but with every national Establishment, which has existed since the days of Constantine; so that the multitudes, who give in

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their testimony to our cause, or rather who give it against theirs, is vastly greater than Captain Hall imagines. Lastly, his own observation, that we often think of England, as though the name of Christ were confined to its shores, is entirely an ebullition of his own rich fancy; for my part, I have never met with any one, who was foolish or ignorant enough to suppose so, or even that the Church of England was thus confined.

We come now to Captain Hall's defence of a proselyting spirit in himself and his followers. And here we must observe, that Mr. Venn did not complain of a proselyting spirit, conducted on proper principles, and with a proper end, as he declares himself in the preface to the second edition of his sermon. But there are three things necessary to constitute a proselyting spirit of this kind—an imparting of spiritual good—a proper disposition of soul in imparting—a well-founded conviction, that more good will be given than taken away. This last must be acquired by one of two ways; a miraculous endowment of spiritual discernment, and a direct mission from God; or else, by common reason, reason, I mean, appealing to the word of God. If Captain Hall pretends to the former, and professes an immediate commission from Heaven, he must give some proof of this; we must have miracles to establish his pretensions; if not, (let him rattle his collars if he please, he cannot slip them) if he appeals to reason, by reason he must abide. But since the question of the distribution of spiritual good, must depend upon the knowledge, whether there *is any* in the present case to be distributed or not, since also the other two requisites cannot exist without this knowledge, we will defer this particular subject till we have examined more fully the character of Captain Hall's opinions.

Captain Hall avows, that "he was led by the hand of God to

Hereford to sustain and seek the unity of His people." "He did not divide the Church," he says, "but found it divided,"—though it would have been nearer the truth, had he said, that he found it divided, and divided it still more. But what is the disunion of which he speaks? First, a local disunion—Christians were not worshipping under one and the same roof, and so he was sent to gather them together in Bridge Street. But has he effected this purpose? certainly not, even by his own allowing—"I do not at all deny," are his own words, "but that there are many members of the body of Christ within it" (the established Church), and this Church in Hereford, I presume, is allowed to have its share. But according to this, he has *caused* a disruption of local union, instead of removing it; inasmuch as Christians are now worshipping under more roofs by one than formerly, But not only were Christians guilty of worshipping in different places, according to Captain Hall, but those, collected in the same place, were divided in heart and judgment;—and so to unite their hearts and judgments, he introduces a new set of opinions, professing to be of home manufacture, and thinks further local dis-union, which he misnames union, to be highly conducive to that end. But what is the result of his plan? He confesses himself, that his disciples differ in many things; and can he search their hearts, and know how far they differ, especially as he invites persons of *all parties* to be present at his meetings? They profess indeed to be united, but so do they in our own Churches and elsewhere, and both he and we must be content with this, and leave the rest to God. The division, therefore, which Captain Hall has caused in the Church is not unlike all other divisions, but beyond doubt is both a disunion of heart and judgment, as well as a local disunion among Christians. Local disunion as a consequence of the introduction of new

doctrines must be allowed to go hand in hand with disunion of the former kind, unless there be very strong evidence to the contrary; in the present case there is evidence not against, but (as we have shown) for the supposition. A passage from Archbishop Laud is next thrown at our heads, as forcible and capital proof that the Church of England has been guilty of schism, because Captain Hall has thought proper to separate himself from it. The dogmatical Captain ought to have known that no proof of a just cause given by our Church, is to be drawn from the fact, that hundreds have taken offence at her statutes and Liturgy, and withheld themselves from her communion; for it may happen, that they have taken an unjust offence: nor did the learned Prelate, whom he quotes, mean to say, that he who takes offence unjustly is in a less degree schismatical, than he who unjustly gives it. And the case is the same, if a weak conscience is involved; for a weak conscience may, and very likely will, take alarm at anything and everything; not at things of doubtful disputation only, but at grand and certain truths; not only at manner of ceremonies, but at matters of faith. *The* weak conscience, alluded to by the Apostle, is concerned with things trivial and indifferent in themselves; so that, if Captain Hall speaks of these, it is sufficient to say, that he does not speak to the purpose; for it is on other principles, that both he and the great body of dissenters stand aloof from us. If he means a weak conscience in the former sense, if important matters are the occasion of disunion—both the fundamentals of her religion, and her national constitution the Church of England is ready to defend, and has a hundred times defended; and till she can be proved to be wrong, those who separate from her, and not she, are guilty of schism, even though Captain Hall and others in their fall should draw after them the third part of the stars of heaven. In the last place, with respect to a



weak conscience, be it observed that there is latitude enough in our Church, by his own allowing, for the weakest conscience to indulge itself in; he goes far beyond overselves, when he asserts, that our articles are so indefinite, that hundreds of volumes have been written to determine what they mean.

And now, having concluded with the first division which we made of this learned and logical address, we may proceed to consider its more formal attack upon the Church of England. But here I must make two remarks; first, that as Captain Hall's objections, at least most of them, are very sweeping and general, he must of course be content with a very general reply,—secondly, I must be excused from following his pages, so closely as I have hitherto done, as the extremely loose and undigested manner, in which his remarks are arranged, would make it very inconvenient to do so. Most of his objections, I think, will be found to resolve themselves into the following heads:—

1st. Its terms of adoption, its articles, &c., independent of the spirit of God.

2nd. No visible union, such as we are required to seek.

3rd. Formal arrangement unscriptural.

4th. Its ministers constitutionally carnal.

5th, Separation from the world required.

First, then, we are told that “the articles, formularies, terms of adoption, privileges of the Church of England are altogether and alike independent of the Spirit of God.” The egregious misstatement, here put forth, is only to be equalled by the sad ignorance, or unblushing impudence, which could venture to make such assertions in a place, where the articles and formularies alluded to are in everybody's hand; and which bare stamped and emblazoned on their very forehead, in a manner clear to the meanest capacity, the most ample contradiction to

these charges. And mind, it is to the drawing up, the wording, the *constitution*, in short, of these articles, &c., that our attention is to be directed; to the requisitions they make, and not to the effect of these on the life and conversation of persons, who profess to submit to them. This is the ground taken by Captain Hall himself; "I do not at all deny," he says, "but that there are many members of the body of Christ within it, &c." (which we had occasion to quote before.) Again, in "its constitution, it is at variance with what the scriptures state of the Church of God." "I do not speak of its corrupt practices, but of its corrupt and unscriptural constitution." Of the thirty-nine articles of our Church, the five first relate to the foundations on which all our religion is built—our belief in God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; the infinite existence, wisdom, power, and goodness of the first; the passion, death, resurrection, and ascension of the second; the procession of the last: and the co-eternity and co-equality of all three, the sublime and mysterious doctrine of three persons in one God. But how the profession and inculcation of these great truths is altogether independent of the spirit of God, is intelligible only to Captain Hall. The next three articles speak of that, which our Church maintains to be the rule and standard of her faith, the Holy Scriptures; also of her Creeds, which are derived entirely from this sacred source. But all this, according to Captain Hall, is unscriptural, i. e., the scriptures are unscriptural, and independent altogether of the Spirit of God, and so is everything which professes to be derived from them. The ten articles, which in order succeed, relate to the duties of Christians as individuals; and their scope in general is this, that man is sinful and corrupt by nature, that he has no strength of himself, that we can do nothing without the grace of Christ, and that by faith alone are we justified, that Christ's human

nature was impeccable, and that eternal salvation is only to be obtained through his name. Yet all this is independent of the spirit of God too; but since faith in Jesus he allows to be a scriptural doctrine, and our articles maintain this doctrine, but yet are unscriptural; therefore, according to Captain Hall, the same thing is scriptural and unscriptural at the same time. Enough, I hope, has been brought forward to show, that our articles are not altogether independent of the spirit of God. Of the last division of the articles I shall not formally speak, because their agreement with scripture will be proved as we proceed, some of them at least including points of main argument between us and Captain Hall. So much then for these. If we open our prayer-book, we shall find as easy a refutation of our assailants here as in the articles. In the exhortatory address the people are invited to make a humble confession of their sins before Almighty God, to return thanks for past benefits, to set forth his praises, to hear his most holy word, and to beg for future mercies. Of course I cannot stay to examine separately each part of the Liturgy; but, in few words, its spirit and design are expressed in the above exhortation. Every prayer is offered up in the name of Christ; and most expressly in that excellent prayer of St. Chrysostom do we profess to make our common supplications, and to be met together in this name. Every prayer acknowledges, at least by implication, our own abject and utter helplessness, and our entire dependance on God's Spirit to do anything pleasing and acceptable to him. Every prayer, in the last place, is a proof, that the *privileges* we seek are not independent of the Holy Spirit, but wholly dependent on this; for since the grand end and object of our prayers are spiritual blessings, and these we clearly maintain to be the effects of the Spirit of God dwelling in the heart, the Spirit, therefore, and

his sanctifying influence is the privilege we seek, i. e. it is the privilege which the Church of England, a segment of the Church Catholic, seeks.

These remarks equally apply to our Church's administration of the Lord's supper, her marriage service, the service for the burial of the dead, &c., &c. We must, however, briefly examine the baptismal service, since this is particularly alluded to by Captain Hall. The prayers offered up by the congregation, previous to the child's being baptised, are to this purpose, that God would grant to him that which by nature he cannot have; that he may be baptised with water and the Holy Ghost; that he may be made a living member of Christ's holy Church. The vows, which are made in the child's name, are, that he shall renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil, &c., that he will be baptised in the faith of Christ, as set forth in the Apostle's Creed. These vows he is required to renew with his own lips, when he has come to years of discretion. So that Captain Hall's remarks on this subject (page 9) would have read quite as well, and would have been much more correct, with a few alterations, as follow:—The Church of England is a body, having for its members every person born an Englishman, who is subjected to the rite of baptism, and binds himself, in the presence of God and of the Church, with a most solemn and awful vow to renounce, with God's help, the world, the flesh, and the devil, to believe all the articles of the Christian faith, and to walk in God's holy will and commandments all the days of his life. It has its articles, formularies, &c., altogether and alike dependent on the Spirit of God; and so long as this Holy Spirit will deign to hear the prayers of the humble and contrite heart, and visit the habitations of men, babes, born indeed of the flesh, but *born again* and renewed in the Spirit, and growing up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, will still be-

come its members. They will show forth the fruits of their holy vocation, by rendering unto God the things that are God's, and unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, by respecting the rights and property of their fellow men, by reverently frequenting the temple of God, and (highly amusing as Captain Hall considers it) by the decent and solemn burial of their dead.

Second,—The visible union of the Church is to be considered. Now there are two ways in which the union of the Church may be spoken of. First, that mystical union of all the members of Christ's body throughout the world, which in our Creed is termed the Communion of Saints. It is an union of heart and soul, of thought and affection, by which we are intimately knit together, as dear children of the same God, partakers of the same blessings, heirs of the same glory. But this holy and blessed communion can be visible only to the Searcher of hearts; and as it comprehends in its ample fold all the Saints of all the world, so does it necessarily and essentially *exclude* all, who are not Saints in spirit and in truth. Secondly, there is another union of the Church, which may be called an union of *profession*, (not profession as opposed to reality); we profess to meet together in the same name, to trust in the same blood, to be sanctified by the same spirit, to regulate our thoughts, words, and actions to the glory of the same God. Our professions may be true, or they may not be, there may be greater or less degrees of probability as to their being so; but it is the only union visible to mortal gaze—the bad fish and the good are included in the same net; the wheat and the tares grow up in the same field, but men are unable to distinguish them. It is only the piercing and omniscient eyes of God, which can, and will, make the separation at the last day. Of course we are to seek that other and more glorious union, but not to expect, what in the nature of things is impossible, that it will be visible to us. The expres-

sion, therefore, in our articles "congregation of faithful men" may be understood in either of these two senses—par excellence, as invisible to us in the former sense; as visible to us and of an inferior kind in the latter. That the word "Church" is only applicable to a congregation of faithful men, in the highest sense, is a most absurd and unfounded assertion. This cannot be proved better, than by examining one of Captain Hall's own instances. A body of men, terming themselves a Church, could scarcely be found more corrupt than the Corinthians were; parties and schisms, doubts and disputations, drunkenness and profligacy, prevailed widely amongst them, and yet the Apostle calls them a Church; "Unto the Church of God which is at Corinth," he writes, "to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be Saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord." Nor is there anything contradictory, in this address, to the character of the Church to which he was writing. Any Church, where the name of God was professed and worshipped, would be a Church of God, inasmuch as it is dedicated to him: the words "sanctified in Christ Jesus" need signify nothing more than baptised in that name; for baptism, as being a washing away of sin, is a proper sanctification; at all events, baptism is a separation, and this, in some sort, is a sanctification—"called to be Saints," does indeed probably mean those, in whom the work of grace was effectually wrought; but again, "those that call upon the name of Jesus," evidently implies professing Christians. The fair conclusion from all this is, that the Church of England is properly called a Church, though it embrace many an unsound member within it; it is after all a lively branch of the Church Catholic, though a leaf here, or a spray there, be withered, or even if there be many such. It is also a visible Church, or if this cannot be predicated of it, there neither is,

nor ever was, nor ever will be, a body of men of whom it can be predicated.

Third,—Captain Hall tells us, that “the Church of God in the Scriptures is without formal arrangement.” In this I shall prove to him to be as completely mistaken as in any other of his propositions. Perhaps the following texts will be somewhat to our purpose. “God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, &c., helps, governments.” “He hath given some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers.” “If a man desire the office of a bishop,” &c., “likewise let the deacons be grave.” “Against an elder (or presbyter) receive not an accusation,” &c. “They that have used the office of a deacon will purchase to themselves a good degree.” “Lay hands suddenly no no man.” “Ordain elders in every city.” “Let these also first be proved, then let them use the office of a deacon,” &c. “For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting.” “These things speak, exhort, and rebuke with all authority.” Now from these passages (many others might have been brought forward), the following conclusions are to be drawn. First,—The Ministry of the primitive Church was composed of several orders or ranks of persons, some superior, some inferior to others, and a prudent and zealous discharge of an inferior office was a necessary recommendation to a superior one: among these are to be found two at least of the ministerial orders of our own Church, those of bishop and deacon; and the third, that of priest, *most probably* existed, as a distinct grade, under the name of Presbyter, from which the word Priest is derived. Here then we have the ideas of subordination, gradation, and successive promotion—and this is formal order. Secondly,—This Ministry was systematically ordained by the

imposition of hands, which also implies formal order. Thirdly,—A great many rules for Church government are detailed in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus; and the very command “to set in order,” given to Titus, denotes that there was to be a settled and prescribed order of things in the Church—and this is formal order. Fourthly,—Authority to speak, exhort, and rebuke in all these matters was vested, not in a presbyterian synod, but in an individual, and this individual was a bishop of the Church—and this is formal order. But we may carry the argument still further, and show that a formal order of *Divine Service* was used by the primitive christians. First,—The Lord’s prayer was, beyond a question, made a necessary part of their congregational worship; this does not required to be proved. Secondly,—The Psalms of David were used on the same solemn occasions. “When ye come together,” wrote St. Paul to the Corinthians, “every one of you hath a Psalm;” but since, in another place, he exhorts them to teach and admonish one another in Psalms, he could only object, in this passage, to each person having his *particular* psalm, instead of all joining in the same. There can be no doubt, from the accounts given by Pliny, Eusebius, &c., of the same fact, that Psalms were always used by the first Christians in their public worship. Thirdly,—The reading of some part of the Holy Scriptures seems to have been enjoined. Moses, we know was read in the synagogue every Sabbath day, and so were the prophets; and our Lord gave a sanction to this custom, when he condescended to read and expound the blessed book himself. *A priori*, therefore, we might fairly conclude that his disciples also would publickly read them. The great importance too, attached by the sacred writers to the reading and studying of the word of God, must lead to the same conviction. And in the last place, Justin Martyr, who flourished in the second



century, speaks of the reading of the prophets in the assembly of the faithful as a custom in his time. Fourthly,—General supplications are by St. Paul commanded to be made. “I exhort that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men; for kings and for all that are in authority.” Now if general supplications and giving of thanks, &c., if reading of the Bible, the Psalms of David, and the Lord's Prayer, were prescribed as parts of congregational worship in the apostolic age, then, most certainly, did formal order belong to the Church of God even in its Divine Service. And as in the organisation of a regular Ministry, its Bishops, its Priests, and Deacons, in the imposition of hands, and many other minute particulars the Church of England resembles the Apostolic Church, so does it also in the constitution of its public Service. Under this head I will only add, Fifthly,—there are three Liturgies ascribed to St. Peter, St. Mark, and St. James respectively; which, at least, are of great antiquity, and a strong confirmation, that pre-arranged and pre-composed forms of public worship were in use among the earliest Christians.

Fourth,—“The ministers of the Church are constitutionally carnal.” As the appointment of a regular ministry by the laying on of hands has already been proved to be scriptural, it only remains to consider, whether the particular service, used by our Church on the occasion, is so or not. And to this, I suppose, Captain Hall alludes, when he says, that neither conversion of soul, nor special gift of the Holy Ghost is really required of any. If he means to express, by the words “special” and “really,” a miraculous effusion of the Holy Spirit, then, certainly, he is right in supposing that the Church does not require this in any of her candidates for orders,—for she does not *presume* to require it; but if he means, that the gifts and graces of the same Spirit, drawing up the soul with real con-

version to high and Heavenly things, is not required, surely he is very greatly in error. To refute this, I shall only mention one part of the Ordination Service, which will be quite sufficient for the purpose. The following is among the questions, which the Bishop proposes to his candidates :—“ Do you trust, that you are inwardly *moved by the Holy Ghost* to take upon you this office and ministration, to serve God for the promoting of his glory, and the edifying of his people.” Of the general qualifications of the candidate, the congregation are to judge; of the sincerity of heart, with which this solemn question is answered, the Bishop can form an opinion with about as much certainty as a more unlettered person; while the latter decidedly is not so fit a judge of the learning of the candidate as the former: nor do I perceive, how the addition of a mitre, or even a wig, which Captain Hall will find more in fashion than the other, on the head of a Bishop, can in any way disqualify him for his office. As to open ministry, except the advantage of its being unscriptural, it has very little to recommend it. An “ignorant and unlearned man,” indeed, for want of clearness of style, command of words, and consecutiveness of argument, (if there be no miraculous endowment in the case), is more likely to be edifying to himself, and unintelligible to others, than a better educated person. Captain Hall himself must be remarkably brilliant in his lectures, if an undisciplined reason, and ignorance of his subject, are good tests of qualification for the ministry.

Fifth,—The last point to be considered is, “that the Church of God in the Scriptures is separate from the world.” The world here of course means *the State*, and Captain Hall would say, that the Church of God in the Scriptures is separate from the State. But since the Jewish Church, i. e., the the Church in the Old Testament, was not separate from the

State, nor even the Christian Church as represented by the Prophets; he must further mean, that the Church of God, in *the New Testament*, is separate from the State. Now, that the Church was not immediately connected with the State is to be accounted for on the same principle, and is no more extraordinary, than that the population of a mighty empire should not in a moment be converted to the religion of Christ. So that Captain Hall (if he means to draw any conclusion against our Church) makes this absurd proposition, that because the Church of God, in its very infancy, was separate from the State, (as without an universal miracle it must necessarily have been), *therefore* it was intended always to be thus separate. And this other *reductio ad absurdum* follows from the same reasoning, that for 1500 years there has been no Church of God at all, i. e. from the time that the Christian religion became the religion of the Roman empire under Constantine. But God saw with other eyes than Captain Hall, and though, for three long centuries, the prayers and the patience of the Saints fought against the sword and malice of the persecutor, He was pleased, at length, to give the Church happier days. And principally for these four reasons he may have done it—it was the fulfilling of prophecy, that the sons of strangers should build up her walls, and princes should minister unto her—it was, in a peculiar way, a vindication of his providence, that the same empire, which had systematically combined against her, should combine systematically for her defence—it was an act of grace and mercy to the Church to send her some refreshment after her troubles—lastly, it was a grace bestowed on kings and queens, that they should be the nursing-fathers and nursing mothers of so Holy a Thing. But in what, after all, consists the union of Church and State. Is it that the State interferes in the ordering of the Ministry, or the spiritual go-

vernment of the Church in any way? By no means,—the terms of union are those of temporal protection and ghostly submission on the part of the State; of ghostly aid and temporal submission on the part of the Church. Her Bishops and Pastors, it is true, are Dukes and Barons; but these titles, as being the effluxes of Royalty, are only visible symbols of our union with a temporal Sovereign; as the graces and ornaments of the soul are symbols of our union with Him, who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. The Church is not in the least degree *essentially* dependent on the State, and if it shall please God to remove the robe of an earthly protection, which he has at present flung about her, she will only display more openly the nails and the thorns of her militant condition, and stand forth to the world in her naked and awful beauty, the persecuted, indeed, of men and Satan, but the beloved of God, and the admiration of the blessed Angels.

The third division, which we made of Captain Hall's pamphlet, yet remains to be examined. After his Quixotic attack on all the Churches, sects, and parties, which ever existed from the days of the Apostles downwards, unhorsing the member of the Church of England here, thrusting his lance into the Dissenter there, he proceeds to draw himself up, and explain the base, neither too broad nor too narrow, on which the only true Church, the Church of Captain Hall, can rest—the length and breadth of saddle with which his Rozinante must be harnessed. We may well exclaim "*parturiunt montes,*" the mountains are in labour; and what is the result? Why, it is either a mouse, or a scorpion, for we have not yet ascertained its nature. Captain Hall may have one of three different meanings, when he says, that faith in Jesus Christ is the *only* base for Christian communion. First,—the expression can be understood in a sense, which most entirely harmonizes with the doctrines of

the Church of England. Faith, in Jesus Christ, as this Divine Person is set forth to us in scripture; faith in him as our only Sacrifice and Mediator, and as opposed to any confidence in our own merits and deservings—such a faith our Church maintains to be the only ground of salvation; it is the foundation on which she is built, the doctrine into which all her members are baptised. Now, whatever importance *she* may attach to other doctrines, as constituting the walls and out-works of her edifice, the importance which *Captain Hall* attaches to them is clear. He invites all true christians who have faith in Jesus Christ, whether members of the Established Church, or any other community, to unite themselves with him; so that (if this be not an untruth) he considers variety of opinions on other points, and on forms and ceremonies among the number, *not to be worth contending about*. But why then does he separate from the Church, if she holds fast the only essential doctrine—why does he denounce her as being no Church of God, and the very world out of which we are commanded to fly? He stands self-convicted and guilty, not doubtfully, but as clear as the noon-day, and by his own showing, of the deadly sin of schism.

Secondly,—But perhaps Captain Hall does not intend to make any such definition, and limitations of faith as we have mentioned; he intends, perhaps, the words to be taken in their broadest signification; and this does not seem very unlikely, if we are to judge from the extremely sweeping and universal invitation, which he gives to all denominations of Christians to join his party. Have we lived then to see a body of men, not the advocates of this or that particular heresy, but professedly the champions of all the abominations and corruptions of doctrine that ever existed? But this, undoubtedly, must be the case, if all particular Creeds, and details of doctrine are to be

rejected; if the door of admission is to be thrown wide open, and without restriction, to every comer. The Arian, the Socinian, the Sabellian, the Antinomian; that damnable heresy, almost too black to stain one's pen with, which maintains the peccability of the nature of the Incarnate God, and a hundred other heresies as bad, are invited to assemble under one roof—thistles and thorns, and brambles, rank and pestilent, growing up together, and ripe for the burning.

Thirdly,—The only other way, in which to interpret this expression of Captain Hall's, is to suppose his meaning to be, not that forms and ceremonies are of no importance, but that they are *absolutely destructive* of the nature of the true Church. The first consequence of which is, that he is guilty of self-contradiction; for, with such a meaning, the declaration he makes, that "all, who are really Christians, are free to come to his communion *without yielding any of their opinions*, and even while continuing to attend any other place of worship," is utterly irreconcilable. If the Church of England, by reason of its forms and ceremonies, is the world out of which we are commanded to fly, we cannot wilfully remain in it, and be true Christians at the same time; we cannot compromise between the Devil and Christ, we cannot serve God and Mammon. In the next place, it follows with equal certainty from this supposition, that Captain Hall argues in the most convincing manner against himself. For if the Church of England, as he declares, rests on too narrow a base, then does his own sect rest on a much narrower. We can safely commit to the judgment of any one, whether to believe that all the forms of Church government, which ever existed, are deadly infringements on the word and will of God; to believe that the mark of the beast is on every religious institution of men; to hem oneself in round and round with this most distant, damning,

and uncharitable creed—whether to believe that Captain Hall is the only interpreter of the mysteries of God, his sect the only true Church, since the days of the Apostles; that our fathers, and forefathers in the old time before them, have grown up and perished among the dead and dry bones of an unblest and unchristian Communion—whether it be not a much greater demand on one's faith to believe all this, a *much narrower base*, therefore, on which to found a religious party, than any which can be objected against the Church of England. So that, Captain Hall, you must choose between one of these alternatives—let them be set plainly, broadly before you—either you must be charged on your own showing, with the fatal sin of schism—or else you are a heretic, and the champion of heretics—or lastly, we must accuse you of self-contradiction, self-refutation, and most fanatical presumption. You must choose between these, I repeat, or else renounce your present creed.

And now we may revert to the question of a proselyting spirit, and pronounce our judgment with confidence, as to how far it is justifiable in the instance before us. So far as Captain Hall preaches salvation through the name of Christ, so far does he impart spiritual good. And this doctrine, be it mixed up with a multitude of absurdities, if preached in the midst of darkness, or inferior light, would be an infinite blessing. But what are the circumstances of the present case? Those to whom Captain Hall addresses himself are persons included, at least many of them, within the bosom of a most Holy and Scriptural communion; where the doctrine of faith in the blood of Christ is the leading and all-pervading article. So that the great foundation of our Creed being common to both parties, we must attend to another question, viz., whether to put forth the hand against *the walls* of our earthly Zion, though the temple itself be untouched, is not a sacrilegious deed. It must un-

doubtedly be so—and we have already proved our system of Church government and discipline to be founded on Scripture. It is of no use for Captain Hall to say, that “truth is compassionately aggressive,” that “it is the very nature of truth to spread itself,” &c., since this is a mere *petitio principii*, the point at issue being, whether he *has* truth on his side or not. Till he can substitute Scripture, fairly interpreted, and reasonable argument for mere ravings and phantasies, he may, indeed, lead away captive silly women, and silly men too, but he cannot justify his proselyting spirit in the eyes of God or man. He has a double sin to answer for, the denouncing *that* as unholy which God in Scripture has pronounced Holy; and in the next place, distracting and dispersing thereby the flock of Christ. Lastly it follows, that the disposition of heart and soul, which prompts him to carry forward the work of proselytism cannot be a sound one. For granting that Captain Hall is in error, this error must proceed either from wilfulness or ignorance (including *a wilful ignorance* under the former). As the better alternative, we will argue as if it proceeded from ignorance. Now some ignorance, even of divine truth, may be pardonable; but not so in one, who presuming on that ignorance, *actively* sets his face against an institution founded by Christ and his Apostles, built up in the beauty of holiness, and watered and cemented by the blood of Martyrs. An ignorance of this magnitude must be a sinful one, and a sinful ignorance cannot consist with a proper disposition of soul. Nor is there any contradiction in supposing that Captain Hall is sinfully ignorant, and yet not wilfully ignorant, should we not be inclined to think the latter of him. It is one of the common laws of nature, that men should be constrained to act from habits, which habits, however, whilst in their formation, might have been subdued. In the same way, a mind undisciplined or dissolute in any respect, often



becomes the subject of strange imaginations and manifold delusions. And it is an awful thing yet true, that this is the very state of mind, and these the very elements, which the great Tempter, in all ages of the world, has seized upon and wrought up to effect divisions in the Church. Heresy and schism, in their turn, never spring up alone, but invariably flourish, side by side, with spiritual pride, arrogance, and religious intolerance. But every man must bear his own burthen, as Captain Hall most justly remarks, and the weightest part of *his* burthen undoubtedly is a proselyting spirit, since thereby he openly ranks himself amongst those, who have set themselves in battle array against the Tabernacle of God—and most deeply, tremendously is he responsible to Almighty God for it.

THE END.