

James Ewing Ritchie

The Religious Life of London



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INTRODUCTION

Man is undoubtedly a religious animal. In England at any rate the remark holds good. No one who ignores the religious element in our history can rightly understand what England was, or how she came to be what she is. The fuller is our knowledge, the wider our field of investigation, the more minute our inquiry, the stronger must be the conviction in all minds that religion has been for good or bad the great moving power, and, in spite of the teachings of Secularism or of Positivism, it is clear that as much as ever the questions which are daily and hourly coming to the front have in them more or less of a religious element. It is not often foreigners perceive this. Take Louis Blanc as an illustration. As much as any foreigner he has mastered our habits and ways – all that we call our inner life; yet, to him, the English pulpit is a piece of wood – nothing more. According to him, the oracles are dumb, the sacred fire has ceased to burn, the veil of the temple is rent in twain; church attendance, he tells us, in England, besides custom, has little to recommend it. There is beauty in desolation – in life changing into death —

“Before Decay’s effacing fingers
Have swept the lines where beauty lingers;”

but not even of this beauty can the Church of England boast. Dr. Döllinger – a more thoughtful, a more learned, a more laborious writer – is not more flattering. The Church of England, he tells us, is “the Church only of a fragment of the nation,” of “the rich, cultivated, and fashionable classes.” It teaches “the religion of deportment, of gentility, of clerical reserve.” “In its stiff and narrow organization, and all want of pastoral elasticity, it feels itself powerless against the masses.” The patronage is mostly in the hands of the nobility and gentry, who regard it as a means of provision for their younger sons, sons-in-law, and cousins. Our latest critic, M. Esquiros, writes in a more favourable strain, yet even he confesses how the city operative shuns what he deems the Church of Mammon, and draws a picture of the English clergyman, by no means suggestive of zeal in the Master’s service or readiness to bear His yoke. Dissent foreigners generally ignore, yet Dissent is as active, as energetic as the State Church, and may claim that it has practically realized the question of our time – the Free Church in the Free State. In thus attempting to describe the Religious Life of London, I touch on a question of which I may briefly say that it concerns the welfare of the community at large.

Ivy Cottage, Ballard’s Lane, Finchley,
April 4th, 1870.

CHAPTER I. on heresy and orthodoxy

The original meaning of the word heresy is choice. “It was long used,” writes Dr. Waddington, “by the philosophers to designate the preference and selection of some speculative opinion, and in process of time was applied without any sense of reproach to every sect.” The most fruitful source of speculative opinion is, and has ever been, religion; from the schools of philosophy to those of theology the term heresy passed by a very intelligible and simple process. The word is thrice used in the Acts to denote sect (Acts v. 17, xv. 5, and xxiv. 5), and Paul himself when on his defence before Felix and in answer to Tertullus confesses that “after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers.”

In process of time heresy came to have a bad meaning attached to it. It is easy to see why this should be so. We naturally prefer our own opinions to those of other people. We naturally prefer the society of those who hold our own opinions to the society of those who do not. Life is short, and we do not want to be always disputing. Life to most of us is hard, and it would be harder still if after a day’s toil Paterfamilias had to discuss the three births of Christ, or His twofold nature, the Æons of the Gnostics, the Judaism of the Ebionites, the ancient Persian dualism which formed the fundamental idea of the system of Manes, or the windy frenzy of Montanus, with an illogical wife, a friend gifted with a fatal flow of words, or a pert and shallow child. We like those with whom we constantly associate. They are wise men and sound Christians. They are those who fast and pay tithes, and are eminently proper and respectable. As to the heretics – the publicans and sinners, away with them. Let their portion be shame in this life, perdition in the next. Thus it is heretics have got a bad name. Church history has been written by their enemies, by men who have honestly believed that a man of a different heresy to their own would rob an orphan, and break all the commandments. The Rev. Mr. Thwackem “doubted not but all the infidels and heretics in the world would, if they could, confine honour to their own absurd errors and damnable deceptions.” The phrase “absurd errors and damnable deceptions,” is one a real theologian might envy, or at any rate appropriate. In another sense also that hero of fiction is a type of the spirit in which orthodox people often (thankfully we record the existence of a better spirit in our day) have written on theology. “When I mean religion,” cries Thwackem, “I mean the Christian religion, and not only the Christian religion, but the Protestant religion, and not only the Protestant religion, but the Church of England.”

Still the question occurs, What is heresy?

It is not difficult to say what it is not. The African Bishops on one occasion, in council in Carthage, decided that heretics were not at all any part of the Church of Christ, but this opinion was modified by a later council. “Heretics,” writes Epiphanius, “are divided into two kinds: those who receive the Christian religion, but err in parts, who when they come over to the Church are anointed with oil; and those who do not receive it at all and are unbelievers, such as Jews and Greeks, and these we baptize.”

According to the Articles of the English Establishment, “the Church of Christ is a company of faithful people among whom the pure Word of God is preached and the Sacraments rightly administered according to Christ’s institution.” But on this very matter we find the Church divided. Low Churchmen tell us that the ritualists do not rightly administer the Sacraments, and the latter say the same of their opponents. The *Record* suggests that Bishop Colenso is little better than one of the wicked, and charitably insinuates that the late Dean Milman is amongst the lost. Dr. Pusey places the Evangelicals in the same category with Jews, or Infidels, or Dissenters, and has strong apprehensions as to their everlasting salvation. Dr. Temple was made Bishop of Exeter, and Archdeacon Denison set apart the day of his installation as one of humiliation and prayer. Yet all these are of the Establishment.

Dr. Parr gladly associated with Unitarians, and went to Unitarian chapels to hear Unitarian ministers preach. Would Dean Close do so? Yet Dr. Parr, as much as Dean Close, was of the Church as regards solemn profession, and deliberate assent and consent. Mr. Melville believes Dissent to be schism, and one of the deadly sins, while the Deans of Westminster and Canterbury hold out to Dissenters friendly hands. If we take the Articles, the Church Establishment is as orthodox as the firmest Christian or the narrowest-minded bigot can desire; if we turn to its ministers, we find them as divided as it is possible for people professing to take their teaching from the Bible can be. If there be any grace in creeds and articles, any virtue in signing them, if their imposition be not a solemn farce, it is impossible that heresy should exist within the Established Church. It is in the wide and varied fields of Dissent that we are to look for heresy.

Yet the Church of England is tolerant, to a certain extent, of heresy. The judicious Hooker writes, “We must acknowledge even heretics themselves to be a maimed part, yet a part, of the visible Church. If an infidel should pursue to death an heretic professing Christianity only for Christian profession’s sake, could we deny unto him the honour of martyrdom? Yet this honour all men know to be proper unto the Church. Heretics, therefore, are not utterly cast out from the visible Church of Christ. If the Fathers do, therefore, anywhere, as often they do, make the true visible Church of Christ and heretical companies opposite, they are to be construed as separating heretics not altogether from the company of believers, but from the fellowship of sound believers. For where professed unbelief is, there can be no visible Church of Christ; there may be where sound belief wanteth. Infidels being clean without the Church, deny directly and utterly reject the very principles of Christianity which heretics embrace, and err only by misconstruction, whereupon their opinions, although repugnant indeed to the principles of Christian faith, are notwithstanding by them held otherwise and maintained as most consistent therewith.” The Privy Council by its Judgment of “Essays and Reviews” has decided that a Churchman may hold heretical opinions.

In popular language, the Congregationalists, the Baptists, the Presbyterians are orthodox; the Quakers, the Methodists, Wesleyans and otherwise, are orthodox; for our purpose popular language is sufficient.

Heresy, says Tertullian, is the result of wisdom, real or assumed. He writes: “The philosophers are the fathers of the heretics.” It is computed that there have been no less than five hundred distinct heresies. Happily for us, most of them are dead and buried in Greek and Latin folios, rarely read and still more rarely understood. The East was the land of heresy. Every day saw the birth of a new one amongst a people of subtle intellect and endowed with a language wonderfully contrived to express the most delicate and phantasmal forms of belief. We laugh at the schoolmen, at their barbarous Latin and incomprehensible disputations. No one now ventures to discuss how many angels could stand upon the point of a needle, but in the early ages of the Church the Fathers wasted their lives in disputations equally windy and barren of practical result. “Greek Christianity,” writes Dean Milman, “was insatiably inquisitive, speculative. Confident in the inexhaustible copiousness and fine precision of its language, it endured no limit to its curious investigations. As each great question was settled or worn out, it was still ready to propose new ones. It began with the Divinity of Christ, still earlier perhaps with some of the gnostic cosmogonical or theophanic theories, so onward to the Trinity; it expired, or at least drew near its end, as the religion of the Roman East, discussing the Divine light on Mount Tabor.” Extinct long ago are the questions to settle which Church councils were held, fanatic monks swarmed into Constantinople by hundreds from far away – Syrian, or Arabian, or African deserts – and armies took the field. Even a vowel might stir up strife and bloodshed. The enmity of the Homoousian to the Homiousian was as bitter as that between Guelph and Ghibelline, as that of Capulet and Montague; and only the pen of a Swift could do justice to the brawls

“Bred of an airy word.”

Heresy can be put down in two ways. You may argue it out of existence, or you may crush it out with the sword. As soon as ever the alliance between Church and State was formed, the latter was the favourite mode of dealing with heretics; it saved so much trouble. If you cut off a heretics head, you are certain to stop his heretical tongue. There is an end of his pestiferous logic. Continue the process, and heresy is exterminated, as Unitarianism was in Poland – as the Huguenots were by the massacres of St. Bartholomew – as Protestantism was crushed out in the Low Countries by Alva, and in Spain by Torquemada and the *auto da fes* of Madrid. After a similar fashion, Bombastes Furioso proposed to annihilate his enemies single-handed. His plan was to take them half-a-dozen at a time, and when he had cut off the heads of the first division, a second was to follow to receive a similar favour at his hands, and so on till all were slain. Power has always dealt with heretics after this fashion; in this way Churchmen endeavoured to put down Puritanism in England, Presbyterianism in Scotland, Popery in Ireland. To Henry IV. is due in this country the first permission to send heretics to the stake. The Preamble of the Act of 1401, *De Heretico Comburendo*, is as follows: “Divers false and perverse people, of a certain new sect, damnably thinking of the faith of the sacraments of the Church, and of the authority of the same, against the law of God and of the Church, – usurping the office of preaching, – do perversely and maliciously, in divers places within the realm, preach and teach divers new doctrines and wicked erroneous opinions contrary to the faith and determination of Holy Church. And of such sect and wicked doctrines they make unlawful conventicles, they hold and exercise schools, they make and write books, they do wickedly instruct and inform people, and excite and stir them to sedition and insurrection, and make great strife and division among the people, and other enormities horrible to be heard daily do perpetrate and commit. The diocesans cannot by their jurisdiction spiritual, without aid of the king’s majesty, sufficiently correct these said false and perverse people, nor refrain their malice, because they do go from diocess to diocess, and will not appear before the said diocesans; but the jurisdiction spiritual, the keys of the Church, and the censures of the same they do utterly condemn and despise, and so these wicked preachings and doctrines they do from day to day contrive and exercise to the destruction of all order and rule, right and reason.”

The Bishops by this Act received arbitrary power to arrest and imprison on suspicion, without check or restraint of law, at their will and pleasure. Prisoners who refused to abjure their errors, who persisted in heresy or relapsed into it after abjuration, were sentenced to be burnt at the stake.

So much deadlier a thing was heresy deemed than evil-living on the part of the clergy, that, previous to the reign of Henry VII., Bishops, who had no power to imprison priests even though convicted of adultery or incest, had, as Mr. Froude points out, power to arrest every man on suspicion of heresy, and to detain him in prison untried. Constantine was the first Christian Emperor who had recourse to this system; and it was against the Arians, who rejected the doctrine of the Trinity, that his enmity was directed. Death was the penalty for any one guilty of concealing an Arian book. Of course the Arians, in their turn, were equally ready to draw the sword. In those passionate and contentious times it was hard consistently and constantly to be orthodox. Justinian, whose laws against heretics were more severe than those of Constantine, and who was hailed by the Church as “the most Christian Emperor,” actually died a heretic. A controversy arose as to whether the body of Christ was or was not liable to corruption. A new sect of course was formed, known as the Corruptibles and the Incorruptibles. The latter were considered heretics. Justinian gave them his support, and was on the point of persecuting others of a different way of thinking when he died. One of his successors, Theodosius, was just as ready to persecute the holders of equally unimportant opinions. He it was who put down the Tascodragitæ, “who made their prayers inwardly and silently, compressing their noses and lips with their hands, lest any sound should transpire.”

Fortunately for our readers, religious London is not thus minutely divided and subdivided. We have still absurd squabbles, that for instance whether Mr. Mackonochie was kneeling or only bending, being pre-eminently so; yet on the whole in Western Europe and among the German races

the tendency is more and more to practical, and less and less to speculative life. In another way also may the comparatively speaking undisturbed orthodoxy of Western Europe be accounted for. For the orthodox there have been cakes and ale, and even the ass knoweth his owner and the ox his master's crib. Nothing so keeps men from religious speculation as a good endowment. In his "History of Latin Christianity," Dean Milman very significantly writes: "The original independence of the Christian character which induced the first converts in the strength of their faith to secede from the manners and usages, as well as the rites of the world, to form self-governed republics, as it were, within the social system; this noble liberty had died away as Christianity became an hereditary, an established, a universal religion." The poet asked, and he might well do so —

"What makes all doctrines plain and clear?
About two hundred pounds a year."

To have an opinion of his own, and to express it, was utterly impossible to any man whose heart was set upon church preferment. One illustration will suffice: Many – many years ago there was in the old city of Norwich a Bishop known by the name of Bathurst. His connexions were good, and when George III. was king there was an Earl Bathurst and a Lord Chancellor Bathurst, and a Sir Benjamin Bathurst. This clerical scion had thus on his entry into public life every chance in his favour. He lived to a great age: he was born in 1744, and died in 1837; but to the last he was only Bishop of Norwich. Why was this? Well, on the 27th of May, 1808, Lord Granville moved for the House of Lords to resolve itself into a committee "to consider the petition of the Irish Catholics." The petition was not a prayer for political equality, simply for employment in military and civil situations. The Bishop of Norwich had the audacity to lift up his single voice from the episcopal bench on behalf of Lord Granville's very moderate motion. The heavens did not fall – nor did the earth open its mouth and swallow him up – but the light of the royal countenance was lost to him for ever. His daughter writes: "A friend of my father's happened to mention in the presence of Queen Charlotte that the Bishop of Norwich ought to be removed to the see of St. Asaph, as the emoluments were better and the duties less numerous. 'No,' said her Majesty, quickly; 'he voted against the king.'" Some years afterwards it was said by those about the Court that the Bishop "might have commanded anything in the Church if he had taken the right line."

It has thus come to pass that heresy in London and the country has been confined within narrow bounds. Whatever Churchmen may have thought, the creed and the public utterances of the Church have been orthodox. Popular dissent has followed suit – heresy has been avoided by some as a temptation of the devil, by others as an obstacle to worldly success, but no religious life can exist without it. In the religious world, as a rule, heresy is life, orthodoxy death. "Are you a Christian?" asked one well-known man of another. "When I am a good man," was the reply; but, say the orthodox, it is on his belief or rejection of dogmas that a man's Christianity depends. One cheering sign of the times is that the religious public is beginning to realize the fact, that it does not follow that because a man holds heretical opinions he will pick your pocket, elope with your wife, or make away with your silver spoons. It is well when people come to think that there may be something purer, higher, holier, than unreasoning uniformity of opinion or than a blind assent to scholastic terms and definitions. Mental stagnation is not Christian life, neither does sterile orthodoxy deserve the name. It was the recognition of this idea that gives to the Apostle John a special claim to admiration and regard. "If," says he, "a man say I love God and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?" It was under the influence of the same spirit that the Master rebuked the zeal of his disciples when they would have hindered one who was according to their own account doing good, merely because "he followed not us." The passage is worth transcribing. "And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name and he followeth not us, and we forbade him, because he followeth not us. But Jesus said,

Forbid him not, for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name that can lightly speak evil of me; for he that is not against us is on our part. For whosoever shall give you a cup of water in my name because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you he shall not lose his reward.”

CHAPTER II. the jews

Of the many definitions of London, perhaps the truest is that which describes it as several cities rolled into one. The rich inhabit Belgravia, the poor Bethnal Green. In Mark Lane on a Monday morning you might fancy, if you were to shut your eyes and listen to the conversation around, that you were in primitive East Anglia; on the contrary, in Chancery Lane, and all the places of resort contiguous, the talk is of writs, of issuing executions, of levying a distress, and of all those horrible processes by which law seeks to secure property from its natural enemies, poverty or rascality. Irish abound in Drury Lane, and in unsavoury Houndsditch the seed of Abraham congregate.

The traveller from the palatial West will perhaps shrink from leaving on his right hand Aldgate Pump, and plunging in the dark alleys and crowded lanes in which the Jews reside. Nor, if he be of a fastidious stomach, would I much blame him. In Meeting House Yard, for instance, I saw a pool of dark fluid, around which little pale children were playing, suggesting something very rotten in the state of Denmark. It is in this neighbourhood that the far-famed Rag Fair is held on the Sunday, and all the week there is more or less dealing in such articles as come under the denomination of "old clo'," respecting which it may as a general rule be safely affirmed that, whilst we may dispute the title of clo', as regards much there vended, there can be no dispute as to the appropriateness of the descriptive adjective. In the lanes and courts around us are names familiar to us from infancy. Lazarus keeps a second-hand book-shop, and Moses sells fried fish. You see a printing-office, with posters up; on those posters are Hebrew characters. In Duke Street there are a couple of book-shops, but the books are all or chiefly Hebrew. In this neighbourhood you can easily forget that you are in London at all. It is not the English tongue you hear; or, if it be, it comes to you disguised in such a foreign accent as to be scarcely intelligible. Through the mist and fog dark eyes, all redolent of the far-off East, flash on you; and now and then a tall figure in flowing robes, sad and solitary, stalks by; and you rub your eyes to be sure that you are not in a dream. This temporary delusion will be stronger if you visit this neighbourhood on a Friday evening just after sunset. In Whitechapel and Aldgate the gas is flaring, and a busy trade is carried on; in Leadenhall Street, in the offices of the great Navigation Companies or of the leading shipbrokers, clerks are busy writing, and weather-beaten skippers from Australia or the Cape or New Zealand are tearing about, if we may use a colloquial expression much in vogue, like mad. It is a contrast to pass from this busy scene into the Jewish quarter, where the shops are all shut up and where all is still. How is this? The answer is, it is the eve of the Sabbath, and the Jews are at their synagogues. There are three in this neighbourhood. The first and oldest is that of the Portuguese Jews in King Street, Duke's Place, erected in 1656. The first German synagogue, also in Duke's Place, was built in the year 1691, and occupied until 1790, when the present edifice was erected. This is called the Great Synagogue. The New Synagogue, as it is denominated, in Great St. Helens, is a very elegant and ornamental structure. The interior is very beautiful. In so dark and dolorous a neighbourhood you are not prepared for anything so fine. Very liberally must these ancient people have subscribed for the fitting worship of their God. From the ground spring up pillars highly decorated, and in the side are windows of a rich arabesque pattern in stained glass. The ceiling is semi-dome with octagonal coffers containing gilded flowers upon an azure ground; and the pavement, which is of polished marble, forms a perfect circle. The ministers of the Great Synagogue were considered the leading ones. It is not so now. Dr. Adler is the head rabbi. He has been long in office, and is universally esteemed by Christians as well as Jews. He is an old man, and as his English is that of a foreigner it is clear that in his public addresses you get an inadequate idea of his talents or attainments. This remark applied to most of the Jewish ministers

in London. They were foreigners, and in speaking English did not succeed much better than we do when we attempt to speak German or French. Now two-thirds of the Jewish ministers are English.

Very far back in English history we find the people whose descendants have taken possession of Houndsditch and all around, and turned it into a Jewish colony. More or less they have always been with us. In Anglo-Saxon times we seem to have had a fair sprinkling of them. After the Conquest they arrived here in great numbers. By William Rufus they were especially favoured, and Henry I. conferred on them a charter of privileges. They were enabled to claim in courts of law the repayment of any money lent by them as easily as Christians, and while the latter were forbidden to charge any interest on their loans, there was no restriction in this respect put upon the Jews. At this time, doubtless, they laid the foundation of their subsequent wealth. The sovereign rather encouraged them, as the richer they were the more gold could be forced from them – and with our earlier as well as with many of our later kings, gold was a commodity always in request. During the former part of the reign of King John (a. d. 1199–1216) they seemed to have gained the favour of that monarch, or at any rate obtained permission to exist, and trade and worship in this country on sufferance. Subsequently, however, they appear to have suffered much persecution, and were eventually banished from the country in 1291 (19 Edward I.), continuing in exile for 367 years. Menasseh Ben Israel, a Jewish rabbi of great learning in Amsterdam, petitioned the Protector Cromwell, in the year 1649, on behalf of his brethren, for a liberty which the Latin Secretary of the Lord Protector it is to be hoped would be foremost to advocate. During the interval the Jews lived secretly in England, but did not possess any “Jewries,” or publicly organized congregations. Ultimately they obtained permission to return, though the Commonwealth refused to give any formal sanction to their re-appearance, merely tacitly consenting to it. The people of England, says Rebecca in “Ivanhoe,” “are a fierce people, quarrelling ever with their neighbours or among themselves, and ready to plunge the sword into the bowels of each other. Such is no safe abode for the children of my people. Ephraim is an heartless dove. Issachar an overburdened drudge, which stoops between two burdens. Not in a land of war and blood, surrounded by hostile neighbours and distracted by internal factions, can Israel hope to rest during his wanderings.” There is, however, reason to suppose that nowhere, except for a short interval in Spain and always in Holland, have the Jews fared better than in this country. In our time they have been allowed to take their seats as M.P’s. We have seen a Prime Minister of England of Jewish origin. Need we say more? Jews are in all respects on an equality with Christians; in art, and literature, and science, and the acquirement of wealth, they have displayed a genius equal to our own. In practical piety – in the benevolence which teaches the rich to give of their goods to the poor, they are infinitely our superiors.

Truly, if we may judge by the aspect of the Hebrew race in Houndsditch and its neighbourhood, there is much room for charity. Just as the Irish Corporations were accustomed a few years ago to land a cargo of “the finest pisantry under the sun” on the Welsh coast to beg or steal, work or die, according to circumstances, so the chiefs of the Jews on the Continent ship the poor and helpless of their people here, and a heavy tax is thus enforced on the wealthier portions of the community. Then, again, the Jews have a great dislike to military service; and the conscription which is imposed in Prussia, Austria, Poland, and France, drives large numbers away from the land of their birth. Thus their number in London is greater than people imagine. Dr. Stallard places it as 55,000, but many Jews inform me that 100,000 is nearer the mark. One thing is certain: as soon as a synagogue is opened anywhere it is immediately crowded; and on special occasions, such as the days of penitence, fifteen regular and eighteen or twenty temporary synagogues are opened in different parts of London. Most of the foreign Jews when they arrive here are wretchedly poor and ignorant, but under any circumstances the Jew has to fight the battle of life under circumstances of peculiar difficulty, in consequence of the Mosaic law, which he is bound to obey, and which he does at a very heavy pecuniary sacrifice. It is almost impossible for a Jew to work with a Christian. He may not partake of his food. He may not work on Friday evening or on any part of Saturday, nor on the days set apart for the observance of the

Jewish fasts and festivals. He is thus shut out from all employment in our factories, shipyards, engine works, or shops. If he seeks work at the docks he is driven away by the roughs. The “old clo” business is being gradually taken away from him by the Irish, so his chief industrial occupations are tailoring, cigar-making, fish and fruit selling. The women are employed in tailoring and shirts making, in the manufacture of umbrellas and parasols, caps and slippers; latterly the supply of cheap picture frames has got into the hands of the Jews. I fancy none of these trades are very lucrative, yet the Jew is rarely a thief, never a drunkard, always attached to his family, and remarkable for his longevity. Suicide is rare, and murder never met with among the Jews. There are not twenty-five male Jewish convicts in all England, and for many years there has not been a Jewess in any convict establishment. Such is the charity of the wealthy that the poorest, who have resided here six months, are looked after. No Jew ever is permitted to die in a workhouse. In many of our hospitals there are wards for the Jews, supported by them. The Jewish Board of Guardians inquire into every case of distress, and relieve it. Yet so economically do they go to work that their expenditure in 1869 was, including loans, not quite 5000*l.*, yet in that year the applications were 12,510.

But, in addition to their charities, the Jews are alive to the importance of promoting religion and education. The Jewish Association for the Diffusion of Religious Knowledge has now been in existence eleven years. Amongst its supporters are the Rothschilds, the Goldsmids, and the other wealthy Israelites whose charities are known all over England; but it needs, and let us add deserves, more efficient support. It has established a Sabbath school, where the present number of pupils is over 500, where instruction is given in reading, translation, and explanation of the Bible, translation of the prayers, religious and moral lessons, and Hebrew hymn-singing. It has established a synagogue in Union Hall, Artillery Lane, where lectures on the Sabbath are given. It has provided Scripture classes, and has published a series of Bible stories and Sabbath readings, of which half a million of copies have been delivered. The committee, when issuing the first number of their publications, stated that those papers would “have for their object to impress upon the Jewish mind proper notions of the principles and observances, spirit and mission, of Judaism, and by appeals to the reason rather than to sentiment, to develop and foster the most fervent conviction of the truths of our sacred religion.” In the way of Bible distribution the Society has especially been active; until recently it was comparatively a rare occurrence to find a Bible in the houses of the Jewish poor. Where it was found it was of course the authorized Anglican version, which, says the report, “however great its literary merit, must be admitted to be faulty, and to contain numerous mistranslations adverse to the spirit of our religion.” The version they circulated was Dr. Leeser’s, and they anticipate the day when no poor Jewish home wherein parent or child can read shall be without a Jewish version of the Holy Scriptures. Under the auspices of the committee, a reply to Bishop Colenso was published.

The children are educated in a way of which Christians have no idea. The Jewish free school in Brick Lane, with its three thousand children, is a sight to see. There is, besides, an infant school equally flourishing, and no poor Jew is relieved unless he sends his children to school. In the visiting of the sick, in the care of the poor, all take their share. I believe a synagogue is a little commonwealth in which the rich help the poor, most frequently by way of small loans, and in which the strong take care of the weak. In these works of beneficence all take their share, the humblest as well as those of more exalted rank. The Jewish M.P. takes his place at the Board of Guardians. The Jewish Countess will not only give of her wealth, but will leave her stately home and seek out the abode of sorrow and distress. Charity is inculcated in the Talmud as the first of duties; and, if heaven is won by good works, the Jews are safe and sure.

As a theology, to an outsider, Judaism seems ritualism *in excelsis*.

The Jewish faith is contained in the Creed and the Shemang. Of the two, the latter is the more important. It is a declaration of the unity of God, the first utterance of the child, the last of the devout Jew as the watchers stand by his bedside, at the head of which is the Shechinah, or Divine presence, and at the foot of which, with outstretched wing, waiting for the last breath, hovers the angel of death.

The Creed, which every Jew ought to believe and rehearse daily, but which they treat as Churchmen do their Thirty-nine Articles, is as follows: —

1. I believe, with a perfect faith, that God (blessed be His name!) is the Creator and Governor of all created beings, and that He alone has made, does make, and ever will make, every production.

2. I believe, with a perfect faith, that God (blessed be His name!) is one God, and that there is no unity whatever like unto Him, and that He alone is our God, who was, is, and will be eternally.

3. I believe, with a perfect faith, that the Creator (blessed be His name!) is not corporeal, nor is He subject to any of those changes that are incidental to matter, and that He has no similitude whatever.

4. I believe, with a perfect faith, that the Creator (blessed be His name!) is both the first and last of all things.

5. I believe, with a perfect faith, that to the Creator (blessed be His name!) yea, to Him only, it is proper to address our prayers, and that it is not proper to pray to any other being.

6. I believe, with a perfect faith, that all the words of the prophets are true.

7. I believe, with a perfect faith, that the prophecy of Moses our instructor (may his soul rest in peace!) was true, and that he excelled all the sages that preceded him or they who may succeed him.

8. I believe, with a perfect faith, that the law which we have now in our possession is the same law which was given to Moses by our instructor.

9. I believe, with a perfect faith, that this law will never be changed, that the Creator (blessed be His name!) will never give us any other law.

10. I believe, with a perfect faith, that the Creator (blessed be His name!) knoweth all the actions and thoughts of mankind, as it is said, “He fashioneth their hearts, and knoweth all their works.”

11. I believe, with a perfect faith, that the Creator (blessed be His name!) rewards those who observe His commandments, and punishes those who transgress them. (12.) The Jew believes in the coming of the Messiah; and (13), in the resurrection of the dead.

The Jews in London are divided into three communities – the Reformed, the *Ashkenasim*, or Polish and German Jews, and the *Sephardim*, or Portuguese and Spanish. These latter pride themselves on their ancient descent, and especially on their nationality. Their Church, as we have said, is the oldest in London; their rabbi is Dr. Artom, and their service differs from that of the *Ashkenasim* in matters of detail not of faith. Of course both take their stand upon the Pentateuch, which they term the Torah or law, a portion of which is read every Sabbath; but, according to the rabbinites, Moses received two laws on Mount Sinai, one written, the other unwritten. This latter was transmitted down from generation to generation by word of mouth until after the destruction of Jerusalem, when it was committed to writing. This work is called *Mishna*, or repetition. In process of time it became a text-book in the schools of Palestine and Babylon, and lectures were delivered on it and comments made by rabbis more or less learned and devout. In course of time these comments and lectures were collected together into one work under the title of *Gemara*, completion. The *Talmud*, which means doctrine, contains the two. There are two Talmuds in existence. One contains the decisions of the Palestine rabbis, collected and published somewhere in the fourth century; the other contains similar decisions on the part of the learned divines of Babylon. The difference between the two is exclusively in the *Gemara*. The Babylonian Talmud is the one in common use. It is for this Talmud, long too much neglected by Christians, that the Jews have contended for ages, and it is for this Talmud an able writer, in an article in the “Quarterly,” which produced an immense sensation at the time, eloquently pleaded, much to the astonishment, most undoubtedly, of those bigoted ecclesiastics who, deeming the traditions of the Romanist Fathers equal in authority with the Bible, look down upon the older and truer traditions of the Talmud with the contempt which ignorance always cherishes for what it cannot or does not understand. Sentiments, as the learned Professor Hurwitz wrote, worthy of Plato have been described as rabbinical reveries, and their authors arraigned of impiety on no better grounds than

what the detractors supplied by wantonly imposing their own literal sense on expressions evidently and unmistakably figurative.

In the synagogue is the worship daily or weekly of the devout Jew performed, for the aim of that worship is to connect itself with the daily life. Dr. Arnold's idea of the Church and State being synonymous – an idea as old as the judicious Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity – is undoubtedly in its origin Jewish. The officers of the synagogue are a complete political as well as religious administration. A synagogue forms a little world of its own. A volume would be requisite to tell of the officers of the synagogue and of their various duties. There is among them no separation into lay and secular. The community consists of three kinds of members – the Cohen or priest, the Levite, and the Israelite. A minister must often support himself, but his ministry never ceases. To the last hour of his life he maintains his ministerial character. “The rabbis are men of great learning; and now in the Jews' College the students,” writes a report just received, “have the advantage of a careful and systematic clerical education, and an equally valuable advantage, an example of piety and earnestness in their teachers.”

The oldest synagogue in London is, as we have said, that of the Sephardim, in Bevis Marks. Let us go there first. All Jewish synagogues are alike; all the men keep their hats on, and wear a scarf round their shoulders, hanging down to their knees. At one time, in another respect, they were much alike – that was in the use of a service not understood by the people generally. All this is altered now. Within the last thirty years there has been a great change for the better. There are but few even of the poorest Jews who do not understand Hebrew.

The governing officers of the synagogue are the Wardens, the Treasurer, the Overseer, and the Elders. The clerical officers are the Chazan, or reader, and the Shama, or second reader, and clerk. The ark is always situated in the south-east end of the synagogue, to direct the worshipper towards Jerusalem. The ark contains the law, written on vellum, fastened to rollers, on the tops of which are little crowns of silver surrounded by bells. The rolling and unrolling of the Law is a ceremony carefully observed every Sabbath. In form the Bevis Marks synagogue much resembles one of our old Nonconformist places of worship before they were improved according to the requirements of modern taste. You pass into it from behind some raised benches, on which several stout old gentlemen are gesticulating with all their might. A little further on is the reading desk, where the reader, with his hat on, his scarf round his shoulders, is performing his appointed task – at one time singly, at another time with the energetic assistance of the whole house. The readers wear black gowns. The faces of the reader and the rabbi are alike turned to the ark, before which a lamp perpetually burns. Of course there never are pews, but benches, under which are lockers, in each of which the worshipper deposits his scarf and prayer-book. In the synagogues of the *Ashkenasim* the benches nearest the ark, where the chief rabbi stands, are considered the most honourable; but the Spanish and Portuguese Jews make no difference in this respect. In the evening the synagogue is lighted up by means of large tapers and old-fashioned gas-chandeliers. In the service all join with more or less fervour. It consists entirely of reading and singing prayers and certain portions of Scripture. No sermon or lecture, except on Sabbaths and festivals, is necessary or usual. The melodies used are ancient, and the reading is of a very peculiar character, and not to be confounded with chanting or intoning as known to Christians. Most of the congregation in Bevis Marks seem to keep time with their bodies, as the sound rises and dies away. Also every other sentence begins with a woah-woah sound of a monotonous cast; but all seem to enjoy it, especially the little Hebrew lads, who make more noise than anybody else. Sometimes the people stand up, at other times they sit down – they never kneel; but the stranger realizes little solemnity while the service is performing, and many of the Jews are quite ready to enter into a little secular conversation, or, if need be – as we can testify from personal observation – to quarrel. The prayers are chiefly of a laudatory, a confiding, a grateful, reverent character, and in a style, as regards composition, indicative of a foreign origin. Indeed, all the time the service is performing – the principal one is on the Saturday morning, and very long – you feel as if you were a

stranger, as if you had no business there; that to the hook-nosed, black-haired, dark-eyed men around, you are a poor pale-faced, flat-nosed Saxon, to be preyed on and victimized to any extent. Here and there you see a foreigner in the picturesque garb of the East, looking sad and solitary as if he really remembered Zion, as if he had walked along the shores of Galilee, rested beneath the shade of the cedars of Lebanon, or had drank of

“Siloa’s brook,
That flowed fast by the oracle of God.”

Occasionally a Jew will rush in, seize a prayer-book, and, shutting his eyes, gabble on at a prodigious rate as if he had started late and had to make up for lost time, and his repeated bowing to all points of the compass is, to the spectator, of a very perplexing character. In this quarter the Jews, as regards appearance, are not very wealthy, nor have many of them very clean hands, nor, except on certain occasions, are the synagogues very well filled. Here you fail to recognise the swell Jews of Margate and Ramsgate, of Brighton and the Boulevards, the fact being that the rich Jews, like the rich Christians, have gone further west; yet the Montefiores belong to Bevis Marks, and the Rothschilds to the great congregation in Duke’s Place. Such are the London synagogues, including, in addition to those we have already referred to, those in Fenchurch Street, St. Alban’s Place, Maiden Lane, Cutler Street, Islington, Portland Street, Bayswater, and others. But the reader will ask, What of the ladies? – most of our churches and chapels would look intolerably destitute without them. The answer is, all the duties of their worship depend entirely on the males. The Jewesses are allowed to sit in a gallery. At Bevis Marks you see they are there, that is all. Whether they are white or black, whether they listen or not, it is impossible to tell, as they are concealed behind a lattice-work almost as impervious to male eyes as those behind which, on the night of a debate, our House of Commons hides our British fair. In other synagogues their gallery is open, and they can see and be seen.

Even these ancient people are moving with the times. The *Jewish Record* says, “That the Synod of Jewish Rabbis, which has just been held, has recognised three new principles. 1. Individual authority in religious matters. 2. The primary importance of free scientific investigation. 3. The rejection of the belief in Jewish restoration. The Synod also recommends choral services and the use of the organ in the synagogue, and musical performances on Sabbaths and festivals.” This paragraph is not exactly correct. The Synod was one of little importance, and the principles enunciated were not affirmed, only discussed; but I quote it as an indication of the spirit existing in our day in all the religious circles of our land.

CHAPTER III. the reformed jews

Sappho, implies Mr. Pope, at her “toilette’s greasy task,” is quite a different individual to “Sappho fragrant at an evening mask.” Just as much does the Jew of the West-end, the Jew of society, rich and cultivated, the Jew who gives good dinners, drives in a faultless brougham, on whose fingers diamonds sparkle, differ from the Houndsditch Jew, toiling along painfully under a load of ol’ clo’ considerably the worse for wear, or smoking bad cigars in the Effingham Saloon. In the same way do the synagogues of the West differ from those of the East. In place of that in Portland Street, the Jews have erected a gorgeous one, towards which the Rothschild family have subscribed 4000*l*. Those in the Haymarket and at Bayswater and Islington are clean and comfortable, and that in Margaret Street is especially so.

On Saturdays service commences there at ten and terminates at one. Let us go there. As you enter, of course you face the ark. On each side benches, well cushioned, are placed. On the right of the ark is a pulpit. In the middle is the raised platform for the readers and the rabbi, the Rev. Mr. Marks. There is a gallery facing the pulpit, in which is an organ, an innovation of which the orthodox do not approve, as it implies Sabbath labour, and there is another innovation I dare say equally shocking. Actually in the side galleries appropriated to ladies you can see them. People of an uncharitable turn often insinuate that so many young men attend at such or such a church that they may see the ladies. I don’t think the fact that you can see them in Margaret Street Synagogue adds materially to the male congregation. Yet Hebrew maidens, some of them, have been and are beautiful as any whose names have come echoing down to us along “the corridors of time.” However, if the Christian stranger should let his eyes wander thitherward he is to be forgiven. Hebrew is a difficult tongue to follow if you are ignorant of it, and, save where there is no singing, which is very fine, the reading of the prayers is not very impressive. Nor do the gentlemen around, all wearing black hats and silk scarfs over the coat, appear to be much impressed. They sit with their prayer-books in their hands, in appearance as calm and unmoved as real West-end Christians of unquestioned respectability. At a certain interval the ark is unlocked, the roll of the law is taken reverently to the platform, where it is uplifted on all sides that all may see it, and then, when the reader has finished, it is borne back and deposited in the ark as formally and reverently as it was taken out. After a little while, as you begin to weary, one of the individuals on the platform leaves it. He wears a black gown and bands, he ascends the pulpit and preaches with his hat on; that is the Rev. Mr. Marks. He is thought much of by the younger and more educated Jews. As a preacher, much is to be said in his favour: he is short, he delivers himself well, his style of address is popular, and he gives many an Old Testament lesson. He demands of Abraham’s descendants Abraham’s faith in God, and obedience to Him. The Christian, of course, misses much. We worship a Messiah who has come; the Jews still, with sad and weary eyes, look onward, waiting His advent. Wherever civilization and science go hand in hand, wherever humanity reaps “the long results of time,” whether in the old world or the new, wherever the great Caucasian race multiplies and nourishes, there, more or less, is there a living faith in the mission of Christ as a Divine teacher, as the comforter of human sorrow, as the healer of human woe, as the model for all to follow who aspire upwards to heaven and to God. In Europe there are 280 millions of Christians, and but very few of Jews. Everywhere they are an immense minority.

“The cedars wave on Lebanon,
But Judah’s statelier maids are gone.”

The Jews are not a proselyting people, but they are becoming increasingly anxious that the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob should not forsake the God of their fathers; and about thirty years ago certain of the London Jews agitated for a reformed mode of worship, as they deemed, more in accordance with the circumstances of their brethren in this age and clime. They argued that there is much that is local in the Jewish ritual, and much that is inapplicable now; that the people in consequence would fall away unless a reformed mode of worship was introduced. I do not think the Reformers have made as much progress as they anticipated, though to a stranger they certainly appear to have not merely modified, but improved the service. The Prayer-book was carefully revised, an improved ritual was drawn up by blending the beautiful portions of the Portuguese and German Liturgies, a choir was formed for the purpose of inspiring devotional feeling by means of solemn song. In the old orthodox synagogues the custom of calling up persons to read the law for the sake of presenting their offerings during divine service, often interferes with the edification of the assembly, according to the Jewish reformers, and this also they omit. Furthermore, they decline to recognise as sacred, days which are evidently not ordained as such in Scripture. It must be remembered the Jew of the Restoration is much more of a formalist than the Jew of David's and Solomon's time, that the rabbis returned after the captivity laden with Babylonian learning, and that a new school arose. In his sermon on the opening of his new place of worship in 1842, Mr. Marks said, on behalf of himself and people, "We must as our conviction urges us solemnly deny that a belief in the *divinity* of the traditions contained in the Mishna and the Jerusalem Talmuds is of equal obligation to the Israelite with the faith in the divinity of the law of Moses. We know that these books are human compositions, and though we are content to accept with reverence from our past Biblical ancestors advice and instruction, we cannot unconditionally accept their laws." "On all hands," continued Mr. Marks, "it is conceded that an absolute necessity exists for the modification of our worship, but no sooner is any important improvement proposed than we are assured of the sad fact that there is not at present any authority competent to judge in such matters for the whole house of Israel. Now, admitting this as a truth (since the extinction of the right of ordination has rendered impossible the convocation of a Sanhedrim, whose authority shall extend over all Jewish congregations), does it not follow as a necessity that every Hebrew congregation must be authorized to take such measures as shall bring the divine service into consonance with the will of the Almighty, as explained to us in the law and the prophets?" To the force of this reasoning the Jews as a body remain impervious, and though time has mitigated the angry feeling which the Reformers created, as Reformers always do, and no longer do the chief men of the orthodox Jews issue warnings against the Reformers, who from the first professed their love to the old synagogues and their desire to continue connected with them in works of charity, yet the new community is by no means cordially received and sanctioned by the old. Nor can we expect it to be otherwise. The more men have in common, the smaller is the difference between them, the more, often, is the ill-will with which they regard each other. The eye of the true theologian is of a wonderfully magnifying character. As he looks, a little rivulet expands into an impassable gulf, and a molehill becomes a mountain. What bitter things have been said, what fierce passions have been aroused, what martyrs have had to die and survivors to weep, because of what seemed to cool observers trifles light as air!

Yet, after all, there is a danger. If rationalist principles prevail, and the Old Testament be a series of myths or allegories, why still retain the ritualist law in all its strictness? and if that goes the whole system goes. Pious Jews find all society against them; its spirit, its customs, its literature, all hostile, if not to their nation, at any rate to their faith. In too many cases they perceive that those who forsake the religion of their forefathers are but little the better for doing so. They find that those who begin by laughing at rabbinical absurdities end by despising the Word of God. A Hebrew infidel, an infidel among the Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption and the glory and the covenants, writes a Jewish author already quoted, "is indeed a frightful and portentous phenomenon," and thus the more sensitive and conservative amongst them shrink from in any way modifying their ritual

in accordance with what is termed the spirit of the age. Christians have no idea of the earnestness of spirit, of the striving after conformity to the law of God, of the devout Jew, or of the great and grand truths which he extracts from observances or forms in which they can see no meaning. The Jew is fond of pleasure, fond of show, fond of jewellery and gorgeous dress, and on his Sabbath rarely exhibits a very devout appearance; nevertheless his religion requires daily observances from his birth upwards, which can only be carried out by means of a living faith. In the first place his religion is an expensive one, and he must pay in various ways very heavily for its support. It is true many of the observances required have become obsolete, but on the Sabbath he has much to go through at home, as well as to attend at the synagogue and to abstain from all worldly occupations. After the third day of the month every strict Jew either alone or with a number of his co-religionists must make the salutation of the moon. Then every month has certain days to be kept, especially in October, their new year, on the first and second days. It is believed that the destiny of every individual is determined on this month by the Creator Himself; that those whose demerits preponderate are sealed to death, those whose merits preponderate to life, and those whose merits and demerits are equal are delayed until the day of atonement. The first ten days of their new year are ten days of repentance, during which the Israelites are to repent and confess their sins, pray to the Almighty to write them down in the book of life, and grant them a happy new year. On the seventh day every one has a branch of willow procured under the superintendence of the officers of the synagogue, and all repair there with branches in their hands. The last of these days is the Day of Atonement, and is religiously kept by every Jew. On the 15th is the Feast of Tabernacles, on which the Jews are expected to live in booths, but in this country the rule is not strictly observed. In April is the most important of all the festivals – that of the Passover and of unleavened bread, when the doors of the house are left open for all, even the very poorest of the poor. In June is held the feast of Pentecost, to commemorate the giving of the law. The synagogues on that occasion are decorated with flowers, and in their houses the tables and floors are also dressed with flowers, sweet briar, and other fragrant herbs. A conscientious Jew must have a life of intense labour and self-denial, nor can he evade his duties nor impose them on another. How welcome to them of old must have been the Master's kindly words, "Come unto Me all ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, and ye shall find peace unto your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." To appreciate these words aright you must fancy yourself a Jew, weighed down to the earth by the daily routine of painful ceremonial and the rigid requirements of inelastic law.

CHAPTER IV. the greek church

In the dark ages of Christianity, when the zeal and purity of the early professors and martyrs of the new creed had died away; when Constantine, anxious to fix his throne on a permanent basis, entered into an alliance with priests and bishops, not satisfied with the humble position assigned them in the Church, only by courtesy at that time to be called Apostolical; there was a revival of an old abuse, or rather, of a Pagan principle – the alliance of Church and State. Dr. Arnold, the truest Churchman in modern times, believed that the national conversions to Christianity, which then became the fashion, were productive of immense evil. This is the opinion long held by Dissenters, and latterly by an increasing number of independent inquirers. If so, Constantine was an arch-heretic; for surely, when Christ had taught that His kingdom was not of this world, it was heresy to disbelieve it, and, in the very teeth of such a declaration, to introduce an ecclesiastical system founded upon compulsion, ignoring altogether the Divine power of Christianity, and assuming that it could only be maintained by the sword and pay of the State.

Constantine's empire has vanished, but his Church remains; and it speaks to us, as Dean Stanley says, in the only living voice which has come down to us from the Apostolic Church: the State Churches of Europe, including even the pretentious one at Rome, are but its children. It is the pattern and model for them all. Greek was the original tongue of the early Christians. It was at Antioch, a Greek city, the birthplace of Ignatius, of Chrysostom, of John of Damascus, that they were first called by the name which now denotes the noblest form of human development. In the Old World or the New, the Councils to which Churchmen in all ages have referred, as of equal, or almost of equal, authority with the Bible, were Eastern. In them the Pope of Rome was considered but as a Bishop in the midst of his equals. The great fathers of the Church wrote in Greek. Dean Stanley says, the earliest fathers of the Western Church, Clemens, Irenæus, Hermas, Hippolytus, did the same. St. Mark first preached his Gospel at Alexandria. St. John established a school at Ephesus, and Polycarp at Smyrna. The very word theology, as Dean Stanley remarks, arose from the peculiar questions agitated in the East. If there be such a thing as apostolical succession, the Greek Church has it. To this day, the English Church owes much to the East; the direction for holding of Easter is of Alexandrian origin, and on every Sunday, in the "Kyrie Eleison," the "Gloria in Excelsis," in part of the "Te Deum," and the prayer of St. Chrysostom, English Churchmen borrow from the service of the Church of Constantine. In Queen Elizabeth's time it was enacted that the Councils of Nicæa, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon were equally judges of heresy as the High Court of Parliament with the assent of the English clergy in their Convocation. No wonder, in these days, when Churchmen are prone to rely on Church claims rather than on Bible teaching – when, of little faith, and timid as to the future, they trust rather to hazy traditions than to living truths – no wonder the Greek Church has become to them an object of special reverence; that they long to form a union with it. Though proud of its superiority, it regards them as little better than Roman Catholics – Roman Catholics as a Greek once said to the writer, without the Pope.

The oldest creed we have is Greek. The pious forgeries of our Church historians are enough to make a candid inquirer a thorough sceptic as to all they say; but we may still give some credit to Eusebius of Cæsarea, the father of ecclesiastical history. He tells us he read his creed before the Council of Nicæa. It was the same, he said, that he had learnt in his childhood from his predecessors, during the time that he was a catechumen, and at his baptism; and which he had taught for many years as a presbyter and bishop. It had been approved of by the Emperor Constantine, and would have been carried had not there appeared a probability of its being accepted by Arius and his partisans – a consummation which, in the opinion of the majority, would have had a disastrous effect, would have

promoted union, would have saved many from the sin of schism, would have allowed the energies of the Church to have been directed to the conversion of the world rather than to internal squabbles, would have relieved Constantine from the stain and guilt and shame of having recourse to the sword to repress religious opinion. The Council of Nicæa cared for none of these things; all they wanted was victory, and so the earliest Christian creed was rejected by the Church. It was as follows: —

“I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things, both visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, God of God, Light of Light, Life of Life, the only begotten Son, the Firstborn of every creature, begotten of the Father before all worlds, by whom also all things were made; Who, for our salvation, was incarnate, and lived amongst men, and suffered and rose again on the third day, and ascended to the Father; and shall come in glory to judge the quick and the dead; and I believe in one Holy Ghost. Believing each of them to be, and to have existed, the Father only, only the Father and the Son, only the Son and the Holy Ghost, only the Holy Ghost.”

Instead of this, but on it, the Nicene Creed was framed, and this creed is still the bond of union in all the Churches of the East. We have corrupted it, and as Dean Stanley remarks, “every time we recite the creed in its present altered form, we have departed from the intention of the fathers of Nicæa, and incurred deprecation and excommunication at the hands of the fathers of Ephesus.” In the heart of London the Greeks have a place of worship. You feel interested as you enter. In the tongue in which you hear the Gospel there read, the Gospel was first proclaimed. Peter, Paul, John, spoke just such language as that you hear. Ever since the Master left the earth has Sunday after Sunday, and year after year, this Greek Church met in Syria in remembrance of Him. In many things the Church of Constantine was less assuming than that of Henry VIII. and Queen Elizabeth. Where in our Prayer-book we have, “I absolve thee,” the Greeks say, “The Lord absolve thee.” Where the English Church says, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost,” the Greek more humbly and Scripturally offers up a prayer for the Divine blessing. In other ways also they differ: they have no organs; the congregation stands all the time of service; their baptism consists of three immersions, and laying on of hands; they administer extreme unction, offer prayers for the dead, and allow infant communion; they have no organized hierarchy; their clergy are married, and their laity have a considerable amount of power. They pride themselves on their orthodoxy, and are very bitter against the doctrine of the double procession — that is, that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.

And now let us go to London Wall, of which the Pope, or head, is the Rev. Narcissus Morphinos, a gentleman really courteous and sincere, and indefatigable in the performance of his sacred duties. Of all the chapels in London, surely this in London Wall is the most unique. As we enter we face a recess, before which lamps are burning; in that recess is a crucifix with a lamp burning over it. In this recess is a door which is partly open, and between the door and the crucifix officiates the priest at a small table. He wears a very rich cassock, and occasionally has on his head a primitive-looking sort of hat, without a brim, and very big. I fancy there are no poor Greeks in London. On our right is a recess, in which are ladies elegantly dressed. On our left is a pulpit very rarely used, and a table at which two clerks are seated. They seem to have the performance of the service very much to themselves. There is a choir in one of the side galleries. In his recess, before the altar, the priest is engaged in praying and taking the sacrament; but every now and then he comes out. A side door opens, and a lad in a white surplice, holding an enormous lighted taper, appears. Then the priest comes from the altar, and stands on the steps. It may be to swing the censer, or to bring out the Gospels bound in silver, which almost all present come forward to kiss; or it may be, in the course of the service, some one wishes to communicate. Then, while the clerks are reading, the doors of the altar are opened, and the priest appears with a cup in his hand, which the communicant comes forward to receive. (The cup, it must be observed, contains bread and wine.) Again the priest comes forward with the crucifix, to which all

bow; and last of all he comes forward and says a few simple words of edification to his faithful flock, in number, I should fancy, from two to three hundred. And this reminds us we have not yet stated where they are. Well, they are exactly opposite the altar, before which there is a vacant space well carpeted, and into which, on one or two occasions in the course of the service, the priest descends. The seats are beautifully carved, and are something like those in our cathedral stalls. Each worshipper is well fenced in by himself; and, as he stands all the time, he will find the sides very convenient for resting his arms on. Each seat is beautifully finished, as the reader can well imagine when he is told that the carving of each seat cost about eight pounds about fifteen years ago, when the chapel was first opened. There are no sittings appropriated to particular individuals, any person coming takes the first he finds vacant. All expenses are paid by the men, chiefly merchants in Finsbury Square, who subscribe on an average for the cost of the service about twenty-five pounds a year. Two gentlemen contributed eighty, and one as much as two hundred pounds, a year. The annual income of the church is stated to be 1660*l.*, and of this 50*l.* or 60*l.* has to be paid to an English church over the way – a grievance which the Greeks, as well they may, feel deeply. There is another Greek church in London, that of the Russian Embassy, – that of course being much smaller. It cannot, I should fancy, surpass in neatness and finish this in London Wall. The Greek Church, Dean Stanley tells us, has always been unfriendly to the arts. You would not think so; the building seems just what it should be – handsome, ecclesiastical in appearance, and yet plain. On the screen, behind which is the altar, are paintings of the “Last Supper,” “The Virgin and her Child,” and a few others, intended to denote to the eye of the worshipper the great fact the worship has to commemorate. Pictures are used but as symbols, as even words themselves are, of ideas needed for human salvation.

The Greek Church protests against anything in the way of doctrine not found in the Bible. Surely it cannot claim the same sanction for its rites and ceremonies. As each worshipper entered he made the sign of the cross on his forehead and his shoulders and breast. This ceremony was repeated several times in the course of the service, the priest on more than one occasion doing the same; indeed, this seems to be the only way in which the laity join in the service. They utter no responses, they declare with one voice no creed, they raise no sacred chant or song; otherwise, they stand as it were motionless and apart; everything is done for them by the officiating priest. He comes between them and God. They speak through him and by him; without him they cannot worship the Father in heaven. Such is the theory of worship current in the Greek Church. Thus was it when the Imperial purple was worn by Constantine fifteen hundred years ago; thus it is in the reign of Queen Victoria, thus it will be, we may predict, for the Greek Church is jealous of every iota of its creed, *in secula seculorum*.

Well does a living writer remark, “Such as the Greek Church became on the extinction of Paganism, such, or nearly such, she seems to be now. Her missionary work has been narrow, her moral influence and control at home small, and though she has preserved a rigid continuity of doctrinal form, the principle of an ever-expanding and all-absorbing vitality has been wanting; in great cities her prelates have too frequently been the slaves of wealth and power, of courtly intrigue and political faction; in the desert her monks have become dreamy and unpractical anchorites. No lands reclaimed, no centres of agriculture and civilization created, no literature preserved, no schools founded, no human beings raised to a higher sphere of social action and duty, are to be set down to the account of the Greek Church. She is a fragment of old Byzantine civilization, as rigid and angular as the mosaics that still adorn and seem to frown down from the walls of her churches.”

CHAPTER V. the roman catholics

If we may quote the Eastern Church, the Roman Catholic Church is the greatest heresy of modern times. In the Encyclic Epistle of the Eastern Patriarchs, the Papal system is referred to as “the chief heresy of the latter days, which flourishes now, as its predecessor, Arianism, flourished before it in the earlier ages, and which, like Arianism, shall in like manner be cast down and vanish away.” “I die in the faith of the Catholic Church before the disunion of East and West,” were the last words of Bishop Ken. Under the Stuarts, in solemn conclave the Anglicans accused the Romanists of idolatry. In the opinion, then, of the oldest Church, the only Church with an indisputable apostolical succession, and in the opinion of some of England’s greatest Churchmen, the Church of Rome is an heretical one. Such is the conclusion to which also we are driven by the very slightest historical inquiry. Lady Herbert wonders that an Anglican Churchman can go to Jerusalem and not become a Romanist. Why, as the priest takes you from one sacred station to another, shows you where the Saviour fainted beneath the load of the cross, where Saint Veronica wiped His face with her handkerchief, where the print of the Saviour’s foot yet remains, – when we all know that the Jerusalem of the Saviour’s time is some eighty feet below the surface, and that all these assertions are absolutely false, you feel indignant, and, if you have the smallest iota of intellect left, after listening to the priestly legends, return a considerably sounder Protestant than you went. In like manner, history leads you to a similar conclusion as to the Roman Church. History, with an impartial pen, tells us how the Roman heresy sprang up, and grew, and reigned in every land. History robs Romanism of all its terror and of all its power. We see it, with plain, unblinded eyes, to be a heresy gradually enlarging its claims in accordance with the increasing ambition of its prelates, and the increasing credulity of its devotees. Gradually, as the memory of apostolic teaching and preaching passed away, the Church of Rome, after the fall of Jerusalem, continued to advance among the western Churches certain vague assertions of authority. In proportion as its clergy asserted their claims, other changes of an unscriptural character were made. First of all, the doctrine of baptismal regeneration was asserted; then a mysterious veneration began to attach itself to the celebration of the Lord’s Supper; the sign of the cross was held to be vital to the expulsion of the devil; and prayers for the dead became common. A great step was gained when the doctrine of the celibacy of the clergy was enforced; when Gregory the Great, as the Romanists may well call him, inculcated purgatory, and pilgrimage to holy places; instituted the Canon of the Mass, and added splendour to the ceremonies of the Church, and claimed the power of the keys for the successors of St. Peter. On the foundation thus raised it was easy to base the most astounding claims; whether you are asked to believe that the Church of Loretto flew through the air from Syria to Italy, or, as in our time, the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius, and the immaculate conception of the Virgin. After a certain point gained, the rest is sure to follow. Give up the Bible, believe in the priest, and the Roman heresy is the natural result.

In the Catholic Directory I find the statistics of Romanism as it exists in London. The province of Westminster, established by his Holiness Pope Pius IX. (Bishop of Rome, Vicar of Jesus Christ, Successor of the Prince of the Apostles, Supreme Pontiff of the Universal Church, – such are a few of the titles he assumes), Sept. 29, 1850, comprises the diocese of Westminster, with twelve suffragan dioceses. Westminster comprises Essex, Hertfordshire, and Middlesex, with, for Archbishop and Metropolitan, the Rev. Edward Henry Manning, elected and consecrated in 1865. In London also there is another Church dignitary, the Rev. Thomas Grant, Bishop of Southwark, elected and consecrated in 1851. The patron saints of the diocese of Westminster are “our blessed Lady, conceived without sin; St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles; St. Edward, King and Confessor.” In addition to the Virgin in Southwark, the patron saints are St. Thomas of Canterbury and St. Augustine. The

ecclesiastical statistics of Westminster diocese are, priests – secular, regular, oratorians, oblates of St. Charles, and unattached, 221; public churches, chapels, and stations, 123; and the average attendance at the four schools of the diocese was, for 1866–67, 12,056. Of course this includes more than the London district; but then in Southwark diocese I find St. George’s Cathedral, and, besides, about thirty chapels or stations; and of the 160 priests in the diocese, we may reasonably conclude that a fourth are engaged in London and its suburbs. Last year thirty-eight secular clergy were ordained for England. Of these, thirteen were for the dioceses of Westminster and Southwark.

A correspondent of the *Weekly Register*, writing to show the increase of Catholicism in London during the last thirty years, points out that in 1839 there were in the metropolis and the suburbs the following Catholic churches: – St. Mary’s, Moorfields; St. Mary’s, Chelsea; the French Chapel, King Street, Portman Square; the Chapel of the Benedictine Convent at Hammersmith (now removed to Teignmouth, Devonshire); St. Mary’s, Kensington; St. Anselm’s, Lincoln’s Inn Fields; St. Patrick’s, Soho; St. Aloysius, Somers Town; St. James’s, Spanish Place, Manchester Square; and the Assumption, Warwick Street, Golden Square; in all ten churches or chapels. There are now, in addition to the above, St. Mary and the Angels, Bayswater; the new church at Bow; the Oratory, Brompton; St. Bridget, Baldwin’s Gardens; St. Joseph, Bunhill Row; the Servite Fathers, Chelsea; St. Peter’s, Clerkenwell; SS. Mary and Michael, Commercial Road; the Immaculate Conception, Farm Street; St. Thomas, Fulham; the German Church, Whitechapel; the church built by Sir George Bowyer, in Great Ormond Street; St. John the Baptist, Hackney; Holy Trinity, Brook Green; Nazareth House, Hammersmith; the chapel at Hampstead; the Dominicans’ Church, Haverstock Hill; the Passionist Church, Highgate; the Augustinians’ Church, Hoxton; the Sacred Heart, Holloway; St. John the Evangelist, Islington; the Italian Church, Hatton Wall; the Carmelite Church, Kensington; the church in Kentish Town; the church at Kilburn; Our Lady and St. Joseph, Kingsland; the new French Church, Leicester Square; the Rosary, Marylebone Road; St. Francis, Notting Hill; St. Charles, Ogle Street; the Polish Chapel, Gower Street; St. Mary’s, Poplar; the Holy Family, Saffron Hill; St. Anne’s, Spitalfields; Our Lady’s, St John’s Wood; St. Vincent de Paul, Stratford; the English Martyrs, Tower Hill; Our Lady of Grace, Turnham Green; St. Mary’s, Horseferry Road, Westminster; and SS. Peter and Edward, Palace Street, Westminster – in all forty churches or chapels in thirty years (without counting many private chapels or convents, &c.), or fifty chapels, where thirty years ago there were but ten. And it should be borne in mind that of the new churches many, such as the Oratory, Commercial Road, Farm Street, Islington, the Italian Church, Bayswater, Brook Green, St. John’s Wood, and others, are of a size and beauty which thirty years ago would have been deemed a folly even to hope for. There are now as many masses said at the Oratory, Bayswater, and Farm Street, as thirty years ago there were in all the chapels in London, so great has been the increase of priests in London since 1839. On the south side of the water, in the diocese of Southwark, the change for the better is even more manifest than in that of Westminster; but, the congregation being poorer, the churches are also smaller. In what is now the diocese of Westminster, there were, in 1839 (writes the same correspondent), about seventy priests, and of these but two were regulars – Jesuits – who lived almost as private individuals in the Marylebone Road. There are now a hundred and thirty secular priests – fifteen Oratorians, sixteen Oblates of St. Charles, sixteen Jesuits, ten Marist Fathers, seven Oblates of Mary, six Carmelites, six Dominican Fathers (besides as many more not yet ordained), six Passionists (in addition to ten or twelve not yet ordained), five Servite Fathers, five Fathers of the Society of Missions (Italians), five Augustinians, two Franciscans, and three Fathers of Charity – in all, between regulars, seculars, and priests not attached to any particular mission, there are two hundred and forty-one priests in this diocese. Of convents for women there were in 1839 two within what is now the diocese of Westminster; there are at present thirty-eight.

In calculating the amount of Roman Catholic influence and activity, we must remember that in their churches and chapels service is always being performed; and that thus one Romanist place of worship for all practical purposes may often be considered as equivalent to a dozen Protestant

places, especially where the incumbents are of the class of old-fashioned clergymen who have a relish for port and what used to be considered a gentlemanly religion. For instance, let us see what is the round of services at the cathedral, Blomfield Street, Moorfields. On Sundays and holidays there is mass at seven, eight, nine, ten, and high mass at eleven. At three there is catechism, at four baptism, and on Wednesdays and Fridays at eleven a. m.; vespers, sermon, and benediction at seven. On week-days mass is performed at half-past seven, eight, and ten. On Thursday, rosary, sermon, and benediction at eight; on the other evenings of the week rosary and night prayers at that hour. On the first Friday of the month there is sermon and benediction in honour of the Sacred Heart; on the second Friday of the month the Way of the Cross. There are the confessions, sometimes twice a day; and the Confraternities of the Blessed Sacrament, of the Sacred Heart, of Holy Angels for Children. Then there are the Societies, such as the Holy Family Total Abstinence Society, Holy Family Provident Society, Benevolent Society for the Relief of the Aged and Infirm Poor, and the Night Refuge for Homeless Women of Good Character. Nor is this the only way in which Roman Catholic influence is felt in this district. On good works the Roman Church has ever laid great stress, and thus we find from the centre in Blomfield Street the priests have specially assigned to them Newgate Prison, Old Bailey; Debtors' Prison, Lower Whitecross Street; St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Metropolitan Free Hospital, Royal London Ophthalmic Hospital, – an amount of exertion incompatible with spiritual ease and worldly enjoyment. I mention this to show that you are not to judge by what you see; attendance at any particular time is no criterion as to the state of the Catholic community. You may depend upon it that it is always much stronger than it seems. Those present are but a tithe of the Romanists in any particular locality, and the admirable organization of their priests peculiarly fits them for aggressive purposes. I believe they are most successful in the low neighbourhoods, in the guilt gardens, in which a great metropolis like ours abounds. Their charities in London are very extensive. There is a Catholic Poor School Committee, a Westminster Diocesan Education Fund, an Aged Poor Society, an Association for the Propagation of the Faith, a Society of St. Anselm, for the Diffusion of Good Books. The Associated Catholic Charities, for educating and apprenticing the children of poor Catholics, have six schools in London. The Immaculate Conception Charity assists the clergy in providing for children whose faith or morals are exposed to imminent danger through the death or helplessness of their parents. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul, whose chief object is visiting poor families at their own homes, has sixteen branches in London, besides a large Orphanage, at this time containing eighty boys, and a Catholic Shoeblack Brigade. The Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul have an establishment in Westminster. The oldest Roman Catholic charitable institution is the Benevolent Society for the Relief of the Aged and Infirm Poor, founded in the year 1761. During the six winters the Providence Row Night Refuge for Homeless Women and Children has been in existence, 92,194 nights' lodgings, with suppers and breakfasts, have been given gratuitously. The only condition requisite for admission is that the applicant be homeless and without food and money. Such are the charities in London of the Roman Church.

As regards the pulpit, the Romanists are not wise in their generation. In London, where oratory can do so much, they fail to provide themselves with a grand and effective preacher. They have no Father Hyacinthe in London. Surely Italy might have sent us a Roman Catholic Gavazzi. Ireland supplies us with orators in abundance, but where are her eloquent priests? Cardinal Wiseman was florid and heavy. Archbishop Manning is more than sixty years old; and oratory, unlike wine, does not improve with age. His position, his talents, his zeal, incline you to hear him with respect, nothing more. As I have listened in some of the fine old cathedrals of the Continent to fiery priests, thundering away to crowded and attentive audiences, it has often occurred to me that it is just as well we have no such preachers in London to bring the Roman Catholic Church into fashion; to make it the sensation of the hour; to do for it what Irving did for Presbyterianism when he drew around him to the Scotch Church in Hatton Garden all the beauty, the fashion, the genius, the intellect of his day.

The ordinary public service of a Roman Catholic Church requires little description; nor do you see it here as you do, for instance, in the magnificent cathedral of Antwerp, where, in the dim dusk of an autumn eve, while a flood of music floats down from the choir, and the gorgeous priests, with tapers and incense and costly banners, are sweeping, dimly seen, along the fretted aisles, the writer has often felt there is a strange, weird effect produced, which, here you can never dream of. All is poor, something like a theatre by daylight, or a fancy ball when the delusions of gas have been dispelled by the too candid and impartial rays of the sun. There are the tapers and the usual processions, the vestments of various colours, and the music ever flowing, while at the altar end the priests are bowing and kneeling and scattering incense, and performing the service of the mass. If you have to listen to a sermon, it will not be a long one; and if you be a Protestant, it will strike you as verbose in style and un-English in tone. Nearest to the altar will be the upper ten thousand, who come in broughams, and have fashionable aspirations. At the other end will be the very poor, such poor as you see nowhere else, scarcely educated enough to count, as they do on their knees, their beads, and certainly not competent to intelligent appreciation of the service. Of course the people kneel to the altar and cross themselves as they come in, and join in the worship with an appearance of piety (I mean the elder ones – young ladies who have eyes will use them, whether they be saints or sinners), which is pretty well for such an undemonstrative people as ourselves, but is nothing to that of the Moslem, who plumps on his knees, regardless of all, exclaiming *Allah hû akbar!* as the Muezzin calls to prayer.

On the Continent it fares ill with the Papacy. In France – in Italy – in Austria – even in Spain it has lost its power. Its chief strength at this time seems to consist in the sayings and doings of an increasing section of the Church of England. It appears there is a society actually in existence to form a union with Rome, and Mr. Malet, the Vicar of Ardley, in Hertfordshire, was lately sent on such a mission. As to the idea of Christian union no one can find fault with that. It is lamentable that the Christian Church should be divided into sections that turn against each other the energies that should be devoted to the destruction of a common foe. That all should be brethren in Christ who believe in Him and lead a Christian life, is manifest, the common reader will say, in his desire after Christian unity. Mr. Malet comes then, of course, to all Christians, of whatever sect or denomination, and holds out to them the hand of fellowship? Alas! no; he does nothing of the kind. First of all he tells us he will not call himself a Protestant, then he dresses himself like a monk, and has his friends to call him “Brother Michael.” He then gets letters from the Archbishop of Canterbury and Dr. Manning, and goes to Rome humbly to ask the Pope to recognise the Church of England. Of course, at Rome, he is favourably received, and is delighted with all he saw, and seems to have swallowed all he heard, not even excepting the most monstrous fable or the absurdest legend. From Rome Brother Michael finds his way to Jerusalem – that Jerusalem that crucified the Lord of life, that stoned the prophets, that persecuted and slew the teachers and apostles and converts of early times – that Jerusalem where there is more downright lying in the name of God, and under the plea of religion, if it be possible, than in Rome itself – that Jerusalem where the rival monks to-morrow would cut each others’ throats if the Turkish soldiers did not keep them quiet; – and then to the Greeks and Roman monks he offers a similar request; and “the aged pilgrim,” as he terms himself, returns delighted, believing that the Church of England will be permitted to join with the Pope in asserting all the frauds of the Papacy, and with the Greeks in celebrating that pious fiction of the holy fire once a year in Jerusalem. “The aged pilgrim” sees many favourable signs in this country. One is the reprint of Edward VI.’s Prayer-book for twopence; and another the fact that incense may be bought in many shops at the West End, and that half a pound lasts a long time. Now what must the cultivated, intellectual, and sceptical spirits of the age think of a man holding such opinions? What must be the effect of his teaching on such men, but to estrange them more and more from the Church and its institutions? Brother Michael falsifies history as much as he does religion. Actually he tells us there would have been no vice and crime in the country, no godless education, no pauper Bastilles, if Henry VIII. had not put down the *Holy Brotherhood*. Of course he means by the “holy brotherhood” the lazy and dissolute monks.

Why, if we were to sully our pages with but a tittle of the abominations and obscenities and rascalities recorded of the “holy brotherhood” in indisputable historical documents, every father of a family would hide away this volume. The less Brother Michael says about “the holy brotherhood” the better.

Again, let us take another illustration of High Church literature: “Innovations: a lecture delivered in the Assembly Rooms, Liverpool, by Richard Frederick Littledale, Priest of the Church of England.” The aim of Dr. Littledale is to show that prayers for the dead, the choral service, the sign of the cross, the weekly offertory, the daily celebration of Holy Communion, the elevation of the Host, turning to the east, the division of the sexes in churches, the mixed chalice, incense, vestments, and lights are *not* innovations. He knows so little of history that he tells us that the conversion of our forefathers is due to Gregory the Great (the man under whom Popery was introduced into England); calls Edward VI. “*a tiger cub*,” and speaks of Cranmer, the martyr for his religion, as having “*been arrested in his wicked career by Divine vengeance*.” He says, “of the depth of infamy into which this man descended” he has not leisure to speak; and all the Reformers, according to him, were equally bad. Dr. Littledale says, “Documents, hidden from the public eye for centuries, in the archives of London, Venice, and Simancas, are now rapidly being printed, and *every fresh find establishes more clearly the utter scoundrelism of the Reformers*.”

The Doctor admits the Church of England was in need of a physician in Henry VIII.’s time. His language is, “A Church which could produce in its highest lay and clerical ranks such a set of miscreants as the leading English and Scottish Reformers must have been in a perfectly rotten state – as rotten as France was when the righteous judgment of the Great Revolution fell upon it.” The Rev. Thomas W. Mossman, West Torrington Vicarage, Wragley, Yorkshire, goes further still. In a letter to Dr. Newman, he says he believes that a time will come to pass that Anglicans will also see that it is God’s will that they should submit to the Holy Apostolic See, and that it is their duty as well as their privilege to be in communion with that Bishop who alone is the true successor to St. Peter, and by Divine Providence the Primate of the Catholic Church. He speaks of the “lurid murky flame of Protestantism enkindled in the sixteenth century;” and hail the light “once more beginning to beam upon us from the Eternal City, where the Prince of the Apostles and the Doctor of the Gentiles shed their blood.” When such are the utterances of leading clergymen, – if the Church of England were Church of the nation as it claims to be, the language of Dr. Manning would be undeniably true. “Protestantism is dead in England. We may save the time which controversy wastes, and instead of going out into the battle-field, we may go into the harvest-field to reap and to bind and to gather our sheaves into our garner.”

Dissent, however, has not been taken into account. It is rarely a Dissenter becomes a Roman Catholic. It is impossible, if he understands his principles, that he should. To too many it is the Church of England that leads to that of Rome.

CHAPTER VI. the church of england

The peculiarity of the Church of England, that by which it is distinguished from orthodox Dissent, is the priestly character of its claims, and its intolerance of other sects.

The “Tracts for the Times” tell us “that the Bishop is Christ’s representative, and the priests the Bishop’s, so that despising the clergy is despising Christ.” “A person not commissioned may pretend to give the Lord’s Supper, but it can afford no comfort to any one to receive it at his hands; and as for the person who takes it on himself without a warrant to minister in holy things, he is all the while treading in the steps of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. It is only having received this commission that can give any security that the ministration of the Word and the Sacraments shall be effectual to the saving of your souls. The Dissenters have it not.”

The Dean of Chichester writes – “Our ordinations descend in a direct unbroken line from Peter and Paul. Unless Christ be spiritually present with the ministers of religion in their services, those services must be vain. But the only ministration to which He has promised his presence are those of the Bishops, who are successors of the first commissioned Apostles, and the other clergy acting under their sanction and authority.”

The Bishop of Winchester says – “We believe that we do possess, as we cannot see that others do, Christ’s direct commission for our ministry, and a certainty and fulness, therefore, of His presence and of His Sacramental working, which, to say the least, may be lacking elsewhere. If we do not hold as much as this we must dissent from the plain language of our own Ordination Service.” The Bishop also denies that it is a superstitious theory that “the clergy can convey to the soul by a material intervention some spiritual influence in an occult manner.”

The Rev. E. Blenkinson, in the “Church and the World,” a book presented to Convocation by the Bishop of Oxford, says the Protestant bodies have “cut themselves off from the participation of the one Spirit as living in the Church and flowing through the Sacraments, which are the veins and arteries of the body.” The last utterance on the subject is that of the Bishop of Ely, who places the first and undisputed General Councils as of equal authority with Scripture. The Catechism teaches Baptismal Regeneration. The clergy also tell us that they are called by the Holy Ghost, that the Bishop has conferred on them spiritual graces by the laying on of hands. This is the theory of the Church of England. In accordance with this in time past, it drove out the Evangelicals on Bartholomew Day, and has at any rate till our time prosecuted Broad Churchmen for heresy.

The bitterest opponents of this theory are the Evangelicals. It is a singular and noteworthy fact, that the theology dearest to the hearts of the people is that which teaches in the plainest manner the literal inspiration of the Bible, the doctrine of Original Sin, of Predestination, of everlasting damnation, of a Devil ever thwarting the designs of a benevolent Deity, and seeking whom he may devour. Yet the character given by Dr. Arnold of the Evangelical clergy is still true, and accounts for the little influence they have in educated circles. Another fact also becomes increasingly prominent: their readiness to swallow their words, to quietly accept whatever may be offered them by their opponents apparently merely for the sake of position in society. Every now and then a crisis occurs in the history of the Church. If Baptismal Regeneration, for instance, be ruled to be permissible they must leave, and then when the time comes for them to arise and become martyrs, they quietly pocket their principles and remain. Of course they plead their greater opportunities of usefulness, as if religion were better served by dishonesty than by honesty, – as if the cause of God were better advanced by falsehood than by truth, – as if position as regards society were of more importance than the man’s consciousness of independence and honourable life. For the ritualist or the Broad Churchman it is no difficult matter to remain in the church in company with the Evangelical; but

they, in accordance with his theory, are teaching soul-destroying errors; yet he remains with them, and is, according to his idea, a partaker in their sins.

The characteristic of our day is the Broad Churchmanship, which rejects the common theology as a prejudice well fitted for certain times, but unworthy of credence now. Of this party are the ablest men in the Church; all who are disgusted with the childishness of ritualism – with the narrowness of orthodox formulas, turn to them, and hail them as the regenerators of Church and State. Such men as Dean Stanley and Mr. Maurice are a power in the land. They walk hand in hand with the poets and men of science of our time. In their teaching is gathered together much that is best and truest in the wisdom of the past. The difficulty of their position is that they are tied down as strongly as they can be to orthodoxy, and half their strength is wasted in the effort to show they have a right to be where they are. Nevertheless it is quite true that there can be no honest faith without honest doubt; that we fight our fears and gather strength; that as we know more, we feel how outworn is the old creed of Christendom. Sir J. D. Coleridge tells us the Articles are Articles of peace – that is, for the sake of uniformity a minister may make statements which he cannot believe. But a man who cannot trifle with words is denied all this liberty; he is tied hand and foot. The State gives him moral prestige, supremacy, wealth, on certain conditions. The Dissenter is free; the wildest ranter has a liberty which an Archbishop may sigh for in vain. Such is the law. A State Church such as is desired by Broad Churchmen is an impossibility. And yet in spite of the rival and differing parties in the Church, and in spite of the fact that Churchmen themselves are longing to be free of the fetters of the State, I know not that the Church of England, as regards London, was ever stronger than now. The layman has little sympathy with Church squabbles: he goes to church feeling that in doing so he is not committed to any form of belief or worship. Dissent requires some sort of faith as preliminary to fellowship. In the Church you avoid all this: the Puseyism of the pulpit seldom extends to the pew. Then, again, there is a natural yearning in all minds after national union in religious as well as political matters. The higher class of Dissenters display this feeling in an extraordinary degree. Their chapels are built like churches – they cling to the steeple which the stern old Puritans considered an abomination – the meeting-house has ceased to exist. Day by day Dissent gets rid of all its characteristics – its ministers assume a clerical appearance – they adopt the Prayer-book as their model – they now listen to read sermons and read prayers. Of late years their leaders have grown rich and respectable, and anxiously disclaim all connexion with the loud and exciting form of worship that has attractions for the ignorant. You may safely assume that the teaching of modern Dissent is indirectly in favour of the Establishment. Dissenters tell us they have modified their customs in order to retain their hold upon the young of the wealthy classes. But they cannot be retained by means like these. It has almost become a proverb, that in the third generation they will pass through the chapel to the church. Half the great mercantile houses of London and the empire were founded by Dissenters whose sons, as they have grown rich and cultivated, feel more and more the awkward isolation of Dissent. Increasingly this feeling is spreading among Dissenters, and the Church, if it were wise – its history is a career of blunder upon blunder – would have laid its plans to recover such. All the levers of society have been at its disposal. The Establishment rolls in wealth; there is no other Church in the world so wealthy; the aristocracy are bound to support it. Literally, there is in our land no career for a Dissenter. Dissent is a stigma in society. Even men who have no religious predilections would scorn the name of Dissenter. The schools, the universities – all have wealth and honour for those who will conform; and for those who conscientiously refuse to do so – exclusion and disgrace.

In London, within twelve miles of the Post-office, there are some seven hundred churches and chapels connected with the Church, and about treble that number of officiating clergy. At St. Paul's it is estimated that on special occasions as many as 7000 or 8000 persons take part in the services. For the special evangelization of the metropolis there is what is called the Bishop of London's Fund. In the summer of last year the Bishop of London stated that towards the sum proposed to be raised for that purpose, 360,000*l.* had been subscribed. By means of that subscription 200 clergymen have been

added to the diocese, and contributions made to the erection of 69 new churches and of 20 parsonages. Sites also had been secured for 33 more churches, 27 schools, 15 parsonages, and 4 mission stations. 15,000*l.* had been expended for educational purposes; upwards of 9000*l.* for 53 Scripture readers; about 2000*l.* for 27 parochial mission women, and 2670*l.* towards the rent and expenses of mission rooms. It says something for the Church that it has thus raised funds for such purposes. When Bishop Blomfield appealed for 10 new churches for Bethnal Green, and raised sufficient money both to build and to a great extent endow them, it was feared that he had called forth such an expression of Christian liberality as would exhaust the resources of wealthy Church people in the great metropolis for many years to come. Since that time it is estimated that 1,700,000*l.* have been expended in London on churches and endowments. I am not aware that any other religious sect can say as much. The *Times* estimated that there are as many as 85 clerical charities in London.

In the City of London the Church does not seem to thrive. The *Church Times* published a kind of census of fourteen of the City churches drawn up after personal inspection during service time not long ago. It gives the value of the benefice, and the number of persons actually present when the correspondent entered the church.

	Annual Value.	No. Present.
St. Bartholomew the Great, Smithfield	£680	40
St. Anne and Agnes, St. Anne's Lane	626	25
St. Michael le Querne, Foster Lane	300	closed
St. Mary Magdalene, Old Fish Street	230	18
St. Nicholas Cole Abbey	270	closed
St. Bennet's, Paul's Wharf	254	6
St. Nicholas Queenhithe, Thames Street	260	11
Allhallows, Bread Street	382	3
St. Martin Pomray, Old Jewry	410	1
St. Margaret, Bread Street	287	3
St. Peter le Poor, Old Broad Street	1725	20
St. Martin Outwich, Bishopsgate Street	1100	6
St. James, Mitre Square	300	20
Allhallows with St. Bennet, Lombard Street	650	9
	£7074	162

In the City there are 105 churches, parochial and district, and in the City the superiority of the Church over Dissent is manifest. The Jews, the Greeks, the Roman Catholics, the Wesleyans, the Baptists, the Congregationalists, the Presbyterians altogether have but twenty-six chapels in the City.

From the beginning of the long reign of George III. to its close – that is from 1760 to 1820 – there were not six new churches erected in the metropolis.

When the Great Fire had devoured the eighty-nine parish churches of London, Sir Christopher Wren superintended the building of fifty-three at the same time that he was building St. Paul's. Various Acts were passed in the reign of Queen Anne and George I. to increase church accommodation in London, and Commissioners were appointed to apply the coal duties from the year 1716 to the year 1724, to the building of fifty-two new churches. Much of the money was misappropriated and only eleven were built, and a subsequent fund of 360,000*l.* was granted, to be paid in instalments of 21,000*l.* a year. In 1818, Parliament was prevailed on to vote a million and a half for building churches throughout the country as a thank-offering for the termination of the war; and in the same year the Incorporated Church Building Society was founded, to build, enlarge, and repair churches; of which many, such as those in Bethnal Green, Hackney, St. Pancras, Battersea, were in London. Daniel Wilson, Bishop of Calcutta, persuaded the vestry of Islington to vote 12,000*l.* for church building. In 1836 Bishop Blomfield inaugurated the Metropolis Churches Fund, to which he himself gave up sinecure patronage at St. Paul's to the extent of 10,000*l.* a year. Sixty-eight churches

were built by this fund at the cost of 136,787*l.*, before it was merged, in 1854, in the Diocesan Church Building Society. During the twenty-eight years of his episcopate, Bishop Blomfield consecrated 108 churches in London. The whole number of churches ten years ago, writes Mr. Bosanquet in 1868, was only 498. Now Churchmen aim at absorbing the entire metropolis. “But in order to secure for every 2000 of our population one clergyman,” said the present Archbishop of Canterbury in 1867, “we shall need twice as many additional clergymen as we have yet, with a proportionate number of schools.” And here as elsewhere it seems to be true that supply creates demand. As soon as a church is opened it is well filled.

The Bishop of Winchester’s Fund, also known as the South London Church Extension Fund, is a similar effort to supply the spiritual need of that part of London which belongs to the diocese of Winchester.

THE DEAF AND DUMB AT CHURCH

In London there are two thousand persons born deaf and dumb. To the sweet music of speech, whether in the way of conversation or lecture, grave or gay, or song however sacred and Divine, they are insensible. It follows almost as a natural consequence that they are mute, that from their lips can never come the thoughts that breathe and words that burn. It is almost impossible for us to measure adequately the greatness of their loss or the depth of their desolation. How in some degree to make it up to them, to raise them in the scale of being, to teach them to think, and feel, and learn, and to enable them to communicate to others the results, is certainly not one of the least praiseworthy of the many praiseworthy Christian efforts of our day. With this view two courses of action have been followed. A Jewish school has been established at 44, Burton Crescent, where the system of teaching by articulation and lip-reading is pursued. For some time a similar system has been in successful operation in Rotterdam. As to the merits of the system a warm dispute has been for a considerable time in progress in America. Its advocates tell us that when these results shall have been made known, and the attention of the philanthropist and man of science shall have been directed to them, the days of the old system of dactylology, or communication by the aid of fingers, will be numbered. They ask, triumphantly, What parents will be content that their children shall continue to communicate their thoughts and wishes by the aid of signs, when it can be proved to a demonstration that 999 deaf mutes out of every 1000 possess the faculty of speech, and that such faculty can be successfully utilised? Mr. Isaac tells us, that at Burton Crescent, after only eighteen months' instruction, a deaf child who had never previously uttered a clear sound, recited a verse of the National Anthem in a way that brought tears into the eyes of many hearers. The questions are put by the teacher in audible language; and the deaf mute, by aid of lip-reading – another marvel of the system in which the eye does duty for the ear – comprehends every question, and gives answers audibly and distinctly. The Association in aid of the Deaf and Dumb, of which the Rev. Samuel Smith is the able and indefatigable secretary, are, however, doubtful of the new system – and certainly lip-reading seems liable to give facilities for great misapprehension as to the speaker's meaning – and prefer to continue the system which the society was organized in 1840 to teach, and under which it has worked more or less successfully ever since. Under this system has sprung up a deaf and dumb church-going public. On Sundays there are five or six places opened for such in London; on Tuesday evenings there are two, the principal one being held in the fine old church of St. Lawrence Jewry, near the Guildhall – one of Sir Christopher Wren's churches – in which are monuments to Wilkins, the learned Bishop of Chester, and Archbishop Tillotson, whose lot was no peaceful one, and of whom it is worthy of remark that in the language of Jortin he broke through an ancient and fundamental rule of controversial theology, "Allow not an adversary either to have common sense or common honesty." Poor Tillotson, you see, never got over the disadvantages of Dissenting training.

But to return to the deaf and dumb. Inside this handsome church you will find any Tuesday evening about eight o'clock, some fifty or sixty of them sitting near the reading desk. Most of them are men and women in a humble position in life, engaged in various callings in the neighbourhood, more, however, in the east than the west. The desire to profit by such services seems on the increase. They have, for instance, at St. Lawrence, double the number they had, and the same may be said with regard to the services conducted morning and evening at the Polytechnic Institution. Nor are these services held in vain. Every year some are prepared for confirmation, and special celebrations of the Holy Communion are held for their benefit. To the ordinary attendants, including even such as have little need of an interpreter to explain the subject or to help them to follow the services in church, the committee report, "these services and lectures are profitable." "I have felt it a great privilege to attend the services," said one, "which have been a great comfort and benefit to me, and I hope I shall remember what I have heard" (it is to be presumed, by "heard," the writer means what he saw: his

language is conventional). “After I left school I felt so lost I could not hear what was said in churches, and now I am very happy in attending them.” In another way, also, the religious condition of these afflicted ones is kept in view. The Society employs missionaries engaged in house-to-house visitation. By these missionary agents, acting in concert with the parochial clergy, a personal acquaintance is maintained with the deaf and dumb scattered over London, and a most marked improvement in their character, conduct, and intelligence is the result of the supervision exercised. The society is also engaged in promoting the erection of a church for the deaf and dumb. For this purpose 550*l.* have already been subscribed. In the Old Kent Road there is a Deaf and Dumb Asylum, and in other parts of the metropolis there are societies for their special benefit. Of course no mere outsider can give an account of a service with the deaf and dumb. It is easy to realize songs without words, but not so easy to realize public prayer and preaching in which no audible sound is heard, in which the service is conducted as it were by pantomime. As much as possible the rubric is observed, the deaf and dumb obey the instructions of the Prayer-book, and stand where standing is prescribed, and “sign” the response to the Lord’s Prayer, Creed, Confession, &c. As to the sermon, all that can be said is that it comes up to the Demosthenic standard for eloquence – action, action, action. Among the deaf and dumb the best preacher must be the best actor. Not merely are the fingers in constant requisition, but every part of the preacher’s face, as much as possible, is speaking all the time, either in the way of exhortation or entreaty. Great use, as we may imagine, is also made of the arms, and the body sways backward and forward as if to lend expression to such ideas as it may be the design of the teacher to convey. The great aim of these services is educational. They are intended to afford such an insight into the meaning and use of the Book of Prayer, that the deaf and dumb may be enabled to join intelligently in the public worship of the Church of England, and undoubtedly it is desirable that the terrible sense of isolation so natural under the circumstances should be got rid of, that the deaf and dumb should feel that they are part and parcel of the universal Church. Nevertheless there must be a deaf and dumb pulpit from which may flow the ever fructifying stream of Christian truth – a pulpit which the deaf and dumb may feel exists especially for them. Of this pulpit at present the Rev. Samuel Smith is the most distinguished orator, and as you watch him, though you cannot understand him, you cannot but wonder at his marvellous skill. Evidently his heart is in his work; equally evident is it that he has to complain of no wandering eyes. Every hearer is intent, many seem really devout and find the privilege one not lightly to be esteemed. The deep strain of the organ is not there, you miss the song of praise, you hear no penitential chant. From no living tongue falls the sweet promise of salvation and eternal life, from those sealed and silent lips escapes no audible prayer. Yet we know that and that He may be met with even among the deaf and dumb.

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