

IS THERE POPERY IN THE PRAYER BOOK, HISTORICALLY CONSIDERED?¹

Church Association Tract 16

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The very asking the question now proposed for our consideration would have utterly astonished our forefathers of the last century. I am old enough to remember when plain Church people used commonly to speak of their religion simply as Protestantism. Often, in the early days of my ministry, when making my first acquaintance with parishioners, and therefore feeling it necessary to know what they were, I have asked whether they went to church or chapel, and have received the reply, "Oh, I am a Protestant"—meaning thereby a Churchman. Of course they would have admitted that their Wesleyan and Baptist neighbours professed the Protestant faith too. But the old English idea was distinctly that the Church of England was *the Protestant Church*, and Churchmen were *Protestants*. How it has come to pass that such a firm English notion should ever have been partially loosened, is a strange story, the telling of which in years to come will be a singular page in history.

However, that it is loosened is but too clear. The proposed question for our Lecture implies that some think that somehow, and somewhere, there is Popery in our Prayer Book. If there is, it will concern us to find out where it is, and who put it there, and why; and whether they did it consciously or unconsciously? If unconsciously, those who did it were either themselves in a muddle, or were not entirely free from the old system. If consciously, they were either dishonest men, or they yielded to influences they could not resist.

I am to consider the question historically. I fear I cannot calculate upon anything more than a vague and general knowledge of the history of the subject among my audience. I can only beg those on whom I may be inflicting tedious repetition, to pardon it for the sake of the less-informed. If I could read your minds I should know where a mere allusion would suffice, and where I must speak in full, as far as time may permit. But I am no clairvoyant.

Let us first go back to the very commencement of the Reformation, and let me remind you that there was scarcely any doctrinal change whatever in religion during the days of Henry VIII. There was a sort of a Pope at Windsor instead of a Pope at Rome, and not much more. Many outworks of mediaeval superstition lay in ruins—the authority of the Pope in England, the monastic orders, the chantry priests, the prohibition of the English Bible, divers abuses, had been abolished. These made a reformation in religion more possible, but that reformation had not come. Then Edward VI., with his Protestant advisers, came into power; and in the year 1549 the first edition of our English Prayer Book was ordered to take the place of the old Latin service books. Doubtless there were things in that First Prayer Book of King Edward, especially in the offices for Baptism and the Communion, which would have made my present question much more difficult to answer if that first Prayer Book had been retained. Accordingly you see that the Ritualists petition Convocation that, in any Revision of the Prayer Book, the *First* Prayer Book of King Edward, and not the existing one, may be the model; and I shall presently show you why. Then, two years afterwards, in 1551, the Reformers saw their way to further changes, and the Second Prayer Book of King Edward was ordered to take the place of the First. Then followed the terrible episode of Mary's reign and then the accession of Elizabeth. In the first year of her reign, in 1559, the English Liturgy was restored. With slight modification, it was the Second Book of Edward which was adopted. It has been subjected to revision twice since then; but so little has the main body of the Liturgy been touched

on those occasions, that I verily believe if, by any strange chance, an Elizabethan book should be used next Sunday, few of the worshippers would perceive much difference.

Before proceeding further with our subject we may pause just to glance at the nature of the leading difference between the First Prayer Book of Edward, and the Second, which is substantially the same as ours. It chiefly lies in the Offices for the two Sacraments. We know what our own Baptismal Service is. In the First Book of Edward there were three additional ceremonies: 1st. A Form of Exorcism. The Priest, "looking upon the children, was to say, "I command thee, unclean spirit, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, that thou come out and depart from these infants, whom our Lord Jesus Christ hath vouchsafed to call to His holy Baptism, to be made members of His body, and of His holy congregation. Therefore, thou cursed spirit, remember thy sentence, remember thy judgment, remember the day to be at hand wherein thou shalt burn in fire everlasting, prepared for thee and thy angels. And presume not hereafter to exercise any tyranny towards these infants, whom Christ hath bought with His precious Blood, and by this His holy Baptism calleth to be of His flock." This, with more of the service, took place at the church-door; then the priest was directed to take one of the children by the right hand, and so they were to go to the font. In the act of Baptism, the priest was to dip the child thrice. First the right side, then the left, then the face downward. Next the sponsors were to lay their hands on the child, and the minister put on it the white dress called the Chrisom—afterwards he was to anoint it. Now, whatever any one may think of these things, or whether he calls them Popery or not, it is clear that a great deal of ceremonial was cut away from the baptismal service by the Second book of Edward, that is to say, by our present book.

Now let us glance at the Communion Service. I will not weary you with details of verbal differences, though they are considerable, but I will notice, 1st. That an alb, with vestment or cope, was ordered to be worn by the officiating priest, which the recent judgment has pronounced to be illegal under our present system. 2nd. That auricular confession was recognized by name, though left optional. 3rd. The men were to sit on one side, the women on the other. 4th. Water was to be added to the wine. 5th. The departed in the faith, were commended in prayer to the mercy of God. 6th. The sign of the cross was made over the elements in the act of consecration. Again, I say, whatsoever we may think of these, they have all been swept away from the Second Book of Edward, and our present service. It ought to be added that even that first book forbade "any elevation or showing the sacrament to the people."

These matters of difference, then, we notice. But above all details must be observed the radical difference between the First and Second Books, produced by a simple interchange in the order of parts of the service. Nothing has been so bitterly lamented by the Ritualists as this. The "irreverence, ignorance, folly, malignity," of those who so altered the order, they are never weary of dilating upon. And again, without going into detail, the difference is this. You will observe that in our present service the consecration of the elements is reserved for the close of the service, that after consecration, the administration *immediately* follows without any kind of pause, excepting for the necessary movement of the communicants, and without any opportunity for adoration, or devotional recognition of the consecrated elements of any kind, and then when all have communicated two or three short acts of prayer and praise close the service. Now in that First Book, the consecration prayer follows upon, and is part of the prayer for the Church militant, and then the main part of the Communion Service itself comes in between the consecration and the administration. So that the consecrated elements were there present on "the altar" (as that book styles it) giving an opportunity for adoration to those who recognized the corporal presence. Now that was all swept away by the simple transposition of parts of the service, causing the administration to follow immediately upon the consecration, and both to occur, as nearly as might be, at the close of the service. It is clear, I think, that those who made these changes were at least aiming at casting out all Popery from the Prayer Book. After this brief and popular glance at the subject, we have still to ask whether all Popery was cast out, or whether some was inadvertently left in, so that there is Popery in the Prayer Book. Observe, it is not the question whether things

have been abused—whether the progress of time has shown that some additional precaution might be desirable—whether here or there an expression or an action might have been more wisely ordered; but whether there is Popery properly and essentially in the Prayer Book fairly understood as it was meant to be. Who is to judge? Are we to judge in this room? Or must Dr. Pusey, or Mr. Mackonochie, or Mr. Ryle, or Mr. Spurgeon? Because we shall get answers as different as possible from these gentlemen. The way in which our question is proposed, relieves us from this dubious mode of consulting contradictory oracles. We are to consider the question historically. I will briefly glance first at the answer which would have been given early in Elizabeth's reign by those ultra-Protestants, the first generation of the Puritans.

Any one at all conversant with these subjects is aware that many English exiles found shelter in Switzerland during Mary's reign, and that after their return to England, they kept up a constant correspondence with the leading Swiss Reformers, especially those at Zurich. This voluminous correspondence has been carefully preserved in the archives of Zurich, and is constantly referred to by all writers on those times. It is very well known that from the very beginning of Elizabeth's reign, some of the advanced Puritans wrote to their Swiss friends, bitterly complaining of what they called dregs of Popery in the Church of England. Now what were these dregs? Out of a weary reiteration of complaints which seldom come to the point, I select a letter dated July, 1566, from Humphrey and Sampson, the leaders of the first English Puritans, to Bullinger, chief pastor of Zurich. It chiefly discusses the question how far it was lawful for a Christian minister to wear the dress enjoined by the Church of England. And then it says, "We have (praised be God!) a *doctrine pure and incorrupt*. Why should we go halting in regard to divine worship, which is not the least important part of religion?" We find appended to the letter a schedule specifying the writers' chief complaints. I will read all the part bearing on our subject in full, that every one may fully know what these acute critics and ardent Protestants at that day were able to put together as the strongest case against the Church of England. It is entitled:—

"Some blemishes which still attach to the Church of England.

1. "In the public prayers, although there is nothing impure, there is however a kind of popish superstition, which may not only be seen in the morning and evening service, but also in the Lord's Supper."

Upon this we can only say that it is impossible to deal with such vague words. Judging by the more detailed objections of other Puritans, the "kind of Popish superstition" consisted chiefly in using responses, kneeling to receive the Lord's Supper, and so on. People may or may not like such arrangements, but to call them Popery is childish.

2. "To say nothing of the effeminate and over refined strains of the music itself, the use of the organ in church is growing more common."

We should add now-a-days, "the use of the organ in chapels." Anyhow there is no organ in the Prayer Book, so that does not touch us.

3. "In the administration of baptism the minister addresses the infant; in whose name the sponsors, in the absence of the parent, make answer concerning faith and renouncing the world, the flesh, and the devil. The person baptized is signed with the sign of the cross."

On this I beg you to notice that no objection whatever is made to the *doctrine* of the Baptismal service, only to this mode of taking the covenant.

4. "Licence is also given to women to baptize in private houses." That is not in the Prayer Book, be it Popery or not.

5. "The sacred habits, namely the cope and the surplice, are used at the Lord's Supper; kneeling is enjoined to those who communicate, and an unleavened cake is distributed for common bread."

The surplice and the kneeling remain, the last is disused, the Prayer Book tells us to use good ordinary bread.

6. "The Popish habits are ordered to be worn out of Church, and by ministers in general." That again is not in the Prayer Book, nor indeed now anywhere else.

7. "There is no discipline, neither has our Church its rod, or any exercise of superintendence." This may be laxity, but it is not Popery.

8. "The marriage of the clergy is not allowed and sanctioned by the public laws of the kingdom." We cannot complain of that now.

9. "Solemn betrothal takes place after the Popish method by the giving of a ring." We may grant this and not feel very Papistical.

10. "Women continue to wear a veil when they come to be churched." The Prayer Book does not say so.

11. Relates to abuses of the ecclesiastical courts, in which I heartily sympathise with the complainants, but then these are not in the Prayer Book.

12. Relates to impediments then placed in the way of preaching.

13. Complains that the rubric about spiritual eating, which denied the corporal presence had been removed. However it has since been restored, so that objection falls through.

Now I have to say this,—If ever men knew Popery well, these did. They knew it as a man knows his enemy, with whom he has been at sword's point, or in deadly grapple; into whose eyes he has gazed and marked the deadly hate concentrated there. And yet of all the hateful lineaments of Popery these were all they could recognise. The doctrine they confess is pure, and these are the sum of their objections. Not a word against the Absolution, or the Baptismal doctrine, or any of the matters familiar to us. On the sum of the controversies familiar to us in our day, I must say that the verdict of those early Puritans must be—There is no Popery in the Prayer Book.

But I pass on to particular things, which since those days have been extensively objected to and charged with Popery, and I will endeavour to allege the opinion of some of those who knew Popery best, and are supposed to be typical Protestants. Men whose names are continually abused as being at the opposite pole to the Church of England, or anything that is Catholic. Such men as Calvin, John Knox, Baxter, and others I might allege; or, which will be more convenient and decisive, we may take the Westminster Confession of Faith, the authorized formula of the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland, and (considering its history) what we may call double-distilled Protestantism. Let us glance at our Communion Service with this Protestant light thrown upon it. Does our Service say of the unworthy receivers that they "are guilty of the body and blood of Christ our Saviour and eat and drink their own damnation." The Presbyterian formula says that the wicked "by their unworthy coming thereunto are guilty of the body and blood of the Lord to their own damnation." (29, 8.) Do *we* call the sacramental emblems "*holy mysteries*." So does the Confession (29, 8) use the expression partake of these holy mysteries," Do *we* use such expressions as this: "Then we spiritually eat the flesh of Christ, and drink His blood, we are one with Christ and Christ with us." The Confession hesitates not to say—"Worthy receivers outwardly partaking of the visible elements in this sacrament, do then also inwardly by faith, really and indeed, yet not carnally and corporally, but spiritually receive and feed upon Christ crucified, and all

benefits of His death; the body and blood of Christ being then not corporally or carnally in with or under the bread and wine, as really but spiritually present to the faith of believers in that ordinance, as the elements themselves are to their outward senses." If there were such a person as a Presbyterian Mackonochie what might he not make of that with a few judicious epithets, such as supralocal, supernatural, and the like? when so much has been made of the two or three simple words in the Church Catechism—"The body and blood of Christ which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper." Again I need not remind you of the words which the minister pronounces when administering the elements in the Lord's Supper in our Service. But what does the Presbyterian Directory order its ministers to say? "Take ye, eat ye; this is the body of Christ which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Him;" and in like manner with the cup. But I ought first to have noticed the consecration. We have a prayer, simple and beautiful, which is called consecrating the elements. The Presbyterian Confession (29, 5) says that "the outward elements in this sacrament, duly set apart to the uses ordained by Christ, have such relation to Him crucified, as that truly, yet sacramentally only, they are sometimes called by the name of the things they represent, to wit, the body and blood of Christ." These are a few specimens which might be carried much further. If there is Popery in our Communion Service, there is also in the Presbyterian formulas. And if it is there, where is it *not*?

A glance next at the Baptismal Service. I grant that none of our formularies has been so much abused in a papistical direction; that none has been more freely attacked as Popish by our dissenting critics. But I deny altogether that there was a legitimate opening for the abuse, or a sound basis for the criticism to a well taught theologian. I might grant that to modern ears there is ambiguity, and that experience may have suggested the expediency of some modification. But beyond this I will not go. I appeal to the same authorities. Those Puritans of early times, those ultra-Protestants, those acute theologians, those strong Calvinists and determined Presbyterians, they who could detect Popery in the hem of a surplice or the four corners of the ecclesiastical cap, they who felt their weak point to be that the doctrine of the book was pure, and they could not deny it.—These had the Baptismal Service before them, and they carped at some things; they did not like the cross; they objected to the questions put to the sponsors; they were indignant at lay-people baptizing; but not a word had they to say about the doctrine of Regeneration in the Service. We shall presently show why. They were far too good theologians not thoroughly to understand that a thing sacramentally present and a thing spiritually present were not always coincident.

But, before touching further on that, let us briefly ask what is the Popish doctrine of Regeneration in Baptism. I will take the Catechism of the Council of Trent and produce these extracts. "That infants when baptized receive the mysterious gifts of faith, it is not lawful to doubt." "No other means of salvation remains for infant children but baptism." "By the admirable virtue of baptism sin is remitted and pardoned whether originally contracted from our first parents, or actually committed by ourselves, however great its enormity." "That an innate predisposition to sin remains, must be confessed, but this does not really possess the nature of sin." "The soul also is replenished with divine grace, and grace is a certain splendour and light, that effaces all the stains of our souls, and renders the souls themselves brighter and more beautiful." To this is added a most noble train of all virtues, which are divinely infused into the soul with grace. Really, I may ask, where in all our Formularies we have any such contradiction of all our experience as this? I suppose it will be replied you have it wrapped up closely in the word *Regenerate*. Very closely indeed! A very small compass to hold so much. We will examine it as before. We will consider whether we say more than the Presbyterian Directory and Formularies do. First I note that they are very particular about the minister. They say that "Baptism is not to be administered in any case by any private person, but by a minister of Christ called to be the steward of the mysteries of God." Next I note that we have a simple prayer that God will wash and sanctify the child with His Holy Spirit, and give it remission of sins by spiritual regeneration. And we also pray that God will sanctify that water to the mystical washing away of sin—*i.e.*, the figurative, symbolical representation of a spiritual act.

Now I turn to the Presbyterian Directory. The minister is directed to instruct the people that “the water in Baptism representeth and signifieth both the blood of Christ which taketh away all guilt of sin, original and actual, and the sanctifying virtue of the Spirit of Christ against the dominion of sin and the corruption of our sinful nature.” Moreover, that “Baptism is a seal of the covenant of grace, of our ingrafting into Christ, and of our union with Him: of remission of sins, regeneration, adoption, and life eternal.”

Then also it is enjoined—“Prayer is to be joined with the words of institution, for *sanctifying the water to this spiritual use*.” Then the minister is to pray that God would “make this baptism to the infant a seal of adoption, remission of sin, regeneration, and eternal life.” So far, there is really no difference. But there is an expression in our service occurring twice after the administration which has been made to bear all the brunt of controversy, and which seems to go beyond the Presbyterian formula. We say, “Seeing this child is regenerate;” and we thank God that it has pleased Him to “regenerate the child with His Holy Spirit.” It has often been shown that this is no more than the language of faith and charity, just as in the other sacrament we thank God “for that He has vouchsafed to feed us, who have duly received these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious body and blood of Christ.” And I will show you that the Presbyterian Confession says what is practically the same of Baptism in the case of those who are God’s elect. It says, “the efficacy of Baptism is not tied to that moment of time when it is administered; yet, notwithstanding, *by the right use of this ordinance*, the grace promised is not only offered, but really exhibited and *conferred, by the Holy Ghost*, to such (whether of age or infants) as that grace belongeth unto, according to the counsel of God’s own will, in His appointed time.”

In short, I may sum up my comments upon this topic thus. When, about the time of the great Civil War and the Restoration, our divines began to speak of Regeneration in Baptism apart from the consideration of the electing grace of God, a difference at once arose about it. But, before that time, you can scarcely find any doctrinal objection raised by the strongest Antipapist to the *language* of our service, as distinguished from its arrangements. This cannot be better illustrated historically than by noting the tone of the comments made by Richard Baxter and his Puritan colleagues at the Savoy Conference in 1661, when negotiating for some alterations in the Prayer Book. Their “fifteenth exception” is generally, not only in the Baptismal service, that “the phrase” of the Liturgy “presumes all persons (within the communion of the Church) to be regenerated, converted, and in a state of grace,” which they said, in the absence of strict discipline, was too much to assume. In other words, they objected that the Church assumes these worshippers to be Christians.

With regard to the apparent assertion of regeneration in Baptism, they afterwards, in their Rejoinder to the Bishops, enter more fully into the question. They say of it: “Baptism, as an outward administration, is our visible sacramental regeneration. Baptism, as containing with the sign, the thing signified, is our spiritual real regeneration.” After some further discussion they dismiss this topic with the words, “But we are not willing to make more ado about words than needs.” (Rejoinder, § 6.) And further (§ 7), they seem distinctly to object to the apparently general assertion of the baptismal regeneration of infants only in the case where the parents are unbelievers; they seem quite willing to use the words as to the children of believing parents.

So feebly, judged by modern standards, did the learned and devout Baxter, and the other Commonwealth divines urge their doctrinal objections to our baptismal service. Contrast this with certain popular dissenting leaders, charging Evangelical clergy with wholesale hypocrisy for using this service, with the meaning which our Reformers intended when it was first composed.

I conclude, therefore, again historically, that whether every expression in our service is quite safely worded or not (which is quite a different thing) there is no Popery in it, nor anything more than the principle admitted in the Presbyterian Confession, to which I beg a very close attention, as it is the key to much theological confusion. “There is in every sacrament, a spiritual relation or sacramental

union between the sign and the thing signified; whence it comes to pass that the names and effects of the one are attributed to the other.”

There is one more subject upon which I am bound to touch; and that is, the Absolution in the service for the Visitation of the Sick, and the sentence used in the ordination of priests. The Bishop says to him, “Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven, and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained.” Also the Absolution referred to runs in these words. “By His authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Whether our reformers were wise in using this language—whether they ought to have said, it is a dangerous expression, and it is certain to be abused, all this is another question, and not my subject. All I am now concerned with is to show that there is no Popery in this as it was meant. I know not how this may be more distinctly set forth than in the contemporary work of Bishop Jewel, “The Apology for the Church of England,” published 1562, with the approval of the whole Church, and referred to with approbation in the Thirtieth Canon. He thus defines the ministerial powers of absolution. “We say that Christ has given to His ministers power to bind, to loose, to open, to shut, and that the office of loosing consisteth in this point, that the minister should either offer by the preaching of the Gospel, the merits of Christ, and full pardon to such as have lowly and contrite hearts, and do unfeignedly repent them, pronouncing unto the same a sure and undoubted forgiveness of their sins, and hope of everlasting salvation; or else that the minister, when any have offended their brothers’ minds with a great offence, and with a notable and open fault, whereby they have as it were banished and made themselves strangers from the common fellowship and from the body of Christ, then after perfect amendment of such persons, doth reconcile them, and bring them home again, and restore them to the company and unity of the faithful.” In short Jewel recognizes two branches of this office. First, the pardon of God fully offered in the preaching of the Gospel. Second, the Absolution from any Church censure of discipline under which an offender may lie. There is scarcely a sect on earth that does not fully admit both these. And now whether our Church has wisely worded this part of her office or not I will not say. But I shall probably surprise some very much when I read precisely parallel words from the formulary of ultra-Protestantism—the Westminster Confession (Chap. XXX.) “The Lord Jesus, as King and Head of His Church, hath therein appointed a government in the hand of Church officers, distinct from the civil magistrate. To these officers the keys of the kingdom of heaven are committed, by virtue whereof they have power respectively to retain and remit sins, to shut that kingdom against the impenitent both by word and censure; and to open it unto penitent sinners, by the ministry of the Gospel, and by absolution from censure, as occasion shall require.”

Here, also, I will connect this subject with Richard Baxter and his coadjutors at the Savoy Conference of 1661, the last attempt to unite the Church in England. You will find that they, great divines but uncompromising Protestants, men of the solemn League and Covenant, had, indeed, something to say about this Absolution formula, but by no means what a modern Dissenter or timid Churchman would expect. When they comment upon it, are they indignant? Do they denounce it, or demand its total excision? No; this is the line they take: they recommend, in their exceptions, that there be more license to the minister to use or omit the Absolution as he shall see occasion. They also recommend that the form be, “I pronounce thee absolved,” instead of “I absolve thee”—“if thou dost truly repent and believe.” To which the Bishops readily replied that the Scripture's words are, “whose sins ye remit”—not “whose sins ye pronounce remitted; and the condition needs not to be expressed, being always necessarily understood.” It is manifest again that modern dissent takes very different ground from those whom a wise comprehension might have retained in our Church two hundred years ago; and that, to say the least, no Popish interpretation was intended, and none need, or ought to be given to these passages now.

Baxter and his coadjutors would have been surpassed in Protestant fervour by no modern low Churchman, if they had deemed this sentence necessarily and in itself Popish. Their demand would have been: “Away with this intrusion into the priestly office of Christ towards His Church!” That their tone was so different, shows how different was their understanding of the words.

Time will not allow me to go at greater length into these matters. The principal things objected to have been touched upon and dealt with as completely as time would allow. Two results will, I trust, remain with you.

First, you may come to the conclusion that there is a far stronger doctrinal affinity between the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland and our own than you may have ever suspected, and that our Protestantism really stands on a common basis. If I have not noticed the great and powerful modern English sects, it has been simply because they have no authorized theology. They mercilessly assail ours; but, if we would attack them in return, there is no theological citadel into which to direct our shot; and if we would defend ourselves by pointing out similarities and coincidences of doctrinal belief in them, there is no formulary from which we may select. They used to admit as a standard the doctrinal Articles of our Church; do they now?

The second result is this. We are not to be carried away by peremptory assertions about the identity of certain doctrines as taught by the Church of Rome and the Church of England, whether those assertions come from Romanizing Churchmen or controversial dissenters. It may be there is a lack of caution in some of our expressions. It may be that time has revealed certain weak places in the wording of our formularies. And it may be that to remodel these passages in close conformity with their original intention would at present be impossible. What then? We must know, and we must be able to defend their original meaning, the meaning with which they were inserted by our Reformers; the meaning with which they were accepted for at least a hundred years by some of the most devoted Protestants the world has known. We must not allow ourselves to be browbeaten by those who claim to interpret these things in a Romanist sense; and who arrogate to themselves almost exclusively the title of Churchmen. Rely upon it the Prayer Book is ours, if we do but understand it. How could it not be ours? We sympathize with those who compiled it, and who died a bitter death for faithfulness to its teaching. Aye, and the extreme party witness to the truth of what I have advanced. They cannot find in our Prayer Book, doctrine or ceremonial to hear out their opinions. And, therefore, services and ritual are, as all know, freely borrowed from Romish manuals and unblushingly interpolated in, or substituted for our own. And yet they who do these things are called high Churchmen, and we are either low Churchmen or scarcely Churchmen at all!

The absurdity (to say the least) of such a position cannot endure. Some purgation, some reparation, some final adjustment of our relations cannot be very long delayed.

Finally, we must remember that our authorized standard of doctrine is really the Thirty-nine Articles. If the language of devotion in the Prayer Book has not always escaped perversion, I think the Thirty-nine Articles as nearly incapable of it as human words can be, and I would appeal to the miserable and contemptible quibbling of Tract Ninety² to prove how little susceptible they are of wrongful handling. Finally, when I remember that Popery fastens itself on the words of Holy Scripture itself, and when I call to mind what Popery makes of these simple words—"This is my body"—"Thou art Peter," and "Feed my sheep"—I learn that no system of words only can exclude it. It is the mighty power of evil; and nothing but the Spirit of God Himself can lift up a standard against it.

May that Holy Spirit breathe into all our hearts with His gracious influences.—A Spirit of Power, of Love, and of a Sound Mind. Power instead of weakness, Power of Faith, of Mind, of Heart—Power that believes, understands, and grasps the Truth. Love that embraces God and His Word, and Man and his eternal interests in its mighty grasp of divine sympathy. A Sound Mind that weighs the Truth of God, in the balances of a divinely enlightened reason, and is able to give an answer to every man that asketh of the hope that is in us. This is the divine gift. Unbelief may bring its darkness. Superstition may dazzle and bewilder with its false lights. But holding forth the Word of life, God's true Church, taught, led, and enlightened by His Spirit, shall still be the light of the world during its days of trial, and the time may not be long till He shall come before whose face all

shadows shall flee away, and we shall no longer see as through a glass darkly, but face to face shall behold the Truth Eternal!

Endnotes:

- 1) The foregoing lecture, delivered before the Bennett Judgment, has been entirely confirmed by that remarkable decision. That Judgment distinctly enunciated the Protestant doctrine of the Lord's Supper as that which alone "the Church, by her Articles and Formularies affirms or requires her ministers to accept." It proceeds to say that the question as to the defendant, was not "what the Articles and Formularies affirm, but what they exclude." The Court decided that it was just possible to understand Mr. Bennett to mean something not absolutely and verbally forbidden. On the ground of this alleged ambiguity of words they refused to condemn him, only censuring him for "rash and ill-judged" expressions.

In other words the lecture is confirmed by the Bennett Judgment. It pronounced on the matter then in debate, "that there is no Popery in the Prayer Book," but that the language of the Prayer Book and Articles has failed to *exclude* Popery, introduced under the veil of cautious ambiguity, and interpreted in the most favourable light. In old times Englishmen used to say what they meant and defend it. What spirit is this which eludes examination, and escapes by the artifice of the chameleon?

- 2) Newman's Tract Ninety, which appeared in 1841, argued that there was nothing in the Thirty-nine Articles contrary to the Council of Trent.