

**STEDFAST ADHERENCE TO THE  
CHURCH OF ENGLAND,  
RECOMMENDED AND ENFORCED  
IN THREE VILLAGE SERMONS  
AND A VILLAGE STORY**

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Stedfast adherence to the Church of England, recommended and enforced in three village sermons and a village story by Edward Berens

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**EDWARD BERENS**

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BY THE  
REV. EDWARD BERENS, M.A.  
VICAR OF SHRIVENHAM.

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1852.

*100. 3. 35.*



## ADVERTISEMENT.

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IN a Parish, which for a long series of years had been little troubled with Dissent, but is now invaded—from without—by separatists of various denominations, it is natural that its aged Pastor should wish and endeavour to keep his flock from wandering, and from deserting the pure and scriptural faith, in which they have been baptized, and brought up. That the Pastor above mentioned has not been so utterly inattentive to the spiritual wants of his Parishioners as his assailants would seem to insinuate, may, perhaps, in some degree be inferred from the list of some of his little publications, most of which were suggested by what appeared to him to be the wants of his own Parish, and a large proportion of which have been again and again,—“line upon line, and precept upon precept”—delivered from the Pulpit, with such measure of impressiveness as he was able to impart to them.

Of the first volume\* of *Eleven Sermons*, 300 copies were printed for gratuitous distribution in the Parish, and several hundreds have been given since.

*Shrotonham, Jan. 1852.*

\* Of this volume, 15,000 copies had been sold previously to the year 1836.



## SERMON I.

THE PRAYER BOOK A FORM OF SOUND WORDS.

Second Sunday in Advent.

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2 TIM. i. 13.

*Hold fast the form of sound words.*

THE return of the second Sunday in Advent again calls our attention to the goodness of God in giving us the holy Scriptures, to be "a lantern unto our feet and a light unto our paths" in our journey through life,—in our pilgrimage through this evil world,—those Scriptures, which are indeed able to make us wise unto salvation.

Year after year I have endeavoured to set before you, how greatly it was our duty and our interest to make the Scriptures our frequent study,—to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them; praying earnestly to that Holy Spirit, by whom they were indited, to assist us in understanding them, and in applying them to our own consciences, to our daily practice and conversation.

None of you need to be informed, that the Holy Church, of which we are members, considers the Bible, the revealed word of God, as the only authoritative standard, the only rule of faith. She accordingly lays it down in her sixth Article, that "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or to be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." Our Church, consequently, may be considered as built "upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets,"—the Apostles and apostolic men who were the writers of the New Testament, and the Prophets, the penmen of the Old Testament, those holy men of old who wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,—"Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone."

But while the whole of the sacred volume, called the Bible, (which word means the Book,) is received as having been written under the guidance of one and the self-same Spirit, yet it consists, we know, of many distinct and separate books, written by different men, at sundry times and in divers manners, some of those books being principally historical, some chiefly pro-

phetical,—(I use the words *principally* and *chiefly*, because in most of those holy writings, history, and prophecy, and moral teaching are blended together,)—some practical and moral, and some consisting, mainly, of prayers, praises, and thanksgivings to the great Author of all good things.

But amidst this diversity of subjects, and diversity of penmen, it is not unnatural that there should exist much diversity in the easiness, or the difficulty, of interpretation. While all that is absolutely necessary for the soul's health, necessary to make a man wise unto salvation, is readily accessible to the humble searcher of God's word, so that, according to the language of the prophet Isaiah, "the wayfaring men though fools shall not err therein," yet in the Scriptures there are also high and deep mysteries, which the utmost learning and diligence of men have not been able fully to penetrate. For the humble and single-hearted man, who reads the Scriptures with a view to his own individual edification, the directions given in the Homily of our Church, are very excellent and very useful. "I shall shew you," says the Homily, "how you may read without danger of error. Read it humbly with a meek and lowly heart, to