

**THE ANGLICAN CHURCH
VINDICATED; IN ANSWER TO M.
D'AUBIGNÉ'S DISCOURSE,
ENTITLED "GENEVA AND
OXFORD"**

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The Anglican Church Vindicated; In Answer to M. D'Aubigné's Discourse, Entitled "Geneva and Oxford" by Jeremy Taylor

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JEREMY TAYLOR

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BY

JEREMY TAYLOR,



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1844.

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THE ANGLICAN CHURCH
VINDICATED.

FROM the epoch of the Restoration up to the present time, the Anglican Church has enjoyed a continuance—though not of equal dominion—of almost uninterrupted tranquillity; free from any very decided attempts, insidious or overt, to assault or undermine it. Out of the fierce struggles which it had previously encountered, with Puritanism on the one hand, and Roman Catholicism on the other, it came forth strong in its faith, pure in its doctrines, stedfast in its ordinances, active in its offices; and there was a hallowed lustre gathered round its eminent divines, which will secure to them from posterity, devoted remembrance and reverence, as the lights and fathers of that period of gospel preaching.

The peace, however, which their pious, untiring, and uncompromising energies won for the Church, has not, throughout its duration, been as favourable to the growth and developement of Christian faith and practice as might naturally have been expected from it.

A false security, partly owing to self-confidence, partly also, perhaps, to the protection afforded by the State, has, in the later generations produced supineness, and out of this supineness, the garden of the Lord has become disfigured with noxious weeds, which have choked up and obstructed the growth of its wholesome plants. In its slumbering, an enemy has come in, and sown tares in the midst of wheat. The mischief has grown to a visible, if not alarming height ; and those of our clergy who have shaken off their lethargy, are now seeking to cleanse the holy soil of the evil which their long apathy engendered in one way, and almost invited in another.

The principle on which the Church of England was founded, viz. the right, not of altering the doctrines received from the apostles, and confirmed by the Fathers, but of deciding and condemning what was abuse in faith and practice, became, through her own unguardedness, and the obtuseness and obstinacy of men's minds and

temper—some being unable, some unwilling, to separate between privilege and licentiousness—converted into the *right of private* judgment upon *doctrines*, and hence the numerous heresies which have since sprung up to impair her greatness, to check her salutary influence, and limit her usefulness.

Unhappily, also, there existed an error in her first construction, which from the moment of its conspicuousness, has been ever fatal to the harmonious operation of the clergy with each other, and with their flocks; an error which insinuated itself under the title of Predestination, and which—in the desire of acquiring for herself, within her own field, the advantages of that unity, so admired to this day, in the Church from which she had separated, but which, in the former, was due to other causes than the admission of heterogeneous tenets,—she unthinkingly received without duly estimating its nature and tendency, and considering whether it was compatible and conciliable with the doctrines handed down from the first churches, and made the basis of her own.

This new doctrine which brought schism within her pale, and, like the deadly upas, paralyzed the energies of all who came within its sphere, which has rendered discipline obsolete, and faith

inoperative, is one still pertinaciously clung to by a not inconsiderable portion of the Church, and which, bringing them into affinity with the Church of Geneva, has emboldened one of the living and influential disciples of Calvin to rise up and impugn the principles and practice that are distinct from the Genevan, and do essentially constitute the English Church.

The mode in which the attack has been directed, is that of a discourse, entitled "Geneva and Oxford," addressed to the Theological School of the former place, by its president, M. D'Aubigné, and ushered into this country by the Rev. E. Bickersteth, who thus identifies himself and his section with the Church of Geneva, and makes the learned foreigner the champion of his party.

Had the above-mentioned address not been widely circulated among us, and were there not many more who read than reason—others too, who conclude where it favours their own views that a work unanswered is not answerable,—were there not many also, on the other hand, who, though the pious zeal and example, the eloquence and the argument, of able advocates of the ancient Church, may have roused them from torpidity, are yet not trained to, or even furnished with all

the armoury that renders them strong to resist and overcome, the discourse might have been left to all the importance with which tyros in divinity at Geneva, or the party espousing its views elsewhere, might please to invest it.

Levelled, however, as the pamphlet avowedly is, at the Anglo-Catholic Church, through that portion of those who call themselves of the Church of England, but are Anglican in form and name only, while far from Catholic in spirit, it becomes a duty to expose the febleness of the attempt, and, in Christian charity, to show them that the weapons wielded against us do assuredly recoil upon themselves.

For a just appreciation of the substance of the address, it is necessary to premise that the Genevan Professor has—if supposed undesignedly, then at the cost of logical reputation—presented it to the reader under a very specious, seducing form—a rhetorical artifice, by which an author ingeniously obtains credit for the whole matter from an apparent clearness in the ground plan of his work, and thus escapes the investigation whether all the matter introduced comes really within the plan, or whether the plan itself is completely carried out. Division of a subject into parts is a very convenient one for facilitating the