

# **THE LISTENER IN OXFORD**

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The Listener in Oxford by Caroline Wilson

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**CAROLINE WILSON**

**THE LISTENER IN  
OXFORD**



# THE LISTENER IN OXFORD

BY THE AUTHOR OF

'CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE,' 'THE LISTENER,'

&c. &c.

*Caroline Fry*

SECOND EDITION.



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## PREFACE.

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WITH much reluctance this work was undertaken. Controversy has never been "the Listener's" sphere, nor is it now her choice: it is not even her design: for in the composition of the following pages, she has had nothing so little in her mind as to engage in disputation with those writers whose opinions she has denied and endeavoured to expose. They will not read the book. It is not intended for their reading; and it can tell them nothing that they do not know. It seems to be the peculiar character of these "last days," that every device of Satan for the affliction of the Church, is

begotten, not of ignorance, but of knowledge ; born of carnal ingenuity, to make its prey of spiritual simplicity. The author has had in view the victims, not the champions of this new scheme. Whatever has been written is intended for a shield and not a sword : a cry from the watch-tower, not a challenge to the field. Nevertheless, it is not for him that girdeth on his armour, to boast himself as he that putteth it off. He needs a sure footing and a firm one, who determines to move, or even to stand against a tide that has suddenly turned upon him, and is bearing back whatever he might lay hold of for support, whatever he has heretofore relied upon for encouragement. Among those for whom this work is intended, and by whom it will be read, the writer expects that it will be by many disputed and condemned. But will it be disproved ?

Evangelical religion *has been the fashion* : the tide is turned ; and much that had floated forward on its surface, is now floating backward whither it set out. Many that called themselves evangelical, and seemed to delight in the truth that is so designated, have now disowned the word, and grown, at the least, indifferent to the doctrine. There is every ap-



pearance that the world will get back its own—some landed and some wrecked upon its familiar shores, where they will find themselves, alas! how much at home!

Fast fixed, meantime, upon the Rock of ages, the Church of Christ remains: firm, immutable, and separate as ever: she has not neared the world; and however in calm times the world has poured its multitudes upon her borders, the distance is ever and exactly what it was. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." "The flesh warreth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other." They who have built their house upon that Rock, will be as surely found upon it, when the current turns, as when the floating multitude came in upon them; for what was but a fashion of the times to others, is life and peace to them. Of those whom we now see departing from us, we believe and are assured that we shall see many back: but with what loss returning!

The author has felt it no small discouragement in her task, to have some in mind while she indites these pages, who were used to welcome what they will not now; to expect a con-

flict where she would once have found acceptance; and feel that she is, not leaving, but left by those with whom she was used to walk together in the truth of Jesus. May her words but reach however few, of those who, gone as they are upon the turning stream, are not yet out of hearing, and be by heaven blessed to their recal, and she will be amply satisfied, whatever else ensue. She feels not confident, of even so much as this: for her voice is too feeble for the greatness of the evil. She was urgently called upon to appear on the Lord's side: the only unshaken confidence she feels in putting forth these pages, is, that what she has written, *is on the Lord's side*: the rest is in His hands.

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