

**A RATIONAL AND SCRIPTURAL
REVIEW OF THE SACRAMENTAL
SYSTEM OF THE CHURCH OF
ENGLAND, SHOWING THE
URGENT NECESSITY FOR REFORM**

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A rational and scriptural review of the sacramental system of the Church of England, showing the urgent necessity for reform by William Purton

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WILLIAM PURTON

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SACRAMENTAL SYSTEM
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BY WILLIAM PURTON, M.A.

AUTHOR OF 'PHILOCALIA' ETC.



'Be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is,'
Eph. v. 17.

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1870.

MS. A. 1. 1. 1.

'I could not in Church matters feel confidence to alter a straw, if I did not stand firm on a scriptural basis, and had not the conviction that the alteration or reform proposed was a higher development of the Divine religion of Christ, and therefore also a calling to a higher life than that which it might seem to abrogate or modify; and finally, if I was not convinced that the time is come when that institution or Church must either be reformed or perish, by that same Divine right which it justly claims for its existence. . . . But is the time come (for reform of Liturgy and Articles)? I believe the time is come, in so far as that the necessity is urgent, to consider the matter above and before anything else. This consideration will show that, independently of all expediency, there are internal reasons and arguments enough at hand to prove that the Liturgy may be more perfect, and that it must now be revised, because it offers the only means of bringing about a more glorious manifestation of Christian spirit and the reign of Christ than before. . . . Let me state explicitly, that a union with the Dissenters who worship Christ is what I bear in mind these fifteen years as to my own country and the Church in general. We must come to that if God will save us and our countries. It will take place *once* and somewhere on earth. Blessed the land and Church who effect it, who throw off the yoke of doctrine and ritual tyranny too long exercised by those who should be united in Christ, and who ought to believe in facts revealed and transmitted, not in words and abstractions and formulæ substituted or annexed to them.'

BUNSEN to ARNOLD, 1834.

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INTRODUCTION.



THERE are few, I think, except her ill-wishers, who can look with any degree of satisfaction on the present state or prospects of the Church of England. It has often been remarked, that the general attitude of the people towards her is one of indifference. This, perhaps, only shows that the questions which are so fiercely agitated by contending parties do not interest them; but the fact is indisputable. The noisy crowds which stand forth as partisans of this or that doctrine do not represent the people, or their feelings toward the Church; Churchmen, as a general rule, keep aloof, either caring for none of these things, or fondly hoping that they will right themselves. If this apathy continues, there will soon be no Church to care for. The House of Commons has passed an Act to do away with the Church establishment in one of the three united kingdoms; and had it passed the House