

**THE NONENTITY OF ROMISH
SAINTS AND THE INANITY
OF ROMISH ORDINANCES.
TWO SERMONS**

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The Nonentity of Romish Saints and the Inanity of Romish Ordinances. Two Sermons by
Walter Farquhar Hook

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BY
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VICAR OF LEEDS.

SECOND EDITION.

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1849.

P R E F A C E.

THE following Treatises were originally delivered as Sermons; the first on the Festival of All Saints, and the second upon the reopening of a church for divine service on the 5th of November.

Although much has been inserted in the body of the Discourses which was at first intended for the notes, the form of Sermons has been retained, both to avoid the trouble of reconstruction, and also because the thoughts of the writer more easily flow in the form of composition to which he is habituated.

Having been requested by a friend to address his congregation on the Festival of All Saints, the author thought it a good opportunity to supply an answer to those who assert of the Church of England, that, since the Reformation, she has not been productive of Saints; and having been requested by another friend to preach at the reopening of his church, the author took occasion, from the event occurring on the 5th of November, to point out that a due attention to æsthetics is not, of necessity, connected with the principles of the Church of Rome.

We differ from the Church of Rome fundamentally and irreconcilably.

Of reconciliation there can be no hope until the Decrees and Canons of the Papal Council of Trent

are revoked, and its principles renounced; in other words, until Rome repudiates Romanism and reverts to Scripture and primitive Christianity.

The real controversy between the Church of England and all Protestants, on the one side, and the Romanists and Romanizers, on the other side, relates to Justification. The controversy is the same now as it was in the time of the Reformation.

A dispute about mere matters of detail is useless, while we differ with respect to that principle which places each party, with respect to every detail, on a different standing point.

What is the formal cause of Justification? this is the question.

The Church of England holds the doctrine of Justification by Faith only; the Church of Rome asserts the directly opposite doctrine, viz. Justification by Inherent Righteousness.

Admit the Romish doctrine that we are justified by our inherent righteousness, and all Romanism will follow as a matter of course.

Accept the Protestant doctrine of Justification, which we claim also to be the Catholic doctrine, though opposed to that of the Schoolmen and of Rome—accept the scriptural doctrine of Justification by Faith only, as affirmed in our Articles and expounded in our Homilies, and though we use the same forms, adopt the same ordinances, and utter the same words as the Papist, we shall still be far as the poles asunder. It is impossible to become Romanists so long as this doctrine is held.

This is the conclusion at which the author has

arrived, after a patient inquiry, why so many who, beginning with ultra-Protestantism, and having passed through High Churchmanship, are now on the verge of Rome; seeking to give a Romish spirit to our theology, and a Romish tone to our ordinances.

Alarmed by the Antinomianism into which their first friends were too often hurried, they have not been contented with the doctrine of Justification by Faith, as asserted in our Articles, and vindicated, not only by our Reformers, but by Hooker, Andrewes, Bramhall, Barrow, Waterland, and our other great divines; but they have permitted themselves to descant upon Justification by Works until they now find their private judgment to concur, not with the English Convocation of 1562, but with the principle of the 6th Session of the Council of Trent.

They who have once adopted the Romish system of Justification by Inherent Righteousness, are in principle Romanists. They become discontented with the Articles and Formularies of the Church of England, by which they are rebuked at every turn; and the peculiarities of the Church of Rome become dear to their hearts. They are retained in the Church of England merely by their prejudices. The prejudice is honourable which makes them reluctant to leave the Church of their forefathers, or, in the cant of the day, the Church of their Baptism. But prejudice is a very sandy foundation on which to stand when the storms of controversy blow, or when religion passes from the imagination to the heart.

Several years have elapsed since the author of the following Discourses published "A Call to Union on

the Principles of the English Reformation." It was intended for those who neglected to recognise the sacramental character of our religion, and in their zeal for the Articles and Homilies forgot the teaching of the Prayer Book.

The present Tract is published with the same object, though addressed to those chiefly who forget the Protestant character of the Church of England, and who, while adhering to the letter of the Prayer Book, are unmindful of its spirit, and forget the teaching of the Articles and Homilies.

Let us receive the Prayer Book *and* the Articles; not the Articles without the Prayer Book, nor the Prayer Book without the Articles.

So will the members of the Church of England become a united body, walking in the *via media* with the freedom of the Protestant without the scepticism of the Rationalist, with the ancestral dignity of the Catholic without the corruptions and anti-scriptural principles of the modern Church of Rome.

THE
NONENTITY OF ROMISH SAINTS.

"We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." — *Isaiah*, lxiv. 6.

THERE is a prejudice in the minds of some devout and pious persons against the observance of Saints' Days, although the observance of them is enjoined by the Church of England; and to the injunctions of the Church of England every conscientious member of her communion must be willing to defer.

The prejudice no doubt arises from a mistaken idea, that the observance of Saints' Days is connected with Popery, and with that worst feature in the Romish system, the invocation of saints.

But when the subject is duly considered and fairly weighed, it will be perceived that we of the Church of England differ from the Church of Rome in our very definition of a Saint; and I am prepared to show that on the ground of this difference, and on account of our holding the grand distinguishing principle of orthodox Protestantism, it was wise in our Reformers to retain, and we shall do well to imitate their wisdom by observing, the minor Festivals of the Church, and especially the Festival of All Saints.