

**PROTESTANTISM IN PERIL! A  
COMMENTARY ON THE TRACTARIAN  
TENDENCIES OF THE AGE,  
ROMISH PROSELYTISM AND  
PERVERSION, EVIDENCED BY FACTS;  
AND POPULAR EXPOSITION OF THE LAW**

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Protestantism in Peril! A Commentary on the Tractarian Tendencies of the Age, Romish  
Proselytism and Perversion, Evidenced by Facts; And Popular Exposition of the Law by F. J.  
Hamel

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**F. J. HAMEL**

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PROTESTANTISM IN PERIL!

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A COMMENTARY

ON THE

TRACTARIAN TENDENCIES OF THE AGE, ROMISH  
PROSELYTISM AND PERVERSION,

EVIDENCED BY FACTS;

AND

A POPULAR EXPOSITION OF THE LAW

RELATING TO THE

*Services of the Church of England;*

WITH

PROPOSITIONS FOR PRACTICAL MEASURES OF REDRESS,

DEMANDING THE CO-OPERATION OF

PROTESTANT CHRISTIANS OF EVERY DENOMINATION.

BY

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## P R E F A C E .

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AMONGST the most earnest and thoughtful members of the Protestant community, both clergy and laity, the opinion now obtains that the Christian Church of this country is passing through a very critical era of her existence. Although their confidence in the prevalence and undoubted triumph of truth remains unshaken, they cannot but view the present aspect of affairs with some uneasiness, from a serious conviction that, unless a decided stand be made against the Romanising tendencies of the age, troubles and sorrows of which the thoughtless little dream must inevitably ensue. This feeling is not merely entertained by the warmest supporters of the Church of England, but largely participated in by sincere Christian men of various denominations of Protestant Dissenting communities. Circumstances have occurred in the parish and neighbourhood of Stoke Newington which have compelled me to assume a position unequivocally opposed to the spread of Romish practices. I have had occasion to write much upon the subject, and, as the Rector of the parish is responsible for the Anti-Protestant changes recently introduced by him into the Services of



the Church, and which have given rise to much pain and alarm amongst the people, the course I have been forced to take, as one of the Church-wardens, to whom thousands of pounds have been entrusted for the use of that Church, has naturally become one of politico-religious antagonism towards him and his innovations. The thoughts which I have from time to time submitted to my fellow-parishioners for their consideration have therefore, of necessity, been mixed up with matters of a local and sometimes personal character, in which strangers cannot be expected to take the same lively interest as the parishioners. It has, however, been strenuously urged that much of what I have written would not only be acceptable to the public generally, but that, as the result of much reflection, investigation, and experience, it would not be without its use in the present crisis.

Such assurances are doubtless flattering, but I am not insensible to the fact that much of the value of my observations, in the estimation of those to whom they were addressed, is attributable to the deep interest they naturally take in the local circumstances which have called them forth. In a matter, however, of such paramount importance as the maintenance of the pure and spiritual simplicity of Divine Worship in our Protestant Church, I feel that I ought not to shrink from any trouble or personal

inconvenience so long as anything I can say or do may tend in the slightest degree to promote the interests of religion. Under these circumstances I have been induced to recast much of what I had already written, but, in accordance with the suggestions of several friends, for whose judgment I entertain a great respect, I have not hesitated to reproduce such of the facts as may give interest and freshness to the work, divesting it of everything which, being of a personal nature, is not essential to the support and illustration of the arguments I venture to adduce. Much therefore that is advanced in the following pages, though not in the same dress, has already appeared in the shape of pamphlets, letters, &c., addressed to my fellow-parishioners, two of the principal ones having gone through several editions, and been circulated and read, as I am told, with much interest far beyond the limits of the locality for which they were written. Perhaps I might have done better had I entirely discarded my previous Essays, of which scarcely three pages have been interwoven with these, except as to the reiteration, in other words, of the facts which it was indispensable to retain. Having little time to devote to labours of this description, I have written under great disadvantages, chiefly at uncertain and short intervals of leisure, and hours frequently stolen from the proper seasons of repose. As a natural conse-

quence, I find upon a review of what I have done occasional repetitions of the same ideas and arguments, and some departure from the ordinary rules of order and consecutiveness, but, expedition having been urged, because the present period appears to be peculiarly fitted for bringing the subject on which I have ventured to dilate under public notice, I have not had time to bestow upon it that amount of critical revision which I could have wished; but it is obvious that I could only have one object in taking upon myself such a task, and I feel that I need not offer any apology to those who give me credit for the sincere desire, by which alone I am actuated, of promoting the best interests of the Protestant Church and the Christian Religion of our beloved country.

F. J. H.

*Stoke Newington,*  
*April, 1865.*