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A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE
CHURCH OF ST. JOHN, AT STROUD,
PORT STEPHENS;

BY THE
REVEREND W. M. COWPER, M.A.,
ON WHIT-SUNDAY, 1849:

BEING THE
TERCENTENARY OF THE NATIONAL ADOPTION
OF THE
Book of Common Prayer.

PUBLISHED AT THE SPECIAL REQUEST OF THE CONGREGATION.

SYDNEY:
PRINTED BY KEMP AND FAIRFAX,
LOWER GEORGE STREET.
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A SERMON.

And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.—Acts, ii. 42.

It is hardly necessary for me to observe, that the testimony contained in these words relates to those first Christians, who believed and were baptized, when the Spirit of the Lord was poured out, in so wonderful a manner, on the day of Pentecost. It forms a part of the description, which St. Luke gives, of the condition of the Church in that infantine state, in which it then existed. And, as a part of that description, the passage is well worthy of our attention at any time; for it is by examining the Sacred Scriptures, and searching out the truths which they deliver, that we ascertain with something like certainty, in what way we may serve the Lord acceptably. And can we doubt that we have, in this description of the new-born Church at Jerusalem, the *outline*, at least, of what every Church and congregation ought to be and to do, in order that it may fulfil the will of God?

Let us endeavour then, first of all, to ascertain as nearly as possible, the exact meaning of these words, before we proceed to build upon them the doctrines and duties which they seem to involve.

“They continued steadfastly,” says St. Luke, “in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.” “The doctrine of the Apostles” was that doctrine which the Apostles taught, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, relating to Jesus Christ and salvation through Him. It included all which they delivered as the ambassadors of Christ, and required to be believed or prac-

tised by their followers. This doctrine was at first taught *orally*, that is, by word of mouth ; it was not long, however, before it was summed up briefly, in the Creeds which were used in the different Churches ; but it was afterwards committed to writing, and is now contained in the books of the New Testament.

As long as the Apostles, or any of them, were alive, the true doctrine might be learnt with certainty from them ; but as they were not to remain on earth always, they took means to secure its preservation to all future ages. They committed it to writing, and guarded it against corruption, that Christians "might know the certainty of those things wherein they were instructed ;"* and that they might be able to distinguish between "the truth as it is in Jesus," and the various errors which they foresaw would be brought in by false teachers, in future ages.†

But with the "*doctrine of the Apostles*," we find their "*fellowship*" mentioned. They continued in the Apostles' "*doctrine and fellowship*." By this we understand the fellowship, or communion, of the Church under the direction of the Apostles ; for such appears to be the most obvious and natural interpretation. They had been admitted by baptism into the society of the Apostolic Church, and had thus submitted themselves to the rules and guidance which the Apostles had established, or might establish. They had pledged themselves to obey the laws of the society, as well as to seek the privileges and blessings connected with being members thereof.

By the "breaking of bread" is generally understood the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ; as in the 20th chapter, 7th verse, "On the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to *break bread*, Paul preached unto them ;" which is confirmed by 1 Cor. x. 16, where, speaking of this Holy Sacrament, St. Paul asks, "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ ?"

* Luke, i. 4.

† 1 Tim. iv. 1. Jude, 3, 17, 18.

And besides this, they continued "in prayers;" not merely praying in secret, as individuals, but also in common, and with one accord, as God's faithful people had ever done, and as the small flock of disciples were doing, when the promised Comforter was sent down upon them.

In these things, then, they continued steadfastly; neither moved by the dangers, nor drawn aside by the temptations with which they were surrounded. Having chosen Christ for their Saviour, they clave unto him; having associated themselves with the Apostles, they persevered in their resolution, and in order to testify their faith and love, as well as to seek the edification of their own souls, they united in common prayer; and especially in the commemoration of the death of their Lord and Saviour, as he had commanded.

And these, let us remember, were the first fruits of the Spirit; these were the effects which He produced on the earliest believers, whom the Apostles gathered into the fold of Christ. This was the result of the fulfilment of that promise which the Saviour had given to the Twelve: "When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He shall guide you into all truth" (or rather, all *the* truth).*

Having thus ascertained the meaning of the several particulars in this description, if we take it as a model for ourselves, what does it teach us? Does it not plainly show that we ought to be careful to continue, as they did, in the doctrine, the discipline, and the worship, which the Apostles taught and instituted? And that if, at any time, we find that we have departed therefrom, or are departing, we should retrace our steps without delay, and take our stand upon the same ground that the Christians of old did? It is then only, indeed, that we can hope for the Divine blessing, and go on with undoubting confidence in the path which, as Christians, we are treading.

But here, let me remind you that it is especially as members of the Church of England I address you this day. It is

* John, xvi. 13.

a day on which we are called to reflect on both our position and our principles; and I will endeavour to show you that it was in the very spirit of the Primitive Church that our Reformers acted, when they cast off the errors of Popery, and adopted that purer form of faith, and worship, which it is our privilege to possess.

You are aware that this day is, for a special reason, observed throughout the Church of England, at home and in the colonies, as a day of special thanksgiving to Almighty God for our possession of the Book of Common Prayer, and the benefits therewith connected. It is 300 years to-day, since the first Reformed Prayer Book was appointed to be used in the Churches of England; and I do not doubt that when I shall have explained the circumstances, and shall have shown you some of the blessed results of that event, you will think it to be indeed a cause for gratitude and praise, and will be disposed to respond to the call which will be made upon you, to contribute towards extending the blessings of the Church, and her pure ordinances, as widely as possible.

Now, the first thing necessary to be adhered to by the Church is *Apostolic doctrine*. To a certain extent, indeed, this is necessary to the very being of the Church; for the Church consists only of those who build their faith upon that foundation which the Apostles laid. But beside this, nothing should be taught for Christian doctrine but what was taught by the Apostles; and for the proof of what they taught, we must appeal to the Holy Scriptures.

Now it is a historical fact, that for many hundreds of years before the time we are speaking of, the Church of England, in common with the other Churches of Christendom, had departed, in many respects, from the Apostolic doctrine, and both believed and taught many things which have no foundation in the written word of God.

The Apostles taught that God commandeth all men everywhere to *repent*;* this the Church had corrupted into the

* Acts, xvii. 30.

practice of *penance*. The Apostles had declared the necessity of confessing sin unto God, in order that it might be pardoned,* but instead of this, there had been brought in the practice of auricular, or secret, confession to the priest,† and his forgiveness in the place of God's. The Apostolic doctrine was, that "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many;"‡ that when he died upon the cross, it was as a "sacrifice for the sins of the whole world;" and that through this sacrifice alone, guilty man obtains pardon, and is accepted by his Maker;§ but the doctrine which prevailed at that time was, that Christ was offered anew in the sacrifice of the mass by the priests, and that this sacrifice availed to take away sin. The Apostles had, with one accord, declared that Christ was the only foundation on which the Church was built;|| but men were now made to believe that it was built on St. Peter. The Apostles had testified that "there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;"¶ but men had invented many other mediators, and prayed to the Virgin Mary, to the Apostles, to Saints, Martyrs, and Angels, to intercede for them. In these, and in many other particulars, had the Church departed from the faith of the Apostles, until it pleased God to send down His Spirit, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light;** for undoubtedly, since it is the office of the Holy Spirit, "to guide us into the truth," and to "take of the things

* 1 John, i. 9.

† *Voluntary* secret confession had been allowed in the primitive Church, for the relief of the burdened conscience; but A.D. 1215, Pope Innocent III., in the fourth Lateran Council, decreed that "all the faithful of both sexes, when they had come to years of discretion, should faithfully confess all their sins in private, at least once a year, to their proper priest, and do their utmost to perform the penance enjoined to them. If they did not, they were to be excluded from the Church while living, and to be deprived of Christian burial at their death." It was in the same Council that the doctrine of *Transubstantiation* was first made an article of the faith, even in the Church of Rome.

‡ Hebrews, ix. 28.

1 Pet. ii. 4-6.

§ Acts, iv. 12; xiii. 38, 39.

¶ 1 Tim. ii. 5.

|| 1 Cor. iii. 11.

** Acts, xxvi. 18.

of Christ, and show them unto us,"* we must ascribe to His blessed agency upon the Church the change which was wrought in it, although various external means were made use of in carrying that change into effect.

One of the principal of those means, undoubtedly, was the free use of that "Sword of the Spirit," the written "Word of God."† The art of printing had been discovered in the preceding century, and was now much employed. In A.D. 1535, the first complete translation of the whole Bible into the English language (for which the world is indebted, under God, to Myles Coverdale, afterwards Bishop of Exeter) was printed and published among our ancestors.‡ So that the instructed, at least, among both the Laity and the Clergy now read and searched for themselves, to ascertain what the truth was which that Holy Word contained. Formerly this was impossible. And as they read, many among them saw how they had been misled and deceived; and they became anxious to make their discoveries known, and to bring back the Church to the pure faith of the Gospel. In this way a great part of the nation became prepared to cast off the erroneous and false doctrines they had received, and to retrace their steps to the pure fountain of God's life-giving Truth.

But they had departed, likewise, from the *fellowship*, or discipline, of the Apostles.

We do not read in the Gospels, the Acts, or the Epistles, that any one of the Apostles was set up as a Ruler or Chief over the rest; they were all equal;§ but the Church had *invented* such a superiority. It had found out that St. Peter was the Lord of his brethren, and that Christ had given him authority to rule the whole Church throughout the world.

* John, xvi. 13, 14.

† Ephes. vi. 17.

‡ A translation of the New Testament, by Tyndale, had been previously published at Antwerp, A.D. 1526. The Anti-Reformers attempted to suppress this, by buying up all the copies which could be had, and burning them: but this only enabled him to publish more, and the people formed no favourable opinion of those who were afraid of the light of God's Holy Word.

§ St. Matthew, xviii. 1-4.

xxiii. 10, xxviii. 16-20.

And upon this invention had been built another—that the Bishop of Rome had succeeded St. Peter, and was indeed the Vicar of Christ, to whom all other Bishops were bound to be in subjection, and whom all Christians must obey, as they hoped for salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

But surely, if our Lord had intended his Church to be *thus* governed, he would have made it manifest, in some manner, so that it could not easily be mistaken. Not only, however, do we find no trace at all of such an authority in the New Testament, (for we nowhere find St. Peter either assuming any such authority, or having it assigned or offered to him by others,) but also, in the early history of the Church, we meet with much that is contrary thereto.

After the Apostles, the Church was governed by Bishops : that is, by an order of Ministers ordained and set over the two other orders of Presbyters and Deacons, in a particular district or diocese, whose office it was to superintend, to counsel, to restrain, and to guide, them in discharging their duties. Instances of this, even while the Apostles lived, we find in Timothy, who was ordained by St. Paul Bishop of Ephesus,† and in Titus, who was sent by the same Apostle, with the like delegated authority, to Crete. To each of these was committed the care of all the congregations of Christians in those parts. They were to “set in order the things that were wanting ;” to “ordain Elders (Presbyters) *in every city* ;” ‡ to admit to the order of Deacons ;§ to “receive accusations against these ministers ;” || to censure them, if necessary ;¶ to regulate the worship of the congregations,** and other matters relating to the Churches.††

The same appointment may be observed in the seven angels

* In virtue of this claim the Pope required an annual tribute, called Peter-pence, from every family in England, which was paid to him, with a few interruptions, from the time of Offa, king of Mercia, A.D. 792, until the reign of Henry VIII.

† Compare 1 Tim. i. 3, with 2 Tim. i. 6. ‡ Titus, i. 5.

§ 2 Tim. ii. 2. 1 Tim. iii. 8. || 1 Tim. v. 19. ¶ 1 Tim. v. 20, 21.

** 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2, 8—12.

†† 1 Tim. v. throughout.

of the seven Churches, afterwards mentioned in the first three chapters of the Revelation. These are reprov'd or commended by the Lord for the state of the Church under their care; and are evidently addressed as having authority over other Ministers.*

Now we find in the history of the Church, that in the *first ages* every such Bishop was equal in *authority* to another. Various circumstances might tend to give one more *importance* and *influence* than another possessed; but they were all equal as regarded their spiritual powers: one could not dictate to another, though he might advise him; nor was one bound to submit to another, though he was at liberty to follow his advice if he thought proper.†

This was the ancient government of the Church; but at the time referred to, though the order of Bishops existed, as it had all along from the time of the Apostles,‡ their independence was greatly impaired, and that of the Church under them, by reason of the usurpation of the Bishop of Rome, and his arrogant assumption of the title of Universal Bishop and Vicar of Christ.

Nor was this the only particular in which the Church had forsaken the fellowship of the Apostles. The laws of Christ

* Rev. ii. 2, 14, 20.

† This is shown clearly enough by Bingham, in his *Antiquities of the Christian Church*. And the testimony of Cyprian is much in point; in a letter to Pope Stephen, (all Bishops were in the early Church called Popes, that is, Fathers) he says, "Every Bishop has the free choice of his own will in the administration of his Church, having to give account of his own doings to the Lord." And in the Council of Carthage, convened to consider this question, he uses this language—"None of us sets himself up as Bishop of Bishops, or compels his colleagues, by despotic terror, to obey him; for every Bishop has full right to act for himself, according to the unfettered liberty and power which he possesses, and can no more be judged by another, than he can himself judge."

‡ "It is evident unto all men diligently reading the Holy Scriptures and ancient authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been these three orders of Ministers in Christ's Church—Bishops, Priests, and Deacons."—*Preface to Ordination Service of the Church of England*.

were almost wholly neglected, and others enacted which were opposed to them. The clergy were corrupt, grievously corrupt, in their lives and manners, as well as ignorant of true doctrine. And in place of that holiness of life which was witnessed in the primitive Church, vice, profaneness, and impiety prevailed amongst the people.

But thoughtful, serious, Bible-reading men perceived that these things must not be allowed to continue if they could possibly be removed. They were awake to the evils that existed, and wished to apply a remedy; but vices, when they have become inveterate, cannot easily be cured, and the work of Reformation therefore went on but slowly. Still they sighed and mourned over the desolations of Zion, and prayed that the "Lord's time to favour her, yea, His set time, might come."* And thus again was the nation preparing to go back to the Apostolic fellowship as well as doctrine.

But the corruption had spread through their *worship* also. Pagan rites had been introduced into the Church, and ceremonies without number, if not without meaning.† The simple, though most sacred and blessed, Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ was changed into a Sacrifice, which the Priest offered for the living and the dead. The host (as it was called) was elevated by the Priest, in the sight of the people, that they might behold it and adore: for they were taught to believe that the wafer, which was used instead of bread and wine, when consecrated, was actually changed into the body and blood of Christ. In this character they received it; but the laity were denied any share in the cup which was appointed by Him to represent his blood, although it does not appear how the Sacrament can be complete unless both elements are administered. Error, superstition, and idolatry, in fact, pervaded the solemn worship of the Almighty. There were purifications with holy water, anointings with holy oil, crossings, bendings of the knee,

* Psalm cii. 13.

† See the preface to the Book of Common Prayer, "Of Ceremonies."

exorcisms, invocations of saints and angels,—all contrary to the maxims of Christ and his Apostles, all opposed to these solemn truths; “God is a spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth,”* and “Let all things be done to edifying.”†

Nor must it be forgotten that in addition to the evils which have been already mentioned, the language in which the services were celebrated was one which the people in general did not understand—the Latin. This, as our Church justly observes in her 34th Article, was “plainly repugnant to the Word of God,‡ and the custom of the Primitive Church;” and even if the services themselves had been pure and unblamable, it may be asked, How could the great body of the people receive edification from the use of them?

But the time forbids me to enlarge on these particulars. What has been stated is sufficient to show you that our Church was grievously corrupted in all these respects. The time, however, came when God intended to bless her. The way had been prepared by the publication and perusal of the Bible in English. The main errors were detected; the truth was revealed. And when the young King Edward VI. came to the Throne (a youth who may be held up as a pattern, in many respects, to the young now), the Reformation began in earnest. His guardians and advisers had drank from the pure fountain of the Bible, and directed all their efforts against the errors in which they had been nurtured. And one great point which they saw to be necessary to be attended to, was the establishment of a pure and Scriptural method of public worship. In the year 1548, therefore, a Royal Commission of Bishops and other Divines was appointed for this purpose. The instructions to the Commissioners were to frame a Liturgy which should be “agreeable to Scripture and the custom of the Primitive Church.” And in a few

* John, iv. 24. † 1 Corinthians, xiv. 26.

‡ 1 Cor. xiv. 2, 11, 15, 16, 19, 23.

months this was accomplished. Being approved by the King's Council, and by the Convocation of Bishops and inferior Clergy, it was then sanctioned by Parliament, and ordered to be used throughout England on and after Whitsunday, 1549.

The book thus framed by the Commissioners, and then adopted by the nation, was not, in all respects, the same as that which we now use, though to a great extent it was. There were some errors left, which is not to be wondered at, considering the times and circumstances. Nor are we to understand that it was a book *entirely new*, the prayers of which were then for the first time written. It was, in fact, a compilation from books which had been used from ancient times. Some of the prayers were hundreds of years old; but they had been previously expressed in the Latin language, and had been marred and mutilated by errors and superstitions. Being now divested of these, they were translated into the English tongue, that the people might worship God with understanding, and really unite together in offering up the sacrifices which were due to His holy name.

The design was to provide a form which should be at once simple, scriptural, and devotional; sufficient for all, and level to the capacities of all: and how far the attempt was successful may be perceived by what we now possess. For the principal additions which were subsequently made were the Exhortation, the Confession, and the Absolution at the beginning of the Morning and Evening Services, the General Thanksgiving, with a few other prayers; some errors were also corrected which at the first formation of the book had not been removed.

Such, my brethren, was the nature of the event which has been thought worthy of being specially commemorated at this time; and surely the effecting of such a work is one for which our thanksgivings are abundantly due to the Lord our God: for the work evidently proceeded from Him: it was the movement of His Spirit upon the turbid waters which brought it about. And if we consider the effect of the adop-

tion of this Reformed Liturgy in the National Church, we shall find that it was this: *It was at once a formal and decided testimony on the part of the nation, against the errors which had so long prevailed. It was the national expression of those reforming principles, which were now, through God's grace, working in the national character. And it showed men how they ought to worship God, while it enabled them to do so in a becoming manner.* All the great truths and principles of Scripture; all the doctrines which relate to our pardon, peace, justification before God, our holiness and comfort, were brought out and embodied in the devotional forms of the Church, free from the errors with which they had been previously encumbered, and well-nigh smothered. Nor should we forget the provision that was made in the services, that the Bible should be copiously and constantly read to the people. Thus the nation was brought back, externally at least, (and we know that with many it was an inward work also) to that from which they had departed; to the "Apostles' doctrine and fellowship;" to their "breaking of bread," in place of the Sacrifice of the Mass; and to "prayers" in which all could unite, instead of having forms of devotion which a small number only could comprehend.

These were the effects of the adoption of such a Liturgy then; and they have continued and are felt, up to the present hour. Twice indeed our Liturgy has been suppressed; (once in the reign of the sanguinary Mary, and again during the period of the Commonwealth); but even when suppressed by the strong hand of power, there were those who worshipped by means of it in secret, and found its devotions both consolatory and edifying; and as soon as they were permitted, the great body of the people again accepted it with joy and thankfulness. And great reason have we to rejoice that they did so. For the Liturgy is, in truth, the expression to us of the mind of the Church of England. It shows us, generally at least, what she is in doctrine; though not in all points with the same exactness as is done by her articles. It teaches how she would

have her people to worship God, and what she desires them to be both in their lives and principles. Its tendency is to impress them with a spirit of genuine and habitual devotion.

Far indeed is she from placing, or wishing to place, it on a par with the Bible, but it may with truth be called her companion to the Bible, and a valuable help for her members towards understanding the Bible. The possession of such a blessing for three hundred years past is, therefore, an event which, next to our possession of the Bible, should call forth our warmest acknowledgments and thanksgivings to the Lord our God. The millions of England, from the inhabitant of the court down to the tenant of the humblest cottage in the kingdom, have thus been taught how to worship God spiritually; the Clergy have been enabled to guide the devotions of the people, free from error and superstition on the one hand, and from irreverence or cold formality on the other; and the nation has had a standard of orthodoxy, which has reflected its light even upon those who dissent from the use of it, and of which it has been acknowledged by one of the most eminent amongst them, that "the evangelical purity of its sentiments, the chastened fervour of its devotion, and the majestic simplicity of its language, have combined to place it on the very first rank of uninspired compositions."* One of the leading journals of Dissenters, not many years ago, also bore witness that the "devotion of the Prayer-Book is unrivalled in beauty, majesty, propriety, and comprehension." And who can tell how many hundreds of thousands, in every age which has followed, have thus been spiritually edified, who would otherwise have lived and died in the darkness of error, the thralldom of superstition, or the misery of total unbelief?

But the same blessed privilege has been extended, and is extending, far beyond the limits of Great Britain and Ireland. The same Prayer-Book, with some alterations, is used by

* The late Robert Hall, in his *Remarks on the Present State of the Dissenting Interest*.—p. 47.

our brethren of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, whose numbers are estimated at about 1,500,000. The various Colonies of England enjoy the same boon. It has gone forth, likewise, to the countries of Europe, as a testimony of what our Church is, practically and devotionally. It bears the same witness among the infant congregations of India. It has lately been translated into the language of China, where there are two or three hundred millions of people yet to be enlightened with the knowledge of Christ. And at all our Missionary Stations it is employed for the same purpose as among ourselves. It is indeed calculated by the Bishop of Gibraltar, at whose suggestion this day is observed as one of thanksgiving for this blessing, that there are about 20,000,000 of souls in various parts of the world belonging to our Communion, and who are, therefore, more or less influenced and guided by our Book of Common Prayer.

In what way, then, let me ask, can we express our gratitude to Almighty God for the enjoyment of so great a blessing? For surely something more than merely verbal acknowledgments become us. "The most Christian way," says the Bishop, "of expressing our gratitude to God, will be to make a thank-offering to Him out of that which He has given us, for the purpose of advancing His cause by increasing the efficiency of our own Branch of His Church."

To this therefore I now, in conclusion, invite you. With regard to the collection to be made, whether received at or before the Offertory, it will all be forwarded through the Bishop of the Diocese to the Common Fund, which is to be appropriated for the object before mentioned; or, to be more explicit, will be expended in providing additional Bishops and Clergymen for the Church in the Colonies and Missionaries for Foreign parts.

You will observe that I mention Bishops as well as other Clergymen; for it is proposed to send forth an additional number of both. We desire indeed to plant and extend our

Church after the Apostolic model in our colonies, and the Missions to the Heathen ; so that not only the Gospel shall be preached, and a pure form of worship established, but that these may be preserved from decay and corruption, and that unity of mind and practice be promoted, which, if we judge from what is recorded in the New Testament, it was the especial design of Episcopacy to secure.

And I may observe that, as the order of Bishops has been extended of late years, the most important results have been found to follow. Without looking abroad for proofs, we need only remark what has been going on in our own colony. Previous to the appointment of our first Bishop, the Church was neither extending, nor did there appear any probability of its extension. But since that event, there has been, notwithstanding great difficulties and trials, a continual progression, into the particulars and the reasons of which I need not now enter.*

* Some idea of the progress of the Church of England in the Australian Colonies, since the appointment of the first Bishop, may be formed from the following particulars :—

The See of Australia was founded in the year 1836, in which year the Bishop arrived in Sydney. It then embraced the whole Continent of New Holland, with the Islands of Van Diemen's Land and New Zealand. In the year 1841, New Zealand was erected into a separate See ; in 1842, Van Diemen's Land was constituted another, under the title of Tasmania. In 1847, the remaining Diocese of Australia was again subdivided into four Sees, namely, those of Sydney, Melbourne, Newcastle, and Adelaide,—the whole six forming one Province, of which the Bishop of Sydney is Metropolitan.

The number of Clergymen in Australia, on the arrival of the Bishop in 1836, was only twenty ; the number of Churches ten. There are now in the reduced Diocese of Sydney fifty-two Clergymen, fifty-four finished Churches, twenty-three in course of erection, exclusive of the Sydney Cathedral, besides several licensed Chapels, numerous School-houses, and other buildings finished or projected, with a prospect of their being completed.

In the Dioceses of Newcastle and Melbourne, when detached, there were fourteen Clergymen ; there are now more than thirty, and several young men preparing for Ordination.

It is believed that in the six Sees which form the Province, there are not fewer than one hundred and sixty ordained Clergymen.

And so it has been, and will be, elsewhere. The order of Bishops is as necessary to the *well-being* of the Church now, as it was when established by the Apostles; and we may expect the same happy results from making our Church in practice what she is in theory.

If, then, you value your own privileges, my brethren, do what you can to extend them unto others. If you wish to benefit your country, your fellow-churchmen in destitute parts, or the heathen abroad, you have now an opportunity to do them service. And when you think of the mercy which has been shown to you, when you consider the blessings you enjoy in that Reformed Branch of the Church, beneath whose hallowed shade it is your privilege to dwell, and then cast your eyes abroad, and contemplate the miseries of the destitute, the benighted, and the lost, suffer not your hearts to be cold, nor your hands slack, in the cause of God your Saviour. "Withhold not good from those to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it."* Let the love of Christ constrain you. "Freely ye have received, freely give."† And though it be but a mite which you can cast into the treasury of God, remember Him who has said, "Verily I say unto you, it shall in no wise lose its reward.‡

And it is not one of the least benefits which have resulted from this organization of the Church, that the energies of the Laity have been called forth, and their efforts stimulated and combined for the propagation of the Gospel, and the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom.

* Proverbs, iii. 27.

† Matt. x. 8.

‡ Matt. x. 42.