

*The Ancient Things of the Catholic Church in England*, by  
Frederick William Faber. (1838).

THE  
ANCIENT THINGS  
OF  
THE CATHOLIC CHURCH  
IN ENGLAND.

BY THE REV.  
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And these are ancient things.—1 CHRON. iv. 22.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:  
PRINTED FOR J. G. F. & J. RIVINGTON,  
ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD,  
AT WATERLOO PLACE, PALL MALL.  
1838.  
[*Price Fourpence.*]

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PREJUDICES are not necessarily bad things; although they may often do a great deal of harm. There are good prejudices as well as evil ones. There are prejudices which it is good for men to have, which good men always have, which a man could scarcely be good if he had not. This is only another way of saying that there are certain things which men are bound to believe in, and to love before they can give any reason for it. They have a natural feeling of jealousy about every thing which they respect or admire. They look with fear and suspicion upon whatever seems really to detract from that admiration. For example; if a man has a friend, who excels in any particular attainment, he listens with distrust, often with dislike, to any thing which takes from the merit or the worth of that attainment. He feels that his friend is concerned in the matter. This, of course, is neither more nor less than a prejudice. Yet it is a prejudice which we love, and which we ought to treat with delicacy, kindness, and gentleness, all the while thinking better of a man for being actuated by it.

Now there is a prejudice of precisely the same sort as this against the doctrine of the One Catholic and Apostolic Church—*that it leads us away from Christ!*

It is quite strange to see how widely this is spread, even among serious thinking people. It shows us the danger of dwelling only on portions of the Bible, of picking and choosing, and assorting and systematizing certain favourite doctrines of Holy Scripture. It has really come to pass that Churchmen are afraid of the Church, and that too for the strangest and newest of all reasons, because it leads them

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from Christ. Surely on the very first view of the matter we should say it could not be true. It must be a prejudice; a prejudice doing a great deal of harm, yet to be respected because of the good things out of which it comes.

A person unaccustomed to what are popularly called High Church opinions, is not unfrequently struck at the perpetual recurrence of the word "*Church*" in the sermons, the writings, and even the conversation of those who differ from him, or at least think they differ. But he soon gets a step further than this. He sees that not only does this word "*Church*" come in very frequently, but that it comes in, in most cases, where he would have used one or other of our Saviour's Names. If he is a hasty, proud, or uncandid man, he dismisses the matter at once; and rests, where shallow and uncharitable religionists delight to rest, in an apposite, pithy misquotation of Holy Scripture. For instance, confounding, as is not uncommon, Jewish things and Christian things, such a man would imagine that he had at once accounted for, answered, and condemned this language by the words of Jeremiah—"The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are these;" as if one might not just as well say on the other side—"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." Yet such is the use to which Christians now-a-days put the Word of Almighty God! They make epigrams out of it. With these men we have nothing to do. There are others who are pained at the frequency of the word "*Church*," and, as it seems to them, the infrequency of the most sacred of our Saviour's Names. There is just this prejudice standing between them and Church views. A jealousy of the Church lest it should lead us, our thoughts, our hopes, and our affections from Christ. Now this shows that these love their Master truly, sincerely, and fervently. They are holy people; and, although another man may think their love is not according to knowledge, yet he must have a cold, dull, ungenerous

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heart, who does not feel drawn towards them, seeing that they do really love their Saviour with so much warmth and simplicity. They, like Mary, have chosen the good part. They have seated themselves at the foot of Jesus; and they look upon this doctrine of Church as a something to allure them from that one spot where alone grace is ever dropping from the anointed Son of God, something of human invention with the marks of man's wisdom and man's intellect about it, something which if admitted will distract the evangelical singleness of their hearts. Alas! that people should think so: yet to speak harshly or bitterly, to say high and scornful things, to argue them down, would be to treat Christ's children as the world treats them. We are bound rather to shew them with all meekness, softness, and constancy, that our love for Christ is as strong and fresh, as jealous and as vigorous as theirs: but that we express it in a different way, and that our reason for doing so is only because we think the different way the most reverent way; and, as such, more free from error, more full and satisfying and spiritual, and, as springing from obedience, more acceptable in the sight of Him Whom we adore and love. Surely, if a man would take the Bible and patiently unfold all this, many who now start back from the Church, as if it were a substitute for Christ, would come in gladly to the old and apostolic view of it, when they found that Christ was ever there, clearer, brighter, more full of promises, more abounding in gifts than elsewhere; and enabling us to get closer to Him than we otherwise could do. Such persons are like St. Philip, "Lord, show us the Father and it sufficeth us:" and surely Christ may answer from out His Church, "Have I been so long time with you, and do ye not know Me?"

Unhappily the Church of Rome, our old enemy, remains our enemy still. She has done us as much harm almost since the Reformation as she did before it. Where she is really most unlike Scripture, there she tries to look

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most like it; and the consequence has been that she has all along endeavoured to keep back from us certain high and primitive truths, by having her name, now a justly odious one, affixed to them. In this matter she has had more or less success at different times; to the great discomfort of all true and loyal sons of the Church of England. It may be as well then, old and trite as the subject is, to say a few words on some of those features of our Church, which bear at once a double witness against Rome on the one hand, or mere Protestant Congregations on the other. It will help to show that the only real preservative against Popery, because the only real preservative against perpetual change, is to be found in the views of the Church, from which many shrink back because of the latent Romanism supposed to be contained therein. The end of all religious change is Romanism or Socinian infidelity. To be safe from Rome, we must have doctrines older than Rome; and such we profess to have. We refuse to have our inheritance taken away from us, because an unfaithful Church has brought wild beasts into it, and left wreck and devastation all over its rich and happy fields. All this fortunately is matter of history, matter of fact; not a thing whereon to build theories or abstract reasonings of our own. At all events, enough may be said to shew men, as well the cruelty, as the ignorance, of throwing big and fearful words of reproach up and down, without knowing exactly what they mean by them, and when perchance the hearts they wound are in the sight of God as deeply and intensely set upon the promotion of the pure and simple truths of the Gospel as themselves.

The Christian world since the Reformation has presented a scene as painful as it is singular. No matter whether we turn our eyes to the old corrupt Church of Rome, or to the infinitely various and contradictory bodies which separated from her, we see something in them all, some features, some characteristics, which are not to be

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found in the Holy Scriptures. Now in this respect, as opposed at once to Romanists on the one hand, and to Protestants on the other, stands the Church of England. Let us see how the case is with her. The ancient ceremonies of the Church Catholic, as well as its doctrines, were, in the west, in the keeping of the Church of Rome. She was not entirely faithful in her stewardship. She mingled up a good deal of error and novelty with most of them, rites as well as doctrines. She linked to many beautiful ceremonies new notions of her own, having as little countenance from primitive usage as from Holy Scripture. Indeed all really primitive usages, if not explicitly taught in Scripture, are indicated therein: and that is enough for faith and love. She went on doing this till she had rendered many practices, in themselves not merely innocent but catholic, quite unsafe. This was the state of things when our Formularies were drawn up. The theory of the Church of England, as set forth in them, was, that she was to be in her services, ceremonies, creeds, and manner of dealing with the Bible, pure, primitive, catholic, and evangelical. In her arches and her aisles, her towers and her foundations, every thing in her and about her was to be of Apostolic building, fashioned after Apostolic models, filled with the true and liberal light of Apostolic teaching. Such is the Church of England in theory. But in her endeavour to carry this fully out she was very much interfered with. "Without were fightings, within were fears." There were many of the accessories of devotion, which the Church of Christ in the single-hearted innocence of early times, might enjoy without fear. It was not so now. Various rites, and forms, and ornaments, had the taint of corruption in them. Another meaning than their own had passed unto them. They could not perhaps in the people's minds be divorced from the error to which they had so long been wedded. The Church therefore was compelled to forego them. So far she did lose something at the Reformation. It was nothing in

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comparison of what she gained. All changes are full of evil. The Reformation was not without evil, because it was a change. It had marvellously little evil in it considering what a change it was. Only, not they who wrought the change, but they who made it necessary, are to be blamed. The fault, the heavy portion of the sin of that rests with the Church of Rome. But after all, confessing that we are poorer in these things than our forefathers of antiquity were, still how rich are we even in primitive riches. If no western Church now-a-days is quite what its Mother used to be, England surely comes nearest to her; nay, so near that they, who have well scanned the Mother's lineaments, can be at no loss to trace her features in the child. She did give up some things. It is granted. But what did she refuse to give up? In what she did give up she witnessed against Rome. She witnessed just as much against modern sectarians in what she did not give up. Some Christian bodies have sacrificed old primitive ceremonies to purity of doctrine, as if both could not be had together. Some have given up old Apostolical forms of Church government to what they deemed Gospel freedom, as if one were incompatible with the other, and not, as is the real truth, that the one only exists under the other. Some to avoid licentiousness have grown cold. Others to escape coldness have waxed licentious. The Church of England gave up none of these things. She has them still. They are her ancient things.

More or less perfect, more or less pure, more or less beautiful, still almost all the Christian congregations in the West, with the exception of the English Churches, have somewhat in them unscriptural, somewhat in them of man's devising, somewhat which rests neither upon the foundations of Apostles and Prophets nor on the cornerstone Christ Jesus. If we look deeper into the matter we shall get a step farther. Whatever in them is unscriptural, is also new; and indeed, the Holy Scriptures being old,

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whatever is new must therefore and on that account be unscriptural also.

Now placed as we are, among various and conflicting bodies of Sectarians, among numberless and contradictory forms of doctrine, a plain statement of the free evangelical principles of our own mother Church cannot be an unpractical subject for us to consider.

I.—That then which our Church has, and others have not, is first and plainly shewn in its reverence for antiquity. This is stamped upon all its services and formularies of doctrine. First in its old form of government. “It is evident,” says the Preface to the Ordination Service, “unto all men diligently reading Holy Scripture and *ancient authors*, that from the Apostles’ time there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ’s Church; Bishops, Priests, and Deacons.” Again, as to its doctrine, the Convocation of 1571, instructs preachers to take the Catholic doctors and ancient Bishops as guides in collecting doctrine from the Old and New Testament; and in the 34th Article, the Church forbids any one to break the traditions and ceremonies of the Church. So again in the Preface to the Prayer Book, concerning the Service of the Church, we are bid to search out the grounds thereof by the *ancient Fathers*; they give as a reason for rearranging the liturgy, that the godly and decent order of the *ancient Fathers* hath been so altered, broken and neglected; then, a few lines further on, the division of the Psalms is authorized by the example of the *ancient Fathers*; and lastly it says, here you have an order for prayer and for the reading of the Holy Scripture much agreeable to the mind and purpose of the *old Fathers*: and all this in a preface only one page and a few lines long. Then in the next short preface on ceremonies, St. Augustine is twice quoted and referred to. Lastly, as if to show how natural this reverence came to the Church, if we look into her service, we have the prayer of St. Chrysostom, the creed of St. Athanasius, the Nicene



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creed. The 6th Article quotes St. Jerome, and the 29th St. Augustine. From this then, and from the strong and invariable teaching of our Reformers, we may draw the inference that the great characteristic of our branch of the Catholic Church of Christ is a reverence for antiquity. It is needless here to trace out the effect of this standing in the old paths, and looking out for the old ways and walking therein; how it has given a firmness and stability to our Church, how it has enabled it to flourish, and is still enabling it even under the most adverse circumstances: how its Three Creeds, for example, have been like so many bundles of myrrh in the Church's bosom, preserving it from the taint and the decay of heresy, of novelty, of human systems, of unsoundness and degeneracy. Let us look rather,—it is the more instructive, because the darker, side of the picture,—at the effect which other Christian communities have experienced from their neglect of antiquity, their high and lofty and disrespectful handling of it. For example: the Protestant bodies on the Continent and dissenting communities among ourselves. The latter indeed have fared less evilly than their foreign brethren. The presence of the Holy Catholic Church amongst them has blessed them indirectly and as it were by accident. It has been to them like the body of the Prophet, touching the cold and lifeless corpse. It has given them a sort of energy, a borrowed, unnatural, awkward kind of life. Yet even amongst ourselves many communities are existing which deny what we believe to be the fundamentals of the Gospel of Christ. Some which began in difference of discipline and government, soon came to differ in doctrine also. They grew from bad to worse. From slighting the ministry which alone could administer the ever blessed Sacraments, they came to deny the grace of the Sacraments. Some to disuse them altogether. Some deny the proper and eternal Godhead of our Saviour. So of course these have ceased to be Christians at all. So it ever has been in Church History.

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Schism drops down into heresy, and heresy falls away at last into apostasy. Some openly teach that we should sin, that grace may abound. Others talk slightingly and blasphemously of the insufficiency of the Written Word, and set up above it I know not what extravagant, indecent, and wretched tumults of their own base passions, which they attribute—most horrible to think, and which one almost shrinks from saying—to the Third Person of the adorable Trinity. The community founded by Calvin, though once it did hold the foundations of the faith amid the impure and turbulent notions wherewith he obscured the truth, is now the nest of infidelity and the favoured home of the Socinian apostasy. This is a fearful and appalling picture; and how unlike the calm, sober, bright, and fervent piety of the Church of England!

But now turn the other way, to that miserable and forlorn Church that once was Queen among the nations. With all her professions, the falsehood of which her own history sets forth, no Church has shown less reverence for antiquity than the Church of Rome; no Church has kept less faithfully that deposit of sound faith once for all delivered to the Saints. The lineaments of a true Church of Christ are scarcely visible upon her, distorted, disfigured, buried beneath the load of utterly abominable and corrupt novelties wherewith she has overwhelmed them. The old doctors, to whom our Church refers us, could find, no more than ourselves, the doctrines of modern Rome in the Holy Scripture. Has she not made the Commandment of God almost of none effect by her traditions? Has she not destroyed the power of Bishops and the freedom of Churches by the unscriptural domination of the Archbishop of Rome? Has she not added falsehood to the Sacraments, and brought in purgatory, and other dark notions too distressing to be enumerated, perhaps even idolatry? And all this because she has neglected the single and pure voice of Christian antiquity. Look at the Church of Rome, as she

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was in ancient times, when she was called the virgin Church, because she was so free from all taint of heresy and unsoundness. She was then bright and glorious as a sunset sky, gleaming all over richly with the light of truth, kindled within her from the pure fountains of Apostles and Evangelists, a marvel to the nations, the bravest jewel that hung about the Cross of Christ. Then watch her as years rolled on, watch her with rude and indelicate hand touching here and there her spotless heavenly creed. Where she touched she marred, where she marred there she left a stain. The light began to fade within; one by one the lamps that hung there went out: the glorious thing grew paler and paler, emptied more and more of its splendour and its loveliness, its gifts, its graces, and its unearthly powers: till now the lines have melted away into the dull, cold, evening gray of the world around, and we scarce may tell whether she still is or is not a Christian Church. May God have mercy upon her, and upon all those gentle hearts within her who may, perchance, in her dark dim gloom be feeling after Christ! This picture is as instructive as it is painful; painful to us who, in early times, owed so much to Rome, painful to all who have the purity of evangelical doctrine deeply and solemnly at heart. She was our mother Church; and we may almost hear the voice of God speaking to us in the words of Hosea:—"Plead with your mother, plead: for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband: let her therefore put away her whoredoms out of her sight, and her adulteries from between her breasts; lest I strip her naked, and set her as in the day that she was born, and make her as a wilderness, and set her like a dry land, and slay her with thirst. And I will not have mercy upon her children; for they be the children of whoredoms. For their mother has played the harlot: she that conceived them hath done shamefully."

Such, then, on both sides of us, have been the consequences of being neglectful of Christian antiquity.

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May the lesson sink deep into our hearts, may we be so jealous of our inheritance, the fulness and the beauty of Catholic truth, that we may not be beguiled of our remnants of it, by any system which the pride or the ingenuity, the reasoning or the imagination of men may devise in these active and uneasy times!

II.—Now let us say somewhat on another characteristic of the English Church as opposed both to Romanists and to Protestants,—Its fearlessness of Scripture. Now this is a matter very practical to all of us. A narrow way of looking upon and reading the Word of God is common, is invariable outside the Church; and as evil is always catching, we may become tainted with it ourselves, and thus depart from the purity of our own Church, So much is clear. No merely human system of doctrine dare trust itself with Scripture. It is afraid of it. It must be afraid of it from the very nature of things. The revelation of an Infinite Being to finite and ignorant sinners cannot be systematic. It must be darkness and light mixed up together, mystery and glory running in and out of each other perpetually. The lines of the Christian scheme are in one place deep and darkly graven, in another faintly sketched, not unfrequently disappearing altogether, and beginning again in broken and fragmentary brightnesses up and down; in the Apostle's words, "We see in a glass darkly." But the pride of man will not be content with this. It will have clear, rounded, logical statements, critical accuracy, philosophical precision, literary propriety. This brokenness, this rugged-ness, unevenness, indefiniteness in which the Gospel is put and left with mankind, is irksome to the weak, arguing, positive, cavilling intellect of man. They will have knowledge, not love. They do not see that practice is as clear as a sunbeam in the Bible. They are not content with knowing that doctrines are so and so, but they will know the *how*. They will have mysteries clear, as if they would not cease to be mysteries if they were so. There

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is not the holiest, deepest cavern in the Revelation of God, on which the Holy Trinity hath set the seal and sign of fearfullest mystery, whether it concern the decrees of Jehovah, or the adorable dark things of the Threefold God we fear, adore, and love, but these rude men will break the seal, and think it wisdom, glory, and greatness to violate the Sanctuary. Faith knows not of, it shrinks back in horror from such philosophical sacrilege as this. It thinks only of obeying out of a childish heart. "Mine eyes gush out with tears because men *keep* not Thy Law." These men are Christian Infidels.

Of course, one need not take long to show how Rome's coward heart trembles at Scripture. She will not let her sons have it. She could not stand if the Gospels be the touchstone of a Gospel Church. Many reformed Congregations, though they have not shown it in this way, have sufficiently shewn themselves to be human systems, because they are afraid of Scripture in its full length, and breadth, and depth. They take partial and contracted views of it. For example: Luther invented a new theory of justification: what was the consequence? He could not manage the Epistle of St. James; it refused to be crushed up into his arbitrary and tyrannical system; so, being a rough and violent man, he called it "an epistle of straw," These scornful words he absolutely applied to a portion of the living Word of God, written, as he and we believe, by the Inspiration of the Holy Ghost. So his opponent Calvin could not conceal how different his systematizing of Scripture was from the teaching of the purest antiquity. We read that he called the Nicene Creed "a childish sing-song," and that he objected to the use of the word "Trinity." These little things are very instructive. It would be easy, if it were not invidious, to multiply strange examples of this sort, taken, as the above are, out of books now in every body's hands. These found in the two opposite and hostile bodies of Foreign Protestants are enough for our purpose. Let us

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look to ourselves. Perhaps we are not utterly without fault in this matter.

First, let us look at the theory and practice of our Church. The Articles and Homilies not only invite us, but drive us to the Scripture. In her services, the Calendar is so arranged that, with the exception of some Chapters, the Song of Solomon, and the Books of Chronicles, which are mainly repetition, the Old Testament is publicly read through entire every year, the New Testament three times, except the Revelation, the Psalms twelve times, beside the ninety-four Epistles and Gospels for Sundays, Saints' days, and other holy days, throughout the year. This shows pretty clearly how fearless of Holy Scripture the English Church is; how free, Catholic, and really evangelical she is in her treatment of it. Now, let us look at our own practice, for it is much to be feared a sectarian and puritanical spirit, which is Popery under another name, has crept in among us in our handling of the Word of God. The sons of the Church have not heart enough to be as Catholic as their mother. For example: we may have known cold men who took low, unworthy views of free grace, justification, and the Cross of Christ. Those men when they met with the words of St. Paul in such passages as, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:" and many similar passages which burn like torches up and down his writings, always guarded them with some cold and wretched caution about good works, and the necessity of holiness, and the danger of Antinomian views, and so forth. Now, all this is very true, but does the Holy Ghost say a word about it in those places? Are they not all the while distorting Scripture? Are they receiving teachably what is said in the place before them? Are they not doggedly fixing their thoughts on one part of the Gospel when the Holy Ghost by the mouth of St. Paul is bidding them look at another? Is this to look Scripture in the face like men who are not afraid of it whatever it says?

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who are ready to be led by it, like Abraham, who went out not knowing whither he went? Surely there is a want of faith here.

Now take the other side. We may have known others, who, when they meet with such expressions as, "By thy words shalt thou be justified, and by thy words shalt thou be condemned," and many like passages which speak of reward and our own works, of not being justified by faith only, of Abraham being justified by works, flew off from them as if they were stung; and would begin to gather up all the texts which spoke of free grace, and dwell doggedly on them. If a man, and not the Holy Ghost in St. Peter said, "Baptism saves us," we should be told it was very wrong language, highly unevangelical, leading people away from Christ, and so forth. Now is not this to be wise above what is written? Is this to look Scripture in the face? To follow it quietly and peaceably in all its windings? Is it not all popery, the popery of the heart? Picking and choosing in Scripture? Is it to be sons of a Church whose Articles men fight about, some saying they are Calvinistical, others Arminian, while the Church is neither one nor the other, but follows Scripture wherever it leads her, and so to argumentative men, for faith never argues, seems to be inconsistent; they never seeing that she knows nothing of Calvin or of Arminius, except to dislike and reject both as mere human teachers. So, forsooth, she is Popish in her Bishops and her ordinations; semi-popish in her high view of the Sacraments; Calvinistic in one Article; Arminian in another; Lutheran in a great many; all three together in some; while all the while she travels on in much meekness and much quietness, like a holy mother journeying with her child through the wilderness to meet the Master; and ever and anon she meets first with one petulant wayfaring man and then another, who made new roads for themselves, sometimes running alongside her own, sometimes diverging far away, and ending, alas! we know not where:

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and while they mock her and provoke her to argument, she has an answer ready for all. If her old and beautiful ceremonies are attacked, she is ready; "If any be contentious, I have no such custom, neither the Churches of God." If Calvin, Luther, Arminius, and the like, be thrown in her teeth, and she be told to obey them, her answer is, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are these?" Oh! may Almighty God bless her evermore in this Apostolic moderation, and suffer her to be clothed still in the austere gracefulness of her primitive robes. The fashions of the world may change. The old garment of the Church may seem quaint and awkward and ill adjusted to new and modern doctors. But her work will stand the fire, and theirs will not. In one hour shall they be made desolate, because they were wiser than the ancients, and purer than Apostles, and keener-eyed than prophets. "Rejoice over them, thou heaven, and ye holy Apostles and Prophets; for God hath revenged you upon them."

In conclusion. If what I have said has been enough to give you some faint and imperfect outline of the system of your Church, and the peculiar position which she occupies: if it has been enough to show you how the outward resemblance of some matters of faith or practice to popery only sets off the more strikingly their inward and essential difference,—it may be well to say somewhat now on Church authority; for this is the way in which these points come practically home to ourselves. The Church can do no more than profess a theory. She cannot force her members to carry it out into practice. She is without discipline. Her hands are tied. It is melancholy it should be so. Still, the question with ourselves, as humble and quiet Christians, is,—What is the best use we can make of an unfortunate state of things? Surely to do that generously and affectionately, which our mother cannot compel us to do. It may be our lot to see her civil importance in the country diminished, by attacks on her Cathedral



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Establishments, because men at prayer seem to the world to be but men in idleness. We may see the hierarchy shorn of its strength, and beauty, and efficiency in Ireland, that a pure and evangelical Church may be more at the mercy of political agitators and seditious Romanists. The Church Catholic in the forlorn and injured Colonies may be stripped of her rights, and made over in mockery to the Providence of God: more sure and firm in that, than ever she could have been in the niggard bounty and unblessed protection of evil men. We may, perchance, behold the liberties of our venerable Universities, those perpetual fountains of the Church, which may God in His power and mercy bless and keep! grievously disturbed, because men, who act on high, and noble, and Christian principles are likely to be troublesome to those who act on low, and worldly, and unworthy ones. All this it may fall to us to witness. All this our duty to God may lead us to protest against, and, each in his appointed place, most seriously to condemn. Still, these are not our chief arms as Churchmen. We may talk, and write, and argue. It may be our duty so to do. But if this be all, we do not love our mother as we should do. We are not kind-hearted sons and dutiful. She appointed her fasts. Do we fast thereupon? Are those days marked by any acts of self-denial, done for our mother's sake, and to her good, or are they lost in the common undistinguished mass of worldly days? Are they times of deepest prostration of heart, of spirit-searching melancholy, of mournful confession of our sins,—our sins as a Church, as a nation, as a diocese, as a parish, as individual members of the Body Mystical? Are her Festivals days of quiet and subdued spiritual joys? Do we sit, like children, first at the feet of this Apostle, then of that, as she leads us round the blessed company to be taught, and bids us, at such times live among the dead, our hands clasped in theirs, with a mysterious love, that we may so sit more lightly to the world when we go back to our work and care therein? We

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see the clergy almost fainting, the harvest plentiful, and the labourers few. Dissent, and violence, and wrong, and party-spirit, and cruel opposition, making them slow, and weary, and sick at heart. Do we diligently watch for the Four Holy Seasons of the Ember Weeks to come round, when all the loyal Churchmen in the land are at prayer, and fast and watching for their Bishops, Priests, and Deacons? We are bidden to be Catholic. The Church is one Body. She is the only Body we have to do with. Are we given to make arbitrary bodies for ourselves, parties, little sects, selfish distinctions, Churches within the Church? Our hearts then are not large enough. We know not how high, how glorious, how angel-like a thing a Churchman's charity is, or ought to be. My brethren, it is in these things that the strength of our Church consists. It is not in the wealth of her laity. It is not in the learning of her priests. It is still less in the secular uneasiness of those who think themselves her friends, and would fain help her zealously, but whose zeal is not according to knowledge. And, moreover, it is in these things that she cannot avenge herself; and we are mean enough to take advantage of our mother's weakness. "My son," saith the Wise Man, "despise not thy mother when she is old." To thoughtful men the Church is only the more terrible for her meekness. Vengeance is more sure because it lingereth. She hath made her cause over to her Lord. Thus she is like God Himself. His laws do not, in ordinary cases, avenge themselves here, as they are wont of old. They wait their time and His coming. To faithful men she is all gleaming with the gifts and graces of the seven-fold Spirit Who abides within her. "The King's daughter is all glorious within." The blessed Trinity is set up in her holy place, though it be not manifestly yet; the Glory that was to be her dower when her Spouse ascended up on high. But surely she is not a mother to be feared by her true and loyal sons.

If, then, we believe her to be in danger, if we

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believe her to be worthy of our love, why have we not the manliness to rise up into our places? Why do we stop, and hesitate, and question, and prove, and cavil, and dispute, when it is our mother whose voice is calling from the dust? Oh! let us cast off this bad and slavish spirit; let us knock away those cold chains we have bound about ourselves; let us rise like freemen in the freedom wherewith Christ hath made us free; let us be daring Christians, ancient Christians, ready, in the Name of God and of His Christ, to walk on the waves with St. Peter, or drink the bitter cup with St. James and St. John, or to die, if need so be, with St. Paul. Prayer, and watch, and fast, with the mercy of our God, may yet save the Church on earth; and thereafter cometh praise, and rest, and the Supper of the Lamb with the Church in Heaven.

### ARCHBISHOP LAUD'S PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH.

O ETERNAL God and merciful Father, I humbly beseech Thee bless Thy holy Catholic Church, wheresoever spread upon the face of the whole earth. Good Lord, purge it from all atheism, heresy, schism, superstition, factious maintenance of groundless opinions; that one faith, one Lord, one Baptism, may in all places be uniformly professed, as Thy Church is, and can be but one. And grant, good Lord, that I may be, and continue, a faithful, living, and a working member under Christ the Head, in that Church the Body, all the days of my life, and through the hour of my death, through the merits, and by the grace, of the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, and only Saviour. Amen.