

JOURNAL
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS OF THE
NINTH ANNUAL CONVENTION
OF THE
PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
IN THE DIOCESE OF GEORGIA.

TOGETHER WITH
THE CONVENTION SERMON,

Preached at the opening of the same, in Christ's Church,
St. Simon's Island, on Sunday Morning,
April 17th, 1831.

BY THE REV. HUGH SMITH,
RECTOR OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH,
AUGUSTA.

PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF THE CONVENTION.

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1831.

JOURNAL, &C.

CHRIST CHURCH, ST. SIMON'S ISLAND, \\
Monday, April 18th, 1831. /

This being the day appointed for holding the Ninth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church for the Diocese of Georgia, and this Church being assigned as the place of meeting, several of the Clergy and several Lay Delegates accordingly attended, at 11 O'clock, A. M.

Divine service was conducted by the Rev. T. B. Bartow, minister of Christ's Church, St. Simon's, and a discourse delivered by the Rev. Edward Neufville, of Christ's Church, Savannah: The *Convention Sermon* having been preached yesterday, according to appointment, by the Rev. Hugh Smith, of St. Paul's Church, Augusta.

The Rev. Hugh Smith was called to the Chair, *pro tem*, and Wm. T. Williams, Esq. acted as Secretary *pro tem*.

The Certificates of Lay Delegation were then presented, read, and examined; when it appeared that, Dr. James Bond Read, Wm. T. Williams, and Joseph S. Pelot, Esq's, from *Christ Church, Savannah*, and Wm. W. Hazzard, Esq. Thomas B. King, Esq. and Dr. Thos. F Hazzard, from Christ Church, St. Simon's, were duly appointed Delegates to the present Convention. All these gentlemen, with the exception of Dr. Read, appeared, and took their seats.

The Lay delegation appointed to represent St. Paul's Church, Augusta, having failed to attend, their certificate was not presented.

No delegate appeared from Christ Church, Macon.

On Motion, a Ballot for President, Secretary, and Treasurer, of the Convention took place, when the Rev. Edward Neufville was chosen President, Joseph S. Pelot, Esq. Secretary, and Dr. James Bond Read, Treasurer.

On Motion, Resolved, That the same Rules of Order, observed as the previous Conventions, shall be observed as the Rules of Order on the present occasion.

The following Parochial Reports were then presented, read and ordered on file:

CHRIST CHURCH, SAVANNAH. REV. EDWARD NEUFVILLE, RECTOR.

The Rector is happy in being able to state that this Church continues to increase and flourish. Its financial concerns are in a much better condition than they have been for many years past. A liberal bequest, made by the late Miss Wilkins, has enabled the Wardens and Vestry to liquidate the remaining debt, and to improve the appearance of the building as well as add to the number of pews, by altering the arrangement of the Pulpit and Reading-Desk.

Much praise is also due to the few Ladies composing the Beneficent Society, for their active and persevering industry, in raising an amount sufficient for the purchase of a new and very handsome Organ, which they have recently presented to the Church: thus adding materially to the beauty and solemnity of our worship, in that essential part of it—sacred music.

There have been since the last report---

Adult	2 \		Number of Communicants,	116
Infants	26/	Baptisms,	Added,	13
Marriages,		8	Removed,	2
Funerals,		18	Died,	1
Confirmed,		33	Withdrawn,	1

The Sunday School continues about the same.

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, AUGUSTA.

REV. HUGH SMITH, RECTOR.

Marriages,	-	-	-	10	Persons confirmed	-	-	15
Adult,	1 \	Baptisms,	-	5	\	died,	-	5
children,	4 /				Communicants /	Added,	-	10
Funerals,	-	-	-	5	Present Number,	-	-	80

The Rector is not a little encouraged in his labors, by the augmented numbers, and the spiritual improvement of the people of his charge. He has noticed, with much satisfaction, an increased attention to the great concerns of Religion, and a new degree of that zeal, which is the very life of the spiritual body. An adult Bible Class, re-organized during the winter, has been, and still continues to be, productive of very happy results.

The Sunday School attached to the congregation, has been resumed under a *pledge* from the *Teachers*, that, with the blessing of God, it should be efficiently conducted: a pledge, thus far, nobly redeemed. Under the superintendance of John F. Lloyd, Esq. assisted by Mrs. Edward F. Campbell, in the Female Department, it bids fair for great and increasing usefulness. There are now on its *roll*, a President, Superintendant, and Assistant Superintendant, ten female and eight male Teachers, and seventy-three scholars. The average number of Attendants is from sixty to sixty-five. The teachers are punctual in their attendance, and devoted to their duties: the scholars assiduous in their studies, and orderly in their deportment. The Room, now occupied, being too small for the *comfortable accommodation of the School*, it is contemplated, immediately to erect a building for the purpose, of Brick, 50 feet by 30—a subscription for which, has already been commenced.

On the whole, the Rector is cheered in spirit, and encouraged to hope for the continued blessing of Him, who hath “helped hitherto,” and to whom alone it belongs to “give the increase.”

CHRIST CHURCH, ST. SIMON'S ISLAND.

T. B. BARTOW, MINISTER.

Neither Baptism, Funeral, nor Marriage, has occurred during the brief charge of the present Minister.

Number of Communicants, - - - 8.

A Bible Class has been recently established for the younger part of the congregation. It is a subject of regret, that the Sunday School is necessarily small, in consequence of the distant residence of the Parishioners. A Sunday evening Lecture is likewise preached to the Blacks.

The Parish now presents the desirable anomaly of an undivided attachment to the Church, through all its families, and Hope has nothing left but to await the day, when her doctrines shall be as generally felt in power as in word, and the primitive spirit of the Church be loved as well, as the venerable beauty of her Liturgy.

From Christ Church, Macon, no formal report was received; it was, however, stated to the meeting, that a lot had been purchased, and funds collected for the erection of a Church, and that the congregation were anxious to obtain a minister, to whom they were able and willing to give a *comfortable support*. A correspondence having been opened for the purpose, it was confidently hoped that they would not long remain destitute.

The Rev. Mr. Smith, as President of the standing Committee, made the following Report:--

The Standing Committee of the Diocese of Georgia, beg leave to report to the Convention,

That since the meeting of the last Convention, the Rev. Theodore B. Bartow, then a candidate for orders in this Diocese, has been admitted to Deacon's

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orders, by the Right Rev. Bishop Bowen, of South Carolina, and is now officiating with much acceptance, and a fair prospect of usefulness, in Christ Church parish, St. Simon's Island, vacant by the removal of the Rev. T. S. W. Mott, to the Diocese of South Carolina. They regret to state, that there is no other candidate for orders now in the Diocese.*

During the past year, official communications have been received from the Dioceses of Maryland and New York, accompanied by the proper testimonials, announcing the election of the Rev. Wm. M. Stone to the Episcopate of the former, and of the Rev. Benj. T. Onderdonk, D. D. to that of the latter. The concurrence of the Standing Committee in their desired consecration, was given and forwarded.

(Signed,)

HUGH SMITH, *Pres't.*

Ewd. F. Campbell, *Sec'y.*

The following preamble and Resolution was offered by the Rev. Mr. Smith, and unanimously adopted:--

Whereas, "it has pleased Almighty God, in his wise (but to us, inscrutable) Providence," to remove from a wide sphere of devoted labor, and of eminent usefulness, the Right Rev. Jno. Henry Hobart, D. D. late Bishop of the P. E. Church, in the Diocese

*---It is the conviction of the Standing Committee that an efficient and permanent supply for the wants of the Church in this State, can only be expected from the dedication to the work of the ministry, of some of its own Youth. To young men of piety and talent, who might be disposed to prepare themselves for that work, every necessary encouragement and assistance in the prosecution of their studies, would be afforded by application to the President of the Committee, Rev. Hugh Smith, Augusta, or the Rev. Edward Neufville, Savannah.

of New York, very shortly after the lamented removal by death of the Right Rev. John Stark Ravenscroft, late the energetic and able Diocesan of North Carolina: and, whereas, the death of these distinguished Prelates is a severe loss and a deep affliction to the whole Church, throughout the U. States—

Therefore, be it *Resolved*, That this Convention, under the influence of deep feeling, would record its high sense of the rare ability, and invaluable services of these departed servants of Christ—its lively sympathy with the Churches, over which they so ably presided,—and its cherished hope and fervent prayer, that the wisdom and unanimity displayed by one of these bereaved Dioceses, in its choice of a successor, may attend upon the counsels of the other also, in the difficult and delicate task of filling its still vacant Episcopate.

On Motion, Resolved that the thanks of the Convention be presented to the Rev. Hugh Smith, for his impressive and highly interesting Sermon delivered yesterday, & that he be requested to furnish a copy for publication, to be affixed to the Journal of the Proceedings of this Convention.

On Motion, The Rev. T. B. Bartow, and W. W. Hazzard, were appointed a Committee to communicate to the Rev. Mr. Smith, the purport of the above Resolution, who reported that Mr. Smith had acquiesced in the wishes of the Convention.

The following Report from Dr. James B. Read, Treasurer, was read and accepted, viz:

The Treasurer begs leave to state, that circumstances have prevented his preparing a Report of the state of the Funds of the Diocese, to be laid before the Convention. He refers to his last report, which stated a balance in his hands of Twenty-one Dollars; since which, he has received from St. Paul's Church Fifteen Dollars, and from Christ Church, Savannah, Fifteen Dollars, making in the whole, Fifty-one

Dollars: and having expended for printing the last Journal, Twenty Dollars, there yet remains in the Treasurer's hands, Thirty-one Dollars, subject to the calls of the Diocese. As Treasurer of the Society for the promotion of Christianity in Georgia, he states, that not having received or paid away any money for the Society, he begs the former report

may be accepted, and that the balance then stated, of One Hundred and Fifty Dollars, may be taken as the sum in hand.

On Motion, Resolved, That this Convention, feeling a deep interest in the honor of the Church, and in the safety of its members, do recommend to the respective communicants of the Churches in the Diocese, to observe that sobriety and seriousness of deportment, which should ever distinguish the followers of Christ, from “the lovers of pleasure, more than the lovers of God.” And they would respectfully call the attention of the members of the Church in this Diocese, to the following expression of opinion, entered upon the Journal of the House of *Bishops*, in the General Convention, A. D. 1817, and subsequently read in the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies, at the same Convention, viz:

“The House of Bishops, solicitous for the preservation of the purity of the Church, and the piety of its members, are induced to impress upon the Clergy the important duty, with a discreet but earnest zeal, of warning the people of their respective cures, of the danger of an indulgence in those worldly pleasures, which may tend to withdraw the affections from spiritual things. And especially on the subject of Gaming—of amusements involving cruelty to the Brute creation, and of Theatrical representations, to which some peculiar circumstances have called their attention—they do not hesitate to express their unanimous opinion, that these amusements, as well from their licentious tendency, as from

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the strong temptations to vice which they afford, ought not to be frequented.”

The Convention then proceeded to the election of a Standing Committee, for the ensuing year, when the Rev. Hugh Smith, Rev. Edward Neufville, Rev. T. B. Bartow, Dr. James B. Read, Dr. T. I. Wray, and Edward F. Campbell, Esq., were chosen.

The following Gentlemen were elected Delegates to the General Convention, Rev. Hugh Smith, Rev. Edward Neufville, of the Clergy; Dr. George B. Jones, Dr. James B. Read, E.F. Campbell, and Thomas B. King, Esq'rs, of the Laity.

On Motion, Resolved, That two hundred Copies of the Journal of the proceedings of this Convention together with the Sermon of the Rev. Mr. Smith be printed, and that the Rev. Mr. Smith, and Mr. G. McLaughlin be, and they are hereby appointed to carry this resolution into effect.

On Motion, Resolved, that the Lay Delegates to the General Convention be requested to pay the special assessment for each Clergyman in this Diocese as noticed in the Journal of the last General Convention, page 73.

On Motion, Resolved, That the next annual Convention be held in Christ Church, Macon, on the *Second Monday* after Easter Monday, in the year 1832, and that the Rev. T. B. Bartow, be and he is hereby appointed to Preach the Annual Convention Sermon, at the time and place above stated.

On Motion, after prayer by the President, the Convention adjourned.

(Signed)

EWD. NEUFVILLE, *Pres't*.

Jos. S. Pelot, *Sec'y*.

The Glory and Good Report of the Church.

A SERMON.

BY THE REV. HUGH SMITH.

From 87th Psalm, 3d & 5th Verses.

“Glorious things are spoken of thee, O City of God! Selah”

“And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her; and the Highest himself shall establish her.”

This is bold and striking language. Ascribing life and intelligence to the earthly Zion, the Psalmist, in a beautiful apostrophe, reminds her of her fair fame among the people. It is evident that when he penned it, his eye and his mind were intent, not on her external grandeur, or her civic polity, but on her *religious* constitution and character. He thought of the Sanctuary and its privileges. The “City of God” was in his mind, associated, nay, identified, with the *Church of God*, and to this Church did his glowing eulogium apply.

It would be foreign from our present object, to show at large, what “glorious things were spoken” of this first spiritual “City of God,”—how that God was unto her as “a wall of fire round about from her enemies,” & “known in her Palaces as a sure refuge—“ how imposing were the solemnities of her worship—how the light of inspiration gladdened her own tabernacles, and beamed forth thence upon the surrounding darkness—how her gifted seers, rapt in vision, looked upon and declared the future—how her “holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,”—how her varied and striking types, concurred with the voice of her Prophets, in speaking of the Messiah “to them that looked for Redemption in Israel.” Truly “glorious things were spoken of her,” and in reference to the past, are *yet* spoken—for “To *her* pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the Covenants, and the giving of the law, and the ser-

vices of God, and the promises—her’s also were the Fathers; and of her, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever.” But “her glory hath departed.” She *was* and is *not*. Turn now to the Christian Church, the heir of her privileges and her glory.

To her may justly be applied the spirited language of the Text—“Established by the Highest himself,” “in the fullness of time,” as the last and best depository of divine truth upon the earth, enriched with all spiritual grace, having Evangelists, Apostles, and Martyrs, among her spiritual children—truly “glorious things are spoken her,” as “the city of God,”—And, Brethren, taking heed unto “the sure word of Prophecy,” we cannot but feel that her *past* or her *present* glory, is as nothing, when compared with that which shall gild her latter, her Millennial Day upon earth, or with that which shall attend upon her new state, when she shall be translated to the Heavens.

As an important member of this great body of the faithful, the Church from which we are descended, has her good report among men. The eldest daughter of the Reformation born and nurtured amidst the strife of conflicting opinion, in the days of “resistance unto blood,” she acquired a spiritual vigor, and a peculiar impress of

character, which admirably fitted her for the warfare against sin and corruption: and in her, happily re-appeared those features of the primitive Zion, “the mother of us all,” which had been lost during many intervening generations. Her name and her deeds have found a place, in the proudest annuals of human history; and the world which she has cheered with the light of doctrinal truth, with the splendor of holy example, and to the intellectual, moral, and spiritual amelioration of which, she has so largely contributed, will not be unmindful of her claims. Had we nothing else to attest the value of her labors, the stable and well ordered polity, and the

sublime and scriptural Liturgy, which she has transmitted to us, would cause her to be “had in everlasting remembrance.”

From this Church, thus happy in her constitution, and important in her influences, we, Brethren, have derived our spiritual existence: And it is our happiness to think, that while we have retained all that was peculiarly admirable, or spiritually essential in her institutions, we have in this our favored land been enabled to throw off some of her manifest disadvantages, and especially, that *one* peculiarity, so unfavorable to her spiritual character, and so much regretted by some of her ablest Prelates, *the connexion between Church and State*; a connexion so entirely repugnant to the genius and spirit of our civil Institutions, as to occasion manifest alarm, and excite to watchful jealousy, even when contemplated as a bare and very remote possibility—a connexion which, from its trammeling and debasing influence upon the Church itself, would be deprecated by all who desire her prosperity. Saved, them, from this snare, and yet enjoying all the positive excellencies of that Church, surely, Brethren, to *our* Zion ought to be applicable the glowing language of the Psalmist in our Text.

But I would cease from her eulogy, however merited. The occasion rather demands appropriate counsel. Bear with me, then, Brethren, while I attempt to show, under what circumstances, “glorious things shall be spoken of the City (or Church) of God.”

I. When, according to the external structure, it is “built upon the foundation of Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself, being the Chief Corner Stone.”

If it be *not* thus constructed, it is evidently a *human*, not a *divine* Institution. Many and very excellent things may be spoken of it, in reference to the wisdom, the prudence, the piety, the zeal of its earth-

ly founders, governors or members; the nature of its regulations—the spirit of piety, which is kept alive in its bosom. Its influence may, in the main, be salutary; tending to strengthen the bonds of a social order and to promote the extensive diffusion of a religious spirit. It may be recorded of it, that “this man, and that were born there;” and since, through its means, “Christ is preached,” we “therein may rejoice and do rejoice.” But, our admiration of its acknowledged excellence, in some particulars, will be mingled with regret, that, although its system may, perhaps, be based on doctrinal truth, it is not based upon the authority of those whom God hath placed at the foundation of the

Christian Church. It devolves not on us to decide upon the consequences of its unwarranted foundation, or irregular construction. Be that left to the serious consideration of those whom it most concerns; and to the liberal allowances of Him “who seeth the heart,” and is ever merciful to unintended error. But, as to ourselves, it is a source of lively and grateful satisfaction, that while, in all, wherein it was left to the mind of man to choose, and to the hand of man to act; there has been no want of discreet and efficient action, we have still made no unauthorized innovations upon the plan of its Divine Founder—that *our Zion* is indeed a part of “the city of God, the city of the great King,” whose foundation is “the Rock of Ages,” “whose Builder & Maker is God,” whose “walls are salvation, and whose gates are praise.” Consistently with the views which we entertain in regard to the Constitution of the Church, and the source of ministerial authority, we lay marked stress on the fact, that we have retained, not only the Apostles’ *doctrine,* but also their *fellowship,* and the maintenance of this *fellowship,* by regularly derived succession, we hold to be essential to the integrity and full glory of the Church. The declaration of this our honest and assured belief cannot sure-

ly be regarded as an infringement upon the christian . The *proscription* of this our opinion *in itself is bigotry*; and they who assert that we are violating christian charity by merely declaring what we deem essential to primitive order, and an Apostolic Ministry, by that very charge trench upon our right of private and social judgement.

II. In order that “glorious things may be spoken of the Church” *she must maintain Integrity of Doctrine.*

Faith and practice, nay faith and salvation, are too nearly connected, to have it a matter of minor importance what is believed and taught by the Church. By every defection from evangelic truth, however slight, she is partially shorn of her glory. Every error, is unto her as a “spot, or a blemish,” and happy is that Church which has fewest of them; and altho’ thro’ the infirmity of human judgment, they may not be wholly prevented, yet like spots upon the sun, they should be rarely seen, and almost lost in resplendent brightness. A general and very close conformity to the scriptural standard, should be her steadfast aim, and will prove her distinguished glory.—In this age of bold and reckless departure from the *fundamental* Doctrines of the Gospel, on the one hand, & of culpable and dangerous indifference to its minor peculiarities of the *other,* indulged and cherished under the specious but misapplied name of *Liberality,* the only safe motto for us as individuals, or for the Church as a Body, is the uncompromising sentiment, *The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.* Depart from this, and you have no longer a sure and an unvarying principle. The degree of admissible concession becomes an unsettled and debateable point, to be left to the discretion or indiscretion of different judgments; and it is easy to imagine how often, from the pliant and facile disposition of

some, from a thirst for the praise of liberality in others, from ignorance of the consequences involved, or from the surrender of a better judgment to the force of persuasion, this concession will exceed the limits of prudence and safety, and amount to

the surrender of that which is vitally important,—I can well conceive, that the christian would feel a deeper, solicitude, and make a more determined stand, for the maintenance of those doctrines which are justly termed the *peculiar doctrines* of the Gospel, and without which that Gospel is nothing worth; but surely there is inconsistency evinced, when a lively zeal for these is found in connexion with lax views, or utter indifference on subordinate points of Christian sentiment and practice. The principle of *steady devotedness to all known truth* is then given up; and this being relinquished, it is natural that spiritual indifference should widen its sphere; that pretended liberality should ask and receive, new sacrifices for the altar it has set up; and that not content with “the mint and anise and cummin,” of human and ritual observances, it should demand also, the weightier matters of the Christian Law.”

So vital is the importance of doctrinal purity, and so insidious the nature of error, that I cannot look with unconcern upon any novelties in speculation or expression, on the great subjects of Faith and Practice, however trifling or harmless they may seem. They are easily misconstrued, and as easily perverted. Some of the worst systems, that have ever appeared in the world, had a similar origin.—Many of the early heresies that infested the Church, some of which are yet exerting a baneful influence, may be traced to a careless or unusual phraseology, or to strange modes of illustration, which were intended to attest striking originality of thought, and to secure the praise of distinguished genius. *This spirit of bold speculation—this seeking after novelty,*

is too often the entering wedge of error: and who can wonder if it should be driven deeper and deeper, until the sacred tree of Truth is riven asunder.

Let the standards and symbols of our religious belief be sacredly guarded. Let us be roused to a holy and watchful jealousy, when pretenders to improvement profess to teach old truths in a new way; when they would remove all mystery from confessedly mysterious subjects; introduce philosophical niceties, which are learnt in the *School of Men*, into subjects which belong exclusively to the *School of Christ*; and substitute new terms for those technical and established expressions, to which long usage has affixed both a definite meaning, and a peculiar sacredness. *All this either meditates heresy, or it will end in it.* And from that Church which hath fallen from the faith, lo! “the glory hath departed.”

But III—Then and then only will “glorious things be spoken of” the Church of God, when her doctrines and ministrations prove themselves the means of conversion to sinful men.

Of her “it must be said, that this man and that was born in her:” spiritually born—“born anew,” not only “of water,” but also of “the Holy Ghost.” *Then “the Highest himself shall establish her.”*

Of the Church to which we are attached, Brethren, this may confidently be asserted, Her doctrine founded on the fall and depravity of man, the atonement of the Son of God, and the sanctifying agency of the Holy Spirit, is pre-eminently a doctrine unto conversion; admirably calculated “to convince of sin,” to lead to “*righteousness*,” and thus prepare men for “a judgment to come.” Most insidiously and unwarrantably has to been declared, that she neither recognizes the necessity for a change of heart, nor its

reality; and that the only spiritual or new birth of which she takes note, is the regeneration of Baptism. It will require but a moment's examination to correct the

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misconception, or refute the slander. She does indeed represent us, as being “born again,” in baptism; born *out of the world*, into *the Church*—out of an externally *uncovenant* into a *covenant* state. And as the sealing of every covenant transaction on the part of God, and the giving of the associated “inward and spiritual grace” to every appointed “visible sign” or ordinance, belong, of right, to the Holy Spirit, as his peculiar work, she pronounces those baptized, “*regenerated by the Holy Ghost.*” But so far from regarding this as precluding the necessity for any subsequent change, she puts up the prayer, that these baptized and regenerated ones may afterwards “crucify the old man, and utterly abolish the whole body of sin.” In her admirable catechism, she teaches that there is signified, as the inward grace, corresponding to the outward sign, “a death unto sin, & a new birth unto righteousness,” but however strongly adumbrated in the rite, could this be realized in infancy? could “the death unto sin” “precede the commission and the consciousness of actual sin? could the “new birth unto righteousness” precede the period of moral accountability? Mark these striking supplications: “Grant that the old Adam in this child may be so buried, that the new man may be raised up in him.—Grant that all sinful affections may die in him, and that all things belonging to the Spirit, may live and grow in him.—Grant that he may have power and strength to have victory, and to triumph against the Devil, the world, and the flesh.—Grant that whosoever is here dedicated to thee, by our office and ministry, may also be endued with heavenly virtues, and everlastingly rewarded,” &c. We ask, then, can these supplications at all apply to the *infant recipient* of Baptism in his *then* state? How can sinful affections die, before they have been developed? before any afflictions are yet entertained? How can the *child* achieve a *moral* and *spiritual*

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victory, a victory which the matured saint, hardly, and but partially obtains? What *Infant* was ever yet endued with *heavenly virtues*?” The answer to these questions is obvious—the inference is irresistible, that the reference of these prayers is prospective, & therefore that the great moral and spiritual change which they point out is also prospective. Using the term Regeneration, in its scriptural acceptation, the Church applies it to a *change of state*, which *does take place in Baptism*. But the change of principle, or of heart, and the gradual renovation of the affections, she teaches us to pray for, in various and most expressive supplications, as a thing to be subsequently realized.*

It would seem to me impossible, Brethren, to examine with candour, her well ordered ritual, to listen to the evangelic earnestness of her supplications for the illuminating and sanctifying influence of

* Wholesome indeed, and scriptural, is the idea that *Grace* always accompanies Christian ordinances, properly received. In those baptized in infancy, the grace received, may either be

stifled and lost, through subsequent sin, or if retained and cherished, its development at an after period, may constitute *genuine conversion*, and be further displayed in *progressive sanctification*. But in the case of *adult* recipients of Baptism, the change of heart preceded or ought to precede the act. The very wish to receive the ordinance being the result of that change—of a newly awakened desire to “fulfil all righteousness”—the public *profession of faith* certainly *presupposing the existence and the exercise of faith*, and the external sacramental dedication to God, being only the meet expression of the inward desire and resolve, to lead a godly and a christian life. In this case, the reception of Baptism is the *effect* of antecedent change in spirit and feeling—not the cause of such change; and conversion having gone before, the accompanying grace of Baptism will be displayed in the daily “renewing of the Holy Ghost,” the maturing of Christian character.

The Church, then, conceiving all to be “regenerated in Baptism,” because by it brought into a new state, evidently does not confound this regeneration with *spiritual conversion*. *That conversion*, as in the case of adults, may *precede Baptism*—or, in the case of those baptized in infancy, may follow it “after many days,” or may not be experienced at all.

the Spirit, and still suppose her indifferent to that radical change, to which this influence naturally leads.

Facts, however, speak for themselves and for her. Her doctrine has proved itself, signally, a doctrine unto conversion. Countless thousands, through the instrumentality of her services, have been “bro’t out of darkness into the marvellous light of the Gospel;” out of “the bondage of corruption,” “into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God.” The *new heart* has been proved by the *new life*. And surely it is unreasonable to suppose that her members would so often realize in fact, a change, which she denied even in theory, and which she taught them to regard as visionary. On this point, her witness is abroad in the earth, and yet, in accordance with the unobtrusiveness, and the characteristic modesty of genuine piety, it scarcely goes beyond the simple, silent, but convincing evidence of facts. She “sounds no trumpet before her.” She doeth not her charities to the soul, “to be seen of men.” With her, “boasting is excluded.” The work of God goeth on silently, but surely in her borders, and “the humble hear thereof and are glad;” but she has no proclamation, at “the corners of the streets.” Members are added to her communion; but she telleth not their names, in “the chief place of concourse.” Some “weep in secret,” by reason of their sins;” other rejoice in the hope of pardoning mercy; but the deep exercises of their souls *are between them and their God*; or, if necessarily laid open to those who watch for souls, whose duty it is counsel and to comfort, they receive not a publicity which might make them a snare to the soul that had experienced them, a theme of idle remark, or perhaps of unhallowed mockery to others. In all this, she doeth well, loving “the praise of God,” more than “the praise of men,” We would not that she should purchase additional celebrity, by destroying

the moral delicacy, or fostering the vanity of her members, by inducing them to substitute the self-complacency of a vaunting profession, for that “ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which, in the sight of God, is of great price,”—and by departing from that chaste

reserve, that marked propriety, that holy simplicity which are the peculiar charm of her polity. Those whom she hath gained unto God, lo! are they not all “written in the Book” of his remembrance? and in the Day when “the Books shall be opened,” when God shall “write up the people,” “gather together his elect,” shall it not be found who “were born there?”

The Church then holds and teaches, the *Doctrine of Spiritual Conversion*, and her ministrations have a converting efficacy.

In reference to individual Pastors and Churches, the want of present success is not always a proof of the want of zeal and fidelity. “Good deed may be sown,” and a blessing invoked upon it in faith, and yet it may lie long buried and inert in earthly hearts.—“Many days” may elapse, ere it be quickened, and “spring up, and bear fruit.” “He that went forth weeping, bearing good seed,” may not be permitted to “come again with joy, and bring his sheaves with him:” Yea, “one may sow, and another reap.” Yet as a general remark, it may be asserted, that if the Word have no spiritual influence, it has not been spoken in its purity or power: and that the judicial sentence of spiritual barrenness rests over that Church, of which none are born unto the Redeemer.

Aware, then, that the Church was intended to be a mean and a medium of converting and strengthening grace to guilty man, & still recognizing God, as “the author and giver of all spiritual grace,” how imperative becomes the duty of fervent prayer in her behalf, that she may fulfil the end of her high appointment, that “the Highest himself would establish her,” “an e-

ternal excellency, a joy of many generations,” that he would “make fast the bars of her gates, and bless her children within her”—that “these children may all be taught of him, and that great may be their peace.”—It is not under the idea of the general inefficacy of the means of grace as enjoyed among us, or with a view to the substitution, in their stead, of any extraneous and less regular, though seemingly more zealous ministrations, that we would urge upon her members the duty of “striving together in prayer,” that her teaching may be “in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power,” but simply with a view to the attaining of that blessing, without which “a Paul may plant, or an Apollos water,” yet see no “increase.” Feeling her need and knowing the source of her supply, she has, in many touching appeals, cast herself upon the succours of her God, and the prayers of her people. Let us plead for her, then, in her own language, & her own spirit. Let her hallowed cause, the cause of truth and righteousness, of grace and salvation, be borne upon our hearts, and remembered in our breathings before the Mercy Seat. Let us supplicate, not only at *special seasons*, for *special visitations* of transient excitement, to be succeeded by anticipated derelictions of the Spirit, and coldness and deadness on the part of man, but at all times, for *abiding grace*; for “the Spirit of Glory and of God” to *rest* upon her: for a fire on her altars, and a light in her tabernacles, that shall “not go out day nor night,” causing “her righteousness to go forth as brightness, and her salvation, as a lamp that burneth;” for then and then only “Shall glorious things be spoken of thee, thou City of our God,” when thou art the light of the world; a “City set on a Hill,” when thy ministrations of mercy, prove unto many “the power of God and the wisdom of God, unto salvation.”

Brethren, we are peculiarly situated. Our congregations few in number, and widely separated by

distance, can scarcely animate and encourage each other by mutual countenance, far less, produce any strong & deep impression on the public mind. Wholly unknown, or known only by name, or still worse, by partial, unfair, and malignant report, it is evident, that for a season, we shall have to contend against that vague suspicion, that indefinite, but still deeply fixed prejudice, which are ever entertained against ill-understood systems of Doctrine. The mere fact that we are so few and so little known, would operate unfavourably to our claims, in the minds of some; placing us in the light of *innovators* among established sects, *innovators moreover*, evidently not backed by public opinion. Dark insinuation, doing its work in secret, would increase this prejudice, with no opportunity for its counteraction by the light or the tongue of Truth. Hence, therefore, results a peculiar necessity for the open, frank, and full statement of our doctrines, and exposition of our services; that the public mind may be disabused and enlightened; and that the Church, no longer viewed through the mists of ignorance or with the jaundiced eye of prejudice, may be seen in the clear light of truth, in all her fair proportions and attractive beauty. Hence, also, brethren, there is in our case a special necessity for an enlightened comprehension of her principles, and a holy consistency of conduct, on the part of her members; that each one, as occasion may require, or opportunity permit, may be the prudent, but convincing advocate of her cause, his life, not less than his lips, being eloquent in her praise. This indeed is incumbent in all places, and at all times; and we would by no means hint, that the standard of christian knowledge and practice might be differently graduated to suit different Meridians or Latitudes, and elevated or depressed, according to the tastes or habits, of different localities. God forbid, brethren. Still, we cannot but perceive that the importance and the

results of individual example, are far greater in some cases than in others. Where the Church is firmly established, and generally known; where she takes her noble & conspicuous stand among other religious institutions; causing the voice of her teaching to be heard of men, and the voice of her supplication to go upward to her God, ably supported by her ministry, and advantageously presented by her Laity—there, Brethren, her general character triumphs over the defects of individual example; and the happy moral and spiritual influence which she exerts as a whole, settles her claim in the esteem of the whole christian community, to a share in all that is “pure, lovely, and of good report.” In that case, individuals are judged of by the *body*: but with us the body is judged of by individuals. The single advocate for episcopacy, whether professedly pious or not, in a whole community ignorant of its principles, is considered as *its representative*—And the solitary Church in the midst of many others, variously differing from her in “doctrine, discipline, and worship,” gives the current character to all the Churches of our communion.—What a call does this give to holy circumspection!—Members of the Church, and more especially professing members, do you indeed love

her in sincerity and truth? Show it in your works! See that she is not “wounded (like her Divine Lord,) in the house of her friends.” “*Glorious things should be spoken of her.*”—Let her not, then, through your means, be “*blasphemed among the people.*” I appeal not now to the mere *pride of sect* I ask not, neither do I expect a sacrifice to *the Church*, solely from regard to her worldly reputation, which you would refuse to *Him* who “hath purchased both her and you, with his own blood;” but for your own sake, I ask for that *consistency* which would become you as men, in reference even to worldly things, far more, as *christian men*, in reference to sacred things, Let an attachment open-

ly professed by your lips, and doubtless deeply cherished in your hearts, be manifested in your lives.—Feel that you are the representatives of her cause, & charged with her honor. It is not enough, that we who “name the name of Christ,” should depart from *open and glaring* iniquity—and sit down with contented hearts, and folded hands, in the decencies of a worldly profession. *Men expect, the Church requires, God demands more than this.* There must be spirituality in the *heart* and in the *life*. Citizens of the spiritual Zion, “our conversation (our citizenship) must be in Heaven.” Even the world can boast of its *morality*: The *Church* must be marked by heavenly-mindedness: for why should it be tauntingly asked of her members, “What do ye more than others?” Awake, then ye that love her, to a solemn sense of your responsibilities.

It is certain that the standard of christian profession is again elevated more nearly to its primitive height: to fall below this, is to fall short of general expectation, and to destroy our claim to general respect. A worldly Church—worldly in its spirit, its habits, and its associations, is scarcely *esteemed* as a Church, by the serious in the religious public; not is it respected by the irreligious themselves. Entirely worldly and earthly-minded members, however numerous, add nothing to the glory of any Church—nay, they are a shame and a reproach to its communion. Let those, then, who have “witnessed a good confession before many witnesses,” act up to the spirit of its requirements. “Not conformed to the world,” let them be “transformed by the renewing of their

minds.” Let them be “a holy and a peculiar people, zealous of good works”—devoted, consecrated unto God. Then truly will that God, “be their God, and they shall be his people;” and, then, “thy spiritual children all being holy,” “Glorious things shall be spoken of thee, thou City of God.”

My Brethren of the Clergy! On us it will largely depend, how our Zion is regarded among men, and how far she shall prove a mean of conversion, to “a world lying in wickedness.” They that are placed of God in “the Golden Candlesticks,” must be the lights of the sanctuary, even as that sanctuary is the light of the world. The “Angels” of the Churches, must be the earthly guardians of the Churches. They must themselves hear the voice, and court the influences of the spirit, that they may say unto their people, “He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.” A momentous responsibility rests upon us—for to us is entrusted the charge of immortal souls. Who, “who is sufficient” for it? Let “our sufficiency be of God,” who hath made

us ministers of the New Testament. The continuance of our sacred stewardship is fearfully uncertain; and the account to be rendered of it, oh, how strict and how solemn! Affecting and startling have been our recent warnings. Within a brief space of time, how many of our brethren have fallen before the scythe of Death—some in the freshness of early promise, others in the fulness and glory of ripened excellence.—“And our Fathers, where are they?” The mild, amiable, pious, and holy Kemp,

is at rest from his labors. The venerated Ravenscroft, that man of might, that “man of God”—he who could grapple with a giant in intellect, and yet condescend to “a Babe in Christ”—he of whom as of a dauntless reformer of other days, it might well be said, that “He never feared the face of man,” *he* also hath given his powerful frame to the dust; while his noble spirit with all its powerful energies, and ardent feelings, hath “returned to God who gave it;” in the brightness of his presence, and amidst the beamings of his love, to expand and glow with a seraph’s freedom and a seraph’s fire.

His equal in firmness, his predecessor in the toilsome, thankless, and almost martyr work, of restoring the paths of primitive Apostolic truth, the all-gifted, and all-honored Hobart—he who was indeed, what his own pencil so beautifully portrayed, “the Christian Bishop approving himself to God”—he, whose rich and varied eloquence held admiring crowds in breathless silence, as though fearing to lose a word or a tone that breathed forth his feelings and thrilled through their own,—eloquent in life, and still more eloquent in death—the pride and glory of our Zion, whose value to her in life, and whose loss in death, none can speak—the remembrance of whose bright career of official usefulness, to *two of us* at least, is indissolubly connected with the experience of his private worth, his private friendship, his warmhearted efforts for our good, and with all the thousand nameless, but sweet associated recollections of other days, when he was our guide, our instructor, our friend, our father; *He*, too, hath fallen.

Brethren, surely “judgment hath begun at the House of God;” the judgment of mercy to those removed, but of solemn warning and admonition to us who remain—Where, and with whom shall it end? In providences like these, God speaketh to us from Heaven, saying, with unearthly solemnity, “what thou doest, do quickly! The night cometh when no man can work!” “Take heed to thy ministry.”

My Brethren of the Convention! To counsel for the welfare and the glory of the Church, in this portion of our country, is the object of our present assembling. Let us enter upon our duties, in the fear of God, in the love of the Saviour, in dependence upon the Spirit of Truth. With us, this is indeed “the day of small things.” But let us not despise it. It is the promise of Him whose word is truth, that to those who “are faithful over few things,” he will give the over-sight “of many things.” In all that we do for the Church, let us be careful to compromise nothing of her doctrinal integrity, her well-ordered services, her pure and elevated spirit. Let us lay a foundation, which none who love her, will desire to subvert; but on which “they which come after” shall build with security and advantage; causing her walls to extend, and her palaces to arise, that she may

be seen and known afar; that “people and the inhabitants of many cities, yea, many people, and strong nations, may come to seek the Lord of Hosts, and to pray before the Lord,” in her hallowed Temples.

It is a delightful thought, that our counsel for the prosperity of our Zion, is to be ushered in, by the holiest of her religious ordinances. Recipients of the

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Eucharist, let all the feelings of your hearts be in lively exercise, when you come to this holy and heavenly feast. Humbled by the recollection of your sins, yet rejoicing in the hope of pardon, feeling your unworthiness, but looking by faith to Him, who is infinitely worthy, pressed down by many anxious cares, yet “casting all your care upon him who careth for you,” come, in humility, in faith, in peace & love: and may the Spirit of peace come with you! Let not your feelings be evanescent. When you go out again into the world, *remember that the Vows of God are upon you*, & say to your own souls, “What manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness.”

Brethren of the Congregation, who have *not* made a profession! It cannot be that you are wholly indifferent to the purposed objects of our assembling, or to the solemn and touching services, immediately before us. Why is it then, that *you*, “have no right nor memorial in Jerusalem?” Be intreated to remember, that it is private and personal religion, and that alone, which can prove unto you, “the savour of life unto life.” The Kingdom of God may be established around you and you may advance its interests and rejoice in its prosperity—but what will it profit you, though thousands “come from the East, and the West, and the North, and the South, and sit down in it, if you are yourselves cast out?” And know, that it is only the kingdom of God *within* you, the triumph and the reign of grace in your own hearts, that can prepare you for the kingdom of glory above—“What shall it profit you though you gain

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the whole world” of external privilege for yourselves & for others, if you still “*lose your own soul!*” Too many, alas too many, are the admirers of religion, rather than the seekers after religion—the friends and well-wishers of the Church, rather than its members. Let it not be so with you. Feel your individual responsibility; and be content with nothing short of a personal interest in the Gospel of Salvation. To all the prior triumphs and glory of the Church, let this be added, that you, and you, and you, “were born in her,” “unto a new and lively hope. See to it—oh, see to it now, that when “God shall write up the people,” your “names may be found written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.” AMEN.