

*In 1864 the Ecumenical Patriarchate Opens Syncretistic Dialogue
With the Armenians, Presuming Their Mysteries To Be Valid*

DEDICATION.

King's College, Cambridge,
Festival of the Annunciation, 1866.

MY DEAR HOPE,--Permit me to inscribe to you the following pages, prepared under your roof, and bearing on a subject in which I know you to take a lively interest. They relate to the aspirations after Christian Unity expressed by an eminent Oriental Prelate, and bear very directly, as I have endeavoured to show, on the longing desire of many among ourselves after more intimate relations with the great Eastern Church. And it is surely a most remarkable and memorable combination, which presents to us a Gregory of Byzantium, Metropolitan of Chios, as mediator for the reconciliation to the Catholic Family of the Church founded by Gregory the Illuminator in the far East; and in that capacity--unconsciously to himself--helping forward a better mutual understanding between the Orthodox Church and that founded by the pious care of Gregory the Great in the then remotest West. If only the large-hearted and intelligent charity exhibited by the Archbishop of Chios in the pages of his learned Treatise, were more widely diffused among us, the hindrances to Catholic Unity, which we have discussed together, insurmountable as they now appear, would speedily vanish away, and the idea of "one fold and one Shepherd" would no longer be regarded as an unattainable dream of a visionary and enthusiastic [iii/iv] imagination. The reviving faith of divided Christendom would then grasp the Divine promise, "there shall be;" and the kindling charity of Christian brotherhood would set itself in earnest to realize it, "being fully persuaded that what He hath promised, He is able also to perform."

Yours most affectionately,

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N.B.--This Series of Tracts will be issued gratuitously to the Members of the Eastern Church Association; and may be procured by non-Subscribers of Messrs. Rivington: London, Oxford, and Cambridge.

Number I., on the "Apostolical Succession in the Church of England. A Letter to a Russian Friend." By the Rev. William Stubbs, M.A., Librarian to His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Vicar of Navestock.

Number II., on the "Essential Unity of the Church of Christ." Extracted from "An Eirenicon" by E. B. Pusey, D.D., Regius Professor of Hebrew, and Canon of Christ Church, Oxford, with the sanction of the Author.

YEARNINGS AFTER UNITY IN THE EAST.

AMONG the numerous indications of an earnest longing after the reunion of the estranged families of the Holy Church Catholic which the present age is witnessing, not one is fraught with more hopeful promise to the cause of the Christian faith than that attempt to reconcile the Armenian with the Greek Orthodox Church to which I wish to call attention in this Paper.

Yet it is not merely, nor even mainly, on this account that I desire to bring these facts under notice; but chiefly because of their direct bearing upon the cause in which our interests and exertions are engaged,—that, namely, of the restoration of friendly relations, and ultimately, if it please God, of inter-communion between ourselves and the Orthodox Church of the East.

It will not, therefore, be necessary for my purpose to enter into any investigation of the causes that have so long alienated those two venerable and important communities of Eastern Christendom, the Gregorian Armenians, and the Orthodox Greeks. Still less could it subserve any good end to revive the discussion of the various points at issue between them for the past fourteen centuries of mutual crimination and recrimination, of misrepresentation and misunderstanding.

Suffice it to say that now, at length, through the Divine mercy, more reasonable counsels would seem to be gaining the ascendant; the thick clouds of partiality and prejudice are vanishing away before the cheering beams of Christian love; the Sun of Righteousness has risen with healing in His wings over those two God-fearing nations; and that prophetic Word is beginning to have its Evangelical accomplishment:—"The [5/6] envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim." [Isa. xi. 13.]

What the blessed results of such a reconciliation would be, can be estimated only by those who have witnessed, as I have, the lamentable consequences of the divisions of Christendom in the East. My convictions on this point, which I ventured to express twenty years ago, before any idea of such a

reconciliation had been entertained, have been only confirmed by time. It would be like "life from the dead" to the nations where the power of the Cross has been paralyzed for centuries by the shameful factions of Its natural champions. [Holy City, vol. ii., pp. 554-556.]

Chief among the living promoters of this much-to-be-desired union is Gregory of Byzantium, the actual Metropolitan of Chios, whose weighty words it is the main object of this paper to introduce to the reader.

It is now more than eighteen months ago that he commenced in the columns of the "Byzantis," a Greek orthodox newspaper, published at Constantinople, the issue of a "Treatise on the Union of the Armenians with the Catholic Orthodox Church." This Treatise, commenced on the 1st of July, 1864, was continued in twenty numbers of the Journal, until October 24th of the same year, from which date it was interrupted until November 3rd, 1865, when it was resumed, and is still being continued in the same Journal.

This most learned and valuable argument, historical and doctrinal, for the orthodoxy of the Armenian Church, so long suspected by the Greeks to be tainted with Monophysite heresy, is one of the most remarkable phenomena of modern times, as it is certainly one of the most able controversial works of this century. But it would be beside my present purpose to enter into a review of it in these pages. My purpose in referring to it is, to introduce a portion of the Work which is of the greatest practical importance to ourselves at the present juncture, when the possibility of the restoration of union between the Anglican Church and the Orthodox Eastern Church is occupying the attention of so many members of our [6/7] Communion, and has already so far attracted the attention of the Convocation of Canterbury, that a Committee of the Lower House was appointed in 1864, for the purpose of considering the subject, and has been reappointed in the new Convocation.

At such a time, nothing could be more opportune than the opinion of a learned Prelate of the Orthodox Eastern Church on the means to be adopted with a view to restoration of intercommunion between two long-estranged branches of the Christian family; and it cannot be wrong to regard this action, taken by the Metropolitan of Chios, as providential, in view of our aspirations after communion with Eastern Christendom. It is certainly most remarkable that a Greek Archbishop, having no knowledge, as would appear, of the recent progress of opinion in this country in favour of the re-union of Christendom, should have furnished, with an entirely different view, precisely what was most wanted for the guidance of our own conduct in opening negotiations with the East.

The Treatise is divided into Chapters, of which four were completed before the suspension of the work in 1864. Of these, Chapter I. is occupied with "the Introduction and Progress of Christianity in Armenia." Chapter II. deals with "The Schism of the Armenian Church, and its Dogmatical difference from the Orthodox." In the course of this discussion is introduced an account of the various attempts that have been made from time to time to bring about a reconciliation of the Orthodox and Armenian Churches; and long extracts are given from a Dialogue between Nerses IV., Catholicus of Armenia, and Lysias Theorianus, who was appointed by the Emperor Manuel Comnenus, on the part of the Orthodox, to confer with the Armenian Prelate on the subject of the restoration of communion. This Conference took place at Roum-Kale in A.D. 1175; and the very charitable opening of the discussion is so highly creditable to both parties, and so valuable as a precedent in all like attempts, that I translate part of it, as narrated by the Greek interlocutor.

The Catholicus,--"Having read the Imperial Letter, I understand it to be the will of the Emperor, and of the Holy Church of the Greeks, that if we will correct our errors, they are ready [7/8] to receive us as brethren. "We desire, therefore, to be informed what are the points of Faith on which we have erred; and if we can be convicted canonically, with Scripture proof, we will fairly and willingly receive correction."

Theorianus.--"I beg your mighty Holiness to receive my remarks with your innate gentleness, and not to think my questions captious; but let this rule be observed in the interrogatories and answers on both sides:--When we hear any thing which seems of unsound meaning, not forthwith to conclude that it is heretical; but to inquire carefully, and ascertain the force of the expression, and the mind of him who adopts it."

The Catholicus.--"You say well. So be it."

The third Chapter of the Treatise relates to "The Phases and Variations of Worship among the Armenians."

The fourth to "The Ritualistic Observances and Customs of the Armenian Church."

The fifth Chapter of the Treatise, with which the work was resumed in November last, is that which has the most immediate practical interest for us, as laying down principles directly applicable to our case. It discusses the question, "How the Union of the two Churches may be arranged." Its importance demands that the general principles laid down in this admirable scheme should be given in full.

"In what Manner the Union of the two Churches may be effected.

"For the success of this much-desired union two things are required: (1) The appointment of a Commission for the preliminary investigation and explanation of existing differences; and, (2) The adoption of certain concessions and accommodations, on the basis of the ancient precedents of the Catholic Church.

"Of the Appointment of a Commission.

"1. The Commission to be appointed for the explanation of differences and the consideration of the preliminaries of Ecclesiastical Union, shall be mixed, being selected from the most enlightened Clergy of the two Churches.

"2. The members of the Commission to be chosen by each side shall be equal in number, considering the question on a perfectly equal footing, and in a spirit of brotherhood.

[9] "3. No inquiry shall be made concerning the validity of the Orders and of the Baptism of the Armenians; because all doubt on this point is a contradiction to the design of negotiations with a view to the union and reconciliation of Christian brethren, inasmuch as such negotiations of necessity presuppose the acknowledgment of these, as being incontrovertibly fundamental elements of Christianity: and consequently all doubt upon this point renders the appointment of a Commission impracticable; for how can we confer with men who are supposed to be without a priesthood and unbaptized, in other words, with heathens, and consult with them on a footing of equality and brotherhood concerning the doctrines of the Christian faith?

"4. Since nothing is more easily excited than national jealousy, therefore, for the removal of all suspicion (by which the whole object of the negotiations may be defeated) of a secret attempt either to Hellenize the Armenian Church or to Armenianize the Hellenic Church, it is necessary that it should be agreed that neither of the two Churches claims to impose its own Ecclesiastical discipline, or its own usages and customs, upon the other; but, on the contrary, should be ready to waive or even to abandon these, so far as they shall be proved contrary to Catholic tradition, and to admit the customs of the other, no longer as Hellenic or Armenian, but as Oecumenical, as being in manifest agreement with the Apostolical Constitutions, the decrees of Oecumenical Synods, and the teaching of the Holy Fathers.

"5. Since the negotiations themselves will be a continuation of those held at Roum Kale and Tarsus in 1179, it is requisite that in the proceedings of the

Commission should be set forth an historical account connecting the Old and the New.

"6. Since secrecy in negotiations of this kind may give rise to national suspicions, and possibly afford weapons to the evil designs of the enemies of the Union, and particularly of the Romish Priests, we therefore think it requisite that the Proceedings of the Commission should be published in a Report drawn up in Greek, Armenian, and French. Besides this, Publicity will have the advantage of inviting the expression of opinions upon the points in question on the part of learned Christians, and will enlighten and prepare the public mind of both Christian nations for Union.

"7. The subjects to be discussed shall be (1) The Two [9/10] Natures in Christ; (2) Unleavened Bread; (3) The Holy Oil; (4) The Hymn "Trishagion;" (5) The Feast of the Nativity of Christ; and (6) Fasts.

"8. Should any custom of the Armenian Church be found in disagreement with Catholic tradition and sacred antiquity, but of which the correction shall be shown to be impossible, in consequence of its having become, through the use of many centuries rooted in the conscience of the whole body of a Christian people,--in order that the work of Union may not come to naught, or in other words, that no violence be done to the Law of Love, 'which is the sum of the Gospel, the observance of that custom must be conceded. In such a case, let the Greek and Armenian members of the Commission take for their rule the maxim of the holy Theophylact:--"Not every custom hath power to sever from the Church, but only such as involve difference of doctrine." (It is evident, however, that the final decision with regard to such concession is reserved for the whole Church.) But it is requisite that records of all the circumstances of such concession, and of the ancient Ecclesiastical precedents by which it is supported, should be made with circumspection in the Proceedings, to the removal of any possible offence.

"9. The Proceedings of the Commission, when complete, shall be submitted, in the first place, to the separate consideration of the Ecclesiastical authority on either side--I mean the Orthodox and the Armenian; who afterwards may proceed to public consideration of them in Synod: communicating to each other their own Faith in a special Report, and their agreement upon the questions of secondary importance; setting it forth in a spirit of Christian love, and at the same time submitting the solemn proceedings of their public and Synodical deliberations to the eye of the Churches every where in communion with them, for Oecumenical decision, as has been customary; and after this the work of Union shall be perfected by the salutation in Christ of the holy Pastors of the two Churches, and by common participation in the most Holy

Mysteries; for the cause of offence having been removed, love must be confirmed by communion.

"Thus far concerning the mixed Commission."

The application of these principles and this method of [10/11] proceeding, *mutatis mutandis*, to our advances towards reconciliation with the Orthodox Church of the East, is so obvious that it is quite unnecessary to enlarge upon it here. But the following reflection may be useful for those who, in view of the stupendous difficulties to be surmounted, have perhaps been unduly discouraged by the unfavourable remarks on these efforts of ours from several influential quarters.

If the learned and large-hearted Metropolitan of Chios can see no insurmountable difficulties in the way of restoration of communion between the Orthodox and Armenian Churches, it may well be hoped that the same intelligent charity would admit the possibility of a reconciliation of the Anglican Church to the great Orthodox Church of the East: For while the variations in the Armenian version of the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan Creed, as compared with the original, are far greater and more numerous than those in our version, the Anglican Church has always explicitly accepted the doctrine of the Fourth Oecumenical Council, which was formally rejected (however under an erroneous impression) by the Armenian Church at Tiben in A.D. 491.

As it is very important to ascertain the disposition towards the Anglican Communion of one who has shown himself so competent to deal with the delicate and complicated questions at issue between the Orthodox and the Armenians in a spirit of Christian charity and conciliation, I am happy to be able to quote from another work of the Metropolitan of Chios his opinion of the English Church, which shows a juster appreciation of our position since the Reformation than is common among foreign divines, and also a larger acquaintance with our Ecclesiastical history than is at all general even among ourselves.

The following notices of the Anglican Church occur in two notes to a very remarkable work of the Metropolitan Gregory, entitled "The Voice of Orthodoxy," the first part of which, published in Chios in 1861, is all that I have at present seen. It is, like the treatise which I have above noticed, full of learning; and shows at the same time a wide grasp of Orthodox truth, [11/12] and a considerable dialectical power to maintain and enforce it. It is in speaking of Protestant anarchy as the natural result of Papal despotism, that

he thus discriminates between the English Reformation and that of the Continental Churches.

"The Anglican Church alone of the Protestant Communion, which have rejected both Fathers, and Synods, and Sacraments, and Hierarchy, and, in short, all Ecclesiastical Tradition--the Anglican Church alone, I say, after a long and terrible struggle, has been able, so far as circumstances permitted, to preserve from the deluge of innovation (metarruqmiseW) a portion of Orthodox Truth; as having accepted the power of Synods, the authority of Fathers, in part at least, and an Episcopal Hierarchy. And to such an extent did she resist the demands of the Calvinists and Puritans of the then Parliament, that, in the Synod assembled in 1603, she even ventured to excommunicate such as did not receive her discipline, her worship, and her ecclesiastical ordinances; [See Canons 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, of 1603.] and in that of 1606, she nobly proclaimed, by Synodical act, the Episcopal Hierarchy to be apostolical and founded on divine authority. [He probably alludes to Canons 7 and 8, of 1603. There are no Canons of 1606. See also the Preface to the Ordinal.] But among all the Bishops of the Anglican Church the most distinguished in the struggle against the Calvinists, was Montagu, Bishop of Norwich, and Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury. For the former preached, in addition to other things, the divine authority of the Seven Sacraments, and the latter secretly excited the Court and the Universities to a regard for the Fathers and Councils, at the same time restoring the fonts, the altars, the ecclesiastical furniture and vestments, and bringing back to the eastern end of the chancel the moveable tables which had been set up, in more Calvinistic fashion, in the middle of the churches, &c. Laud's assistants in these measures were James I. and his son Charles I., against whom the Calvinists, under the leadership of Cromwell, raised an insurrection, and brought him to the scaffold, chiefly because he would not consent to the destruction of the Episcopal order; putting to death, at the same time, his spiritual father, the venerable Laud."

This sketch--allowing for such chronological and historical [12/13] inaccuracies as are excusable in a foreigner, and will be easily corrected by the intelligent English reader,--shows at least a thorough appreciation of the difficulties which the post-Reformation Church of England encountered from the persistent efforts of the Puritanical faction to deprive her of her distinctively Catholic elements; and the following extract, which the Metropolitan cites approvingly from Bishop Andrewes's answer to Cardinal Perron,--in evidence that the Anglican Church "distinctly recognizes the Power of Councils, and the authority of the Fathers,"--will still further prove that he has rightly understood the distinctive principles of the Anglican Church:--

"The blessed Chrysostom, in his thirty-third Homily on the Acts, when discussing the question how the true Church can be distinguished among the many societies which claim that name, teaches that there are two criteria for deciding this question:--first, the Word of God, then the antiquity of the doctrine, not thought out by any modern but known from the beginning of the nascent Church. The King and the Anglican Church embracing these two criteria with all their heart, declare that they recognize that doctrine as both true and necessary to salvation, which, flowing from the fountain of Holy Scripture, by the consensus of the ancient Church, as through a channel, has been derived to these times.....The King, therefore, and the Anglican Church declare that they admit the first four Oecumenical Councils.' [Casaubon's Letters, pp. 493. 498.]

"But in later times the salutary inclination of this Church towards Orthodoxy and sacred tradition was somewhat checked, through the introduction into it of the spirit of individualism, and above all by the practical application of the Thirty-nine Articles put forth under Edward VI. and Elizabeth However, notwithstanding this, since this Church accepts two salutary principles,--viz., on the one hand, the authority of Councils and the tradition of the ancient Church, if only theoretically; and, on the other, logical inquiry and investigation,--we are persuaded that by the Divine aid and assistance the hour will come, as it never yet has, when the attempts for the union of the British with the Orthodox Church of the East, undertaken in the time of the memorable Jeremiah, Patriarch of Constantinople, [13/14] and interrupted by circumstances, shall be renewed and brought to a successful termination; and the union shall, by God's grace, be arranged, through impartial investigation conducted in a spirit of Christian love; by the Anglican Church wholly embracing the other three most venerable Oecumenical Synods and the local Synods confirmed by them, and the rest of the doctrines and traditions of Orthodoxy; remembering among other things, that the first founder of Christianity in the most powerful, God-fearing, Christ-loving England, was a Greek, viz. Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury. [It is quite correct to say that Theodore consolidated and extended the British Church; but that he was "the first founder" of Christianity among us is in no sense true, as indeed is clear from the Metropolitan's own statement in this note.] This persuasion of mine is strengthened by the leaning of many learned Englishmen towards Orthodoxy, which has been for some time past manifested in their most weighty works on the Eastern Church." [*The Voice of Orthodoxy*, pp. 11-13, note.]

Of the earlier history of the Church he writes as follows, in speaking of the usurpations of the See of Rome, as based on the false Decretals:--

"Not only did the Popes manage to extend their power on the Continent of Europe, but even over the British Islands, although the Britons had received the light of Christianity, not from Rome, but from the Greek Churches of the Lesser Asia, as is clear from certain customs common to the Britons and to the Greeks in Asia,--such as the practice of observing Easter on the 14th of the month of March, and baptizing heretics who submitted to Orthodoxy; practices which were manifestly opposed to those of the Roman Church, according to the very witness of Augustine, who was sent on a mission to the British Islands by Pope Gregory the Great in A.D. 596. "There are," he said to the British Bishops, "customs among you contrary to ours." Further, the English word Church, derived from the Greek Kuriakon, witnesses to the Hellenic descent of the Anglican Church,--for, be it known, the Latins use in this signification the word *Ecclesia*, but Kuriakon they translate *dominicum*. [In an interesting controversy on this question, carried on in the columns of the *Times*, in the month of January, 1866, this view is ably advocated by Professor Max Muller. See *Times*, Jan. 10, 1866.] Christianity was introduced into these islands very [14/15] early, according to the testimony of Tertullian, who flourished about the middle of the second century (*Britannorum inaccessa Romanis loca Christo subdita*). Already in the third century there were these three Metropolitan Sees, those of York, London, and Caerleon,--to which many Bishops were subject,--because the country was divided politically into three provinces, which were called respectively 'Maxima Caesariensis, Britannia Prima, and Britannia Secunda.' Further, in the Acts of the Council of Aries, assembled under Constantine the Great, in A.D. 314, against the Donatists, the following signatures of three British Bishops are subscribed, viz., Eborius, Bishop of the city of York, of the Province of Britain; Restitutus, Bishop of the city of London, of the above-named Province; Adelphinus, Bishop of the city Colonia Londinensium. [Labbe, *Concil.* Tom. i., p. 1439.] Then as the first foundation of the British Church was due to Greek Bishops, so its consolidation and extension was owing to the Greek Archbishop of Canterbury, Theodore, who is mentioned as follows, in the Acts of the Sixth General Council. [Collection of Acts, tom. ii., p. 554, The words of those of Paul III., Patriarch of Constantinople.]

"Then we hoped that Theodore, from Britain, our fellow-servant and fellow-Bishop, Archbishop of the Great Island of Britain, and Philosopher, with others living dispersed in those parts, should thence have been united with our humility." [Voice of Orthodoxy, pp. 86, 87.]

I proceed to offer a few remarks on the discriminative and appreciative views of the Anglican Church expressed in these two passages.

1. We have lately been advised, in a letter from Athens, by a well-informed writer, favourably inclined to the union of the Churches, that "much effort should be directed to showing in a strong light the differences of both the historical position and the doctrines and usages of the Church of England as distinguished from other Protestant communities." He adds: "This, I may venture to say, even the most learned of Eastern ecclesiastics are utterly ignorant of." [Union Review for November, 1865.]

It is, then, a great satisfaction to find in the Metropolitan of Chios an exception to this almost universal rule. He recognizes [15/16] in the English Church precisely those characteristic features which commended her, two centuries and a half ago, to the candid and impartial foreigner from whom he quotes; who, wearied with the Puritanism of continental Protestantism--which had "no taste for any thing in religion except novelty"--found, during his voluntary exile, a solace for his sorrow, in that, "in this kingdom, he recognized the form of the ancient Church which he had learnt from the writings of the Fathers." [Is. Casauboni Epistolas, No. 703, p. 369 (Ed. 1709).] It is Isaac Casaubon, who, having been present at the consecration of an Archbishop and two Bishops for the Church in Scotland, thus writes, with an ecstasy of admiration: "I witnessed those rites, and the imposition of hands, and the prayers on that occasion. O God, how great was the pleasure it afforded me! Do Thou, Lord Jesus, preserve this Church, and to our Puritans, who see these things, grant a right judgment!" [Vita, p. 53. This was A.D. 1611.]

Of the English hierarchy he writes: "I am in daily intercourse with the Bishops, most learned, most wise, most pious, and--what is new to me--most ardently attached to the ancient Church;" and generally of the English Reformation he expresses himself in language which is singularly coincident with that in which the Metropolitan Gregory credits us with having retained the two principles of reverence for authority and logical investigation. [Epist. 703, p. 369.] "If I am not mistaken," he writes, "the soundest part of the whole Reformation is in England, where, together with devotion to truth, there flourishes also devotion to antiquity." [Epist. 837, p. 489 a.: "Quod si me conjectura non fallit, totius Reformationis pars integerrima est in Anglia; ubi cum studio Veritatis viget etiam studium Antiquitatis."]

2. But if the Metropolitan is correct in his estimate of the principles on which the Reformation in England was conducted, he has also divined with singular accuracy the influences which have checked the growth and development of the Catholic, or, as he styles it, the Orthodox element in the Anglican Church

during the last two centuries; these are, according to him, a "spirit of individualism," and "the practical application of the Thirty-nine Articles."

The former of these he regards as directly antagonistic to the [16/17] Oecumenical or Catholic spirit, which he claims as the characteristic of Eastern Christianity: by the latter he apparently alludes to the tendency to regard the Thirty-nine Articles as a body of Divinity, superseding or expanding the Catholic Creed of universal Christendom; the result of which has been to disturb the harmony and to destroy the proportions of the Faith, by throwing into the shade many vital truths, and bringing into undue prominence matters of minor importance, until at last we found ourselves subjected to the iron bondage of a traditionary standard of interpretation, of recent growth and of no real authority.

And it deserves to be noted, in confirmation of these remarks, that, while those of our English theologians who have commented on the Catholic Creed--or even on any particular Article of the Creed--have produced standard works worthy to rank among the great dogmatic treatises of the patristic ages; such as have chosen what at first may appear the broader, but is in fact the narrower, field of the Articles, have sunk with their subject to the level of ordinary polemics.

These evil effects of a tendency to erect the Articles into a system of Theology--which was certainly far from the thought of their original framers--are now becoming every year more widely recognized among ourselves; but it is a subject of equal wonder and gratification to find that they are so distinctly recognized by a foreign divine, who has, moreover, so firmly grasped the idea as to be able to express it in two words!

It will be a source of gratification to the Metropolitan, to be assured of the correctness of the suspicion which he himself seems to entertain--that these blemishes are not of the essence of the Anglican Church, but merely parasitical excrescences, the growth of the puritanical leaven which has so long striven in vain to eliminate the Catholic elements from our ecclesiastical system, and so to extinguish the light of evangelical truth.

The theory of the Anglican Church, as laid down in its authorized formularies, and understood by its standard divines, is precisely that of the Orthodox Eastern Church, as explained by the Metropolitan, and interpreted to me by a learned member of the Greek Church. "It is lawful for us to search the Scriptures," writes my friend, "not certainly for the purpose of [17/18] conforming our own private interpretation to an individual doctrine; but in order to submit the individual doctrine (which the Metropolitan calls

atomikismon) to the interpretation of the Church. The opposite of this is the case in the West, where each individual is at liberty to frame his own doctrine according to his private interpretation:--a fruitful source of many and divers interpretations and opinions." [Professor J. N. Valetta, the learned Editor of the Letters of Photius.]

It were beside the purpose of this Tract to enter into the proof that the former part of this contrast describes the rule of Faith in the Anglican as in the Eastern Church. It may suffice to say, that "the right of private judgment," and "the spirit of free inquiry"--the unrestrained exercise of which, as described in the latter part, is the principle of pure Protestantism,--has as little warrant in the one as in, the other.

Neither yet are the limits of synodal authority recognized by the Church of England restricted, as the Metropolitan seems to suppose, to the first four General Councils. There is no question among Anglican divines as to the authority of the six Oecumenical Synods which have been received or approved by the Catholic Church; although, in common with St. Gregory and other high authorities in the Eastern and Western Church, they regard with peculiar honour the first four as the most important, and virtually including the other two, which were in a manner supplementary to them. As to that which is reckoned the seventh by the Eastern Church, it is hoped that the Church of England could show canonical cause why she should not be required to accept it, and that it might be brought within the limits of the concessions which the Metropolitan advocates as essential to give effect to the law of charity.

As, however, it is intended to devote one Tract of this series to the consideration of the whole question of the authority of Councils in the Anglican Communion, it is unnecessary further to enlarge upon the subject in this place.

3. One other statement of the Metropolitan calls for a correction; viz., that in which he expresses a confident hope that the attempt once made "for the union of the British with the Orthodox Church of the East," will be renewed with better effect.

It ought to be distinctly understood, that the attempt here referred to, however much it may have deserved and commanded [18/19] the sympathy of English Churchmen in later times, was in no sense the act of the English Church; but of a small and (at that time) inconsiderable section, which had separated itself from the National Church thirty-five years before, and

designated itself the Catholic Remnant,--being, in fact, the body now known among ourselves as the Non-jurors.

All complicity in their proceedings was in fact distinctly disavowed at the time by the then Metropolitan of Canterbury, Archbishop Wake, in a letter to Chrysanthus, Patriarch of Jerusalem, in which he further declared the schismatical position in which the Non-jurors stood to the English Church.

The Anglican Church, then, as such, while, on the one hand, it is in no way responsible for the sentiments expressed by the Non-juring Bishops in their correspondence with the Easterns, is, on the other hand, no way involved in the injurious misconceptions of the Patriarch Jeremiah, who (under an unintentional error no doubt) identified the Anglican with the Calvinistic doctrines, condemned in the Synodical Confession of the Patriarch Dositheus in the Council of Bethlehem.

It were, then, a serious error to connect with that movement--prompted, no doubt, in great measure, by the natural desire to find support for a sinking cause in an alliance with the Eastern Church--the present yearning after Unity in the heart of the Anglican communion, which is rather the evidence of reviving Catholicity and of more active spiritual life and energy, both in the mother Church of England and in her American daughter, where this recent movement in fact originated.

Least of all can the Anglican Church take cognizance of the still earlier correspondence between the Eastern Patriarchs and the Lutheran divines of Wirtemberg in the sixteenth century, to which we have been sometimes referred. We are neither Lutherans nor Calvinists; and we claim to be judged by our own standards and formularies,--not as interpreted by prejudiced adversaries, whether of Rome or Geneva, but by our own divines, according to the analogy of the Catholic faith; and we have now, at length, in the discriminative appreciation of our true position manifested by Gregory of Byzantium, Metropolitan of Chios, an earnest and pledge that we shall not urge our claim in vain.

<http://anglicanhistory.org/orthodoxy/eca/yearnings1866.html>