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assured results of modern Biblical Criticism," he informs us (*Ibid.* p. 193), are fatal to the "Mosaic" authorship of the Pentateuch. We take leave to apprise him that he has been hoaxed. Is he aware that the Incarnate WORD meets him with a clear counterstatement—"Moses wrote of Me" John v. 46, 47)? His "thinkings" on Micah vi. 8 ("And what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God"), are quite a curiosity:

If any so-called Religion takes away from this great saying of Micah, I think it wantonly mutilates, while, if it adds thereto, I think it obscures, the perfect ideal of religion.—(*Ibid.*, p. 860.)

XIX. There is a time for all things—a time for bandying compliments, and a time for speaking plainly. We must be allowed to designate all that precedes by its proper name—*impertinence*. We recommend the concluding clause of what Professor Huxley regards as the Cyclopædia of Divinity to his own special consideration. Let him learn to "walk humbly" with his Maker. And since the Philosopher is so fond of straying out of his own province into that of the Divine, he is respectfully assured that it is one of the fundamental truths of Sacred Science that "*the fear of the LORD* is the beginning of wisdom." He is also reminded that it was "*the Fool*" who "said in his heart," (because he was ashamed to say it with his lips), "there is no God."

XX. Why need I withhold the frank avowal that what is sometimes dignified with the name of "Scientific doubt" excites in me nothing so much as astonishment and ridicule? Astonishment, at its pitiful imbecility; ridicule, at its utterly unscientific character. The so-called philosophers who from time to time favour the world with their silly cogitations on Sacred Science—their weak objections, their impossible hypotheses, their crude difficulties—remind me of nothing so much as little children, crying because they find themselves left out in the dark.

JOHN W. BURGON.



## ART. II.—NONCONFORMITY IN POOR PARISHES.

IT is not the design of this paper to expose or magnify the shortcomings of Nonconformity, but to aid in vindicating the right of the Church of England to be regarded as the Church of the poor, and to show the unrighteousness of those who, mainly for political ends, persistently assert that

the Church of England is the "privileged and State-aided Church of the wealthy;" that it has "done much to alienate the people from religion, and to drive them into indifference, if not into unbelief"; and that its clergy "oppose all efforts made for promoting national good."<sup>1</sup>

We disclaim any intention of speaking disparagingly of much solid and self-denying Christian work carried on by Nonconformists; to their agencies the nation is much indebted. The circumstances which at the close of the last century compelled such noble workers as Wesley and Whitfield to leave the Church, have often been lamented by Churchmen; still all has not been loss. Most heartily would we emphasize a recent utterance of Bishop Maclagan: "We must cease to look upon all Nonconformists as the natural enemies of the Church. There are, of course, political dissenters who feel bound by the dictates of their ill-informed conscience to pull us down, if they can, from our vantage-ground, and to strip us of our inherited possessions. But there are thousands of chapel-goers who have no enmity against the Church, and to these we ought, as far as possible, to hold out a loving hand."

It is sadly true that, notwithstanding the earnest and combined efforts of Churchmen and Nonconformists, vast numbers in our large towns appear to be altogether indifferent to the claims of God. The rapid increase of the population, the constant influx from the rural districts, the workers massed together by hundreds and thousands in our large manufactories, the lack of sympathy between masters and workmen owing to the rapid extension of "Limited" Companies, the conflicts between capital and labour, the unhappy and apparently widening distinction between class and class, the political animosities of the day, the disgraceful condition of vast numbers of the dwellings of the poor, the large number of public-houses in our town parishes—all these, with other matters, render religious work in our poor and crowded districts no easy task.

It is sorrowfully admitted that there have been, both in town and village, clergymen who have closed their eyes to the responsibilities and duties of their office, and left undone what they ought to have done. No institution on earth is faultless; no Church is free from the reproach of unworthy ministers, and the hindrance of inconsistent members.

Still the truth remains, a truth supported by evidence from all quarters, that the Church of England has been and is to-day the Church of the poor—the friend of the people. It may be asserted by some, either in ignorance or in prejudice,

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<sup>1</sup> See "Case for Disestablishment," page 13, and letter of Mr. Handel Cossham, M.P., in *Christian World*, Jan. 21st, 1886.

that she is the "Church of the upper classes," and not of the poor; but any such charge falls to the ground in the face of the unmistakable facts of the Church's work in the poorest districts. Indeed, it may safely be said that to-day the one great bridge which reaches over the widening gulf between rich and poor is the National Church. Nonconformist ministers, not a few, have uttered words confirmatory of Mr. Gladstone's declaration, that, were it not for the "beneficent agency" of the National Church, "crowds of persons would remain utterly remote from the sights and sounds of worship."

More than twenty years ago the late Dr. Hume wrote a tractate entitled "The Church of England, the Home Missionary to the Poor," in which he gave several examples of migrations of Nonconformist congregations in Liverpool from poor to well-to-do districts. The old chapels were sold, some being purchased by Churchmen and turned into churches or schools, whilst others were used as warehouses, shops, cottages, public-houses, etc. Some years earlier the Rev. W. F. (now Dr.) Taylor had drawn attention to the subject in a pamphlet on "The Church and the State," in which he gave the following examples:

(1) There was a Methodist chapel once in Leeds Street, Liverpool, but as the neighbourhood deteriorated it was abandoned; another built in Everton, Great Homer Street, the dead disinterred, and the congregation removed to the more respectable locality. (2) There was a Socinian chapel in Paradise Street, but as the locality sank down in respectability, the meeting-house was abandoned, a new chapel in the strictest style of ecclesiastical architecture erected in Hope Street, a fashionable part of the town. The old building was sold, and used as a theatre! (3) An Independent chapel once stood in Lime Street. It was taken down for the sake of local improvements; but instead of seeking another site in the vicinity, or lower down in the town, where the ministrations of the gospel are urgently required, a splendid chapel was built, far from the crowded haunts of poverty and vice, in Myrtle Street, and thither, accordingly, the congregation removed.

Does not this go to show that Nonconformity has often failed to hold its own in poor districts? Whether we consult the *Congregational* and *Baptist Year Books*, or read the proceedings of the District Unions of these and other bodies, we are compelled to admit that the purely voluntary system has not sufficed to meet one of the great requirements of the times. In town and village alike there have been repeated failures. One aspect of the case is put forth by the *English Independent*, which laments "the unnecessary and injurious multiplication of chapels in thinly populated districts . . . A chapel is built, partly paid for, and the remainder mortgaged; and then the great spiritual work of attracting members from other religious communities begins. A spirit of wicked rivalry fills the place, and envying and strife of the bitterest character

ensue." As a result of this schismatic spirit, many dissenting churches are without pastors, and many pastors without churches. But there is another view still more suggestive. The *Baptist Handbook* for 1878 states that "forty-one towns in Lancashire and seventy-five in Yorkshire have not a single Baptist Church." The same publication for 1879 tells us that in Northumberland there are more than 200 places without any Nonconformist chapel; that in Surrey there are ninety-eight places (or two-thirds of all the parishes) where there is no place for Nonconformist worship; that in Hampshire there are 101 villages (with, in some places, a population of 2,000 souls) without any Nonconformist place of worship; that in Buckinghamshire there are sixty-seven villages (or nearly one-third of the whole) without a chapel, and that of the numerous Baptist churches not one-half are able to support a pastor. The *Congregational Year Book* for 1885 says, "Our country churches have to maintain a hard fight for existence—a fight, the severity of which is likely to increase rather than diminish." At a meeting of the Hull District of the Yorkshire Congregational Union, in February, 1886, it was reported that of the twenty-four churches in the district, seven were aided by grants. Without this assistance it was most probable that the whole of the aided churches would collapse. Three of the chapels, which were endowed, had no churches. The chairman observed that "evidently they were at a stand-still, or going backward in proportion to the relative increase of the population," and confessed that he "did not see any great likelihood of Congregationalism making a deep impression on the working classes." "The serious problem," says the *Baptist Handbook* for 1878, "is how to save our village churches from extinction." "The Difficulties of our Village Churches," was a leading topic for discussion at this year's Annual Meeting of the Baptist Union of Great Britain.

Is it a matter for surprise that, confronted with facts like these, Churchmen should not be enamoured with a system which, however plausible in theory, manifestly fails to bring about the desired results, a system which may flourish among the well-to-do, but which sickens and withers away in poor districts?

Be it remembered that the removal of many Nonconformist chapels in our towns has taken place, not because the population has diminished, but because it changed in character and became poorer. The Rev. Marmaduke Miller, of the United Methodist Free Church, speaking of the Voluntary system, admitted that "in some cases chapels have been removed, not because there was no population, but because it has been deemed, after a long and a fair trial, that the locality was not

the most suitable for a place of worship." If the population was there, what, we ask, made the locality unsuitable for a place of worship? The real answer would doubtless be that there was not that adequate pecuniary return almost indispensable to the keeping up of a Nonconformist chapel. In other words, the districts were *too poor*. The conditions under which Nonconformity works render it necessary that its chapels should be easily accessible to its supporters. Thus, as the *Newcastle Journal* recently remarked, "There is no obligation upon any of them to remain in degenerated neighbourhoods, especially when their leading members and contributors have removed their residences to more auspicious quarters." On the other hand, the Church of England with the present voluntary contributions of her children, backed up by the endowments which she has inherited from former generations, can and does make *permanent* provision for the spiritual, educational, and social welfare of those living in the poorest localities.

Eminent Nonconformists admit and lament that whilst special attention has been given to well-to-do suburban districts, the crowded masses of poor have, to a large extent, been overlooked or neglected. The aggressive work of the Wesleyan Methodists is well known, and yet the Rev. John Bond, in the *Methodist Times* (January 28, 1886), says that, notwithstanding all that has been done, "there are no fewer than fifty-five large towns in Inner London, some of them containing more than 50,000 souls, without the twinkle of even the smallest Methodist taper-light." In the *Pall Mall Gazette* of March 3, 1886, the Rev. H. Price Hughes confesses that the Wesleyans "have in the heart of London a number of large chapels which were once flourishing centres of work, but are now half empty, because we have failed to adapt the services to the changed necessities of the districts, the population having migrated to the suburbs." The *Christian World* ever and anon re-echoes the lament made by John Angell James more than thirty years ago—"hundreds of chapels without pastors, and hundreds of pastors without congregations." Add to this the complaints concerning chapels overburdened with debt, of colleges with heavy deficits, and of poor pastors "whose incomes are not sufficient to feed their families," and it is difficult to conceive that any section of Nonconformists should be found willing to subscribe their tens of thousands to a society which seems to aim at breaking up the parochial system, and impeding the Church's work amongst the poor; a society whose scheme "assumes that the disestablished Church will divide itself into an indefinite number of groups" (*Radical Programme*, p. 169).

We have said that thoughtful Nonconformists have themselves admitted that they have too often overlooked the claims of the poorer districts. And yet it is confessedly true that in hundreds of places costly chapels have been built in well-to-do districts from the proceeds of the sale of buildings in the poorer quarters. Indeed, in not a few cases, the endowment in aid of the minister's stipend has been taken from the poor locality to the thriving neighbourhood. The *Christian World* of May 27th, 1886, in a leading article, candidly says: "We cannot be insensible to the fact that not only the Methodists, but Nonconformists of all bodies, have, as they have become wealthy and found adherents among people of social position, built churches, and adopted modes of worship which, accompanied by social distinctions in the allotment of sittings and so forth, have not attracted, but rather alienated the artizan class."

There is before us an *Abstract of the Evidence on the Church Rates Question*, given before a Select Committee of the House of Lords in 1859. The following passages are of interest. Dr. Hume said:

In Liverpool several dissenting chapels have been closed for want of support, or sold, or abandoned, when their resources diminished. When a district becomes poor, the dissenting congregation generally migrates: the chapel is given up, and replaced in a better district of the town. Nine dissenting chapels have occupied twenty-six sites. There have been seventeen migrations; whereas a church is a permanent building for various grades of the population.

The Rev. George Osborn (Wesleyan Methodist) said:

The extinction of the National Church is to be deplored as one of the greatest calamities which could befall our native country. . . . The Established Church is the greatest Home Missionary Society of which we have cognizance. . . . *The tendency of dissent is to deal with the middle classes, and when they forsake a particular neighbourhood the chapel is removed; and were there not some other description of provision made, the neighbourhood would be left without any.*

Mr. Spurgeon does more than admit that some badly situated chapels have been removed. In May, 1861, he said:

There is growing up, even in our dissenting churches, an evil which I greatly deplore—a despising of the poor. I frequently hear in conversation such remarks as this: "Oh! it is no use trying in such a place as this; you could never raise a self-supporting cause. There are none but poor living in the neighbourhood." If there is a site to be chosen for a chapel it is said: "Well, there is such a lot of poor people round about, you would never be able to keep a minister. It is no use trying, they are all poor. You know that in the city of London itself there is now scarce a dissenting place of worship. The reason for giving most of them up, and moving them into the suburbs, is that all the respectable people live out of town, and of course they are the people to look after. They will not stop in London. They will go out and take villas, and live in the suburbs; and, therefore, the best thing is to take the endowment which belonged to

the old chapel, and go and build a new chapel somewhere in the suburbs where it may be maintained.

Bishop Lightfoot's attention has been drawn to this question in a very direct way. Speaking in June, 1885, he said :

If the Church of England is not the Church of the lowliest poor and the outcast in this kingdom, then certainly no other body is. This position she owes to the fact of her parochial organization. In the largest town of my diocese, the Borough of Sunderland, during the six years of my episcopate, no less than five dissenting chapels have been purchased by the Church, and are now used for her missionary services. Now, I don't blame the Nonconformist bodies. It was the necessity of their position which forced them to the sale. They were congregational, if not in name, at least in fact. As the neighbourhood deteriorated, the congregation migrated to the more respectable localities, and the chapel was obliged to migrate also.

That the testimony of Bishop Lightfoot and Mr. Spurgeon may be applied to almost every large town in England is confirmed by carefully ascertained facts. We will not speak in detail of the Nonconformist chapels in poor neighbourhoods now used by the Roman Catholics. As examples we may name an Independent chapel in Lee Croft, Sheffield, sold to the Roman Catholics in 1863. With the proceeds of this chapel (which was endowed) a handsome tabernacle was built in a prosperous suburb. Birmingham supplies another case: In 1792 King George III., in response to an appeal from the trustees, issued his royal warrant to the Treasury for the payment of £2,000. This sum was duly paid, and applied towards the re-erection of the chapel in Moor Street, which had been burnt down during the Priestley riots. In 1862 the congregation having grown fashionable, built the handsome Unitarian church now standing in Broad Street, and sold the old chapel in the poor neighbourhood to the Roman Catholics. The Salvation Army has acquired a considerable number of Nonconformist chapels in poor neighbourhoods. A recent list of eighty-three buildings in the Lancashire District regularly used by the Army included nine such chapels. Time would fail to enumerate the very large number of cases of buildings once dissenting chapels, but now used as workshops, cottages, and even theatres. If it were possible to compile a perfect list of deserted chapels in poor districts, the result would be painfully surprising. It is only just to add that in many of the cases a new building has been erected, but usually, as Mr. Spurgeon has said, "somewhere in the suburbs, where it may be maintained."

Archdeacon Birch, the Vicar of Blackburn, when Rector of St. Saviour's, Chorlton, Manchester, stated in a pamphlet referring to church and chapel building in his parish, that "A considerable number of the more recently erected chapels in Chorlton have been but removed from the middle of the



city for the convenience of their richer members, who have migrated suburb-wards, the poor and fixed population being thus left worse off than before!"

Here is seen one of the great weaknesses of Nonconformity. The provision of a stipend for the minister, and the keeping up of a chapel can be managed without much difficulty in prosperous middle-class localities, but in a poor district the matter assumes quite another aspect. Often the chapel struggles on for a time; the minister is starved out, until at last the trustees are compelled to remove to a "respectable" locality, in order to ensure the continuance of their cause. How different the case of a church and its minister! He is not compelled by the poverty of a neighbourhood to retire, but, as the *Record* said not long ago, "he can hold his ground amongst the very poorest and most degraded of the population."

We will now adduce additional facts in further confirmation and illustration of the statement that Nonconformity has often proved a failure in poor districts, and has had to remove near the dwellings of the middle and well-to-do classes, whilst the Church has made it a special feature to carry on regular pastoral and mission work amongst the very poorest. There is before us a list of one hundred and four buildings—once dissenting chapels—almost all in poor districts, not merely given up by Nonconformists, but *purchased by Churchmen, and now used for Church purposes*.<sup>1</sup>

This list of buildings, which is by no means exhaustive, includes twenty-four London chapels; eight in Liverpool, seven in Sunderland and Monkwearmouth, three each in Nottingham and Preston, and two each in Brighton, Bolton, Leeds, Sheffield, Plymouth, etc. Not a few of these one hundred and four buildings have been re-arranged and enlarged, and are now used as parish churches, *e.g.*, St. Luke's, Holloway; St. Barnabas's, Bethnal Green; St. Thomas's, Nottingham; St. Simon's, Sheffield; St. Cuthbert's, Monkwearmouth, etc., etc. In other cases the old chapels have been pulled down and new parish churches built, *e.g.*, St. Paul's, Bolton; St. Saviour's, Preston; St. Luke's, Darlington, etc. In the remaining cases the buildings are used as mission churches, Sunday-schools, and for other Church agencies.

The work carried on in the places from which Nonconformity has retired is full of interest and encouragement. When Canon Cadman was Vicar of St. George's, Southwark, he reported that he had established Church services in three chapels

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<sup>1</sup> The writer gave particulars of seventy-four of these chapels in the *Record* of October 2nd, 1885. (Those numbered 14 and 31 respectively should be omitted.)

which had been deserted by the Wesleyans and Independents, with the result that the congregations had risen from almost literally nothing to 90, to 180, and 400 respectively.

Here are a few other typical examples taken from recent reports kindly supplied to me by clerical correspondents :

St. Paul's, Walworth ; population poor ; 13,000. In 1881 a chapel belonging to Primitive Methodists, accommodating 550, with schoolrooms accommodating 200 besides, was bought for Church of England purposes. For £1,500 we bought, readjusted, and refurnished the whole ; and for four years have used it some ten or a dozen times weekly for mission services, clubs, Sunday-schools, etc. The buildings are now an active centre of spiritual and charitable agencies in a poor part of South London.

Sunderland. Forty or fifty years ago Flag Lane Chapel was the cathedral of the Primitive Methodists. It is the old story once again of the neighbourhood going down, and dissenters migrating to a better part of the town. The old chapel and schools were shut up. The pile was put up for sale in April, 1884, and bought by the Rector of Sunderland for £700. £300 have been spent in repairs, etc., and a good work is now going on, a Sunday-school, mothers' meetings, services on Sunday and weekdays, temperance gatherings, etc.

Monkwearmouth, Sunderland. Two chapels, formerly dissenting chapels, are now used in the parish of the Venerable Bede, for mission work amongst the poor. (a) Roker Avenue, originally an Independent chapel, in a neighbourhood once respectable, now exceedingly poor ; seats 500 ; cost in alterations, etc., £600. (b) Brook Street Chapel, built seventeen years ago by the Methodist Free Church ; seats 300 ; bought for £350 ; other £350 spent on alterations, etc. Both the chapels, worked by the Church agencies, are complete successes, and largely attended by the poor.

Again, in Birmingham we read of a chapel in a poor part purchased by the vicar, who put a layman in charge. Now on Sunday evenings the room is crowded, and a good work is going on all the week. In Stoke-upon-Trent we hear of Queen Street Chapel, in the centre of a populous district, purchased by the rector, now forming one of five mission-rooms planned for the purpose of gathering in the masses. Here is a case at Sheffield :

Baptist Chapel in Eyre Street—the only chapel in a district of 6,200 poor—purchased by Churchmen for £2,200 (which sum the Baptists applied towards the building of a chapel in the suburbs). The old chapel, enlarged and remodelled at an additional cost of £2,000, was consecrated in 1865 as St. Simon's Church, since which time it has been a centre of active Church work in almost every department. Convenient schools and also an iron mission-room have been built. The 800 sittings of the church are all free. The day-schools are self-supporting. The offertories and subscriptions for home and foreign missions and local and parochial objects average from £350 to £400 per annum. During 1885 about £60 was given in aid of the sick and poor. The yearly circulation of the parish magazine is about 5,000. During 1885 £990 were deposited in the penny bank in 12,539 sums, and nearly £70 paid by small sums into the Mother's meetings.

Many other examples of work for God carried on by Churchmen amongst the very poor in buildings once occupied by Nonconformists, and in districts from which they have

retired might be given if needful. Sufficient however has been said to prove the insufficiency of voluntarism, and to show the benefits the poor derive from the parochial system and an endowed Church.

The Reports of the various Church Extension and Scripture Readers' Societies in every diocese, and the fact that the church accommodation is supplemented by more than 5,000 mission-rooms, is evidence that the National Church has a special regard for the welfare of the masses in our crowded centres. Add to this the work done during the last fifty years by our two great Home Missionary Societies, the Church Pastoral Aid Society and the Additional Curates' Society; also that accomplished during the last twenty-three years by the Bishop of London's Fund, and some faint idea may be formed of the aggressive work of the Church amongst the poor of our land.

The *Church Pastoral Aid Society*, which seeks to send living agents to labour in the crowded parishes of our large towns, has, in the fifty years of its existence, aided 1,827 poor districts, by grants amounting altogether to £2,019,677, to meet which £606,554 have been locally raised. The *Additional Curates' Society*, kindred in aim, has, since its formation in 1837, granted £994,771, which has been supplemented by £1,024,937, raised by the aided parishes. The *Bishop of London's Fund* expended from 1863 to 1884 no less a sum than £717,909 in seeking to further the work of Christ in the crowded districts of the great metropolis. In addition to the large sums expended in providing mission-rooms, Schools, and missionary clergy, and lay agents, it has aided the erection of 135 permanent churches. These facts are eloquent, and clearly indicate that the Church has laboured long and earnestly in seeking to grapple with sin, and raising the poor socially, morally, and spiritually by the living power of the Gospel.

In January, 1861, the late Canon Stowell appealed to a crowded meeting of working-men in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, in defence of the National Church. "Working-men," he said:

You are become too well informed, have too much common-sense, are men having your eyes too much awake and observant, to be any longer imposed upon with the cry that the clergy are not your friends, and that the Church is your oppressor. Where are the chapels?—in the darkest, poorest neighbourhoods? Where are the dissenting ministers?—ever up and down amongst the poor? What is the place to which the poor go for the comforts, the consolations, the sympathies, and the ministrations of religion? They go to the parsonage, the vicarage, the rectory! I do not blame the dissenters for this. They are congregationalists; they have no parochial charge. The voluntary principle goes far, but it does not go far enough. It stops just where it is the most wanted. It stops when it reaches the poor.

Are there not hundreds of clergy working amid our crowded and poor populations, whose experience fully confirms this statement? Is it not true that the greater part of the Nonconformist ministers do not profess to visit unless sent for? We heard not long ago of a gentleman who accepted a pastorate with a salary of £750 per annum, on the understanding that he was not to be expected to visit. In the Annual Statement of a Baptist Chapel well known to us, is an intimation that in cases of sickness or affliction, friends "will be kind enough not to expect a visit" until word has been sent to a church officer or to the pastor. An "American Pastor," in giving to the *Christian World* his impressions of religious matters in England, says of London pastors that they "do not visit much unless specially sent for, even in a case of sickness, but send the church officers to inquire." In March, 1886, "Candour" writes thus to the *Christian World*, concerning the "average" Nonconformist minister:

He absolutely neglects pastoral work, except that he tries to pay a visit when specially asked. He seems to have no perception of the fact that in a sick house a spontaneous, and not a formal call, affords the balm that helps the sick and cheers the watchers. I am a strong advocate for Disestablishment, but I must admit that the Church puts the Chapel to shame in the matter of visiting.

Nonconformists do not, as a rule, visit amongst the poor. House-to-house visitation is no part of their system. Not a few of the clergy who labour amid the crowded masses of our great towns, and whose constant rounds have rendered every court, and the interior of almost every house, familiar, and who are earnestly and loyally helped by the great army of voluntary lay-workers, can testify that (with perhaps the exception of a Roman Catholic priest visiting a member of his flock) a Nonconformist minister is seldom if ever met with. The vicar of St. John's, Paddington (Rev. Sir Emilius Bayley), in a recent speech said that during the eighteen years that he was rector of St. George's, Bloomsbury, where half the population were poor, he never once met a Nonconformist minister working amongst them.

How different this from the work fostered by the parochial system! The church and schools once built, and the district assigned, the clergy with the staff of workers, all remain, amid varied changes, as beacon-lights amid surrounding gloom. The widow, the sick, and the dying are visited, the distressed relieved, the fallen raised, the young educated, the intemperate warned and reclaimed, habits of cleanliness and thrift inculcated; and above all, the poor have the Gospel preached to them. Amid any deterioration which may happen to the neighbourhood, the church buildings, organizations, and clergy remain

*permanent* for the social, moral, and spiritual welfare of the inhabitants for the time being.

It must be admitted that the present condition of the masses and the spirit of unrest which pervades them, tend to create much anxious thought. The "bitter cry" which rises from our poor and crowded centres calls for the earnest and united practical sympathy of all who profess and call themselves Christians. It is acknowledged that as yet the combined efforts of Churchmen and Nonconformists have not sufficed to evangelize the people. Disclaiming all boasting, and without deprecating other Christian effort, it may be asserted that the Church of England has been and is to-day the great Home Missionary agency amongst the poor. In districts, not a few, abandoned by Nonconformity as "too poor" for a "successful" cause the Church has, amid many difficulties, held her ground and wrought a noble work for God and truth. Her clergy have proved that they were pastors as well as preachers; friends and helpers of their parishioners, as well as teachers of their congregations.

Should Disestablishment ever take place the parochial system, if it be not shattered, would undoubtedly receive a very severe shock. If it be destroyed, what is to take its place? The poor would be the greatest losers, the keenest sufferers by any scheme which would weaken the Church by depriving her of her rightful heritage, the means which enable her to carry on her work in the most poverty-stricken quarters.

"Were the parochial system broken up," says Dr. Osborn, (Wesleyan) "all the voluntary efforts which might be put forward, either by separate classes of Nonconformists or by the joint labours of Churchmen and Nonconformists, would never suffice to compensate for its overthrow, which would be very injurious to religion and to the welfare of the country as dependent on religion."

"Wealth maketh many friends. but the poor is separated from his neighbour." How sadly suggestive are the inspired words! The selfishness of too many of the rich, and the social isolation of the poor, are matters fraught with danger to the commonwealth. Persons are too often honoured for what they possess rather than for what they really are.

"The poor ye have always with you." Care for the poor is an essential obligation of Christianity as it was of the previous dispensation. Our Lord emphasized this duty both in precept and practice. "Distribute to the poor." "The poor have the Gospel preached to them." The history of the Church of England is proof that her members have not been indifferent to this obligation. The clergy, from the Archbishops to the humblest curate, have devoted special attention to the claims

and needs of the poor both in crowded city and scattered hamlet. The *Official Year Book of the Church of England* indicates the nature and variety of Church organizations which are actively engaged in raising the social, educational, and religious condition of the people.

The intention and work of the Church of England may at times be misrepresented by opponents and misjudged by friends. This seems to be an inevitable condition of all righteous effort. Nevertheless, the Church, conscious of her integrity, faithful to duty, and speaking the truth in love, shall go on increasing in power; and, amid labour and warfare, evil report and good report, shall not be ashamed to meet her enemies in the gate with the words of the patriarch—"When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me; because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him: the blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy" (Job xxix. 11-13).

WILLIAM ODOM.

St. Simon's, Sheffield.  
May, 1886.



#### ART. III.—REMARKS ON SOME OF THE MESSIANIC PROPHECIES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT AS AFFECTED BY THE REVISION.

I PROPOSE in this paper to consider some of the changes which have been introduced by the recent Revision in a few of the more prominent of the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament. In doing this I shall refer where it seems necessary to objections which have been urged against those changes, or against the marginal notes on such prophecies. But I shall not deal only with objections. I shall also direct attention to one passage against which, so far as I am aware, no objection has been urged. I shall do this, because I think that the positive excellences of the Revision have been too much overlooked. The critics have been busy with what they deem to be its errors and its defects; they have too often been grudging in their acknowledgement of its merits.<sup>1</sup>

I have already replied elsewhere,<sup>2</sup> at some length, to the charges brought by the *Quarterly Reviewer* against the

<sup>1</sup> An exception, however, must be made as regards Canon Girdlestone's excellent articles which have appeared in the *CHURCHMAN*.

<sup>2</sup> In the *Contemporary Review* for April and May of the present year.