

# LECTURE LXXIV.

## RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

### SYLLABUS.

1. Establish the doctrine of Religious Liberty and the right of Private Judgment.
2. Discuss and refute the theory of Church Establishments held by Prelatists, and that of Chalmers.
3. What are the proper relations between State and Church? And what the powers and duties of the civil magistrate over ecclesiastical persons and property?  
Conf. of Faith, ch. 20, and ch. 23, § 3. Locke's first Letter on Toleration. Milton's *Areopagitica*, or Plea for the Liberty of Uncensored Printing. Vattel, Law of Nature and Nations, bk. i, ch. 12. *Montesquieu Esprit des Loix*, bk. xxv. Chalmers on Church Establishments. Gladstone's Church and State. Review of Gladstone, by Lord Macaulay.

**Y**OU may suppose it superfluous to lecture on a subject so well understood, and universally admitted, as this is among us; but you will be mistaken. Our ancestors understood it, because they had studied it, with all the earnestness of persecuted men, who had to contend with sword and pen. We hold their correct theory; but, it is to be feared, only by prescription and prejudice. Consequence: that when temptation comes, and the theory of religious liberty seems awkward just at a particular juncture, we shall be carried about with any wind of doctrine. This is ever the course; for fundamental truths to be practically learned by one generation, handed down to the next, held by prejudice for a few generations, (the words used and sense dropped) and at last lost in practice.

Again, many, even of statesmen, do not defend Religious Liberty on sound and rational grounds. Even Brougham and Macaulay (see his *History of England*) seem not to have found out that the proposition, "man is not responsible for his belief," is not the same with that of Religious Liberty.

The arguments by which Augustine induced persecution of the Donatists have ever been the staple ones of the Roman Church, for intolerance. They are so wretched and flimsy, as to be unworthy of a separate discussion. Their answer will be apparent in the sequel. But it should be observed, that the doctrines of intolerance are consistent with the claims of the Romish Church to infallibility, and supremacy. A man ought not to have liberty to destroy his own soul by refusing the infallible teachings of God, on earth. This claim of infallibility puts the relations between the unbeliever and Church, on the same footing as those between the unbeliever and his God. To both he is guilty. But is the claim of infallibility to be implicitly admitted? The answer to this question shows that a

Augustine First Advocate of Persecution.

denial of the right of private judgment, is essential to the Romanists' intolerance. For if the infallibility is to be brought into question, then the basis of the right to enforce absolute conformity is melted away.

A far more plausible argument for the right to enforce religious conformity has been glanced at by Heresy is Criminal. later Romish writers. It is hard to answer by many a Protestant, who inconsiderately holds to Religious Liberty. Man is responsible for his belief. His religious error is not simply his misfortune, but his crime. Bad volitions are at the bottom. Truth is discoverable, certain. This crime has a very certain, though indirect evil influence; not only on men's religious, but secular conducts and interests. The heretic injures the public morals, health, order, wealth, the value of real estate, &c., &c. He may be doing mischief on a far larger scale than the bandit. Now, if his religious belief is of a moral quality, voluntary and criminal; and is also mischievous—highly so; and that, to the interests both Church and State protect, why not punishable? Why does it claim to be exempted from the list of offences amenable to law? The cruel abuses of the power of punishing heretics, by ignorant or savage rulers, are no argument against its use, any more than the Draconian penalties conclude against moderate power in the magistrate, of repressing secular crimes." Answer.

Every thing which is moral evil, and is detrimental to the interests of society, is not, therefore, properly punishable by society (e. g. prodigality, indolence, gluttony, drunkenness). The thing must be, moreover, shown to be brought within the scope of the penalties, by the objects and purposes of Government; and the relevancy of corporeal pains and penalties to be a useful corrective; and the directness of the concern of society in its bad consequences. Society may not infringe directly a natural right of one of its members, to protect itself from an indirect injury which may or may not occur. It only has a right to stand on the defensive, and wait for the overt aggression. It is not the business of society to keep a man from injuring himself, but from injuring others. As to his personal interests he is his own master. Now, that religious error, though moral evil, voluntary and guilty, does not come within the above conditions, we will show, and at the same time will adduce arguments of a positive weight.

1. Premise. Church and State are distinct institutions, since theocratic institutions are done away; they have distinct objects. The Church is to teach men the way to heaven, and to help them thither. The State is to protect each citizen in the enjoyment of temporal rights. The Church has no civil pains and penalties at command; because Christ has given her none; and

But Force Not the Remedy.

State and Church Have Different Objects.

because they have no relevancy whatever to produce her object—the hearty belief of saving truth (see John xviii : 36 ; 2 Cor. x : 4, &c.). The main weapon of the Civil Government is civil pains and penalties (Rom. xiii : 4).

2. Premise. In the State, the good of the governed being the object, (in temporal interests) the governed are the earthly sources of sovereignty. Rulers have only a delegated power, and are the agents of the community, who depute to them, for the general good, so much of power as is necessary.

Now, for the direct argument, observe: The Church's bearing penal power, and being armed with civil pains, is utterly inconsistent with her spiritual character, her objects, and the laws of Christ. Rome herself did not claim it. When the Church persecutes, it is through the commonwealth. This lends its corporeal power to the Church. When Romish Priests persecute, they bear a twofold capacity, magisterial and clerical.

But, by what power shall the magistrate persecute his own Sovereign? Whence delegated? All the power he has is delegated. Now a citizen cannot delegate to another the right of judging for him what is right, because to do so is a self-contradiction, and unutterable absurdity; and because to do so would be a crime. For the merit of all my religious belief and acting depends on my free, conscientious convictions; and God has made me responsible for them, so that I cannot give away the responsibility.

By the same general fact, it appears that when intolerance commands me to surrender my private judgment in religion, it is to the Magistrate I surrender it; i. e., a man not sacred, nor even clerical, an officer purely secular, and even upon Romish teachings, no more entitled than me, to judge in religion. But, it is said, "the Magistrate persecutes not for himself, but on behalf of a Church infallible and divinely authorized, to which he has dutifully bowed, and lent his secular power, as he ought; so that it is to this infallible Church we are compelled by the Magistrate's sword to surrender our private judgment." No; how did the Magistrate find out that this Church is infallible? Suppose I, the subject, choose to dispute it? who shall decide between us? Not the Church in question; because the very question in debate between us is, whether the Church ought to be allowed a supreme authority over my, or his conscience. It is to the civil Magistrate's judgment, after all, that I am compelled to yield my private judgment, and that, in a thing purely religious.

The civil authority of the magistrate is not due to his Chris-

3. Magistrates Not Even Christians. tianity, but to his official character. This follows from the entire distinctness of the Church and State in their objects and characters. It is proved by Scripture asserting the civil authority of Pagan magistrates; Matt. xxii : 21; Rom. xiii ; 1 Peter ii : 13. If we were citizens of a Mohammedan or pagan country, we should owe obedience to their civil rulers in things temporal. And this shows that the authority is not dependent on the magistrate's christianity, even where he happens to be a Christian, Now what an absurdity is it, for that which is not Christian at all to choose my Christianity for me? To see this, only suppose a case where the magistrate is actually infidel. The Greeks and Protestants in Constantinople struggle with each other. The Turk, more sensible than intolerant Christians, merely stands by and derides both. But suppose one of them should manage to get him on their side, and use his temporal power to persecute their brethren? Can a Turkish infidel, who has nothing to do with Christianity, confer on one sect a power to persecute another? Confer what he has not? Outrageous. But the reason of the thing is the same in any other country; because the civil authority of the magistrate is no more due to his Christianity than that of the Grand Turk in Turkey, who has no Christianity.

4. Which Religion Shall Coerce? But suppose the persecuting Church repudiates the aid of the magistrate, and claims that she herself, as a spiritual power, is entitled to wield both swords, temporal and spiritual, for suppression of error, in person, as Rome does in some of her more imperious moods. Then all the absurdities are incurred which arise from confounding the two opposite societies of Church and State and their objects; and all the Scriptures above quoted must be defied. But other arguments, still more unanswerable, apply. Among competing religious communions, which shall have the right to coerce the other? Of course, the orthodox one. This is ever the ground of the claim. "I am right and you are wrong; therefore, I must compel you to think as I do." But each communion is orthodox in its own eyes. Every one is erroneous to its rivals. If Rome says, there are evidences of our being the apostolic infallible Church, so clear, that no one can resist them without obstinate guilt, Geneva says to Rome just the same. Whatsoever any Church believes, it believes to be true. There is no umpire under God; shall the magistrate decide? He has no right. He is not religious. There is no umpire. Each one's claim to persecute is equally good. The strongest rules. Might makes right.

5. Coercion Not a Means to Faith. But again: The Church cannot use persecution to gain her end, which is the belief of religious truth; because penalties have no relevancy whatever to beget belief. Evidence begets con-

viction; not fear and pain. While we do not think that belief or unbelief of moral truth is of no moral character, with Brougham, we do know that it must be the voluntary, spontaneous result of evidence, and that it must be rational. That a spiritual society, whose object is to produce moral beliefs, and acts determined thereby, should do it by civil pains, is an infinite absurdity. This is enhanced by the other fact: that the virtue and efficacy of religious belief and acts before God depend wholly on their heartiness and sincerity. Feigned belief, unwilling service, are no graces, but sins: do not save, but damn. . . . Nor do persecutions have any preparing effect to open the mind to the rational and moral means which the Church is afterwards to use. This the Augustinian plea. To punish, imprison, impoverish, torment, burn a man, because he does not see your arguments as strong as you think them, is surely a strange way of making him favorable thereto! To give him the strongest cause to hate the reasoner, is a strange way to make him like the reasonings! The most likely possible way is taken to give him an ill opinion of that communion he is wished to join. These measures have some natural tendency, on weak natures, to make hypocrites; but none to make sincere believers.

Under this head, too, notice the outrageous impolicy of persecuting measures. Supposing the doctrines persecuted to be erroneous, the very way is taken to make them popular, by arraying on their side the sentiments of injured right, virtuous indignation, sympathy with the oppressed, and in general, all the noblest principles, and to make the opposing truth unpopular, by associating it with high handed oppression, cruelty, &c. The history is, that no communion ever persecuted which did not cut its own throat thereby unless it persecuted so as to crush and brutify wholly, and trample out all active religious life *pro* or *con* to itself. The persecuting communion dies, either by the hand of the outraged and irresistible reaction it produces; or if the persecution is thorough, by the *syncope* and atrophy of a spiritual stagnation, that leaves it a religious communion only in name. Of the former, the examples are the Episcopacy of Laud, in Scotland and England, Colonial Church of Virginia against Baptists, &c. Of the latter, the Popish Church of France, Spain, Italy. "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church."

All acts of religious intolerance are inconsistent with the relations which God has established between Himself and rational souls. Here is the main point. God holds every soul directly responsible to Himself. That responsibility necessarily implies that no one shall step in between him and his God. No one can relieve him of his responsibility, answer for him to God, and

Persecution Prejudices Truth.

6, Intrudes into God's Province.

bear his punishment, if he has betrayed his duty. Therefore no one should interfere to hinder his judging for himself. "What hast thou to do, to judge another man's servant?" Here it is plain how essential the claim of infallibility is to a plausible theory of persecution. For a man who acknowledges himself fallible, to intrude his leadership by force on his fellow-man, who is no more fallible than himself, when it is possible he may thereby ruin his soul, is a position as satanic as impudent. But where the persecutor can say, "I know infallibly that my way is right, and if he will come into it he will certainly be saved," there is a little plausibility. But if infallibility is disproved, that little is gone. And more: Each man is directly bound to his God to render a belief and service hearty; proceeding primarily from a regard to God's will, not man's. Else it is sin. Now, how impious is he, who, professing to contend for God, thus thrusts himself between God and His creature? Substitutes fear of him for fear of God? Thrusts himself into God's place? He that does it is an anti-Christ. Man's belief is a thing sacred, inviolable.

7. Let it be added, also, that persecutions ruin that cause which they profess to promote, the cause of God, by demoralizing the persecuting community. They tend to confound and corrupt all moral ideas in the populace, who see moral, merciful, peaceful men punished with the pains due to the most atrocious crimes, because they do not take certain arguments in a certain way. They beget on the one hand subserviency, hypocrisy, cunning, falsehood and deceit, the weapons of oppressed weakness; and on the other, cruelty, unmercifulness, rapacity, injustice. Ages of persecution have always been ages of deep moral corruption; and where persecution has been successful, it has plunged the nations into an abyss of vice and relaxed morals.

Again: we have hinted at the tendency of intolerance to disappoint its own ends. All history is a

8. Persecution Aggravates Divisions.

commentary on this. More persecution, the more sects, (except where it is so extreme as to produce a religious paralysis, and there there are no sects, because there is no belief, but only stupid apathy or secret atheism). Rome tried it to the full. And under her *regime*, christendom was more and more full of sectaries, who increased till the freedom of the Reformation extinguished them: Waldenses, Albigenses, Cathari, Paulicians, Beghards, Fratricelli, Turlupins, Brethren of Free Spirit, Wickliffeites, Hussites, &c., &c. There have always been wider divergences of doctrinal opinion, within the bosom of the Romish Church itself, than there are now, between all the evangelical branches of the Protestant family, with all their freedom. And the effect of the Reformation, (most in freest countries), has been to kill off, or render perfectly impotent, all more extravagant and hurtful

sects. Where are any Turlupins, or mystical Pantheists like those of Germany of the 14th Century? Where any Schwes-triones? Manichæans?

9. Religious sects are nearly harmless to the State, when they are no longer persecuted. It is wholly to their oppression that their supposed factiousness is due; cease to oppress, and they become mild and loyal. This is just the absurd and treacherous trick of persecutors, to say, "conventicles are secret," when it is their oppression which makes them secret. They would gladly be open, if they might have leave. "Conventicles are factious;" it is injustice which makes them factious. Let the State treat all sectaries justly and mildly, and they at once have the strongest motive to be true to the State; indeed, the same which the majority has; that of strongest self-interest.

Persecution for conscience' sake is always supremely false and hypocritical, as appears by this fact.

10. Coercion Hypo-  
critical. The motive assigned by persecuting religion-ists is, that the souls of men may be saved from the ruinous effects of error; of the heretic himself, if he can be reclaimed; of others whom he might corrupt, at any rate. But while they have been imprisoning, tormenting, burning men of innocent morals, because they held some forbidden tenets, have they not always tolerated the grossest vices in those who would submit to the Church? Adultery, profanity, violence, ignorance, drunkenness, gluttony? Was it not so during all the Inquisition in Spain and Italy, Laud's persecutions in England, James' in Scotland? But a bad life is the worst heresy. Surely this destroys souls and corrupts communities. Why do not these men then, who so vehemently love the souls of their neighbours, that they must burn their bodies to ashes, love the vicious enough to restrain their vices? Persecution for opinion's sake is wholly a political measure cloaked under religion. Its true object always is, to secure domination, not to save souls.

This, therefore, is the only safe theory. The ends of the State are for time and earth; those of the Church are for eternity. The weapon of the State is corporeal, that of the Church is spiritual. The two cannot be combined, without confounding heaven and earth. The only means that can be used to produce religious belief are moral. No man is to be visited with any civil penalty for his belief, as long as he does not directly infringe upon the purpose of the government, which is the protection of the temporal rights of his fellow-citizens. The State is bound to see that every man enjoys his religious freedom untouched, because the right to this religious freedom is a secular, or political right.

The doctrine of religious liberty was not evolved at the Reformation: Protestants held it a right and duty to persecute heretics. "Rome's guilt was that she persecuted those nearer

right than herself, and did it cruelly and unjustly." The first treatise taking the true ground, as far as I know, was written by Brown (founder of sect of Brownists). Dr. Jno. Owen wrote for the same cause. Dr. Jeremy Taylor wrote his plea for liberty of prophesying. Milton and Locké are well known. Roger Williams, of Rhode Island, perhaps deserves the credit of being the first Ruler in the world, who granted absolute freedom to all sects, having power to do otherwise.

The separation and independence of Church and State was not only not the doctrine of the Reformation. No Christian nation holds it to this day, except ours. In 17th and 18th centuries some Independents and others in England, and Seceders in Scotland, advocated such separation, but were branded as outrageous radicals. All the Reformation Churches, Lutheran and Reformed, held it as an axiom, that the State had, under God, the supreme care of religion. "*Cujus Regio, ejus Religio.*" Dissenters of England now usually hold our views. (as well as Seceders in Scotland), called there voluntarism. The Free Church, at the head of whom was Dr. Chalmers, held to establishments. Ours is the first fair trial.

Two theories of Church establishments prevail among nominal Protestants. The higher is that squinted at briefly in Vattel, bk. 1, ch. 12, § 129, and more fully developed by Gladstone, Church and State, Chap. 2. That the government is instituted for the highest good of the whole in every concern, and is bound to do all it has in its reach for this object, in every department. That a commonwealth is a moral person, having a personality, judgment, conscience, responsibility, and is therefore bound, as a body, to recognize and obey the true religion. Hence the State must have its religion, as a State. This is a necessary duty of its corporate or individual nature. Hence it must profess this, by State acts. It must of course have a religious test for office, because otherwise the religious character of the State would be lost; and it must use its State power to propagate this State religion.

Let us discuss the abstract grounds of this theory first; then take up the second, or freer theory of Church establishments, and conclude with some general historical views applicable to both theories.

Says Vattel: "If all men are bound to serve God, the entire nation in her national capacity is doubtless bound to serve and honour Him.

Vattel's View.

This is based on a general principle; that all men are everywhere bound by laws of nature; and therefore the entire nation, whose common will is but the united wills of all the members, must be bound by these natural laws; because the accident of association cannot release men from bonds that are

universal." (See § 5). This is true in a sense, but not the sense necessary to prove a state religion obligatory. So far as any acts of any associated body of men have any moral or religious character, they should conform to the same moral and religious rules, by which the individuals are bound. But (a) the obligation is nothing else but the individual obligation of all the members, and nothing more is needed to defend or sanction it than their individual morality and religiousness. And (b) there are associations whose objects are not directly religious, but secular. How can they appropriately have a corporate religious character, when their corporate character has no direct reference to religion.

Gladstone puts the same argument substantially, calling it his ethical argument. "A State is a corporation. It has personality, judgment, reason, foresight. Its acts have moral character. The only safe and sufficient basis of morals is Christianity; therefore they should have Christian character. All things we do have religious relations and responsibilities; therefore the acts of rulers as such, should have a Christian character. In a word, a State is a moral person, corporately regarded, and like any other person, must have its personal Christian character. Else it is anti-Christian, and atheistic." Mr. Macaulay, (Ed. Review, 1839), so terribly damaged this argument, by pointing out that, by this reasoning, it was made the duty of armies, Banking, Insurance, Gas, Railroad, Stage Coach companies, Art Union, incorporate clubs, &c., &c., to have a corporate religion (consider the absurdities), that in his second edition, the author modified and fortified it. "These corporations are trivial, partial. Everybody not bound to belong to one; their operations not far reaching, not of divine appointment, temporary. But there are two natural associations of men, alike in these three fundamental traits. They are of divine appointment; they are perpetual, they embrace everybody, i. e., every human being is bound to belong to them; they are the family and the State. All good men admit that the family ought to have a family religion. The State, a similar institution, a larger family, ought to have a State-religion."

This is the only ingenious and plausible thing in his book. The nature of the reasoning compels us to discuss the fundamental questions as to the constitution and objects of civil society. For our answer must take this shape. The family association is wholly dissimilar from the commonwealth; because its direct objects are not the same. The source and nature of the authority are not the same. There is not the same inferiority in the governed to the governors; and there is not the same affection and interest.

(Remember, however, the fact that all men are bound to be members of some family and State, has no relevancy to

prove that these associations must have religious corporate character, unlike all other partial societies. Nor does the fact that they are not voluntary, but of divine appointment; because under certain circumstances, it may be of divine appointment that men should belong to an army; and this does not prove that an army ought to profess a religion as such).

The object of the family as to children, is to promote their whole welfare. The object of civil government is simply the protection of temporal rights against aggression, foreign or domestic.

State and Church  
have Different Ends.

But this is just the view which all claimants for high powers in governments deny. Like Mr. Gladstone, they claim that the proper view of government is, that it is an association intended to take in hand all the interests and welfare of human beings, of every kind; everything in which man is interested, and in which combination can aid in success, is the proper end of human government. It is *το Παν*: The total human association. Now, the plain answers to this are three: the Bible says the contrary. Rom. xiii: 4. It is utterly impracticable; for, by the necessary imperfection of human nature, an agency which is best adapted to one function must be worst adapted to others; and an association which should do every thing, would be sure to do all in the worst possible manner. But last, and chiefly; if this is true; then there cannot be any other association of human beings, except as it is a part and creature of the State. There is no Church. The State is the Church, and ecclesiastical persons and assemblies are but magistrates engaged in one part of their functions. There is no such thing as the family, an independent, original institution of divine appointment. The parent is but the delegate of the government, and when he applies the birch to the child, it is in fact, by State authority! All combinations, to trade, to do banking business, to teach, to preach, to navigate, to buy pictures, to nurse the sick, to mine, &c., &c., are parts and creatures of the State! Or if it be said that the State, though it has the right to do every thing, is not bound to do every thing, unless she finds it convenient and advantageous, then the ethical argument is relinquished; and the ground of expediency assumed, on which we will remark presently. But the ethical argument fails, also.

(a) In this: That it makes the right and duty of the Sultan to establish Mohammedanism; the King of Spain, Popery; Queen Victoria, Prelacy; the Emperor of China, Boodhism, &c. Julian was right in ousting Christians; Theodosius, Platonists, Constantius, Athanasians; Jovian, Arians. For if the State is a moral person, bound to have and promote its religion, the Sovereign must choose his religion conscientiously. The one he believes right, he must enforce. This is admitted by the advocates. Now, of all the potentates on earth, there is but one, that would conscientiously advocate what these men think the

right religion—Prelacy. How sensible is that theory which, in the present state of the world, would ensure the teaching of errors, by all the authority of the governments over all the world, except in one kingdom?

(b) If strictly carried out, it would ensure the worst governing, and the worst preaching, possible. An organization intended for a particular end, should choose agents best adapted to subserve that end, irrespective of other things. Otherwise, it will be miserably inefficient. And if it is best organized for that end, it must, for that very reason, be ill adapted to a different end. Hence, there should be no jumbling of functions; but each institution should be left to subserve its own objects. Suppose the British Government act out this theory. It must say to the skillful and honest financier: "You shall not help in my treasury, because you do not believe in Apostolic Succession;" to the Presbyterian General: "I will have none of your courage and skill to release my armies from probable destruction, because you listen to a preacher who never had a Prelate's hand on his head;" to the faithful pilot: "You shall not steer one of my ships off a lee shore, because you take the communion sitting," &c. How absurd; and how utter the failure of a government thus conducted!

(c) By the same reason that it is the duty of the State to use a part of its power to propagate its religion, it is its duty to use all; and the doctrine of persecution for opinion's sake is the necessary inference. For the State has power to fine, imprison, kill.

(Before we proceed to the more plausible and liberal theory advanced by Vattel, Warburton, Chalmers, &c., let us notice a point urged by the first mentioned, in § 139, &c.: That there must be a connection between Church and State, in order that the Sovereign may have control over ecclesiastics and religion. If men wielding such immense spiritual influences, are not held in official subordination to the Chief Ruler, he cannot govern the country. It would be a sufficient reply to say that Vattel knew Church officers, chiefly as Papists. Take away their power of the keys, their exemption from civil jurisdiction, and their ecclesiastical dependence on a foreign Pope, and the difficulty is gone. The minister of religion should be a citizen, subject to all laws, liable to be punished for any overt crime committed or prompted by him. This is subordination enough. As for the power still left him to inculcate doctrines of dangerous tendency, unchecked by the State, the proper defence is free discussion. The medicine of error is not violent repression, but light. Let the Ruler content himself with protecting and diffusing free discussion. And again, Vattel's argument may, with equal justice, be extended to political teachers; and then the freedom of the press and of speech is gone).

Hence, Agencies of  
one Unfit for Other.

2. State Needs not to  
Control the Ministry.

But we come now to what we may call the Chalmersian theory. "The proper object of civil government is man's secular well-being. But the right to prosecute this, implies the right to perform all those functions which are essential to the main end—yea, the duty. Public morals are essential to the public welfare. The only source of public morals is Christianity. Christianity will not be sufficiently diffused, unless the State lends its aid and means to do it. Therefore it is right, yea, binding, that the State shall enter into an alliance with Christianity (in that form or forms best adapted to the end), to teach its citizens religion and morals, as a necessary means for the public good. To fail to do so, is for the State to betray its charge."

The contested point here, is in these propositions: That "voluntaryism" will usually fail to diffuse a sufficient degree of public morals; and that a State-endowed Church, or Churches, of good character and spiritual independence will do it far better. And on this point, all the divisions of "Dissent," splitting up of small communities until the congregations are all too small to sustain themselves, the insufficiency of funds furnished by voluntary contribution, are urged, &c., &c.

Now, here we join issue, and assert; in the first place, that an endowed Church, on this plan, will usually effect less for true religion and public morals, than voluntary Churches, notwithstanding these difficulties. For remember that the State is, in fact, and must usually be, non-religious; i. e., the Rulers themselves will usually have a personal character irreligious, carnal, anti-evangelical. What is the fact? How is the composition of governments determined? By the sword, or by intrigue, by party tactics, by political and forensic skill, by the demands of secular interests and measures, by bribery, by riches and family, by everything else than grace. It must be so; for the assumed necessity for a State endowment and alliance is in the fact that the community is yet prevalently irreligious, and needs to be made religious. Now, all just government is representative. It must reflect the national character. To disfranchise, and shut out of office, citizens, because carnally minded, would be an absurd and impracticable injustice in the present state of communities. Now remember (Rom. viii : 7): This enmity is innate, instinctive, spontaneous. If the State selects preachers, some individual officers of the State select them; and the least evangelical will most frequently be selected. Natural affinities of feeling will operate. Here, then, is one usual result of a Church establishment; that of the men who are nominal members of the Church endowed, the least evangelical and useful will receive the best share of all that influence, power and money which the State bestows. Exceptions may occur: this is the general rule. What says History? Arians under Roman

Voluntaryism Most Efficient.

Empire; under Teuton Princes, High Church Arminians; worldly men; semi-Papists in England; Arminians in Holland; Moderates in Scotland.

Again: The pecuniary support will be liberal and certain. Its tenure will be the favor of the Rulers; not of God's people. Hence carnally minded men will infallibly be attracted into the ministry by mercenary motives: and the most mercenary will be the most pushing. Hence a progressive deterioration of the endowed ministry, as in English and all Popish and Lutheran Churches. Shall we be pointed to large infusion of excellent men in English and Scotch establishments? We answer, that their continuance is mainly due to the wholesome competition of Dissent. (Just the contrary of the plea, that the Establishment is worth its cost, by its wholesome influence in curbing Dissent). And the proof is, that wherever Dissent has been thoroughly extinguished, the leaden weight of State patronage has in every case, brought down the endowed clergy to the basest depths of mercenary character, and most utter inefficiency for all good. E. g., Spain, France, Italy, Austria, Russia.

Again: Just as soon as any Church is endowed, it is put in an oppressive attitude towards all that part of the community who do not belong to it, so that prejudice will prevent much of usefulness in its ministrations to them, and perpetually stimulate secession. That I should be taxed to pay for the preaching of doctrines which I do not believe or approve, is of the nature of an oppression. That my minister should have no lot nor part in the manse and salary provided at the common expense, but monopolized by another man who is willing to endorse some doctrine which I think erroneous, is an odious distinction. Indeed, it might be urged, as an independent argument against the mildest form of Church Establishment, that it implies some degree of oppression for opinion's sake; it makes the State a judge, where it has no business to judge, and exercises partiality, where there should be equality. Nor will it at all answer to attempt to elude this difficulty, as in the colonial government of Massachusetts; because this would enlist the State in the diffusion of error and truth alike; a thing wicked; and it gives to the worst forms of nominal Christianity a strength they would not otherwise have, because all the "Nothingarians," being compelled to support some Church, elect the one that has least religion.

And once more: The only fair experiment of full religious liberty, without Church and State, that of our country, proves, so far, that the voluntary system is more efficient than the endowed, in adequately supplying the growing wants of a nation. Let all denominations enjoy complete freedom and equality, and their differences become practically less, they approximate

to a virtual unity and peace on an evangelic ground, and their emulation and zeal do far more than the State could do. The fact is, that this day, notwithstanding our heterogeneous people, and immense growth, we have more gospel, in proportion to our wants, than any except Scotland. And in England and Scotland almost all the enterprise, which has kept up with growth and evangelized new districts, has been either dissenting, or a sort of voluntarism among Established Church people; as in getting up the *Quoad Sacra* chapels in Scotland. Our success is the grand argument against State Churches.

But, second, and more conclusive. This union, on this theory, between Church and State, necessitates the surrender of the Church's spiritual independence. It can no longer preserve its allegiance to Jesus Christ perfect. The necessity of this allegiance we will not stop to prove. If the State employs a denomination to teach its subjects religion and morals, it is bound to have them well taught. The magistrate owes it to his constituents to see that the public money is well spent in teaching what shall be for the public good. And whether the doctrine taught is so or not, the magistrate must be the sovereign judge under God. In other words, the preachers of this State Church are, in their ministerial functions, State officials, and, of course, should be subordinate, as to those functions, to the State. Responsibility must bind back to the source whence the office comes. But now where is this ministers's allegiance to Christ? Whenever it happens that the magistrate differs from his conscience, he can only retain his fidelity to his Master by dissolving his State connection.

This was completely verified in the disruption of the Scotch Establishment. The British government claimed jurisdiction over spiritual affairs, which they supported by their salaries. The faithful men of the Free Church found that the only way to retain their allegiance to Christ was to relinquish their connection with the State. When the secession Churches now exclaimed: "Here is an illustration of the incompatibility of spiritual independence and Church establishments," the Free Church men answered: "No. We admit that the jurisdiction of the State and its courts is just as to the temporal emoluments of a parish, but deny it as to the care of souls, or fitness for that care." But does not a suit about pay for value received necessarily bring into court the nature of the value received? Must not the magistrate who decides on the *quid*, decide on the *pro quo*? The right of the State is to present to the Parish, and not to the salary of the Parish, only. The State has the same right to see the parochial duties performed by whom she pleases, as the salary enjoyed by whom she pleases.

In the incipency of the English Establishment, the grand

3. Christian State  
no Theocracy. appeal of its advocates was to the example of the Israelitish kingdom, where State and Church were united so intimately. Hence were drawn all the arguments, nearly, for the King's headship over the Church. Hence Calvin's idea of State and Church. Nor is the argument yet given up. But the answer is, that a theocratic State is no rule for a State not theocratic. When a State can be shown, where there is but one denomination to choose, and that immediately organized by God Himself just then; where there is an assurance of a succession of inspired prophets to keep this denomination on the right track; where the king who is to be at the head of this State Church is supernaturally nominated by God, and guided in his action by an oracle, then we will admit the application of the case.

In conclusion: The application for such an alliance does not always come from the side of the Church. Commonwealths have sometimes been fonder of leaning on the Church than the Church on Commonwealths. Do not suppose that this question will never again be practical.