

## Appendix to the Notice of the *Achill Herald* Recollections.

W. Kelly.

The author's charges differ from the Bishop of Kilmore's. There is no reason for evading either — least of all for not meeting the more violent of the two. I have replied to Dr. Verschoyle elsewhere, and now proceed to refute the rector of Skreen.

(1.) Mr. Nangle's statement is, that those he calls Darbyites "reject a ministry set apart by the laying on of hands to rule and teach the Church, as laid down in St. Paul's epistles to Timothy and Titus, and various other parts of the New Testament. That they do reject such a ministry is notorious, and the apologist of the sect does not dare to deny it." It is evident that he does not understand the matter; nor should one be surprised at this.

All is confusion in Christendom on the point. The Roman Catholic does not allow the validity of Anglican orders, though the Anglicans own those of Rome, for a recanting Romish priest never undergoes presbyterial ordination within the English Establishment. The Presbyterian reckons episcopacy a fiction. The Independent rests the essence of his call on the choice of the congregation, as the Presbyterian does in a measure. Thus for the most part the theories and practice of Christendom, if applied and held fast, are mutually destructive; one only could be true.

"Brethren" believe that not one of these conflicting schemes is according to God's word; because even those who have a measure of right, in upholding the truth of apostolic authority as the sole adequate ordaining power, falsely pretend that the modern bishop succeeds to this authority. If "Brethren" arrogated such a claim to themselves, they would be as wrong as their neighbours; but as long as they bold to the truth in this respect, they will avoid this error of Christendom. They leave it to others, who have as little real ground as themselves, to imitate an apostle or an apostolic delegate. Instead of aspiring to an authority which "Brethren" frankly own *they* do not possess, and which they firmly believe neither Roman Catholics nor other Episcopalians possess one jot more than themselves, they thank God for the gifts which remain, being amongst themselves more or less as also among the members of Christ's body everywhere.

I flatly deny, then, that they reject a ministry set apart by the laying on of hands, as laid down in 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and elsewhere. It is notorious that they on the contrary hold so tenaciously to the due scriptural order as to reject the poor and baseless imitations of this current among modern Episcopalians, and still more the substitution of the popular voice for it, which passes among Dissenters. But they hold that the Lord (as from the first, even whilst apostles and their delegates appointed elders) gives such gifts (evangelists, pastors, teachers, etc.) is are needed for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. From the beginning, there was the free exercise of gift within and without the Church, *beside* the local charges of elders, etc., which needed orderly appointment. Have gifts ceased, because apostolic authority no longer exists?

(2.) I am grieved to say that the charge of evasion under the head of confessing sins is inexcusable, not to say worse. The Bishop of Kilmore was misinformed if he

thought "Brethren" held that the confession of sins is to be laid aside by those who have already received forgiveness; for they would support himself in resisting that grave error. Mr. N.'s hostility forthwith suspects evil couched underneath a straightforward denial: any candid gracious soul would be gratified by it, because he loves to bear good of his brethren and rejoices to have a prejudice removed. What does Mr. N. say and feel? "We have here another evasion put forth as a reply to my charge. I never denied that the Darbyites, as a body, insist on the duty of a believer to confess his sins; but I did and do charge them with the grievous error that a believer needs not daily to pray for *the forgiveness of his sins*." How comes this shifting of the point before us? Why does he charge the reply to Dr. Verschoyle with "evasion" because his own different statement was not answered? Did he forget that the reply was to Dr. V. not to himself? Again, why did he "adopt" the Bishop of Kilmore's words on this head if he never believed of "Brethren" what the Bishop imputes? Was this upright? Is it lawful to use another's words against the "Brethren," which, when exposed, you deny that you ever held, and then to substitute quite a different statement, with a confident accusation that your charge (which was not in question) is evaded? This is what Mr. N. has done. I do not think any worthy members of his own party will approve of it.

No intelligent Christian objects to the Common Prayer Book on the ground here alleged, but to the *merging saints and sinners in a common petition and confession of sins*, to the exceeding detriment of the converted, to the imminent peril of the unconverted, and above all to the trampling under foot of the primary idea, the express design, and revealed character of God's Church.

To be precise, let me add, first, that "Brethren" do ask forgiveness of their sins; secondly, that confession goes *beyond* this. Who does not know, save the thoughtless, that it is far easier to ask forgiveness than to confess honestly and thoroughly? Have you never felt it? Have you not seen it in your child? For what are sins confessed, if not to seek forgiveness from our Father?

(3.) Neither is there any evasion as to the Lord's prayer. I have never hinted that it was used at meetings of "Brethren," though there is no rule expressed or understood against such a thing. It is evident that the Lord gave it for the *closet* use (Matt. 6: 6) of His disciples, who were regenerate at that very time and had not yet received the gift of the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete. I believe that it abides for such use on the part of disciples in a similar condition; but that it never was intended for souls after they were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise and possessed (not merely the title, but) the Spirit of sonship. This vast change is, I am convinced, the teaching of our Lord Himself in John 16: 24-26. The disciples had been no doubt for a long time using the Lord's prayer; yet the Lord tells them "Hitherto have ye asked *nothing in my name*." "At that day ye shall ask in my Name." "That day" is now come: are we as the disciples were? or, having received the Comforter, are we asking the Father in Christ's name? To my mind this distinction is clear and certain; but Mr. N. counts it "shuffling by which your correspondent endeavours to exonerate the sect from this sanctimonious blasphemy," and then talks about the distinction already pointed out in such a style as to show himself wholly in the dark on this subject. "If any man be ignorant let him be ignorant."

From these bold and bitter, but powerless words, in the face of our Lord's declaration and the evident facts of scripture, it is refreshing to turn to the excellent and learned Dr. John Owen. None can say that Cromwell's Vice-Chancellor of Oxford Plymouthized; none can deny that for spiritual judgment he is incomparably beyond any of the adversaries of the "Brethren." His orthodoxy and his piety are unimpeachable; yet his doctrine (as far as it goes), and no doubt his practice, as to the Lord's prayer, accords with ours. "Let it therefore be taken for granted that our Saviour did command that form to be repeated by His disciples, and let us then consider what will regularly ensue thereupon. Our Saviour at that time was minister of the circumcision, and taught the doctrine of the gospel under and with the observation of all the worship of the Judaical church. He was not yet glorified, and so the Spirit was not as yet given; I mean that Spirit which He promised unto His disciples to enable them to perform all the worship of God by Him required at their hands, whereof we have before spoken. That, then, which the Lord Jesus prescribed unto His disciples for their present practice in the worship of God, seems to have belonged unto the economy of the Old Testament. Now, to argue from the prescription of, and outward helps for, the performance of the worship of God under the Old Testament, unto a necessity of the like or the same under the New, is upon the matter to deny that Christ is ascended on high, and to have given spiritual gifts unto men eminently distinct from and above those given out by Him under the Judaical pedagogy." (Works, Vol. xv., p. 14, Goold's ed.) Of course, I attach not the smallest authority to Dr. O.; but it suffices to evince the abuse and lack of knowledge on our accuser's part.

(4.) It is in vain to appeal to 1 John 2: 3, 1 John 3: 18, 19 to prove that scripture makes the full assurance of our acceptance to depend on our works or our experiences. The apostle treats of a wholly different question and assumes, in this very epistle, that the former was already settled even for the babes of the family of God. See 1 John 2: 12; 1 John 5: 13. There were those who sought even in that early day to set up Gnostic conceits, to despise love and holiness, and to assert the necessity of their teaching for the children of God. Hence, not to raise internal questions, but to comfort the true saints, and to expose these aspiring false teachers, the apostle says, "Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." There is no thought of insinuating an inquiry whether their own faith was real. So in chapter 3 it is expressly a question of "assurance of heart;" not of ascertaining one's individual interest in Christ, but of keeping our confidence toward God unbroken. But I quite agree that without holiness (practically) no man shall see the Lord; and that carelessness of ways even in a real saint is always destructive of spiritual enjoyment.

(5.) So far is it from being true that individuals among "Brethren" are insensible to discipline, that one of the greatest hindrances we know is from the spirit of insubjection which prevails generally over Christendom. When the high-minded among us receive censure beyond their grace to endure, sometimes they resent it by going back to the country whence they came out, or by making a party of their own. It is commonly alleged against "Brethren" that they take "the best" from the various religious societies. Others are perhaps better judges of this. We can thankfully say that none but our worst or weakest leave us to join any denomination. The singular

fact is, that our adversaries do not seem to perceive how serious for themselves are both these allegations if true. And who can deny them?

(6.) I am sorry that the most prejudiced Christian should judge it wrong, when souls established in Christ are taught any truth they need, particularly what is so near to Christ and so practically necessary to our walk and worship as the nature of God's Church. But I can well understand why some are sensitive on this head.

I had almost omitted to add that our reason for not putting forth creeds, or articles of faith, is not in the smallest degree because of diversity of opinion. Tracts and books, however, by men respected among us are abundant and accessible. Why not quote fairly from them, instead of imputing to "Brethren" sentiments which they abhor? First, it is evident to us, that symbols of faith do not secure unanimity in Mr. N.'s system, which affords to all men the spectacle of compelling men to sign what they openly deny, without an approach to the right use of ecclesiastical discipline (though the second part of the Homily for Whitsunday declares this to be one of the three notes or marks whereby the true church is known). Secondly, it is equally clear that the Church of God walked without these Egyptian reeds during its best days here below, as we are seeking to do now by the grave of the Saviour.

As to the reproach of being a conglomerate of the errors of the Quakers, the Anabaptists, and the Antinomians, with supplemental errors increasing and special, it is not worth more answer than that of our scandalous immoralities. I retort nothing; I appeal to those who have knowledge and conscience.