

these we demanded an uncontrolled admission, not only for the sake of obtaining a genuine knowledge of the terms of salvation, but of forming a pure and apostolic church, freed from the corruptions of faith and discipline which had, in the lapse of time, disfigured the original establishment of Christianity. By the Reformation therefore we succeeded in forming an Ecclesiastical Polity, as well as in securing the liberty of the Bible. Our Liturgy was framed, and our doctrine and discipline fortified by the Articles and Canons of our Church. At the present time then we stand with our Bible in one hand, and our Common Prayer in the other. We must cast away neither. Looking at both, indeed, we see the identity of their principles. This is our strong ground. Our Liturgy is drawn from the Scriptures, and we contend, that it may be resolved into them again by the soundest process of argument, and by the most exact tracing of authorities. But, thus extracted from the Scriptures, it is to be for ever maintained, together with them, by all the true sons of the Church. It is the external monument and test of our Establishment; and hence we are bound, in a peculiar degree, to maintain the Book of Common Prayer, and all the doctrines calculated for its support. But by preferring the Bible alone to the Bible and Liturgy united, we return to the imperfect state in which we were before the completion of our Reformation. This road, indeed, is open to Dissenters; but the present question is with the genuine and undoubted Church; and, in this view, we do not hesitate to affirm, that the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, the object of which is to secure the Book of Common Prayer and the Bible together, has a prior and superior demand, first on all the clergy of the Establishment, and next on all the laity. We therefore consider the Churchman who, without visible cause, shrinks from the support of the Society, as having some objection to the constitution of our Ecclesiastical Polity.

Let us now pass to some view of those circumstances which are to be considered by the Churchman as the ground of his subscription to the Bible Society, or of his determination whether he ought to continue in it.—His judgment may be formed then on the following questions: whether the new Society extends a salutary agency beyond the reach of the ancient Institution;—whether, within the circle of the latter, it impedes the cause of Christianity, and menaces the Church Establishment?—and whether, with its outward provisions as a religious association, it connects any secret attempts at political objects?

In the first of these cases we conceive the door of subscription to be open to all, with perfect safety to the Church. The diffusion of the Scriptures by the Bible Society has been effected through a larger tract of the world than was embraced by the ancient Institution.