

POINTS OF DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN CANADA
AND THE
REFORMED EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

A STATEMENT SET FORTH BY THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR THE MISSIONARY JURISDICTION OF OTTAWA, AND APPROVED BY THE PRESIDING BISHOP.

January, 1877.

First. These Churches differ essentially as to what constitutes the Church of Christ. The "Church of England in Canada," as represented by a large majority of its ministers and members, teaches that the Church of Christ exists only in one form or order of church government, a three-fold ministry of Bishops, Priests and Deacons, based on the divine right of Bishops, who are the successors of the Apostles in their apostolic office, and derive their authority from them by succession in an unbroken chain. On this theory, only such bodies of Christians as possess this order and succession, as the Romish and Greek Churches—corrupt though they may be, in doctrine and living—are parts of Christ's Church.

The Reformed Episcopal Church protests against this theory as unchristian, in that it denies the claims of the Protestant evangelical churches around us. It holds that the true church consists of all who are joined to Christ by a living faith, and which, under varying forms of organization, is yet one in Christ Jesus. The claims of the Apostolic Succession, as above cited, this Church repudiates—holding to Episcopacy

not as of divine right, but simply as a very ancient and desirable form of church polity. Hence while the "Church of England in Canada" turns away from the Protestant Churches around us; the Reformed Episcopal Church, with an equally historic Episcopate, seeks the fellowship of all Protestant Evangelical Churches, exchanges pulpits with their ministers, and partakes with them at the Lord's Table.

Second. They differ concerning the nature of the Christian ministry. In the "Church of England in Canada" the Presbyter is called a Priest, and the Ordinal contains this formula: "Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a Priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands; whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven, and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained." The Reformed Episcopal Church abjures this dogma as unscriptural and dangerous, leading to many superstitions; strikes the word "Priest," as applied to the minister, from its Ordinal and Prayer Book, and knows but one Priest, CHRIST JESUS.

Third. They differ as to the SOUL'S CONVERSION. "The Church of England in Canada," as represented by the majority of her ministers, teaches that regeneration is inseparably connected with water baptism, and teaches in her Prayer Book that the infant baptized is thereby "made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven."

The Reformed Episcopal Church rejects this as a perversion of the Gospel, and knows of but one regeneration through the Holy Ghost, of which baptism is only the sacrament, a symbol divinely appointed.

Fourth. The "Church of England in Canada," allows "altars" to be erected in her churches, and permits and suffers her clergy to teach that on these "altars" the sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ is offered up by the "priest."

The Reformed Episcopal Church condemns this doctrine as a dangerous, Romish error, dishonoring to Christ, and repugnant to all true Protestants, prohibits the turning of the "communion table" into an "altar," or the introduction of anything calculated to teach sacerdotalism.

Fifth. The "Church of England in Canada" in receiving communicants from other Protestant Churches generally requires them to be confirmed.

The Reformed Episcopal Church receives to its membership by letter, or other satisfactory evidence, communicants of other churches, dispensing, in their case, with confirmation, unless desired.

Sixth. The "Church of England in Canada" accuses of "schism" any clergyman or communicant who conscientiously desires to leave it for some other Protestant body.

The Reformed Episcopal Church commends any Bishop, Presbyter, or communicant desiring to leave it, to another evangelical branch of Christ's Church, with its prayers and love.

Seventh. The "Church of England in Canada" discourages the meeting together of Christian laymen for extempore prayer.

The Reformed Episcopal Church encourages the use of extempore prayer in addition to the Liturgy, and of "prayer meetings," in which, as in the olden time, the Christian laity actively participate.

A MOTTO FOR PROTESTANTS:

No Altar but Calvary:

No Priest, no Sacrifice, but Jesus Christ.

SCHISM.

The Greek word signifying schism is used in the following passages only:

Matt. 9, 16; Mar. 2, 21; Pro. 7, 43; 9, 16; 10, 19; 1 Cor. 1, 10; 11, 18; 12, 25.

As applied to the Christian Church the word INVARIABLY MEANS A QUARREL OR BREACH OF THE PEACE between those who profess the name of Christ.

As applied to the Christian Church the word *never* means a separation in mere organization or form of church government, for, as Paul says regarding these things, "there are diversities of operation,—differences of administrations,—governments." (See 1 Cor., chap. 12).

There is no schism between the Reformed Episcopal Church and the other evangelical churches united together in the bonds of peace, there are merely lawful DIVERSITIES OF ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNMENT.

The "Church of England in Canada" is in a condition of schism.

1st. Because there is a BREACH OF THE PEACE within her borders. The Ritualists and true Protestants never can exist side by side in the same organization, in the bonds of brotherly love.

2nd. Because she cuts herself off from all other evangelical branches of the Church of Christ on earth.

The Reformed Episcopal Church has withdrawn from the old organization to avoid this lamentable condition of conflict and error, believing that there can be no true union [between Protestant and Ritualist, and that the true and Christian course to be taken is

PEACEABLE SEPARATION TO AVOID SCHISM.

"The stipulations which are made in Baptism, as well as in Ordination, do only bind a man to the Christian faith, or to the faithful dispensing of that Gospel, and of those sacraments of which he is made a minister; so he, who, being convinced of the errors and corruptions of a church, departs from them, and goes on in the purity of the Christian Religion, does pursue the true effect of his Baptism and his Ordination vows."—BISHOP BURNET, on Art XIX of the Church of England.

