

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH ASSOCIATION

Church Association Tract 159

REV CANON ALFRED M. W. CHRISTOPHER,
ST ALDATE'S, OXFORD, 1889.

"The Church Association is the only Church of England Society which has laboured during the last twenty-four years in every lawful way to counteract the efforts now being made to pervert the teaching of the Church of England on essential points of the Christian faith, and to assimilate her services to those of the Church of Rome.

This Association has gone steadily on in its faithful course, in the midst of misrepresentation and undeserved reproach, endeavouring, in dependence on the blessing of the God of Truth, to preserve the blessed results of the Reformation to the Church of England.

I regard it as the truest charity to do all we can, in the Name of our God, to oppose efforts to undo the Reformation, and to pervert congregations from the simplicity of the Gospel. Charity should not be exclusively kept for the teachers of Romanizing errors. Some charity should be reserved for those who may become their unhappy victims.

It is surely worth bearing all the misrepresentations and reproach poured upon the supporters of the Church Association, to help to uphold the "Doctrines, Principles, and Order of the Church of England" in every lawful way, and to preserve at least some members of our beloved Church from the Ritualistic process of gradual preparation for the terrible final plunge of perversion to the Church of Rome! It cost our Reformers something more than reproach and misrepresentation to bring about the Reformation. It cannot but cost God's faithful servants something to preserve the Reformation by His help at this crisis.

I wish that all true-hearted Evangelical men realized the present danger of our Church. If they did, I am sure they would not be apathetic, supine, and unfaithful at such a time as this.

The inspired writer of the thirteenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians surely knew what true charity is; but see how he wrote in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Galatians of those who preach "another Gospel"; and see also in the second chapter of that Epistle how he "withstood Peter to the face because he was to be blamed." Are the Romanizing corrupters of our Church better men than St. Peter?

I measure the value of the Church Association not so much by its success as by its Scriptural objects, and the faith and courage of its members in seeking to obtain them.

The success of Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley in preserving the Reformation they had so well begun, did not seem to be very great when they were being burnt alive within a quarter of a mile of this rectory. Yet we know what great results God ultimately gave to their noble self sacrifice for the cause of His Truth.

Let us pray that God may raise up in our Church at this crisis men of the brave, faithful spirit of our martyred Reformers, and use them to put to shame the feeble and timid Protestantism of the present day.

Holding the opinions which I have expressed in this letter of the faithfulness of the Church Association in labouring in every lawful way for the preservation of the blessed results of the

Reformation in the Church of England, I willingly accept the office of a Vice-president, to which the Council have invited me, and the reproach which is attached to it.

I pray that the Holy Spirit may fill all the members of the Church Association with the faithful charity which He created in St. Paul. I pray also that He may move the hearts of many more of our loyal fellow-Churchmen to unite heartily with them in their difficult labours for the preservation of the faithful Church of England, which was taught of God in the riper days of the Reformation to cast out of her Prayer Book the word "altar," and with it all the false doctrine which is now connected with that word."

[ED. *This Tract is a letter from Alfred Christopher to a certain Mr Miller following his (Alfred Christopher's) appointment as Vice-President of the Church Association. The letter is dated November 5th 1889.*]