

CHAPTER XX.

Dissent a Mid-formation Organism in England. — Church of Englandism strong among the Upper and Lower Classes: its Peculiar Principle of Strength among the Lower; among the Upper. — The Church of England one of the strongest Institutions of the Country. — Puseyism, however, a Canker-worm at its Root; Partial Success of the Principle. — The Type of English Dissent essentially different from that of Scotland; the Causes of the Difference deep in the Diverse Character of the two Peoples. — Insulated Character of the Englishman productive of Independency. — Adhesive Character of the Scotch productive of Presbyterianism. — Attempts to legislate for the Scotch in Church Matters on an English Principle always unfortunate. — Erastianism; essentially a different thing to the English Churchman from what it is to the Scot. — Reason why. — Independent Scotch Congregation in a Rural District. — Rarely well based; and why. — Conclusion.

WHEN I first came among the English, I was impressed by the apparent strength of Dissent in the country. At least two out of every three Englishmen I met in the lodging-houses, and no inconsiderable proportion of the passengers by the railways, so far as I could ascertain their denominations, were, I found, Dissenters. I had lodged in respectable second-class coffee-houses and inns: I had travelled on the rails by the second-class carriages: I had thus got fairly into a middle stratum of English society, and was not aware at the time that, like some of the geologic formations, it has its own peculiar organisms, essentially different, in the group, from those of either the stratum above or the stratum below. Dissent is a mid-formation organism in England; whereas Church of Englandism more peculiarly belongs to the upper and lower strata. Church of Englandism puts up at the first-class inns, travels